October 2026 NEWSLETTER

THE TOWER INCREDIBLE MAKEOVER IN PROGRESS



BEFORE







AFTER

On Wednesday, 7 October, our working group volunteers began restoring the former fire lookout tower, which was relocated from the Noojee Heritage Centre to Dale Bates and Kylie Wilson's workshop.

The restoration will include renovating the interior and exterior and preparing the tower for new interpretive signage and displays.

So far, Troy and Dale have removed extensive rust, installed a new door, and painted the tower an impressive silver.

Meanwhile, Michelle, Bev and Janiene carefully cleaned all 100 louvre panes of glass, scrubbing off at least 80 years of accumulated grime and dirt.

We will fit the glass louvre panes when the Tower returns to the new site at the Heritage Centre in the next couple of weeks.

Thank you, everyone, for your hard work, skill, and commitment to preserving this important piece of local history.





GLASS CLEANING



NEW ENTRANCE SIGNS IN PROGRESS



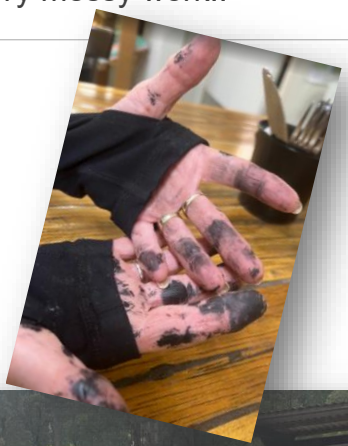
SNEEK PREVIEW OF SOME OF THE NEW SIGNS

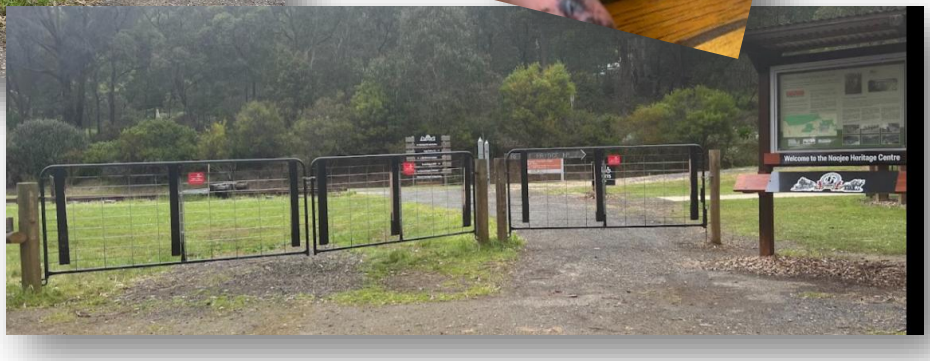
It's been a busy month of renewing, painting, cleaning, repairing, and upgrading. The front entrance and surrounding gardens of the Noojee Heritage Centre play an important role in shaping the visitor experience and preserving the town's historical narrative.

As the main gateway to the historic railway station and the proposed Noojee Trestle Bridge Rail Trail head, expected to be completed around mid-November, the entrance will provide a welcoming introduction and help set the tone for how the community and visitors engage with Noojee's timber and rail heritage.

On Wednesday, 28 October, during Working Group Day, we attached boards to the gates in preparation for the new signs and painted them to match the signage. We also cleared the area around the large stump, ready for Paul Stafford to carve it. It was all very messy work!!







NEW CONTAINER HAS ARRIVED ON SITE





A VINTAGE FOREST COMMISSION WOOD-FIRED BARBECUE



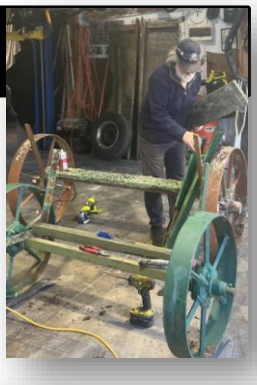
We've purchased a vintage Forest Commission wood-fired barbecue for the Noojee Heritage Centre, like those once installed at Toorongo Falls and picnic spots across regional Victoria. Troy and Dale picked it up from Rokeby and worked their magic to restore it to its original working condition.

This sturdy steel barbecue features a central chimney rising from its circular cooking plate and was designed to be vandal-resistant and practical for public, wood-fired cooking.



THANK YOU WILL, KYLIE, JOHN, TROY & DALE!

PRESERVING HISTORY CONTINUES



We are thrilled to share another exciting restoration project underway. Kylie and Will are hard at work cleaning up a fascinating piece of our region's agricultural past: two vintage portable farm equipment chassis, which we are repurposing into unique, historic park benches.

