



# July 2026 NEWSLETTER

THE NOOJEE TRUFFLE FESTIVAL



Congratulations to everyone involved and demonstrating the extraordinary power of teamwork and commitment!





The inaugural Noojee Truffle Festival, held from July 10 to August 2, 2026, was a massive success, energising the winter tourism scene. This vibrant multi-week celebration not only highlighted the flavors of local truffles but also provided a significant economic boost for West Gippsland, attracting enthusiastic participation from both locals and visitors.

Baw Baw Shire Mayor Kate Wilson commended the remarkable teamwork among local truffle farms, volunteers, and businesses. This collaboration was essential in creating a festive atmosphere that celebrated local produce and showcased strong community spirit.

Festival-goers enjoyed an exciting experience with truffle hunts, thanks to the assistance of Bindi, Molly, and Lulu, the truffle dogs at Ashridge Truffle Farm.

Local dining establishments, including the Noojee Hotel, the Outpost Toolshed, the Little Red Duck, Heritage Gifts and Coffee Café, and the Bean and Brew at Apex Lookout, offered specially curated truffle-infused menus for everyone to savor.



The four weekend gatherings at the Noojee Heritage Centre, also known as "The Truffle Station," provided delightful experiences for weekend travellers looking to soak up the festival's vibrant energy. Families enjoyed a variety of entertainment, including music and face painting, thanks to the Truffle Ambassadors Maria, Lindsay, and Kylie, along with the incredible Baw Baw Shire team—Lana and Leah—and the dedicated N&DHS volunteers: Will, John, Angie, Janet, and Sarah. And let's not forget the charming truffle dogs, especially mate Ghost.

Among the festival's highlights was the "Feast Over Fire" gala at Toorongu Chalet, which captured the community's enthusiasm for this culinary adventure. Another delightful attraction was the "Florals and Truffles in the Forest" event held at Ridge Road Blooms. The festival reached its peak on the final weekend with a lavish four-course degustation dinner at Neeri Nuff Wine Bar & Kitchen.

Overall, the festival showcased extraordinary events and delicious food, leaving visitors and guests with cherished memories of Noojee and its wonderful community!



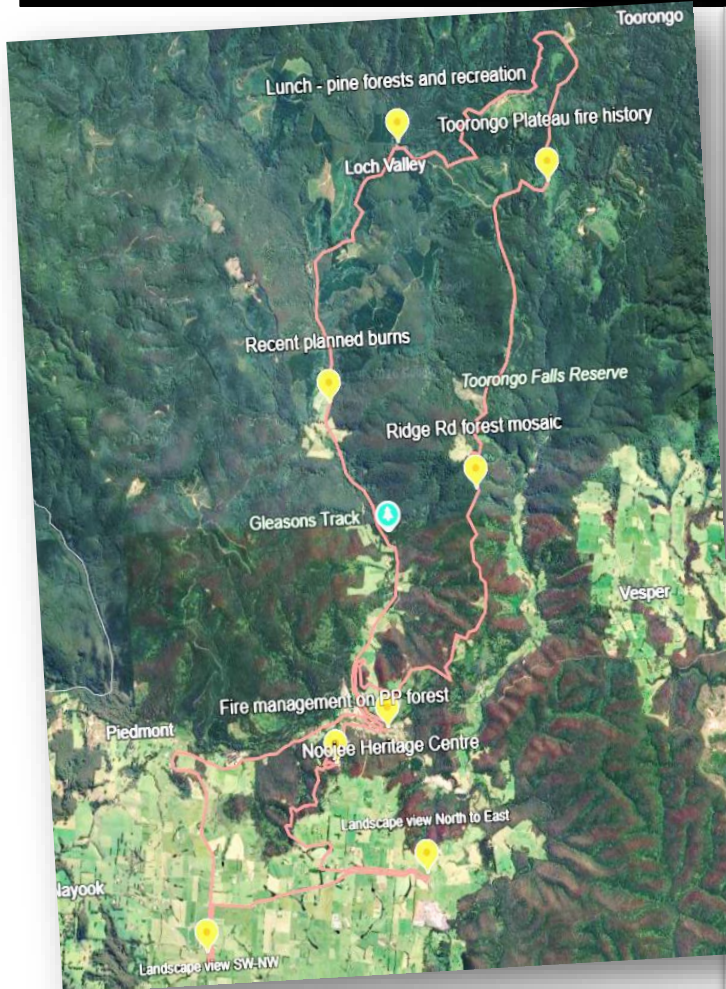
Thanks Lindsay for your amazing Truffle Chocolates!





