

VicTrack

25 September 2015

Donald, Wycheproof and Birchip stations home to new community spaces

Nearly \$1.2 million has been invested in three formerly disused Mallee-Wimmera station buildings, as part of the Victorian Government's Community Use of Vacant Rail Buildings Program delivered by VicTrack.

Donald, Birchip and Wycheproof station buildings have been restored and refurbished to bring them back into use, turning them into thriving community spaces and a focal point for their communities once again.

Donald Station is now used by Donald 2000. They lease the building as a community and meeting space to complement the adjoining rail heritage precinct.

Wycheproof Vision Inc. has taken on the lease of the Wycheproof Station building, which has been converted into flexible community space.

Wycheproof Vision, Wycheproof Community Resource Centre and Wycheproof Youth Group are now using the building as a multi-functional arts, education and cultural hub.

Birchip Station has been refurbished to offer a permanent and flexible community event, exhibition and display space.

The Birchip Lions Club leases the building, which is used by the Birchip Lions Club, Birchip Landcare Group and Birchip Historical Society to provide rotating displays and exhibitions and meeting space.

The works on all three stations were carried out by local Donald-based contractor Onleys Holdings Pty Ltd.

Extensive repair and restoration works were carried out on the buildings, which now all have kitchenettes and accessible toilets.

Birchip and Donald stations are on the Mildura rail line. The buildings both first opened in 1893 and closed in 1993. The Mildura rail line still operates as a rail freight line.

Wycheproof Station dates from 1887 and the goods shed building from slightly later. The station precinct is registered on the Victorian Heritage Register as the most intact example of the modest standard timber station buildings known as the 'Pyramid Hill style'.

The Community Use of Vacant Rail Buildings Program is delivered by VicTrack on behalf of Public Transport Victoria.

VicTrack

**Quotes attributable to Andy Santana, Manager Infrastructure & Facilities,
VicTrack**

“The Community Use of Vacant Rail Buildings program is injecting new life into rural communities across Victoria, and giving them much needed community facilities to ensure they continue to thrive for many years to come.”

“The restoration of these fantastic buildings to bring them back into community use is great news for the Mallee-Wimmera communities of Donald, Wycheproof and Birchip.”

“Not only do they have new spaces to use for meetings and events, the buildings will also attract tourists to the area, boosting local businesses and putting these towns on the map.”

“I would like to congratulate all the community groups who put together the proposals for these stations and made their dreams a reality.”