

TOONGABBIE NEWS

ISSUE 25

SUMMER/AUTUMN 2026



Image: Four men standing on the platform of the Toongabbie Railway Station, in front of the booking office.
Sourced: www.facebook.com/TraralgonHistory

Toongabbie Railway Station

In celebration of the official unveiling of the Rail Dog sculptures by artist Jo Caminiti, I've included this article that was first published on our Newsletter in Issue 18.

In the past at Toongabbie, many people were kept busy with the traffic to Walhalla. Some local men drove horse and bullock teams, taking supplies to the Walhalla mines, and others drove coaches from the railway to Walhalla. The Toongabbie Railway Station had a Station Master and two porters. The goods shed was kept very busy - it was the same size as the shed at Traralgon station and had four doors on each side.

Many men worked in the bush, clearing, while others cut iron-bark sleepers, telephone poles, mill logs and posts and rails. Red-gum wood was carted to the wood mill in the station yard where it was sawn into short lengths, loaded on the trucks and sent to Melbourne for firewood. There were several good-sized fruit orchards in the area; now there are none. Some people had dairy farms and sent cream by rail to Glengarry or Cowwarr as the Toongabbie Factory did not last for long. The ground was chiefly light

grey soil, which dried out quickly. Other farms produced wool, wheat or reared cattle. The timber on the flat ground was messmate and silver top; on the steep stony hillsides, it was iron bark and in the gullies it was chiefly blue gum. In about 1912, a big bushfire came very close to our house and partly burnt some of our flat top pine trees before it rolled on nearly to the town. Fortunately, a sudden change of wind direction drove the fire back into the hills. It came with a wall of black smoke, driving before it huge swarms of large flying grasshoppers, also a large goanna that rushed around the house, climbing up the walls. All around the house we had tins, buckets and tubs full of water and wet bags, but these were not used. I had my property ready for a quick get-away from the fire if necessary - a green toy railway engine tucked under one arm and a cigarette card album under the other arm. After the bush fire, thick clusters of black wattles soon grew up. When they were big enough to strip, two families who lived together as a unit in rough camps of bark and tents, gathered the bark until the area was cut out and

then moved on to another one. The trees were chopped around at ground level, the bark pulled upwards, bent to form a big bundle and tied with bark. Sometimes they stripped a bit of golden wattle, but that was not quite so good. The bark was sent away from the Toongabbie station by the truck-load. When improved tanning methods came into use, there was no further sale for wattle bark. We lived near the foothills of Toongabbie, and we could often hear a distant rumble like thunder, but this was the blasting at Walhalla. Two or three miles from the mill, in a deep gully, there are remains of the "Mountain Queen" mine, dug into the hillside. It was never productive. Almost opposite the entrance, there is a permanent hole in Eaglehawk Creek, over 5 ft. deep and with good fish. This is the perfect place to be on a very hot day; there is a tiny flat where four pear trees grow (probably from seed), but the place is almost inaccessible, even on horseback.

- *Snippets from our Bulletins TOONGABBIE MEMORIES*
Contributed by Seddon Scott - March 1983
Article sourced from www.facebook.com/TraralgonHistory/

The Toongabbie News is produced by the Toongabbie Township Group who welcome news and photographs from community groups, clubs and individuals.

Please send text and photos as separate attachments by email to the Editor, Shazelle Witt E: toongabbieneews@gmail.com

Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or Township Group. Although care is taken, no responsibility is assumed for any errors which may occur. Submissions may be subject to editing.

**THE WINTER EDITION
DEADLINE**
For all contributions is
FRIDAY 15th May 2026

Want to see more community news? Visit the websites below www.toongabbie.vic.au or at www.facebook.com/toongabbievicau

**Printed by
MJ B Printing
Toongabbie**

SUPPORTED BY:



The Toongabbie Township Group has been successful in acquiring a grant through the Latrobe City Council Quick Response program to continue publishing the Toongabbie News. We have received \$1,500 which will go towards the cost of publishing our quarterly newsletter for Summer 2025, Autumn 2026, Winter 2026 and Spring 2026. Printed copies of the newsletter are available free of charge from the Toongabbie General Store and Post Office with all editions uploaded to the Toongabbie website (<https://toongabbie.vic.au/newsletter/>).