## NOOJEE HERITAGE CENTRE EVENTS CALENDAR 2026

### FOREST FIRE FIELD TRIP AT NOOJEE ON SATURDAY 8 AUGUST



#### Fire dialogue: Noojee field trip

We are gathering to talk about fire, its impact on our communities and forests, and the role of fire in forest management.



**Field trip:**  
8 August  
10am to 2pm



**Dialogue:**  
22 August  
10am to 4pm



#### Who should come

Everyone with an interest in Gippsland's forests is welcome.

The Forest Dialogue brings together people with different views, experiences and connections to the forest.



#### Noojee field trip

This is one of 3 concurrent field trips running ahead of the Gippsland Forest Dialogue. It is a chance to visit forest sites, hear different perspectives and help shape the main dialogue.



#### What to expect

Discussions will be led by members of the Dialogue, local community, Melbourne Uni, DEECA and CFA.

You will visit:

**Neerim Junction** | a landscape perspective of fire risk and fire history

**Noojee** | managing private native forest in a high fire risk location, a landowner's perspective

**Ridge road** | fire in a diverse landscape of tenure, topography, forest type and age

**Toorongo Plateau** | a story of beauty, destruction, restoration and recovery

**Loch valley** | forest visitors, campfires, pine plantations and planned burning



Engage • Explore • Change

#### About Gippsland Forest Dialogue (GFD)

The Gippsland Forest Dialogue was formed in 2022 and has 60 members. It has held 6 dialogues with over 250 attendees, representing a wide range of experience and perspectives, including local residents, Traditional Owners, recreation groups, volunteers, not-for-profit groups, academics, forest users, government and businesses.

The dialogue uses The Forests Dialogue method, developed by Yale University in 2020, to support respectful, multi-stakeholder conversations about the future of forests.



#### Noojee field trip

- Saturday 8 August, 10am to 2pm
- Heritage Centre Noojee
- Packed lunch and transport provided
- Registration fee: \$20



#### Fire dialogue

- Saturday 22 August, 10am to 4pm
- Knob Reserve, Stratford
- BBQ lunch provided
- Registration fee: \$25

For more information or to register please scan



[gippslandforestdialogue.org.au](http://gippslandforestdialogue.org.au)  
[eo@gippslandforestdialogue.org.au](mailto:eo@gippslandforestdialogue.org.au)

We would like to remind everyone about the upcoming forest fire field trip organised by Gippsland Forest Dialogue, taking place on Saturday, August 8. This event is an excellent opportunity to gain insights into local forest fire management while engaging with your community.

**Cost: \$20 and covers bus hire and lunch - Catered by The Little Red Duck**

To ensure that we can accommodate everyone, please book your spot by early next week.

Registration is essential due to limits on transport and catering arrangements.

We are excited to see a diverse group of participants already registered, and we would love to welcome more locals from Noojee and the surrounding areas!

Please note that attending the field trip does not obligate you to join the main dialogue, but we encourage everyone to participate to enrich the discussions with local perspectives.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Wally Notman on 0409 146 576.

We look forward to a fantastic day outdoors!

For more information or to register please scan





## August 2026 – Ada River Rally 2026 – 22 August 2026

The 2026 Draper's Civil Contracting **Ada River Rally** takes place on **Saturday, 22 August 2026**, based out of the **Noojee Heritage Centre** in Noojee. Originally moved from May, the event features a demanding 180 km format combining day and night forestry stages across three competitive heats.

### Event & Championship Details

- **Date:** Saturday, 22 August 2026 (Test & Media Day on Friday, 21 August)
- **Location & HQ:** Noojee Heritage Centre, 405-415 Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Noojee
- **Victorian Status:** Round 2 of the DRC 4x4 Victorian Rally Championship (VRC)
- **Interstate/Cross-Border Status:** Round 4 of the Shamrock Haulage NSW Rally Championship and Round 5 of the East Coast Classic Rally Series (2WD & 4WD)
- **Organiser:** [Western District Car Club VIC](#)

### Spectator & Access Info

- **Stages:** Fast-flowing, technical gravel logging roads in the Latrobe and Ada state forest regions around Noojee.
- **Spectating:** Free at designated public spectator points.



