



August 2026 NEWSLETTER

NOOJEE HERITAGE CENTRE STEALS THE SHOW



NIGHT STAGES, TIGHT MARGINS, AND PREMIUM COFFEE!

The Draper's Civil Contracting Ada River Rally took place on Saturday and Sunday, with a pre-event test and media day on Friday, August 21.

While the action on the dirt was intense, the Noojee Heritage Centre earned unanimous praise as the ultimate event headquarters and service park. Nestled beautifully among the trees, the venue provided a picture-perfect, authentic rally backdrop.

The atmosphere on Saturday morning was unmatched, boasting a fantastic community vibe complete with live music and fantastic food! A special shout-out went to the legends at the Noojee Gifts and Coffee Café, opening their doors at 5:30 AM to fuel freezing crews with hot food and premium coffee; they were widely credited with providing "the most important performance part of the weekend!"

The weekend features eight gravel stages and approximately 180 competitive kilometres, with heats that could significantly impact the NSWRC standings. Caffeine has become an essential part of the event! Congratulations to Crystal, Troy, Michael, and their fantastic team. A huge thank you to Will Langoor for all the countless hours of input!

You can view photos from the event on the [Bruce Keys Photography Website](#) or check updates via the [Rally NSW Facebook Page](#)



Overall, the Noojee Heritage Centre was heavily commended for blending an authentic, rustic motorsport atmosphere with great local hospitality.

Well done everyone!





THE 2026 ADA RIVER RALLY NOOJEE!



WHO CONQUERED NOOJEE? 2026 ADA RIVER RALLY RESULTS

Dalton Dominates as Ada River Rally Lights Up Noojee!

The forest roads around Noojee roared to life for the **2026 Draper's Civil Contracting Ada River Rally**. Serving as a critical high-stake round for the NSW, Victorian, and East Coast Classic championships, the event pushed teams to their absolute limits.

Competitors tackled 180 kilometres of punishing gravel across eight special stages. Running entirely "blind" using only a traditional roadbook, the challenge stretched from broad daylight well into the dead of night.

The Podiums – Congrats to:

- **1st Place:** Richie Dalton and Mac Kierans in their Toyota Yaris GR, sweeping all three heats to take a dominant overall victory. Reflecting on the brutal, blind night stages.
- **2nd Place:** Josh Redhead and Ray Winwood-Smith overcame a heavy 2-minute and 25-second penalty to secure second place (the Production Cup) in their Mitsubishi Evo 5.
- **3rd Place:** Jake Bramble and Phillip Bonser with a stellar drive in their Nissan Pulsar GTi-R.

Ada River Rally - Morning Updates! Rally Action... Rally Dramas!!

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our contact, Jimmy, and everyone involved with the Western District Car Club.

This includes the dedicated officials, hardworking crew, talented drivers, and loyal supporters who all played a crucial role in making the event a tremendous success.

The excitement and passion displayed throughout the event were truly remarkable, and we appreciate all the effort that went into organising it.

We can't wait to do it all again in May 2027 for another unforgettable experience!





NOOJEE HERITAGE CENTRE EVENTS CALENDAR 2027

March 2027

The [Gippsland International Film Festival](https://gippslandinternationalfilmfestival.com/) runs from March 12 to March 19 in West Gippsland. The Noojee Heritage Centre will host a GIFF 2027 session on Saturday evening, 13 March at the Noojee Heritage Centre



For more information:
<https://gippslandinternationalfilmfestival.com/>

May 2027

The 2027 Draper's Civil Contracting **Ada River Rally** takes place in May 2027, based out of the **Noojee Heritage Centre** in Noojee.

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



July 2027

The Noojee Truffle Festival 2027 will be held from July 3 to August 1, 2027, in Noojee, Neerim South, and the surrounding areas of West Gippsland.

Every winter, something extraordinary emerges from the frost-covered soils of Noojee: the rare and coveted black truffle.

The Noojee Truffle Festival offers a unique opportunity to experience one of the world's most sought-after culinary ingredients at its source. Join trained truffle dogs for an authentic farm hunt, enjoy meals at long communal tables alongside passionate chefs and producers, and savour dishes featuring freshly harvested truffles.

Make sure to visit us at the Truffle Station, aka Noojee Heritage Centre, on each of the five festival Sundays, with lots of new and exciting attractions planned!



