



May 2026 NEWSLETTER

AWARD IN HONOUR OF THE DEDICATION SHOWN BY THE VOLUNTEERS
OF THE NOOJEE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



We are excited to announce that our nomination for the Noojee & District Historical Society has been recognised with an award!

To celebrate this significant achievement, DEECA hosted a special event during Volunteer Week, attended by DEECA representatives Sarah and Tamika.

The celebration took place on Wednesday, May 27, at the Noojee Heritage Centre.

We gathered to honour and appreciate the invaluable contributions of our dedicated volunteers.

The current volunteers who attended the event were: Percy Camilleri, Gary Ryan, Gary Bell, Janiene Ayre, John Olsen, Melina Camilleri, Will Langoor, and Angie Langoor (left to right).

Those unable to attend included Janet Cowden, Graeme Linaker, Miles Spencer, and Sarah Hobgen.



National 18-24 MAY 2026
Volunteer
YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER **Week**



December 20, 2011



Viewing the original railway station site in Noojee which will be developed into a heritage project centre are (from left) Margaret Christian, Marie Fildes and Dawn Thomas.



Celebrating the Noojee and District Historical Society being named committee of management for the original railway station site in Noojee are (from left) society secretary Emily Harvey, Minister for Planning Gary Blackwood, DEECA representatives Tamika Darragh and Pat Lambert, Lynn Mann, Rose Rose 10000 sign, Diane Blackwood, society development coordinator William Langford and society president Lindsay Handford.

Noojee railway dream becoming a reality

By Emma Bellaghal
A dream to see the Noojee 1919 railway station project rise from the ashes to create a working tourist attraction is becoming a reality.

The DEE, backed over the original railway site lead to the Noojee and District Historical Society

workshop in addition to a working train to both the Noojee 1919 railway station project Centre.

Estimated to cost \$2.8 million and for Noojee on the one side include the original railway station building, goods shed, two working train lines with two train terminus, an- development museum, early station carriage, outdoor stone, and 'society' and

While guests will enjoy the site due to the work done to see it become a reality. Society president Lindsay Handford said she was pleased to see the dream of a railway station in Noojee becoming a reality.

Pat Lambert from DEE first discussed the Noojee and District Historical Society with a certificate of appointment as the committee of management for the site.



Presenting a certificate and aerial photograph to mark the appointment of Noojee and District Historical Society as the committee of management are (from left) DEE representatives Tamika Darragh and Pat Lambert with society development coordinator William Langford and society president Lindsay Handford.

"It hasn't been an easy thing," said Mr Langford. "It's been a long battle. It's a real challenge for us and the community. Completely safe fully supported by the people of Noojee."

Mr Langford said the society will be the first of its type in Victoria. He said a further lot of land was expected to be granted to the society.

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Viewing the original railway station site in Noojee which will be developed into a heritage project centre are (from left) Lynn Mann, society development coordinator William Langford, Member for Narrengon Gary Blackwood and society president Lindsay Handford.



Viewing plans for the Noojee Heritage Project Centre are (from left) Lynn Mann, society development coordinator William Langford, Member for Narrengon Gary Blackwood and society president Lindsay Handford.



Viewing plans for the Noojee Heritage Project Centre are (from left) Lynn Mann, society development coordinator William Langford, Member for Narrengon Gary Blackwood and society president Lindsay Handford.



Offering wine tasting to beat the heat during the original railway site in Noojee to develop heritage project centre are Noojee residents Rose Blackwood of Marie Wilton and Rose Blackwood.

This recognition from the Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action (DEECA) honours the dedication and efforts of current and former volunteers who passionately support our Society's mission.

The event was an uplifting celebration, brimming with gratitude and a sense of community, capturing the essence of our vibrant group.

This remarkable award is a collective tribute to all volunteers who have devoted their time and energy over the years.

It particularly shines a light on those from 2012 onwards, when Tamika Darragh, along with Pat Lambert from DEECA, first embarked on this transformative journey.

Now, fifteen years later, Tamika stands before us to present the award, having witnessed profound shifts and developments at the Noojee Heritage Centre.



Noojee News

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Your Community Newsletter

Issue 2024

One of our wonderful volunteers

By Wendy Morriss



Noojee Heritage Centre would not be Noojee Heritage Centre without the Historical Society's volunteers. Over the years, many community members have worked tirelessly to build the centre and preserve the town's history. Today volunteers still work hard to keep the centre maintained and operating. One long serving volunteer, who may soon have another role cataloguing, is Janet Cowden. President Janlene Ayres said Janet is a vital part of their volunteer team.

"Her skills, her attention to detail and her knowledge of the region is so valuable. She's also done some amazing work with maps." Janet works most Saturdays for about eight hours doing grounds work and research and has been with the society since 2012.

"I got involved when they were meeting at the CFA building," Janet said. "At that stage, they just had a tent pitched on the site.