## August 2026 – Chiaro School Visit - 31 August 2026

Students from Chiaro Christian School will explore Noojee's rich local history through engaging, hands-on experiences and dynamic outdoor exhibits at the Noojee Heritage Centre.

Our new Activity Quiz is an exciting, interactive guide that enhances the visit to the Noojee Heritage Centre. It encourages students to uncover fascinating facts and captivating details about the station and its history.

We trialled a version of the Activity Quiz with visitors at the Noojee Truffle Festival, and it was very well received.

As they embark on their journey around the station, students will visit attractions such as our new interpretive boards, the exhibitions in the 1960 Louvre Carriage, and the J550 Class Locomotive, along with its historical significance.

The quiz also highlights key safety guidelines for teachers and parents, ensuring a secure and enjoyable adventure for everyone.

With its perfect blend of fun and education, the Activity Quiz promises a memorable experience for all participants.



Community Bank  
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**B** Bendigo Bank

**N&DHS NEWSLETTERS**  
**2025 & 2026**

**NEERIM DISTRICT**  
Community Enterprise







## VOLUNTEER UPDATE

# VOLUNTEER CONNECT

### 2026 WORKING GROUP DATES STARTING AT 10AM

Every second and fourth Wednesday

#### AUGUST 2026

- Wednesday, 12 August 2026
- Wednesday, 26 August 2026

#### SEPTEMBER

- Wednesday, 9 September 2026
- Wednesday, 23 September 2026



The volunteer working group at the Noojee Heritage Centre embarked on a crucial project to tackle the persistent drainage issues affecting the platform. These problems, characterised by pooling rainwater and overflowing surface runoff, had led to significant erosion of the timber pillars and the underlying structures, threatening the integrity of this historic site.

To mitigate these challenges, the team focused on the thorough clearing of surface drains, ensuring that water could flow freely and prevent further damage. Looking ahead, our ambitious plans include regrading the adjacent soil to effectively channel rainwater away from the platform, as well as installing slotted ag-pipes or creating gravel trenches to enhance drainage capacity.

Thank you to the volunteers Dale Bates, Kylie Wilson, and Troy Wawrzik, and the invaluable support from John Olsen and Will Langoor.

Additionally, we successfully installed additional directional signage boards on various structures at the Centre, thanks to the efforts of Graeme Linaker, Miles Spencer and team.

The Heritage Centre grounds looked wonderful! A big shout-out to Gary Ryan for the incredible dedication shown in hand mowing the entire area.

It is truly impressive! And believe it or not, there were no small white flowers in sight! The whole place felt fresh and beautifully maintained. Thanks Gary.







## DONATIONS WITH SQUARE

**Over 100 Years of Rail and Timber History on Display**  
**Support the Noojee & District Historical Society**

- In 1919, the very first steam train rolled into Noojee, connecting our timber town to the rest of Victoria. Today, the Noojee Heritage Centre preserves that incredible legacy. We need your help to keep our history on the tracks.
- We are a volunteer-driven organisation and do not receive ongoing government funding. Our survival depends entirely on community donations and membership.
- Your generosity plays a crucial role in keeping our doors open.
- Every dollar you contribute helps ensure that future generations can experience the rich history of Noojee.



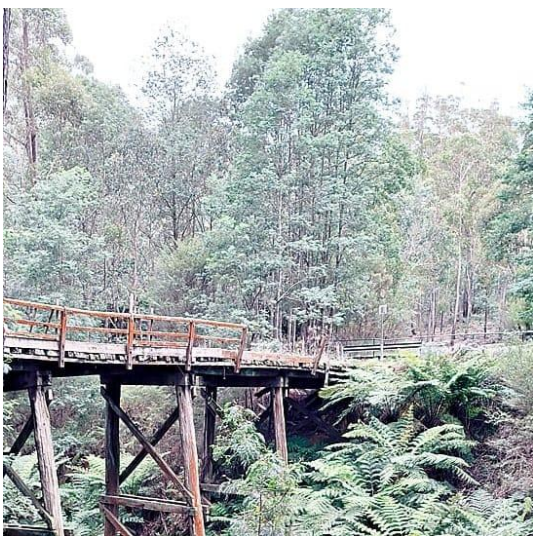
**How to Donate:**  
 1. Open your smartphone camera.  
 2. Scan the QR code below.  
 3. Choose your donation amount securely via Square

Scan to Support the Noojee Heritage Centre

Thank you for keeping Noojee's history alive!

