



March 2026 NEWSLETTER

GIPPSLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



Celebrating Storytelling in Noojee



The inaugural Gippsland International Film Festival (GIFF) took place from March 13 to 15, 2026. The festival aimed to improve regional access to cinema and provide a platform for local, Australian, and international filmmakers.

Under the leadership of Alana Auden and Edward Yates, GIFF showcased 30 short films, elevating filmmakers' profiles and fostering a strong community of film lovers.

The event at the Noojee Heritage Centre was a great success, and congrats to everyone involved, especially the West Gippsland Concert Band and the team from Heritage Gifts and Coffee.



TARGA CLASSICA – CAR EVENT 4 MARCH 2026 UPDATE

San Remo through to Yarra Valley with a time trial in Noojee

“What a week our event was - it was epic and there were smiles all round. We are thrilled with how it all went, and we appreciate very much the part you played in helping its success. Noojee railway sidling worked perfectly for our trials, and we enjoyed our time there”

Linda Lawson and Team TC26



William Langoor

March 5 at 1:16AM · 🌐

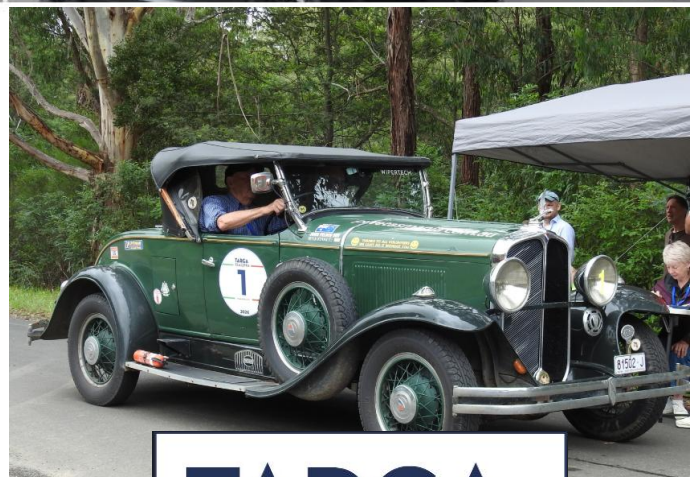


[Noojee Heritage Centre,](#)

Hosting once again the Targa Classic Car Rally [2026 on 4-3-26],

An awesome display of 90 rare classic cars,

The Heritage coffee and gift shop opened specially to make it a great day. a big thank you to all that showed up on the day.





Noojee Heritage Centre Events Calendar 2026

April - May

H AUSTRALIAN
HERITAGE FESTIVAL



Saturday, 18 April to Monday, 18 May 2026

Faces of Noojee

The Australian Heritage Festival 2026 is focusing on the theme "Change," exploring how history shapes us and vice versa, organised by the National Trust.

Sunday, 26 April 2026



Mr Excited – Show and Shine Car Show

Weekend May 16, 2026

Draper's Civil Contracting - Ada River Rally

A 3-day round for both the Victorian Rally Championship (VRC) and Victorian Club Rally Series (VCRS).

July - August

Every weekend from Friday, 10 July to Sunday, 2 August 2026

Noojee Truffle Festival

Join us for a four-weekend festival celebrating locally grown black truffles! According to the Warragul and Drouin Gazette's story on the next page, from March 10, 2026, the festival will feature opportunities to dig for truffles, observe working dogs in action, enjoy cooking demonstrations, and, ultimately, sample truffles to suit all tastes and budgets.

Community Bank
Neerim District

B Bendigo Bank



N&DHS NEWSLETTERS

2025 & 2026

NEERIM DISTRICT
Community Enterprise



Noojee Truffle Festival Plans

Excitement is building ahead of Noojee's inaugural truffle festival opening in July. Local truffle farmers are collaboratively working to prepare a calendar of events for the three-week festival which aims to put Noojee on the map as a truffle town.

Farmer Abbey Graham said history, rebuilding and innovation had long been key to the town's prosperity, and the truffle festival was "continuing on the next step of that journey."

Stemming from locals stating they'd never tried truffle but would like to try it, Noojee truffle farmers began discussions and planning.

The resulting festival aims to be a celebration of locally-grown French black truffles over four weekends of the winter harvest season from July 11 to August 2. It will offer a chance to dig up truffles, watch working dogs in action, view cooking demonstrations and, ultimately, a chance to try truffle within all tastes and budgets.

The fragrance and flavour of fresh truffles will be on offer in a showcase of their versatility across sweet and savoury dishes. A wide range of food options is expected, including truffle fries and truffle butter on steak to truffle custard on apple pie.

"It's important to make it available at all different levels," Ms Graham said. "We will have simple food like toasties to make it affordable to high end food to show what is possible."

Previously known as a timber and forestry town, there are now about eight truffle farms operating in the Noojee area. Farmer Michelle Jones said the ultimate aim was establishing truffles as part of Noojee's identity and - with this - bring the town a new lease on life. "We've got plenty of truffles and there will be more and more as production grows in this area."

Much like the Yarra Valley is known for wine, Ms Graham wants the same for Noojee with truffles.

"A lot of this is about how do we shape the future and get things keep moving forward," she said.

"And keep farming visible," added farmer Ron Geritz. "For the farms in this area...it's good to diversify, become more niche." Although visitors are expected from far and wide, the farmers are keen to attract West Gippsland residents to learn about the new industry operating in their own backyard. The festival is also expected to spread and boost visitation to neighbouring small towns, including Neerim South.