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NEERIM DISTRICT
Community Enterprise





VOLUNTEER UPDATE

VOLUNTEER CONNECT

2026 WORKING GROUP DATES STARTING AT 10AM

Every second and fourth Wednesday

SEPTEMBER

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

OCTOBER

- Wednesday, 14 October 2026
- Wednesday, 28 October 2026

READY FOR A MAKE OVER

We will be relocating the former fire lookout tower to Dale Barnes and Kylie Wilson's workshop next week. Join the working group on Wednesday, 23 September at their place. We will meet at the Noojee Heritage Centre at 10 AM and travel together.

About the Lookout Tower: Originally established on the Toorongo Range, the lookout tower was initially the Mt McDonald tower, featuring living quarters for the fire spotter and an observation cabin. Fire spotters operated from the tower for about 125 days in the summer, scanning the landscape for smoke.



NEW BENDIGO BANK SIGN AT THE HERITAGE CENTRE



We are excited to announce the installation of a new sign at the Noojee Heritage Centre, which serves as our community hub and highlights the partnership with the Community Bank Neerim District and the Bendigo Bank.

The bank plays a crucial role in reinvesting its profits into local initiatives. This funding allows us to enhance our precinct, improve visitor information displays, and support local events. Our collaboration is essential for preserving the rich history of our region.

Thank you for your continued support. It has been great and a pleasure to work with Stacey Alfred, the Community Engagement Manager at Neerim District Community Enterprise.

Thanks Stacey!



WE NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE PLEASE!



OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Police are investigating the disappearance of missing child Costa MEZENTSEFF.

Costa was 5 years old when he went missing at the Toorong Falls in Noojee on the 27th of August 1972.

An extensive search of the area was conducted at the time of the disappearance and police are appealing for any people who were involved in the search.

If you or anyone you know was involved in the search, please contact Detective Leading Senior Constable Corey THOMSON at the Warragul Police Station on 5622 7111

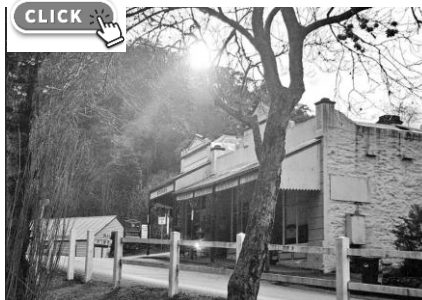
HISTORY AND HERITAGE NETWORKING GROUP

Walhalla's Historic Day: A Memorable Gathering at the BBHNNW Meeting

The August meeting of the History and Heritage Networking Group at the picturesque Walhalla was nothing short of extraordinary! As members arrived at the Walhalla Mechanic's Institute, the warm atmosphere, complete with tea and coffee, set the tone for an engaging day.

After a productive meeting from 10:15 to 11:30 in the main hall, participants were eager to embark on a series of unique activities that showcased Walhalla's rich history and culture. The day was structured in a round-robin style, where we split into smaller groups to explore 3 exciting options:

1. Walhalla Alive: A captivating virtual reality experience paired with a visit to the local museum, allowing us to engage in the town's heritage in a truly immersive way - without any charge!
2. Historic Tour: A guided tour of the Walhalla Post and Telegraph Office. This glimpse into the past also came at no cost, and it enhanced appreciation of this crucial part of Walhalla's history.
3. Culinary Delights: While some indulged in lunch at the charming Walhalla Witchery café, creating a relaxed environment for conversation and connection among members.



As the activities wrapped up, some members gathered for a guided historic walk to the Long Tunnel Extended Gold Mine, where an engaging complimentary tour awaited. This experience not only showcased the town's mining heritage but also wrapped our day perfectly. Thank you to Brian Brewer, Secretary of the [Walhalla Heritage and Development League](#) and colleagues.

Overall, it was an amazing day filled with learning, and a shared passion for preserving our history. The next gathering, along with more opportunities to explore our rich heritage together, will be held at the Noojee Heritage Centre in November 2026.



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

8-9pm: Presentation
8-9pm: 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 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 2026, 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.

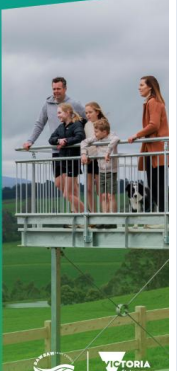
If you'd like to share your thoughts, we'd love to hear from you.

How to book your conversation:

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

www.bawbawshire.co/NoojeeVoices

Or call or message Leah Dougherty on 0455 313 023 or Lana Horn on 0488 718 705 or email shapingthefutureofnoojee@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



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Leah Dougherty

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