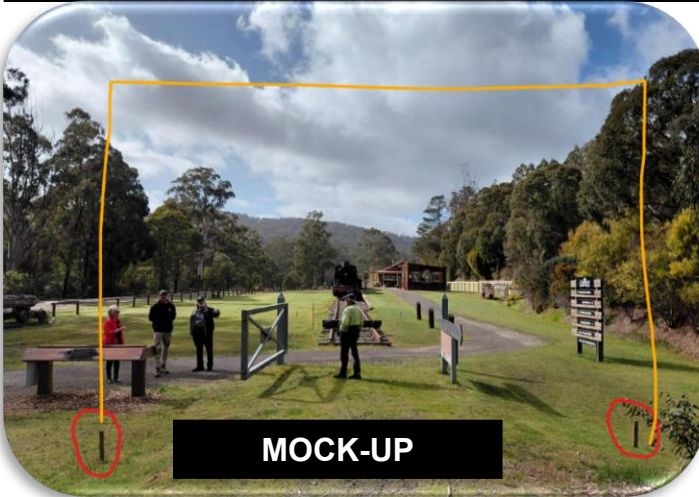




September 2026

NEWSLETTER

NOOJEE RAIL TRAIL HEAD PROJECT



MOCK-UP

The N&DHS Committee of Management met with Lana Horn from Baw Baw Shire and the project's engineer to discuss the Noojie Rail Trailhead's location.

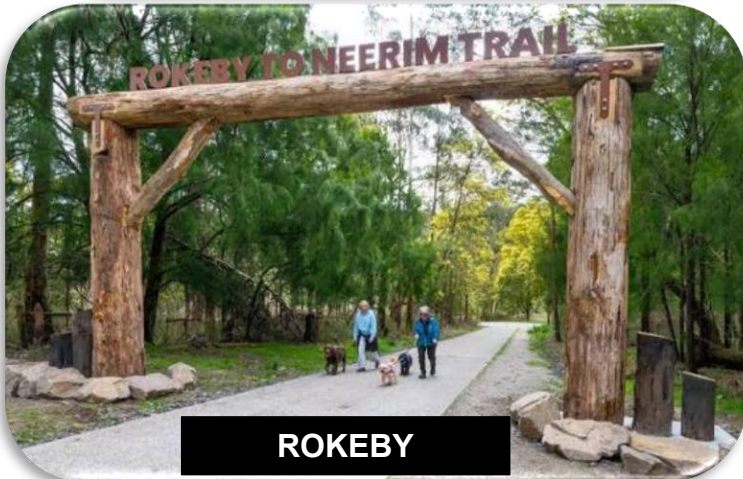
The committee agreed to install the Noojie Rail Trailhead at the trail entrance, immediately to the right of the existing J550 steel gate, similar to the Rokeby to Neerim Trailhead.

The surrounding area will be cleared to improve the sign's visibility from the road, while the large gum tree beside the path will be retained.

Mick Cain removed the steel gate and positioned it at the end of the railway line. Its posts will be painted a rusty colour, and lighting will be installed for night-time visibility. Baw Baw Shire will coordinate design updates, soil testing, and permits.

We cleaned the area, with help from Paul Stafford, and removed the old carvings, which were deteriorating and dated.

We also cleaned the gardens and removed the old, damaged display boards in preparation for the new Rail Trail Head.



ROKEBY



GATE READY TO BE INSTALLED AND PAINTED



PRUNING, WEEDING, GARDEN MAINTENANCE AND TIDY UP!



BEFORE



DURING

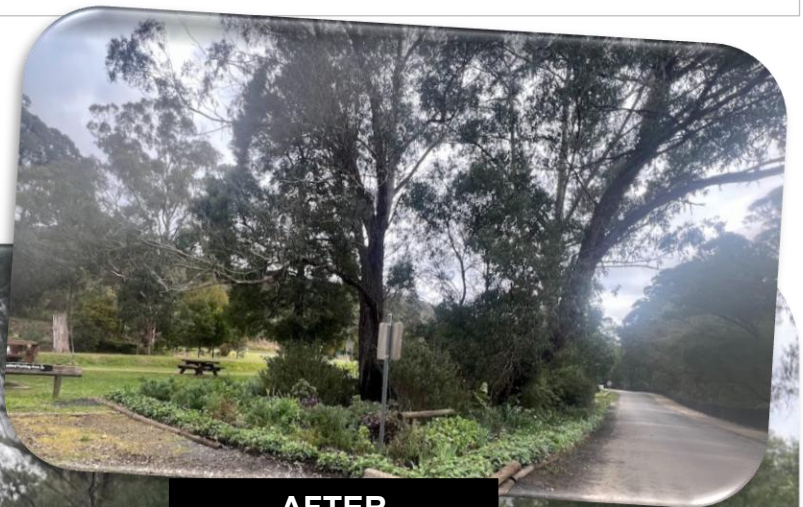


The front entrance and surrounding gardens of the Noojee Heritage Centre are vital to shaping the visitor experience and preserving the town's historical narrative.