One chassis is a dual-axle iron frame connected by a rugged rectangular steel channel, with a distinct centre-pivot front-axle layout that originally allowed the cart to be steered behind horses. Rolling on heavy spoked steel wheels, the chassis tells a story of hard work. The smaller, wide-tread green-painted front wheels contrast beautifully with the larger, flat-rimmed rear wheels built to bear the brunt of heavy stationary engines on rough soil. With treatment and a durable timber top, the chassis will make beautiful outdoor seating.



Keep an eye out for these remarkable pieces of living history, coming soon to the Noojee Heritage Centre grounds.

EVENTS CALENDAR

REMEMBRANCE DAY COMMEMORATION AT NEERIM MEMORIAL HALL

SUNDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2026 from 11 am to 3 pm
The Neerim District History and Heritage Group will hold a
Remembrance Day commemoration
at Neerim Memorial Hall - 21 Hamono Road.

Four presentations will take place that day.

• Heather Steenholdt will present 'In the Footsteps of a Soldier', a story about a soldier who fought in France, following the journey and unexpected moments that helped bring one soldier's wartime story to life.

• Ras Lawson from the Warragul and District Historical Society will present a talk on Leslie Godfrey Barr (a Buln Buln lad). After a family member's death, Ras Lawson discovered a notebook and a collection of letters his great-uncle, Les Barr, wrote home to his family from England, France, and Belgium during his WW1 service. Before volunteering, Les grew up and worked as a builder around Neerim with his father and brothers.

• Descendants of the Mawhinney Family will give a talk on the Four Mawhinney Brothers, who all grew up on McKenzie Road in Neerim and all served in WW1, including one taken prisoner at Bullecourt who spent 18 months as a POW in Germany.

• Professor Peter Stanley will give a presentation (via Zoom) on Tom Feehan from Neerim, who was wounded in the attack on Allonville, a village on the Somme in France during WW1, when two German shells struck two barns occupied by men of the 14th Battalion in the early hours of 31 May 1918.

• There will also be a number of static displays, including artefacts and memorabilia related to Les Barr (thanks to the Warragul and District Historical Society for loaning this display), and District Honour Boards from WW1.

• There will also be a display on WW1 Soldier Settlement Farms in the district, which is currently a work in progress by the Neerim District History and Heritage Group.

• A Warragul Municipal Band Ensemble and the Warragul Pipe Band will play on the day, along with a display of military vehicles from the Victorian Military Vehicle Corps.

• There will also be a sausage sizzle from the Neerim District Lions Club, tea and coffee, and complimentary ANZAC biscuits available throughout the day.

• Family members are invited to place miniature Australian Flags on the graves of loved ones at the Neerim Cemetery, which adjoins the Neerim Memorial Hall. Wayne Farnham MP, Member for Narracan, has kindly provided the flags

- There is no entry fee, and everyone in the community and beyond is welcome to join the remembrance and recognition of our WW1 soldiers. This would be a great learning experience for children and young people.
- As a History Group, we also encourage visitors to share any stories, memorabilia, or photos they may have of their WW1 (and WW2) descendants, so we can copy and add them to our growing history collection.
- Please bring along on the day or contact the Neerim District History & Heritage Group Secretary, Bob Raymount, phone 0411 230133, prior to the day. Keep following our Facebook page for more details on the presentations and displays, which will be published over the coming few weeks.

Photo from Honour Board from Neerim East Hall 1916.



James, Alexander & Thomas Mawhinney, (absent William) WW1

Inscription below reads 'Mawhinney Bros'

NOOJEE CFA 80TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



NOOJEE HERITAGE CENTRE EVENTS 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.

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

Noojee Truffle Festival 2027 - 3 July to 1 August 2027

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

The Noojee Truffle Festival invites you to experience one of the world's most sought-after ingredients right at its source. Follow trained truffle dogs on an authentic farm hunt, share long communal tables with passionate chefs and producers, and savour dishes made with freshly harvested truffles.

Be sure to visit us at the Truffle Station, otherwise known as the Noojee Heritage Centre, on each of the five festival Sundays.

Plenty of new and exciting attractions are planned for 2027!



Community Bank
Neerim District
Bendigo Bank

N&DHS

NEWSLETTERS
2025 & 2026

NEERIM DISTRICT
Community Enterprise

2026 GIPPSLAND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARDS



I'm excited to share that I'm a finalist for the 2026 Gippsland Community Leadership Awards Community Champion Award. This award is especially meaningful because the winner receives a $1,000 donation to a Gippsland charity or project of their choice. The public votes for the winner, so I would really appreciate your support!