We would like to acknowledge the Latrobe City for their financial contribution and extend a huge thank-you to the volunteers that make this newsletter possible.

Local Groups

**The Recreation Reserves Committee Inc,
Toongabbie Mechanics Institute,
Wetlands group and
Toongabbie Township Group**

Second Monday of the Month 7.30pm

Recreation Reserve Meeting Room

All are Welcome

Toongabbie CFA Juniors

Every Second Thursday 6 - 7pm

Contact Cassandra 0411 422 173



**The Wellington - Latrobe Lions Club meet
the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month.
The first Wednesday is a dinner meeting.
New Members always welcome!**

Toongabbie Golf Club

Autumn is the perfect time to take up golf

We have had a few new members join over the last couple of months and they are really enjoying taking part in our weekly competitions and social events. Any trepidations they might have felt about joining were quickly overcome when they experienced the friendly and supportive environment of our club.

Our membership and green fee prices are still far and away the lowest in the area and we want to keep them that way to encourage our locals and others to get involved and enjoy the healthy recreation and social connection that playing golf provides. And remember that unlike at the major clubs in the region, you can play at Toongabbie virtually whenever you want.

For more information call 5192 4755 or email tgc3856@gmail.com.



Toongabbie Township Group 2025 Summary



Pictured: ANZAC Dawn Service 2025

Who are we?

The **Toongabbie Township Group (TTG)** is a small group of passionate locals who love getting involved and making good things happen around Toongabbie. We're all about bringing people together and keeping our township thriving by:

- Sharing information, ideas, and learnings across the community
- Facilitating effective planning, development and implementation of community projects
- Teaming up with other local groups and associations

We might be a small group, but we're mighty proud of what we achieve each year!

What we got up to in 2025

- Hosted the **ANZAC Day Dawn Service** - the very first one held at the new cenotaph
- Published the **Toongabbie News** - a huge Thank You to our volunteer editor Shazelle who prepares the wonderful newsletter editions. Our gratitude also goes to Max from MJB Printing in Toongabbie for printing the newsletter and keeping it stocked-up at the shop and post office. The costs for printing the newsletter are covered by a grant from Latrobe City Council.

- Maintained the **Toongabbie website** (<https://toongabbie.vic.au>) and **Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/toongabbie.vic.au>)
- Put together **Information Packs** for new and existing residents
- Supported the **Lions Twilight Christmas Market** with free face painting, acoustic music, and lollies for Santa to give out (our thanks to Latrobe City for providing the Christmas Grant)

Want to get involved?

The TTG is always happy to welcome new members who want to help keep Toongabbie a great place to live. You're also very welcome to come along to meetings without formally joining—no pressure, just community.

For more info or meeting dates, get in touch with **Cassandra on 0411 422 173** or email toongabbietg@gmail.com. We'd love to see you there!



Pictured: Face painting organised by the TTG

New Members Needed!

**The Wellington/Latrobe Lions need your help!
VOLUNTEERS DESPERATELY NEEDED!**



**Can you spare a bit
of time to make a
difference in your
community?**



Visit our website



Contact Colin Gardner on 0427 489 349

Lions Club of Wellington/Latrobe inc News

The Lions Club of Wellington/Latrobe Inc once again delivered a fantastic Australia Day in 2026.

The event included:

- Address from Councillor David Barnes
- Heartfelt “thank you” to the towns volunteers from MC Peter Feenstra of the Lions Club
- Flag raising by Glengarry Scouts
- Group singing of National Anthem and We are Australian with the Latrobe Valley Community choir and Mark Woods on the keyboard
- Additional songs by the wonderful choir
- Announcement of Toongabbie Citizen of the Year
- Free community breakfast
- Eating and chatting at the Village Green

Cassandra Tolsma was named Toongabbie Citizen of the Year for her volunteer work within the community. Currently, Cassandra is President of the Toongabbie Township Group and volunteers with the Toongabbie Fire Brigade.

