

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



Sunday, 28 July 2024

ALL ABOARD PUFFING BILLY WITH LEG DANGLING BACK ON TRACK

Visitors to the iconic Puffing Billy railway can once again enjoy the century-old tradition of sitting on the sills on open-side carriages for the full length of the railway journey for the first time since 2018, thanks to the Labor Government.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today joined Chair of the Puffing Billy Railway Board Tim North KC OAM at the railway's Lakeside Visitor Centre in Emerald to announce the return of the full iconic experience.

More than 400,000 visitors enjoy the preserved heritage steam railway every year, and the return of leg dangling from Belgrave to Gembrook has been made possible by the Labor Government's \$1.4 million upgrade to both the Gembrook Historic Station and Menzies Creek Station.

The project has restored the Gembrook station's facade back to its original glory – celebrating its rich heritage dating back to the town's initial settlement in 1873.

These works follow the 2021 opening of the Lakeside Visitor Centre, backed by a \$12.7 million investment from the Labor Government, which won the prestigious global award for Best New International Architecture at the 2022 International Architecture Awards.

Puffing Billy Railway has been part of Victoria's railway history for 123 years, with generations of families making the journey through the Dandenong Ranges at the much-loved attraction.

Learn more about Puffing Billy and the iconic Puffing Billy Running Festival taking place this September here puffingbilly.com.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"Puffing Billy has been one of the most beloved experiences for Victorians and international visitors for more than one hundred years, and now visitors can enjoy the excitement of sitting on the sills for the full length of the journey."

Quote attributable to Member for Monbulk Daniela De Martino

"We are proud to continue supporting Puffing Billy which provides many jobs and greatly contributes to the local economy across the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley."

Quotes attributable to Puffing Billy Railway Board Chair Tim North KC OAM

"We're thrilled to announce the return of leg dangling to the Lakeside to Gembrook section of Puffing Billy Railway. This beloved tradition is back, allowing our passengers to experience the full charm of the Puffing Billy journey."