You can vote for me here: https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/C1RAbtBuqD

If you can, please share the voting link with your friends, family, colleagues, and anyone else who might be interested.

Every vote and share matters to the team at the Noojee Heritage Centre and helps us keep working towards our vision!

The winners will be announced at the Gippsland Community Leadership Awards and GCLP 30-Year Celebration on Friday, 13 November 2026.

VOLUNTEER
CONNECT

2026 WORKING GROUP DATES STARTING AT 10 AM

Every second and fourth Wednesday

NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
- **Wednesday, 11 November 2026** - **Wednesday, 25 November 2026**	**Wednesday, 9 December 2026 with a Christmas celebration**

VOLUNTEER UPDATE - WORKING SAFELY AT THE HERITAGE CENTRE

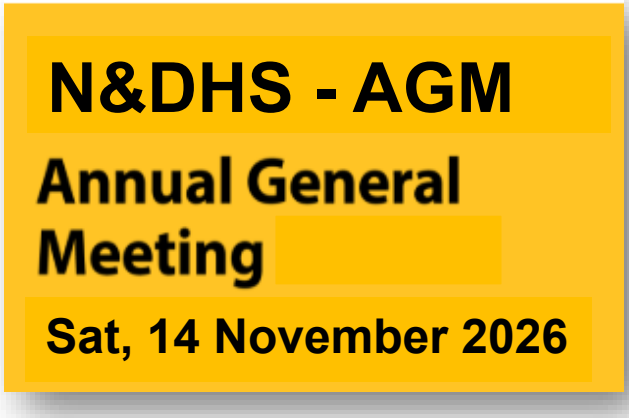


Our volunteers are the heart of the Heritage Centre, and the Committee of Management thanks everyone who gives their time to care for the building and grounds. To keep everyone safe and to meet the conditions of our public liability insurance, the following applies to all members and volunteers:

- **Join the working group**. Our working group meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, and no one works alone. This group handles grounds and maintenance work, and new volunteers are welcome to join us.
- **Get approval for other work**. If you would like to work at the Heritage Centre at another time, please check with our Maintenance Coordinator, John Olsen, first so we can schedule the work and have another person join you.
- **Powered equipment**. Volunteers may use the ride-on mower, whipper snipper, and other powered equipment only after completing a safety induction and receiving approval from the Maintenance Coordinator. Inductions take place at working group meetings.
- **Let us know when you're on site.** Please notify John before you start so attendance and tasks are logged for insurance.

If you'd like to help with the grounds or have a project idea, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact John Olsen, Maintenance Coordinator, via email noojeeheritage@gmail.com to find a task that suits you.

AGM AND GENERAL MEETING REMINDER



Noojee & District Historical Society - AGM and General Meeting

Venue: Heritage Gifts & Coffee Café

Address: 405–415 Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Noojee VIC 3833

Time: 2:00 pm

Light refreshments will be provided after the meeting.

For catering, please email Angie Langoor, Secretary, at angienoojeeheritage@gmail.com to confirm your attendance and whether you will attend in person or online.

If you would like to attend online, please email Janiene, President of the N&DHS, at noojeeheritage@gmail.com or on Mobile: 0448 059 397. Janiene will provide the meeting link.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

A friendly reminder to members who have not yet paid their 2026-2027 membership fee: please take a moment to renew. Your support helps us care for our collection, keep the Heritage Centre open, and share Noojee history!

How to pay

- By cheque: Post your completed Membership Application Form, with a cheque made out to Noojee & District Historical Society Inc., to PO Box 78, Noojee VIC 3833.
- By internet banking:
  Account name: Noojee & District Historical Society Inc.
  - BSB: 633-000 Account No:130747272

Email or post your completed Membership Application Form to Angie at angienoojeeheritage@gmail.com (or to the PO Box above).

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed, and to all our members, for your continued support.

BAW BAW SHIRE INFORMATION



A place for community collaboration

NOOJEE & DISTRICT

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS EVENT

SUNDAY 6th DECEMBER

5.00pm - 7.30pm

We are inviting the local community to come along and celebrate the conclusion of the Noojee Forestry Transition Project at the Heritage Precinct.

We are celebrating with:

- Food trucks
- Live music
- A gelato cart
- Face painting
- Photo booth

.....and a visit from Santa

You'll also be able to learn about the new plans for State Forest management (Healthy Forest Plans Pilot) and what that means for Noojee and District.

Heritage Precinct:
405 – 415 Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Noojee

We look forward to seeing you there!



Talk to the project team



Lana Horn
Noojee Forestry Project Manager
5624 2595
lana.horn@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au



Leah Dougherty
Noojee Forestry Support Officer
5624 2526
leah.dougherty@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au