

**MEDIA RELEASE**

# **MID MURRAY COMMUNITY GROUPS THE FIRST TO CALL HISTORIC MANNUM INSTITUTE HOME**

Two Mid Murray community groups will be the first to call the historic Mannum Institute home as the heritage building continues its restoration and return to public use.

The Mid Murray Council this week endorsed proposals from the Mannum Progress Association and the Mannum History Group to use rooms on the Institute's ground floor for meetings, memorabilia display, storage and as a local history centre.

They will be the first to occupy the Institute since the Council bought the iconic building to return it to the community in September 2018. Some rebuilding and maintenance works have already been completed to restore the Institute to a suitable condition to be used by the public. A 10-year plan has also been drawn up for its continued improvement.

Extra works are also planned before the two groups move in, including the installation of heating and cooling, a new hot water service, and other minor maintenance works. The Institute is still without publicly accessible toilets, but Council is pursuing external funding opportunities in the hope it can secure a grant for the facilities.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the agreement to allow the groups to use the Institute was an important milestone in the historic building's return to the community.

"The Mannum and wider Mid Murray community strongly supported Council in its decision to buy the Mannum Institute in 2018 and they have continued to watch with interest as the first restoration works were undertaken," Mayor Burgess says.

"The Institute holds a special place in our community's heart and its history. It has survived some of the town's most memorable events, and was a place for locals to meet, unite and celebrate for several generations.

"It's a special moment for Council to be able to now prepare to welcome the community back into this building. The Mannum Progress Association and the Mannum History Group already do so much for our town, so it is fitting that they can now find a permanent home within the Institute."

The Mannum Progress Association will hold its monthly meetings at the Institute, will use rooms on the ground floor of the facility as a base to run the annual Truck and Ute Show, and will display memorabilia inside.

The Mannum History Group will share the facilities for its meetings and storing archives. It will also open one room to the public once a week as a local history centre, to allow residents to view and research their family or the town's history.

Lease arrangements for the groups will be drawn up once the additional maintenance is complete.

Council is also looking to establish a 'Friends of the Mannum Institute' with the aim to raise community funds to put back into the iconic building. Such a group will strengthen ties between the Mannum community and the Council, while also finding external funding opportunities to continue to restore the



Institute to its former glory. Anyone interested in joining a Friends of Mannum Institute can contact Council on 8569 0100 to register their interest.

Council will continue its investigations with the local community to explore options to use other vacant areas within the Institute – possibly to allow for pop-up local stalls, to create extra community meeting spaces and to consider commercial lease opportunities.

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