"I kind of fell into volunteering because I'm not a Noojee person, I'm a third generation Neerim South resident. I was in the Warragul Historical Society and attended a meeting there where the shire had done a heritage study and there were a few citations about properties in Noojee. I had the disc with their draft report that wasn't wanted anymore, so I took it to the Noojee Historical Society.

"When I first joined, there was another couple there who were very friendly and invited me back to their place. That was the Harvey's, Peter and Emma, which was very nice of them."

Janet said she volunteers because she likes history. She's also a member of the Neerim District History & Heritage Group. "My father spent 85 years here and he used to talk about the older people and what they did. I do enjoy doing the grounds work too, so I have a love for it. I leave the big heavy work to the men to do. If I see something they are not tackling that I think I can do, then I tackle it. I'm not really into the flower garden that's Valda's work, and I think she's done a very pretty job of it. Valda isn't a society member, she just volunteers."

Janet never married or had children. She regularly attends Church in Rokeby and occasionally sends letters into the Warragul Gazette as part of her civic duty she said smiling.

She was a trained teacher and worked in Merbein near Mildura and Tallangatta.

"Neerim South was my home and I came back for holidays."

She later worked as a librarian in Darwin where she stayed for 25 years, still coming home to Neerim South at intervals.

Noojee Truffle Festival

By Colin Booth

The Noojee Truffle Festival will be held from July 10 to August 2nd. The program features 19 separate events, with seven taking place in Noojee and the remaining 12 held in Neerim and Neerim South. The festival will run during the truffle harvesting season.

The festival is expected to boost tourism across the district while also supporting local businesses.

The event has been made possible through a Victorian Government grant as part of the Forestry Transition Program's Community Development Fund.

Baw Baw Shire Mayor, Councillor Kate Wilson said this festival will showcase the locally grown black truffle with food and produce workshops taking place as well as farm gate tours, truffle hunts with dogs, cooking demonstrations and artisan market stalls.

During the festival, the Noojee Heritage Centre will be transformed into a Truffle Station each Sunday, with additional events taking place at the Toolshed, Ridge Road Blooms, and Toorong Valley Estate. Ashridge Truffles and Neeri Nuff Wine Bar and Kitchen will host events outside of Noojee.

Festival organisers are encouraging visitors to 'follow their nose' to Noojee this winter and discover why black truffles are often called the 'diamonds of the kitchen'.



The Noojee News acknowledges the original inhabitants and traditional custodians of Noojee and surrounds and pays respect to Elders past, present and First Peoples of Australia who live in this district.

Noojee News

→ READ FULL ARTICLE



COUNCIL WELCOMES \$250,000 OF FUNDING FOR THE NOOJEE HERITAGE PRECINCT



Image: Glenn Fenton, Chair, Noojee Governance Group, Baw Baw Shire Mayor Councillor Kate Wilson and Janiene Ayre, President N&DHS

Baw Baw Shire Council has welcomed \$250,000 from the Foundation of Rural and Regional Renewal to fund the next phase of the Noojee Heritage Centre Precinct. The grant will go towards supporting the Shaping the Future of Noojee project which is part of the broader Forestry Transition Program.

The program supports workers, businesses and the community in transitioning away from native timber harvesting and has been running since August 2022. The grant will be used for the installation of new signage including the Rokeby to Noojee rail trail head, expanding and improving carparking including electric vehicle chargers and landscaping and picnic infrastructure.

The Shaping the Future of Noojee project comprises four key working groups that feed into the strategic direction of Noojee. These working groups are:

- The Noojee Eco Community Working Group
- The Specialised Agricultural Industry Development Working Group
- The Tracks and Trails Working Group, and
- The Power and Connectivity Reliability Working Group

Baw Baw Shire Mayor Councillor Kate Wilson welcomed the funding boost for Noojee.

“This latest funding announcement will be used to uplift the end of the popular Rokeby to Noojee rail trail, and this is great news for our community,” Cr Wilson said.

“We will ensure the new infrastructure maintains the current heritage and timber themes in the area by utilising natural materials to provide locals and visitors a sensory connection to the area's history.”

“Some of this will be through interpretative signage, carved timber play spaces and the planting of native Australian flora to provide a place for our community to come together, reflect and connect in the beautiful outdoors.”

For more about the Shaping the Future of Noojee project, visit [Shaping the future of Noojee | Baw Baw Connect](#)



NOOJEE HERITAGE CENTRE EVENTS CALENDAR 2026

July – August 2026

Truffle Station @ Noojee Heritage Centre operates every Sunday during the Noojee Truffle Festival, which runs from Friday, 10 July, to Sunday, 2 August 2026



NOOJEE Truffle FESTIVAL | 10 JUL – 2 AUG 2026
Events > Truffle Station @ Noojee Heritage Centre | Noojee Truffle Festival VIC

Truffle Station @ Noojee Heritage Centre | Noojee Truffle Festival VIC

Time: 11am to 3pm

Each Sunday during the Noojee Truffle Festival



The Noojee Heritage Precinct transforms into Truffle Station – a place to wander, linger and follow your nose.