Serving as a primary gateway to the historic railway station and the proposed Noojee Trestle Bridge Rail Trail trailhead, this space sets the standard for how the community and tourists engage with Noojee's timber and rail heritage.

Overgrown plants or poorly managed walkways can obscure interpretive signage, block pathways, and degrade the smooth transition between these outdoor historical exhibits. John Olsen completed the clean-up, with support from Janiene, moving many loads of vegetation, rubbish, and tree limbs.

Thank You
- For the -
AMAZING
Job You Do
EVERY DAY
Best Team Ever.



AFTER





PREPARATION OF NEW CONTAINER SITE

Will Langoor and Mick Cain worked hard all day, building a stable stone-and-gravel pad for the new 40 ft shipping container at the Noojee Heritage Centre, ensuring a level, well-draining foundation.

We are setting up a dual-container arrangement to separate the space - one container will be dedicated to equipment storage, and the other to a workbench and maintenance station, helping keep operations organised, safe, and efficient.

A big thank you to Mick Cain from Michael Cain Concreting, based in Neerim South, for his excellent work moving gravel and the J550 gate, and for all-day clean-up assistance and supervision!

Your dedication and hard work have truly made a difference!



Spectacular!



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE 'HOTEL AT NOOJEE' - CHRISTMAS 1947



We received a donation from Debra Askew: a small black-and-white photograph of the 'Hotel at Noojee' at Christmas 1947. The writing on the back is in her father's hand, Rex Canfield Brown. He would have been 19 at the time. He may have stayed with family or friends, or possibly by himself. Although the photo is very small, it is in good condition.

We sincerely appreciate Debra's generous offer and are thrilled to include this significant piece in our collection, as each item we acquire plays a crucial role in preserving the area's rich history and heritage. This contribution is a valuable addition that helps us share the stories of the past with our community.

Thank you, Debra, for your generosity.



TOWER ON THE MOVE FOR MAKEOVER

The former fire lookout tower has now been relocated from the Noojee Heritage Centre to Dale Barnes and Kylie Wilson's workshop. Join the working group at the workshop on Wednesday, 7 October, at 10am.

We will develop a project plan outlining the steps to renovate and update the interior and exterior and prepare it for new interpretive signage and displays.

The interior will be a dedicated tribute to John Ryan, and we will install the truck bonnet his family donated to the N&DHS, along with an information booth for visitors to the Centre.

The exterior will display the new Bendigo Bank sign and information about the lookout tower: originally established on the Toorongo Range, the tower was the Mt McDonald tower, with living quarters for the fire spotter and an observation cabin. Fire spotters operated from the tower for about 125 summer days, scanning the landscape for smoke.



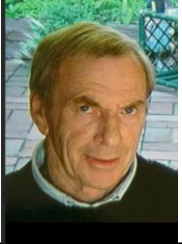
THANK YOU, KYLIE & DALE!





A Memoir

MEMOIRS OF OLD NOOJEE A POEM BY JOHN BAULCH



John and his family visited the Noojee Heritage Centre earlier this year. During his visit, John mentioned that he attended school in Noojee in the 1940s and 1950s and that he writes poetry. This poem reflects on Noojee during its boom years. His poems are his autobiography, and John has written many more poems, and we look forward to publishing them regularly. Thank you to John and his wife, Lucia.

