



The Riesling Trail

Every season, another reason

Riesling Trail Management Committee Chairman's report, AGM, 16th November, 2017

I am pleased to present my 5th report as Chairman of the Riesling Trail Management Committee. Every year is different, with new achievements and challenges. One thing in common is the desire for the Riesling Trail to continue to be an iconic feature of the region with flow on benefits to the community. This involves maintaining the trail to a high standard and developing further facilities to enhance the Riesling Trail experience.

Our recording Trakers show a steady increase in the number of trail users, with an average annual increase in use of 7%. We expect that part of this increase is due to more 'locals' discovering the Trail. Events along the Trail also add to its publicity and return users. One such event this year was the re-enactment along the Riesling Trail of taking vine cuttings from Sevenhill Cellars to Bungaree. Another was the annual half marathon, which attracts more than 500 runners.

Maintaining the trail

A critical part of the maintenance of the trail is to ensure that the surface is in good condition. Fortunately we have not had the heavy rainstorms that caused damage to the trail in September last year, but there are still a few short sections that need to be repaired as a result of this storm. This will be done as part of the upgrade.

The Trail upgrade by Clare Quarry is progressing, with the section from Sevenhill to Auburn mostly completed. We appreciate the understanding of trail users with any disruption for these works and also the additional tree pruning needed for machinery and trucks to pass along the trail and the softer surface until it is finally consolidated (by watering and rolling).

We are very grateful to the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council who have been very cooperative with assisting with improving the trail, especially where roads cross the trail. This includes sealing the roads at crossings at Greenwood Park Road, Wakefield Road and Morrisons Road – this makes these crossovers much smoother and less hazardous than before. The CGVC have also assisted with installation of drainage pipes at the College Road crossing so water does not flow over the trail, causing ruts.

We are also grateful to the Office for Recreation and Sport for on-going financial support for trail maintenance. This includes installation of further drainage pipes and guard rails as well as weed control along the edges of the trail.

Riesling Trail developments

We plan to continue to improve the facilities along the trail. This includes information signs and stop-off facilities.

Working with the Mt Horrocks Historical Society we have installed information boards, the outstanding Tommy Duke, and a new Penwortham railway sign at the Morrison Road crossing. This will be finished off in the near future with a picnic table. We thank the Penwortham community for their help with this project and Sue Wurst and David Spackman for designing the signage.

We have similar plans for signage and seating at the Watervale station area.

Two sets of table and seats have been donated to the Riesling Trail from Savills Australia (renovating the Woolworths site) and with the very capable help of Shane Fraser (MAIT Plumbing) and staff, and volunteers Peter Wood and Peter Haynes, have been installed near the Sevenhill station platform.

Kevin Daly and his helpers have also built and installed seats at six more locations, between College Road, Sevenhill, and White Hut Road. There is a plan to make these high class seats with a mosaic surface.

As part of the railway centenary next year we are installing a 3/4 size steam train silhouette and information boards at the railway turntable site at the southern end of Station Road. Peter Wood is leading this project – this includes land clearing and organising the train silhouette. This is of course under the close watch of rail historians James Duggin and John Wilson. John is writing a history of this railway to be available at the centenary celebrations on the 4th of July.

Our big project still on the list is to complete the last km of the Riesling Trail into the old Auburn railway station – now Mt Horrocks Wines. This involves following the old railway corridor by crossing Horrocks highway, rebuilding a bridge across the Wakefield River and building the trail surface. The planning and the development application for this has been very complex and time-consuming but we are determined to see it through to completion. We are very grateful for Geoff Brock, the Member for Frome, for his support with this project and organising a co-contribution from the SA Government to go with our application to the Commonwealth Government's Building Better Regions fund. I am also very grateful for the support from Kelly-Anne Saffin (Regional Development), Michelle Verco (Mace Engineering) and Susan Cunningham with assistance with compiling this application and Jeffrey Grosset for his leading support.

A revision of the Riesling Trail brochure is near completion. Updating the list and location of wineries seems to be an on-going process! This update is no small job and has been done very well by Committee members Kerstin Kothrade and Susan Cunningham. This brochure is very popular as a tourist map of the Clare Valley, and not just the Riesling Trail.

Links with other trails

The Lavender Federation Trail, from Murray Bridge to Clare, is almost complete. This amazing task of designing and building the 325km long walking trail by a handful of seasoned and dedicated trail enthusiasts is the stuff of legends. We are delighted to assist this group with their final section of their trail. It will travel along a

section of the Riesling Trail (from Watervale to Tatkana Road (north of Penwortham)) and from there go through Spring Gully Reserve and Neagles Rock to then finish at the Lennon Street Park at the Riesling Trail in Clare.

There is now a direct link of pathways from the Riesling Trail to the Gleeson Wetlands through Melrose Park and the Model Engineers Park. This was made possible by construction of pathways and road crossings from the Riesling Trail - York Road crossing (that is, the sheep), along the eastern side of York Road to the Farrell Flat Road and then the western side of White Hut Road. We are very grateful to the CGVC for constructing these pathways and to the Model Engineers and Clare District Lions for collaborating in this project. There will be directional signage in the near future to direct people along this course.

Supporting the Trail

There are many supporters of the Riesling Trail, both financially and in other ways. Annual donations from our Business Partners contribute significantly to improving facilities along the Riesling Trail. We welcome our most recent Business partners, Bungaree Station and Tim Adams Wines as well as those who have renewed their contribution for this year. We are also very grateful for our many Business Friends and Friends who contribute financially to the trail. You can be assured that your contribution is used directly for the betterment of the Riesling Trail. We rely on volunteers for much of our work along the trail, so we are very grateful for their support as well.

I am also grateful for the many watchful eyes protecting our trail from hazards or abuse. I am amazed how quickly I am notified when there is something amiss. We can then quickly rectify the situation to protect trail users and the environment along the trail.

Finally, I wish to thank members of the Management Committee for their great work in helping to improve the trail so it continues to be valued and enjoyed by trail users and the wider community.

Allan Mayfield,
Chairman, Riesling Trail Management Committee