Excited to put Noojee truffles on the map with a winter festival are (from left) Ron Geritz with "Boogie", Michelle Jones with "Charlie", Abby Graham with "Bindi" and "Lulu" and Graham Dewhurst with "Molly".



Key supporters of the festival are the Noojee and District Historical Society, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA) and Baw Baw Shire, who are contributing \$75,000 of in-kind support.

The State Government previously announced a \$173,000 grant for the festival via its Forestry Transition Program. Having garnered three years of support, the farmers said this surety would see the inaugural festival investigate what was possible, with opportunity to add and expand in future.

Not cheap to set up, several Noojee farmers turned to truffle growing during the COVID pandemic, planting trees in 2021 and 2022.

"Every truffle is hand harvested at the moment," said Ms Graham. "It's find and dig up one by one. That's what makes it a very intensive process." Believed to be a first for Victoria and likely the east coast, Ms Jones said "we just want to make it a great day out or weekend away." With festival planning in full swing, keep an eye out for the website and event calendar launch in the coming months.



VOLUNTEER CONNECT



2026 WORKING GROUP DATES STARTING AT 10AM

Every second and fourth Wednesday

APRIL 2026

- **Wednesday, 8 April 2026**
- **Wednesday, 22 April 2026**

MAY 2026

- **Wednesday, 13 May 2026**
- **Wednesday, 27 May 2026**

JUNE 2026

- **Wednesday, 10 June 2026**
- **Wednesday, 24 June 2026**



Tara Brusco, Community Bank Neerim District with John Olsen and Janiene Ayre from N&DHS at the Community Bank Neerim District 2025 Community Funding Program presentation on 19 February 2026

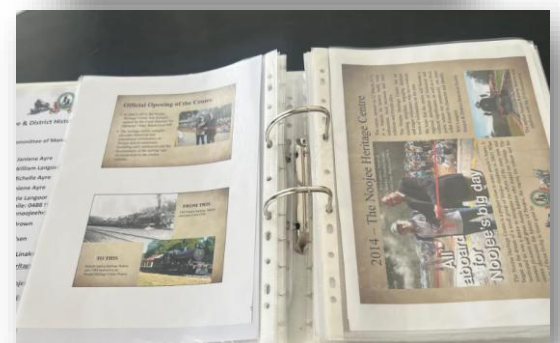
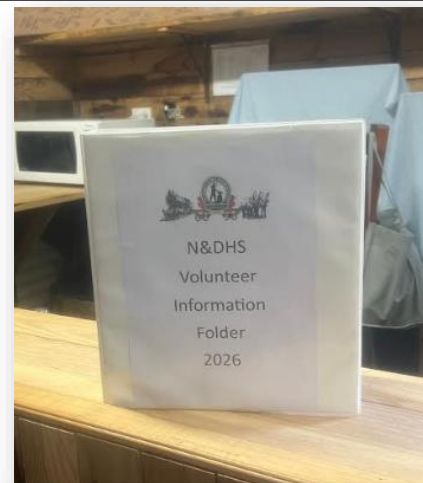
N&DHS VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FOLDER 2026

To support our volunteers, we have created an information folder, now available in the Goods Shed.

This folder is designed to help volunteers respond to public inquiries about the Heritage Centre, including its history, directions, and activities.

The folder covers the following topics:

- Volunteer guide forms
 - Website information and brochures
 - The Heritage Centre
 - Walks and trails
 - Directions to local attractions, such as Toorong Falls, the Ada Tree, and the Trestle Bridge
 - Hospitality venues in Noojee
 - Historical information related to bushfires, tramways, the railway station, and the logging industry
 - Newsletters from 2025
 - Newsletters from this year, 2026



Feel free to reach out for more details at nojeeheritage@gmail.com
– we'd love to hear from you! Janiene Ayre, President N&DHS



BAW BAW SHIRE INFORMATION

SHAPING THE FUTURE NOOJEE PROJECT

Community Event: Sunday 15th March, 5-7pm

NEWSLETTER 2026

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NOOJEE.

As we head into the final year of the Shaping the Future of Noojee Project, it's a big milestone and an exciting time for the community. The project has always been shaped by local voices and ideas, and this last year is all about building on what's already been started together.

The Project Team is looking forward to continuing to support the community by moving current projects ahead and exploring new ideas that matter to locals. With the Governance Group now in place to help guide the project beyond 2026, we're confident the work happening now will keep growing and delivering benefits for Noojee and District.

This next chapter also reflects the pride and care people have for the district, shown through like-minded groups and networks working together to support Noojee's future.

"This project has brought the people of Noojee together to work for the broader community benefit like few things have done before. It has been wonderful to see such engagement, increased connection, and a wealth of ideas, along with the commitment to keep going. The groundwork has been laid, and I look forward to an exciting future ahead."

Heather Gillespie (vice-chair) Governance Group

"It's been wonderful to be a part of the Inter Working Group collaboration process - sharing ideas, knowledge, and expertise between community, council, and associated groups and experts. Together, we have developed achievable outcomes for Noojee and it is exciting to see the planned work now come to fruition. The development of the Master Plan Project for the Noojee Heritage Site has been one of our major accomplishments, and we are confident that everyone will benefit from this important work."

Sarah Duck (chair) Noojee Eco-Community innovation working group



MORE INFO 



Please find a detailed Baw Baw Shire update on the developments of Shaping the future of Noojee

A BETTER WAY TO  **YOUR SAY, YOUR WAY.**

CONNECT.



MORE INFO 



A place for community collaboration