Enjoy truffle dog appearances, children's face painting, heritage displays and live music, all set against the charm of Noojee's historic heart. Grab a coffee, snack and even a truffle toastie from the café, then settle in and soak up the atmosphere.

It's also your starting point for exploring the festival, with friendly Noojee Truffle Festival Ambassadors on hand to share local walks, festival activities and assist with booking events such as dining experiences and truffle hunts.

For more information about the Noojee Truffle Festival visit <https://noojee-truffle-festival.com.au/program/>



August 2026 – Ada River Rally 2026 – 22 August 2026

Location: Noojee Heritage Centre, Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Noojee

Organiser: Western District Car Club

Venue Notes: The rally will be based in Noojee, VIC, emphasising regional forest stages.

For official updates, entry information, and to view the full calendar of events, please visit the Rally NSW website or the WDCC website.



The 2026 Ada River Rally is set to take place on August 22, 2026, in Noojee. This event, rescheduled from May, is part of the NSW Rally Championship as Round 4 and serves as Round 5 of the East Coast Classic Rally Series (for both 2WD and 4WD vehicles).

Community Bank
Neerim District



N&DHS NEWSLETTERS
2025 & 2026





VOLUNTEER UPDATE

VOLUNTEER CONNECT



National **Volunteer** 18-24 MAY 2026
YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER **Week**

A VERY BIG THANK YOU!

The N&DHS Committee of Management wishes to extend its heartfelt gratitude to several dedicated individuals whose unwavering support and assistance are invaluable to our volunteers.

We would especially recognise:

- Simon and Jo Griffin from [Homegrown Design, Photography and Print](#), whose creative insights and commitment to our mission enhance our projects.

- Dale Bates and Kylie Hallam Wilson, whose organisational skills and passion for community service greatly support our initiatives, and whose tireless efforts and enthusiasm inspire everyone around them.

- Crystal Petschack, Troy and Micheal Wawrzik, the dynamic team behind [Heritage Gifts & Coffee](#), exemplify true dedication and commitment to their community. Their passion for supporting local initiatives and enriching the lives of those around them is evident in every aspect of their business.

[Lana Horn, the Noojee Forestry Project Manager, and Leah Dougherty, the Noojee Forestry Support Officer](#), bring their management expertise and dedication to our projects, playing vital roles in advancing our vision and sustaining our community.

2026 WORKING GROUP DATES STARTING AT 10AM

Every second and fourth Wednesday

JUNE 2026

- * Thursday, 11 June 2026 New Date
- Wednesday, 24 June 2026

JULY 2026

- Wednesday, 8 July 2026
- Wednesday, 22 July 2026



We are proud to announce that the Noojee Heritage Centre had another fantastic month, filled with engaging events, volunteer recognition, and funding announcements. We celebrated Volunteer Week, acknowledging the invaluable contributions of our dedicated volunteers, both past and present, who play a vital role in our operations.

We are also excited to share that we have secured funding from Baw Baw Shire to support our vision for the future. In just six weeks, the Noojee Truffle Festival will be here!

Our initiatives, which include captivating workshops and insightful exhibitions, are designed to foster connections and celebrate our local heritage. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about our recent activities, please reach out to us at noojeeheritage@gmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you and sharing more about the exciting developments at the centre!

Warmest regards, Janiene Ayre, President, N&DHS



BAW BAW SHIRE INFORMATION

Shaping the future of

NOOJEE

A BETTER WAY TO
CONNECT.

YOUR SAY,
YOUR WAY.

Talk to the project team



Lana Horn

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Leah Dougherty

Noojee Forestry Support Officer
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BAW BAW SHIRE COUNCIL
Rokeby to Noojee Trail Extension.

Make a Difference:
Assist in funding the planning, development, and construction of the Neerim South to Noojee extension of the Rokeby to Noojee Trail.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT:

Scan the QR code to send a letter to MPs and Ministers.

www.bawbawshire.co/Advocacy | advocacy@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

NOOJEE & DISTRICT COMMUNITY EVENT:

QUARTER 2

Sunday 14 June 2026

- Free dinner and dessert
- Official launch of the Noojee & District Community Development Association (NDCDA)
- Innovation Working Group updates
- Live music
- We've got heaters to keep you warm!

TIME: 5pm - 7pm
ADDRESS: Noojee Community Hall

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Rokeby to Noojee Trail Extension

Support the Rokeby to Noojee Trail Extension **10** emails sent

MORE INFO

The goal of this campaign is to seek government funding and support to allow Baw Baw Shire to develop and construct the Rokeby to Noojee Trail Stage Two Extension. We are asking the community to speak up and tell MP's why they should invest in completing the Neerim to Noojee part of the trail so that the trail extends the full length from Rokeby to Noojee.