



# *The Riesling Trail*

*Every season, another reason*

## **Riesling Trail Management Committee Chairman's report, AGM, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2018**

I am pleased to present my 6<sup>th</sup> report as Chairman of the Riesling Trail Management Committee. Use of the trail by locals and visitors is continuing to increase – at a rate of 7 per cent each year. The trail has also been used for several major events this year. These include the Half Marathon, Cycling Classic, Railway Centenary celebration and completion of the Lavender Federation Trail from Murray Bridge to Clare. The entire trail from Auburn to Clare has now been resurfaced and plans are well under way to complete the final one kilometre section of the trail into Auburn.

### **Riesling Trail developments**

The big news is that we now have the funding (\$320,000) to complete the Riesling Trail into Auburn and so linking directly with the Rattler Trail. This involves rebuilding a 60m long bridge across the River Wakefield, constructing 1km of trail along the old railway track and putting safety rails in place for the crossing at Horrocks Highway. This also includes clearing some Aleppo pines along the western side of the highway so we have the required line of sight for trail users to cross safely. We are also planning to improve facilities at the car park at Mt Horrocks Wines (the old Auburn railway station), including seats, a shelter and interpretive signs about the local history. All being well we should have all of this completed by the middle of next year.

Approximately half of the funds needed are from the Federal Government Building Better Regions Fund, \$120,000 from the SA Government and the balance from local contributors - the Grosset Gaia Fund, Mt Horrocks Wines, Clare Valley Wine and Grape Association and the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council. The Riesling Trail Management Committee is also contributing \$28,000. We are very grateful for Geoff Brock, the Member for Frome, for his support with this project and organising the contribution from the SA Government. 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 support.

The trail upgrade now has been completed and this should provide a good trail surface for the next 20 years. This was no small job and was very ably done by Gary Sims and his team from Clare Quarry. While this was happening we took the opportunity to straighten out the trail at Pawelski Road, Penwortham, and construct stopping off areas at Watervale and Penwortham. The majority of this upgrade work was funded by the SA Government through the Office for Recreation and Sport.

For the Clare Railway Centenary celebrations on 4<sup>th</sup> of July we installed a ¾ size steam train steel silhouette and interpretive signs at the southern end of Station Road in Clare. This was completed in time for the commemoration of 100 years since the first train arrived in Clare, on 4 July 1918. This project has been a significant cost and we greatly appreciate generous donations from the Clare Lions Club, Clare schools and pre-schools, Waterloo Windfarm and the Clare Community Development Committee. We are also very grateful to MAIT Plumbing for levelling the turntable area and repairing the drainage and for the support of the Clare Railway Centenary Committee. This train and improved surroundings are now another great feature along the trail where people pause for a look and a photo. It was very appropriate that our longest serving committee member and the main driver of this project, Peter Wood, was given a life membership of the Riesling Trail at this railway centenary ceremony. I am also very grateful to Sue Wurst for her effort in designing the four interpretive signs there. Coinciding with this railway centenary celebration was the release of a very comprehensive history of the railway from Riverton to Clare by John Wilson.

Another art feature recently installed along the trail is 'The cyclist', approx. 500m north of College Road. This is a great bit of work by local artist, Paul Leditschke. We are grateful to the Clare Valley Wine and Grape Association for funding this project.

We are continuing to improve the facilities along the trail - this includes information signs and stop-off facilities. Extra rest stops with tables and seats have been set up at Penwortham, Watervale and Leasingham. The table at Penwortham was built by local identity, Leo Faulkner. At Watervale, with the help of the local community and Clare Quarry, we have helped build and landscape a stop-off facility and information sign (with the help of local historian, David Spackman).

A revision of the Riesling Trail brochure has been completed thanks to Kerstin Kothrade and Susan Cunningham. This brochure is very popular as a tourist map of the Clare Valley, and not just the Riesling Trail.

### **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 two years ago. Pruning back branches is an on-going job. In the past 12 months we have done more than usual to make room for a grader and trucks when doing the upgrade.

Trevor Mace and Mace Engineering have recently completed very detailed reports of the condition of all structures along the trail, from Barinia to Auburn. These reports will be used to plan repairs and preventative maintenance for the next 10 years.

We are 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 adding a pipe to prevent water erosion at the crossing at Popes Road, Watervale.

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.

### **Links with other trails**

The recent opening of the Lavender Federation Trail, where it ends at the Riesling Trail Lennon Street car park, was a great event. It marked the completion of an extraordinary project (a 325km walking trail from Murray Bridge to Clare) by extraordinary people (dogged volunteers). A touching moment was an address by Ann Lavender, widow of one of the instigators and the inspiration for this trail, Terry Lavender.

### **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 are also very grateful for our many Business Friends and Friends who contribute financially to the trail. We are also grateful for donations we have received recently through our tax deductible arrangement. 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. I would especially like to thank retiring mayor, Allan Aughey, for his support over many years as the Council nominee on our Management Committee.

Allan Mayfield,  
Chairman, Riesling Trail Management Committee