

Chairwoman's report for 2010

This year has been a very successful year for the Rokeby Crossover Friends group on both a project front and on a community engagement/awareness level. We have worked hard in many ways towards achieving our goals and some great outcomes have resulted.

The rail tours have featured as a highlight of the year. This has been a really successful initiative sharing the history of the Rokeby/Crossover area within our membership but also the broader community. This has led to increased community awareness and appreciation of the Rokeby/Crossover area and of the Friends group.

An engineer's report, quote and subsequent grant applications were completed to move towards our major goal of restoration of the trestle bridge at Crossover. Much work had to be put into preparing the site for the engineer to complete his work which was well worth the effort. A promotional video has been created to increase the profile of this project and will hopefully assist us in our endeavors to gain financial contributions for this major project.

More upgrades have been completed along the rail trail. Seating has been installed and interpretative signs are now complete and ready to be put in. Initial plans have been made to upgrade the Rokeby to Bravington part of the rail trail which will continue into 2011. The number of community members now using the rail trail has really increased and partly I think this is due to increased marketing of our projects in 2010. We commenced holding a stall at the Rokeby Market which has been a contributing factor to increased membership and community awareness of current projects. There has also been the development of a new website which is very impressive and has taken a lot of hard work and dedication.

Members have been involved in the Shaping the Future Project - Baw Baw Shire 2050 which has been and continues to be an opportunity to advocate for the values and goals held by the Friends group. Participation in training has also occurred to be part of pre and post controlled burn research of flora and fauna in the local area.

On a financial front we have recently been successful in gaining a grant to obtain a shelter to be used at market days and at other community events which will be a valuable asset to the group for years to come.

Our thanks as a group need to be made to all our partners DSE, Parks Victoria, Baw Baw Shire and Heritage Victoria for their contributions and commitment to our group and community. We hope these relationships can continue to stay strong as we work together in our endeavors.

My thanks to all the members and the executive for their dedication and a successful and fun 2010. I am sure we can continue to improve our local area and achieve more great things in the year ahead.

Nicki Cann