The old mill town where I used to live, long ago when just a kid, now all quiet and not a sound
No Timber Trucks pass through this town
As I look down the deserted street, there's not a friend that I could greet.
The General Store across the road, doors all locked, windows closed
The Butcher Shop where I stand, the meat was tough as the butchers' hands
The Bakery Shop just next door, they baked bread as hard as the wooden floor
The old brick Church next to the store, we learnt about Jesus and much more
The old Town Hall where we'd had a ball, no one dances here anymore!
I take my best girl by the hand; we danced all night to a three-piece band.
The old Milk bar just down the road, the place to go when feeling low. We'd buy an ice cream; with
the Pennys we saved!
Boy they were the good old days
Sometimes we'd fish the rivers and creeks, freshwater crayfish we would seek
Maybe we catch a fish or two, we had a great time, I'm telling you!
The Lolly Shop where we would meet, where we would go every week, to play some records on the
old jukebox box, we would laugh and sing and joke a lot
As years went by, I got a job, working all week for 30 Bob
The Shell Garage where I used to toil, covered in grease and sometimes oil.
Changing tyres that was my job, pumping Gas for 30 Bob
Timber trucks stopped every day, this helped to pass the time away
I would listen to the drivers tell their stories, their days of hope, their days of glory, from war-torn
countries they did come, I would say they were the lucky ones!
New Australians they were called, some were short and some were tall, all good men with
weathered faces, sap-stained hands and broken boot laces.
Sometimes my thoughts drift back in time to this place I left behind
They say this old town will fade away, as for me I couldn't say!
Like the Phoenix rising from the ashes, a new day will dawn, that's all that really matters!
John Baulch

ANNOUNCEMENT

I'm happy to share that our Baw Baw Shire Application for the 2026-27 Community Grants, Community Projects Round 1, titled "Digital Multimedia to Strengthen Community Awareness of Noojee's History", has been successfully approved!

The grant, ex GST, is \$4,490.50 and will go toward purchasing two large, top-quality TV display screens to enhance our displays in the 1960 Louvre Carriage Van and the upgraded container for new exhibits.

Thank you, Baw Baw Shire Council, for your support.





NOOJEE HERITAGE CENTRE EVENTS CALENDAR 2027

February 2027



RAILWAY ADVENTURES

A small-group tour operator based in Sydney, with a strong interest in all things rail, has booked a group of 20 people for Friday, 26 February 2027, with tour leader Karl

Chapman, who met us earlier this year in March 2026.

13:30 - Private guided tour by a member of the historical society

Depending on numbers, we would split the group as follows:

14:00 - One half of the group visits the Noojee Trestle Bridge in a community minibus

14:30 - The other half of the group visits the Noojee Trestle Bridge in a community minibus

15:00 - Afternoon tea in the Heritage Gifts & Coffee Cafe

May 2027

The 2027 Draper's Civil Contracting **Ada River Rally** in May at the Noojee Heritage Centre promises an exciting experience for all. Join us to cheer on the action and be part of the community celebration.

- 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.

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!

Community Bank
Neerim District

 Bendigo Bank

N&DHS
NEWSLETTERS
2025 & 2026


NEERIM DISTRICT
Community Enterprise



VOLUNTEER CONNECT

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

2026 WORKING GROUP DATES STARTING AT 10 AM

Every second and fourth Wednesday

EXTRA DAY - Wednesday, 7 October 2026 – Tower Project

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

- Wednesday, 14 October 2026
- Wednesday, 28 October 2026
- Wednesday, 11 November 2026
- Wednesday, 25 November 2026

WE NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE, PLEASE!



OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Police are investigating the disappearance of Costa MEZENTSEFF.

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

An extensive search of the area was conducted at the time of the disappearance, and police are appealing for anyone who was 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.

Email: noojeeheritage@gmail.com

N&DHS - AGM Annual General Meeting

Sat, 14 November 2026

Online and in-person

All details regarding time, venue, and the agenda will be sent by via email invitation within the next month.

On behalf of the Noojee & District Historical Society, thank you for supporting the Noojee Heritage Centre.

Whether you have visited the Centre, explored our historical displays, enjoyed a coffee at Heritage Gifts & Coffee, shared your local stories, volunteered your time, or contributed through our Working Group, your support means the world to us.

Looking ahead, we have exciting restoration work, new displays, community events, and improvements across the heritage precinct planned.

If you would like to get involved, ask a question, or simply say hello, please email us at noojeeheritage@gmail.com

Thank you for helping us preserve Noojee's history and keep it moving forward!



BAW BAW SHIRE INFORMATION

Shaping the future of

NOOJEE

A place for community collaboration



Community Christmas Event

Celebrating the conclusion of the Forestry Transition Project, this end-of-year event will be big! With food trucks, a photo booth, face painting, and a visit from Santa, save the date – Sunday, 6 December 2026



At the Noojee Heritage Centre, a perfect venue for creating joyful memories together.

*Save
the
Date*



Talk to the project team



Lana Horn

Noojee Forestry Project Manager
5624 2595

lane.horn@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au



Leah Dougherty

Noojee Forestry Support Officer
5624 2526

leah.dougherty@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au