



## Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – The Alternate Ride

Before you know it, Friday is here! You and your horse should be well and truly used to the drill by now. Today we will be circumnavigating Grenfell on the Alternate Ride, for want of a better name. The ride is approximately 23km long.

The Alternate Ride consists of tar roads, local stock routes and fire trails, but don't let this scare you - it is still a beautiful ride with scenic views of the Weddin mountains, and some hidden beauties amongst our small town.

The ride takes us southeast through town onto a small unnamed dirt track past smaller peri-urban blocks and hobby farms before crossing the midwestern highway. [Weddin Shire Council](#) will be assisting us to cross the highway safely by creating a 40km zone when we ride through. Please always follow the directions from our Committee Riders and Horse Marshalls.

Once across the highway, we ride up a tar road past the local Mountain View Apiary (be sure to pick yourself up a tub of their honey from the local IGA before you leave town – it is the best). We then continue onto Qundong road and will follow this dirt road until we stop for morning tea at the same site we stopped at on the Qundong ride.



*The Alternate Ride takes us up Qundong Road - a pretty road, with views of the Weddin Mountains.*

If you can get on your horse again after a scrumptious morning tea, we will then turn and follow a dirt track that runs adjacent to the old Koorawatha – Grenfell railway track. This scenic track winding back into town boasts stunning views of the Weddin Mountains.

### ***The Grenfell Railway***

*The Koorawatha - Grenfell railway line opened in 1901. Water for the steam engines that operated until the demise of the steam was sourced from stand supplied by Company Dam, where we will stop for lunch today. Grain and goods were transported to and from the Grenfell Railway Station along this branch line and passenger services operated until 1974. The Greenethorpe-Grenfell section of the branch line was closed in 1991, cutting Grenfell off from this form of transportation. A recent proposal has been put forward to turn the Grenfell – Greenethorpe section of the railway line into a rail-trail for cyclists to bring further tourism to the picturesque region. You may notice a lot of bikes painted green around the district, which indicates support for the idea.*

Once in town, we ride along far around the outskirts of town then through the industrial area. We cross over Mary Gilmore Way before heading north for quite some time until we arrive at our lunch spot on a private property.



*The lunch spot on the Alternate Ride*

After we enjoy a lovely lunch by the dam, we will continue north and then ride the fire trails near [Company Dam](#). The fire trail will loop around and take us back around past the western side of the showground and we will pop out back near the showground entrance.



*Riding around Company Dam in drier times.*

Phew! You made it! As we re-enter the showground for the final time this year, give our gatekeepers a wave.

**Company Dam**

*Company Dam* was completed in June 1867 to supply water for gold mining and crushing of ore. It was constructed by the Grenfell Water Company, hence the name 'Company Dam'. It had a capacity of ten million gallons and was said to be one of the largest dams for mining in the Colony at that time.

When mining petered out, the dam provided water for steam trains when the railway reached Grenfell in 1901. Nowadays, Company Dam or 'Comp's Dam' as it is known to the locals, is used for recreational activities such as kayaking and as irrigation for local sporting grounds. A series of fire trails surround the dam, which are frequented by walkers, ornithologists, horse riders and cyclists.

Company Dam is a great bird watching site with a combination of many small woodland birds and water birds on and around the dam. Since 2004, the site has been used for Birding NSW's Important Bird and Biodiversity Area Survey, with surveys conducted bi-annually. Over 50 species have been recorded at this bird 'hot-spot'. There is also a great diversity in the plants found at Company Dam. In years like this there is an abundance of wildflowers including lilies, bush peas, heath plants, daisies and orchids

### **The Showground**

*The Grenfell show* is held annually at the start of Spring and has been held regularly since 1876. The PAH & I Association are proud of their showground. With assistance from the Weddin Mountain Muster and other fund-raising efforts, recent improvements to the pavilion and amenities have been possible. The new stables at the northern end of the showground are the latest upgrade made possible by the Muster. They are named after the late Nev Condon, who was our gate keeper for many years.

### **Pony Club**

*The Grenfell Pony Club* was formed in 1963 and remains active to this day. The uniform adopted was gold cap and pullover, royal blue tie and saddle cloth with gold braid and the lettering 'G' in gold, white shirt, fawn jodhpurs and tan riding boots. A clubhouse was built at the Showground in 1982 and will soon be renovated. In 1984-85 the first team of fours attended the Sydney Royal Show, which was a big effort for the Club. The Pony Club will be cooking breaky for you on Wednesday morning at the pavilion so please support them if you can!

\*Please note: the information provided in this document is correct at the time of writing. The Weddin Mountain Muster Committee reserve the right to change the format of the rides if necessary.