

Media Release
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Rolleston Railway Station on track for beautification

Rolleston Railway Station could soon be getting a makeover, as a plan to beautify the train station by the Selwyn Central Community Board has received community support.

The Board held a conversation café on Thursday 22 May which invited the community to share their ideas about how the station could be transformed into a welcoming facility for visitors which local residents can be proud of.

Around 30 people attended the café event. Selwyn Central Community Board Chair Diane Chesmar says the session was extremely positive and a number of people have indicated they want to volunteer their time to help progress the project.

“People were keen to see the Railway station preserved and we had some really good suggestions from the public about how the Railway Station could be improved.”

“These included developing some form of a memorial or mural at the station as part of the World War One centennial commemorations to mark its role as a departure point for local troops serving in World War One. Another idea was to use the original water wheel as a static display with an interpretation panel describing the importance of water and how it was used in the days of steam,” says Mrs Chesmar.

“Selwyn Youth Council representatives also attended the café session and it is great to see that this will be an intergenerational project by the community for the community.”

The first stage of works the Board is planning is to create gardens to make the station more attractive. The Rolleston Railway Station won a prize in the annual railways garden competition in 1966.

Mrs Chesmar says the next step will be to set up a committee including interested community members and Community Board members who will investigate the ideas suggested at the conversation café and progress the project. The board is looking at seeking sponsorship from local businesses to help fund the cost of works.

The first station at Rolleston was constructed in 1866, and 2016 will mark the 150th anniversary of a station at the site. Rolleston railway station is on one of the oldest provincial railway lines in New Zealand.

Ends

Photos attached: (1) The original Rolleston Railway Station site around 1909 (photo credit J.A.T Terry Collection), (2) The train from Springfield at Rolleston Station in February 1966 (photo credit: Canterbury Railway Society Archive).

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