Noojee & District Historical Society Inc

## FORLORN, BUT FAR FROM FORGOTTEN



### The Rokeby-Crossover Friends Group

The old wooden, former road in bushland at Crossover has a future. This is the vision of a working group of local residents, bush users, history buffs and community volunteers.

A group of local residents recently gathered to discuss what could be achieved with restoration of the valued but decaying Crossover Trestle Bridge.

The bridge was constructed by Victorian Railways in the 1890s. It was part of the infrastructure for the Warragul to Noojee railway.

Group members have been inspired by the achievement and profile of the Noojee Railway Heritage precinct.

Noojee and District Historical Society president Janiene Ayre encouraged the trestle bridge enthusiasts to develop a strategy and funding options.





# BAW BAW SHIRE INFORMATION

Shaping the future of

# NOOJEE

A place for community collaboration



## ENERGY EVENING



Sunday 13 September

Providing the community with information about renewable energy choices and available rebates.

Following the results of the renewable energy questionnaire conducted earlier this year as part of the Shaping the Future of Noojee Project, the Power and Connectivity Reliability Working Group have partnered with Gippsland Climate Change Network to run an Energy Evening for the Noojee and District Community.

- Learn about the benefits of home electrification
- Reduce your power bills
- Meet local and trusted installers
- Ask questions about home electrification
- Replacing gas and making the switch to energy-efficient appliances
- Up-to-date information on incentives & rebates

The evening includes a presentation and the opportunity to ask questions without commitment.

DATE: Sunday 13 September  
TIME: 5pm - 7pm  
ADDRESS: Noojee Community Hall

5-7pm: Presentation

6-7pm: Enjoy a FREE finger food dinner, have a chat with installers and members of Gippsland Climate Change Network.

The Shaping the Future of Noojee Project is supported by the Victorian Government through the Forestry Transition Program.



## Upcoming Events Energy Evening & Your Voice Matters

Conversations with the Noojee community throughout the months of August, September and October to share your experience of "Shaping the Future of Noojee" over the last four years.

### SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NOOJEE

## Your Voice Matters

### We'd Love to Hear from You

Over the past four years, the Shaping the Future of Noojee project has worked alongside the community to explore opportunities, deliver initiatives and help shape the future of Noojee following the end of native timber harvesting. As the project draws to a close on 31 December 2025, we'd like to hear from the people who matter most - our community.

We invite you to join the Project Manager for an informal, one-on-one conversation to share your experience over the last four years.

- Whether you've been involved from the beginning, participated occasionally, or simply observed the project from afar, your perspective is important. We're interested in hearing your honest thoughts about (but not limited to):
- Your understanding of the project.
- Your experience with the project.
- The outcomes you've seen (or haven't seen).
- What worked well and what could have been done differently.

There are no right or wrong answers. We want to hear open, honest and respectful feedback. Your insights will play a vital role in telling the story of the project, helping us understand its legacy, celebrate its successes, learn from its challenges, and inform future community-led initiatives.

If you'd like to share your thoughts, we'd love to hear from you.

### How to book your conversation:

You can complete the on-line form to request a date and time via this link:

[www.bawbawshire.co/noojeevoices](https://www.bawbawshire.co/noojeevoices)

Or call or message Leah Dougherty on 0489 319 023 or Lana Horn on 0489 775 105 or email [shapingthefuturenoojee@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:shapingthefuturenoojee@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au)



## Community Christmas Party - December 6, 2026

Celebrating the conclusion of the Forestry Transition Project, this end of year event will be big! With food trucks, photo booth, facepainting and a visit from Santa at the Noojee Heritage Centre.



Save  
the  
Date



## Talk to the project team



### Lana Horn

Noojee Forestry Project Manager  
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### Leah Dougherty

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