

DIAMOND CREEK ROTARY

Wow. Just Wow. The Diamond Creek Rotary Town Fair Did It Again!

40,000 visitors. 2,800 in the parade. One unforgettable night of fireworks.



What a day! The 2026 Diamond Creek Rotary Town Fair well and truly delivered, with over 40,000 people packing the streets, a parade 2,000 strong, and a fireworks finale that had every single face in the crowd tilted skyward. If you were there, you felt it. If you weren't, grab a cuppa, because you're about to wish you had been.

“The three best parts of being a Rotarian,” says *Nathan, one of our Rotary volunteers*, “are seeing the many hours spent planning, preparing and organising a project come to fruition; seeing first-hand the impact that project has on the community; and doing it alongside people who share the same values of community and Service Above Self.” And this Fair, twelve months in the making, hits all three out of the park. It takes an army of Rotarians, families, other clubs and community volunteers, all pulling together for one big day.



And what a day it is! The main street shuts at 10am for a parade of 2,800 locals, kindergartens, bands and community groups. By 2pm the CFA brigades are locked in their annual tug of war, always good for a laugh. At 7pm the torchlight parade rolls in with crews from right across Melbourne, and the crowd's roar for those volunteers is something else. Then at 8pm, the fireworks light up the sky to send everyone home with a smile. In between, there's a whole day of free fun for the kids, from reptiles and a petting

zoo to face painting and circus tricks, which matters even more with so many families watching their

budgets these days. As Nathan puts it: “even as membership in volunteer organisations declines around the world, there are a great number of people out there willing to step up and help. You just have to ask.”

Behind the scenes, the day started a lot quieter than it finished, according to *Linda, our Parade and Entertainment Organiser*. “Saturday's Town Fair began quietly at 6:00am, with the Rotary control tent the hub for sign-in, radios and safety vests,” she says, before stallholders, volunteers, SES and Rotarians from right across the district arrived and the calm turned into organised chaos. The parade gathering kicked off at 9.30am, and by 9.50am most groups were finding their way to the marshalling area without a hitch. This year's Lights, Camera, Action theme brought out some real creativity, Linda says, “from Minions to cameras and everything in between,” with five prizes awarded for the standout interpretations. Entertainment kept the energy going on the fairground stages from late morning right through to evening, but for Linda, the moment that stuck with her had nothing to do with the schedule: a man approached the Rotary tent after seeing the Polio Relay Baton and shared that his mother was a polio survivor, asking how he could donate to help eradicate the disease. “It was a powerful reminder of why Rotary keeps the fight against polio alive,” she says. She also loved seeing Rotarians from different clubs come together to march in the parade, “a great expression of what Rotary can achieve when we work together.”

“The Diamond Creek Rotary Town Fair last weekend was absolutely excellent,” says *Nina, a visitor who brought the family along twice*, once for lunch and stalls, then back that night for the torchlight parade, fireworks and rides. “Each part of the day had a completely different vibe, and both were fantastic in their own way,” she says, before naming the fireworks the undisputed highlight: “It was spectacular, and a wonderful way to finish the evening.” Her verdict on the organisers and volunteers? “A huge congratulations and thank you... your hard work made for a truly memorable community event. Well done!”



“The atmosphere throughout the precinct was vibrant and welcoming,” says *James, from Nillumbik Shire Council*, who noticed straight away how well this year's revised layout worked, improving the flow of the site without losing the community feel that makes the Fair so special. For James, the real magic is in the partnerships: Rotary, council, emergency services, local businesses, stallholders, performers and carnival operators, “demonstrat[ing] the very best of community spirit.” As he puts it, “it is a wonderful example of a community-led event that creates connection, civic pride and a sense of belonging.”



It wasn't all smooth sailing behind the scenes! *Dennis, our Stallholder Coordinator*, admits the team approached this year cautiously: “We weren't sure we'd be able to exceed last year's result,” he says, on top of tighter safety requirements and a rebuilt layout after feedback the year before. A tip-off from the Eltham Town Fair crew led us to a new software system, and after a few Zoom calls with its owner in Canada, he could see it had “real potential.” The final product was outstanding, and the stallholders were genuinely impressed,” Dennis says, adding that safety documentation and communication were praised by both council and stallholders alike. His stand-out memory, though,

was the sheer size of the crowds, with none of the usual quiet afternoon lull. Special mention to the Fair's 12-year-old feature singer, who wowed the crowd right before the fireworks!



“The Town Fair! It happens every year!” says Roger, Chair of the Town Fair Committee, with a laugh. “More risk, more action items from the council, bigger hoops to jump through, and the sore feet and backs. I'm not doing that AGAIN!” And yet, every single year, the same small band of volunteers rocks up with a smile and a lot of pride. “The local community look forward to OUR Town Fair every year,” Roger says. “There are nearly as many people in the morning parade as there

are spectators. It's a community event!” His final word says it all: “We did it again, like we knew we would. And we will all rock up next year to do it all over again.”

“Honestly, this one was by far one of the best events we've ever been part of!” says Angie, a stallholder with Luna Lemon, who was thrilled at how organised, well thought out and welcoming the whole day felt, and grateful to the committee for squeezing her stall in at such short notice. “Events like this don't happen without a huge amount of work behind the scenes,” she says. “We feel very lucky to have been a small part of such a fantastic day.”



Diamond Creek Rotary President Greg commented that “without the Town Fair, we would not be able to do all of the good that we do in our community. It is our main fundraiser, and whilst a lot of effort goes into the event, the rewards to our community in terms of social cohesion, cooperation, fun and joy make it all worthwhile. The financial aspect is a bonus!”

So there you have it: 40,000 people, eight perspectives, and one massive team effort. Bring on 2027!

Thank You

To every Rotarian, volunteer, performer, stallholder and partner organisation who made the 2026 Diamond Creek Rotary Town Fair possible, thank you. Special thanks to Nillumbik Shire Council, Bendigo Community Bank, the Men's Shed, the CFA, SES, Victoria Police and St John Ambulance for their ongoing support. See you all again next year!