



Monaro Rail Trail Inc  
1149 Old Bega Road, Steeple Flat NSW 2631

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2016-2017**

This year the NSW State Government passed the legislation for the first rail trail to be built in a disused rail corridor. This is an encouraging step forward but there is still a lot of work to be done to get the Monaro Rail Trail supported by the local regional council and then get it on the list of the next round of legislative changes.

### **Awareness campaign**

Much work was done this year to raise the awareness of the MRT. Presentations were made to the media. Mary Walters and Michael Daniel were interviewed by WIN TV for evening news, Andrew Carter had a segment on the ABC Sydney Radio on the Saturday morning fishing show with Scott Levi and another with ABC South East Region Radio. Will Jardine was interviewed by The Australian and this article generated a lot of interest. Mary Walters organised an article in the Monaro Post.

Presentations were made in Merimbula to Probus and the Rotary Club.

An awareness campaign was initiated using orange painted bikes. Will Jardine kicked off with a huge event in Easter in Nimmitabel. He got the local businesses to display the orange bikes and campaigned out the front of the bakery on Good Friday and Easter Monday. This resulted in 15 new members and signatures on the petition. Mary and Sid Walters followed up with a set of 5 orange bikes on the rail corridor at the front of their property. The large bike was sculpted by Sid and the bike family has become well known by travellers on the Monaro Highway.

In August, Cate Spencer and Andrew Carter met with Bryce Wilson the Labour endorsed candidate for the NSW electorate of Monaro. Bryce together with Jodi McKay MP Shadow Minister for NSW Transport gave helpful advice and indicated their support for our proposal. Earlier, Michael Daniel, Cate Spencer and Will Jardine met with the Federal member Mike Kelly. He expressed support for the concept and offered assistance if required.

A campaign to sign up business groups has started and all businesses in Nimmitabel have signed up. The individual membership has grown from about 60 to 83.

An online petition to Mr John Barilaro MP local member for Monaro has collected over 2000 signatures.

### **Interactions in Queanbeyan and ACT govt.**

Andrew Carter and Cate Spencer have been working hard to make a presence in the ACT and Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (QPRC). They contributed to the tourism strategy paper prepared by QPRC. It was released in April and includes cycle tourism and rail trails in its thinking on how to boost regional tourism. They also were invited to contribute to the Cycle Tourism Strategy for the ACT and Region. This is being developed by the ACT government. The report released in August clearly identifies rail trails as a means of boosting cycle tourism in the ACT and region and makes many references to the Otago Rail Trail. A further report will have recommendations and an action plan.

### **Development of web site**

A major initiative driven by Andrew this year was the development of the web site. A special thank you to Anthony at Snowy Mountain Designs for his assistance on the web site development. This has generated much interest and response from visitors to the site. A supporter's page has just been released. This will tie in with our new business supports who will be able to put messages and links on the page.

The petition has also interacted well with the website



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**Facebook page**

The Friends of Monaro Rail Trail facebook page has continued to be the major focus for interest in the MRT. It now has 1600 followers. Andrew is doing a huge job in maintaining the interest in the facebook page. He constantly adds new material. The latest popular additions were the video flyovers of the trail route.

Thanks to Jen Smart for joining the committee during the year as Membership Secretary.

**Special thanks** to several people who have been very generous in donating their time and skills to support the MRT. Peter Gamble of Inkpot Design in Canberra who does illustrations for our web site, and Trevor Lawrence also in Canberra who recently took on our web site maintenance. I would like to especially mention Mark Tunningley, again from Canberra, who has done such a great job in producing the videos that create so much interest on our Facebook page.

Mary Walters  
President  
5<sup>th</sup> September 2017