Some of the achievements of the Toongabbie Township Group that Cassandra was been involved with, or led, include:

- Securing grants for printing of the newsletter
- Maintaining the website and Facebook page
- Assisting with obtaining the main grant for the cenotaph, and secured additional grants for the extra concrete and flag pole
- Obtaining the grant for the new tree guards at the Mechanics Hall which the Men’s Shed skillfully made and installed.
- Supporting the Lions Club Christmas market with live music, face painting and lollies for Santa to distribute
- Preparing Resident Information Packs for new and current residents



Pictured: Cassandra Tolsma, Toongabbie Citizen of the Year



Pictured: Australia Day Toongabbie 2026, Our Local Lions Team

- Helping where she could with community events, and helping to build connection with other programs such as the Heart Safe Community and Community Bushfire Connection program.

During her 10 years with Toongabbie CFA, Cassandra has contributed to the brigade through:

- Co-running the Junior Volunteer Development Program for young people aged 11-16. The program provides an opportunity for young people to learn about volunteer roles while having fun and building confidence
- Assisting with the successful grant application for an ultralight vehicle. This new whizz-bang 4x4 should arrive in early 2026 and assist the brigade in turning out faster and safer. The Ultralight will be a significant addition to the brigades resources
- General support during fire events, completing odd jobs around the station, helping with Santa Runs and other brigade events

Cassandra is a firm believer that we all have the ability to make wonderful, positive changes in the world around us. Our actions don't have to be enormous; they just need to have heart.



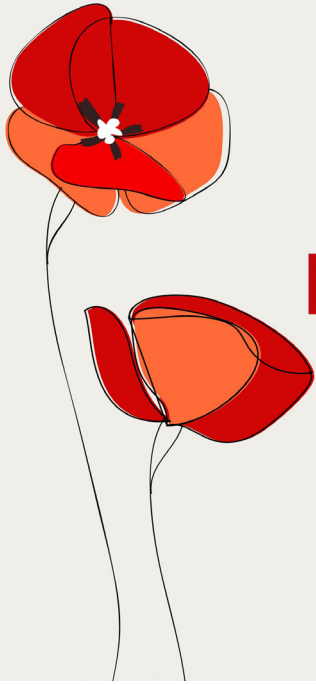
Pictured: Locals attending Australia Day 2026

Events

LEST WE FORGET

ANZAC DAY TOONGABBIE DAWN SERVICE

Village Green
Cnr Cowen and King St
Toongabbie
Saturday 25 April 2026
6.00am



JOIN US!

SUPER GROUP

SEVERAL COMMITTEES ARE NOW HAVING
COMBINED MEETINGS TO IMPROVE
COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION
ACROSS THE GROUPS.
EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO COME ALONG AND
CHAT WITH THE GROUPS.

**REC RESERVE
MEETING ROOM**
**SECOND MONDAY OF
EVERY MONTH 7.30PM**

Wetlands
group

Rec
Reserves
Comm

Mechanics
Hall Comm

Township
Group

St. David's Toongabbie

Services held every
1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays
11am Holy Communion

TOONGABBIE CFA

JUNIOR VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (JVDP)

2026 Dates
Time: 6 -7pm

Term 1
Feb 5, Feb 19,
Mar 5, Mar 19

Term 2
Apr 30, May 14,
May 28, Jun 11

Term 3
Jul 23, Aug 6,
Aug 20, Sep 3,
Sep 17

Term 4
Oct 15, Oct 29,
Nov 12, Nov 26,
Dec 10

Cost: FREE

You don't even need to buy a uniform! CFA provides personal protective clothing and equipment for all juniors (overalls, gloves, helmets). We also have spare steel capped boots that can be borrowed.

What can you expect from the JVDP?

The Toongabbie JVDP program provides a fun, safe and challenging environment for Junior members to learn the basics of being a volunteer with CFA. This includes learning to use the fire-fighting equipment, map reading, radio communication, fire-ground safety, fire behaviour and much more!



Must be aged over 11 and under 16 years to join the program.

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT CASSANDRA

0411 422 173 cassandra.tolsma@members.cfa.vic.gov.au

Want to know what we have to offer here in
Toongabbie?

Check out the Toongabbie website, community run for the community, you'll find local community groups, history on the area, events and news and of course all past and present newsletter editions.
<https://toongabbie.vic.au> or scan the QR code.



Toongabbie Men's Shed

The opening times of the Shed are every
Wednesday 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm, Friday
2.00 pm till required.

Any other time by arrangement.

For more information please contact Colin
on 0427 489 349.

Mother's Day Classic - Traralgon & Toongabbie



REGISTRATIONS

NOW OPEN!



COWWARR & TOONGABBIE
\$5 DELIVERY

PARMA

Wednesday

TRADITIONAL PARMA \$15
CHEESE, HAM, PARMA SAUCE

TROPICANA PARMA \$15
BACON, CHEESE, PINEAPPLE, SWEET CHILLI SAUCE, *Sour cream optional *

AUSSIE PARMA \$15
BACON, EGG, ONION CHEESE, PARMA SAUCE

TEX PARMA \$15
BACON, CHEESE ONION RINGS, BBQ SAUCE

BBQ MEAT \$15
SALAMI, HAM, CABANOSI CHEESE, BBQ SAUCE

Special \$15
With CHIPS ONLY

Delivery Available
5148 2700

Heyfield Pizza & Takeaway
4/58-60 TEMPLE ST
HEYFIELD

THURSDAY NIGHT SPECIAL

Buy 2 large pizzas to the value of \$44 and get a

FREE

Small margarita or garlic pizza

THE URBAN PIZZA OVEN, 50
CAIRNBROOK ROAD,
GLENGARRY

0411 435 920

COWWARR FOOTBALL CLUB

EVERYONE WELCOME!

EVERY FRIDAY
FROM 4:30PM

COLD BEER FLOWING
FREE POOL & DARTS
FRIDAY NIGHT FOOTY ON THE BIG SCREEN

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHT
THE NAKED SPUD FOOD VAN WILL BE THERE!

Take the night off cooking
Grab a loaded baked potato & enjoy the vibe!

BRING YOUR MATES, BRING THE FAMILY —
KICK BACK AND ENJOY YOUR FRIDAY AT THE CLUB!

Save the DATE

Dog Friendly event



Launch RAILWAY DOG

SUNDAY

22 MARCH

GLENGARRY STATION



Gippsland Plains
RAIL TRAIL

The closure of Toongabbie Railway Station has ended an era dating back to 1883. Until 1978 railway travellers could complete their journey via Maffra, or vice versa, and small stations in between.

The small motor train, known locally as the "Tin Hare", rattled along through the picturesque countryside; it crossed three major Gippsland rivers, the Thomson, the Macalister and the Latrobe. No longer is heard its shrill whistle which was the lunch and afternoon-tea clock for the country people. Now, Toongabbie Station has been closed completely and Cowwarr is open

only for goods traffic. A bus service picks up passengers for the Traralgon Station.

It was in 1883 that the railway first went through the area, one reason being the need of a traffic access to the booming gold town of Walhalla via Toongabbie. Supplies had then to be transported by pack horse, or bullock and horse teams. Passengers were provided with a Cobb & Co. coach. It was a busy scene around Toongabbie in those days and numerous teams were seen on the road every day of the week.

The first Station Master was Mr. Noonan.

Now the station at Toongabbie stands as a forlorn reminder of past days - no-one would dream that it was once the second busiest station in Victoria. Cowwarr railway waiting room and booking office have been demolished and a new small office has been installed. What will become of the historic little station at Toongabbie?

*- Snippets from our Bulletins
TOONGABBIE GOLD LINK ENDS*

Contributed by Mary Hague - March 1979

Sourced: <https://www.facebook.com/profile/100068947764797/search/?q=Toongabbie>