

THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

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Explore the Otways It's worth it!

At this time of the year, the beaches around Lorne are hard to beat providing, the weather is good. If, however, you encounter a day when it is not beach weather, remember that when you are in Lorne, you are in a unique environment in which the rain forest comes down to the ocean and the forests of the Otway Ranges provide for some amazing experiences on those days when the beach is not so attractive.

Visit one or all of the 10 waterfalls within a 10km radius behind Lorne and take advantage of the majestic rainforest in our backyard. Take an easy stroll or get more active with over 50km of marked tracks.

Our backyard is bigger than you think and can take days, if not weeks, to explore. As we say, if it's raining, go to the rainforest!

To explore the waterfalls behind Lorne, grab a copy of the free Lorne Walks and Waterfalls map from the Lorne Visitor Centre, and ask one of the friendly staff and volunteers for suggestions.

If you don't mind travelling a little bit further, then the Redwood Forest near Beech Forest is a rewarding experience. These trees were planted in 1936 at the Old Aire Valley Camp. They are growing under ideal conditions beside the Aire River and have attained an enormous size in 50 years. The group planting is particularly attractive in the landscape reminiscent of the Redwood stands in California. This planting is in excellent condition.

Ross Bilton, a journalist with The Australian wrote about this redwood forest; "In a small corner of the Great Otway National Park in southern Victoria, beside the Aire River, there's a curious interloper among all the familiar native trees: a stand of majestic California Redwoods, 500 or so in number, their crowns soaring 65m above the forest floor. Roger Smith predicts

they'll one day be the tallest trees on Earth – but we'll have to wait a few hundred years to find out if he's right.

Smith, 76, grew up in the nearby town of Beech Forest and knows this patch of redwoods like no other person. "They're five years older than me," he says. "I remember when they were the size of broom handles." There was a displaced persons camp beside the redwood stand when he was a kid – the refugees from war-torn Europe worked in experimental softwood plantations, of which this was one – and he'd often go down there to score biscuits from the camp cook.

Smith, who followed his dad into a lifelong career as a forester, and in retirement wrote 'The Redwoods of the Otway Ranges', says these trees will reach full maturity at around 600 years old and could one day top 130m. That's around 15m taller than Hyperion, an individual redwood in northern California that's currently the world's tallest known tree.

Smith says the growth data shows the Otway redwoods are developing faster than those in their native habitat – a result of the Otways' deep, rich soil, abundant rainfall and summer fogs rolling in from the Southern Ocean.

Thankfully, this stand was never harvested – other fast-growing softwood species, notably radiata pine, proved more suitable – and has since been incorporated into the National Park, assuring its protection. These days, tourists marvel at the unearthly quiet of the place, the soaring vertical lines. "It's like being in a cathedral," says Smith, who lives in Melbourne now but still visits the redwoods two or three times a year. "I regard this place as my spiritual home," he says. Ross's article appeared in a series of stories under the banner "Heart of the Nation". The Redwood Forest is indeed a unique experience in our nation and well worth a visit. As we said at the start, explore the Otways, it's worth it!



A word from the *Chairman*

The Pier to Pub swim is such an iconic event and every year it continues to build with excitement and carries an aura like no other open water ocean swim, and this year was no different. In fact to the contrary, in what was arguably one of the most hotly contested and highly ranked fields in its 38 year history and a boilover was the furthest thing from anyone's mind – but the unthinkable happened.

With two Olympic Gold Medallists, Australia's Mac Horton and Italian Gregorio Paltrinieri, plus seven time winner Sam Sheppard, you could be excused for holding the strong belief that the 2018 winner would come from one of these three. And in the women's event six-time winner Harriet Brown appeared assured on drawing level with the incredible 7 wins by Sam Sheppard.

But everything didn't go to plan for those so heavily favoured and with 5300 entrants representing eleven countries around the world, including 43 permanent residents of

Lorne, the world's biggest open water swim on the most picturesque open water circuit delivered two major surprises. It was to be the swimmers of the next generation that were steal the show. In the Men's Superfish Hayden Cotter was first to cross the line and 15-year-old Lani Pallister was the first female to greet the judge – a super effort by both.

But it wasn't just the effort of the winners that was inspiring, it was that for everyone that successfully navigated the 1.2km to complete the swim, whether it was for the 30th time or the first, it was a mighty achievement on a day. It is also a great day for the Lorne Surf Life Saving Club that stage this event so well every year. Whether it be their youngest Nipper members that spend the day volunteering their time or seasoned active and non-active members voluntarily providing the professional skills required to conduct an event of such international recognition, our local Club can

be so mighty proud.

To stand and listen to President Peter Murrihy welcome a VIP guest list that read like a who's who of the Federal and State Parliament and other very special guests, was a strong reminder of the depth and breath to where this event sits. But with all the big welcomes came one very special to the fabric of our community. When one could be distracted from acknowledging grass roots support it was wasn't going to happen in Lorne.

The Surf Club President went out of his way to acknowledge the new Commodore of the Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club, Keith Miller, who along with his members, are such an integral part at the start of the world-famous course, and who stage the legendary after swim celebrations that rock the Lorne Pier precinct. – Well done Lorne!!!

Ian Stewart

Chairman - Committee for Lorne

COMMUNITY PROFILE

MEGAN O'CONNELL



A year as a Monash University exchange student in Johannesburg, heightened Megan's interest in Africa. "It was a bit of a culture shock but I loved it." During her time studying, with an interest in volunteer work, Megan helped out at The Oak Tree Foundation, an organisation to help young people. On completion of her Arts Degree, with majors in psychology and philosophy, and tired of study, she headed off on her own to backpack more of Africa and to explore Europe.

After a year Megan returned to Melbourne and began work with the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation. Four years later she took a job with Melbourne University's Advancement Office, first in administration then in fund raising, becoming particularly involved in the Student for Students Campaign.

Although Megan enjoyed her job, after four years she was tiring of sitting in an office. Her interest in fitness and healthy living prompted her to qualify as a personal trainer and join a friend's newly formed company, 'Liv Fun Fit'. She developed an interest in boxing and ran small group classes.

Megan has been coming to Lorne for holidays with her family since she was born. "Mum was pregnant with me while the beach house was being built. Lorne had always felt like a second home." She had a cousin working in hospitality at Bottle of Milk who, when she expressed interest in escaping the city, encouraged her to move down. She quickly found work as a waitress, loved "the energy of it and dealing with customers", and living in Lorne - so decided to stay.

That was two years ago. She has since met Tim. They bought a house and a dog, she set up three bee hives, keeps fit boxing a bag, reads and walks on the beach. She has more than likely been one of the helpful waitresses who has served you at Ipsos.

I have the feeling we will be seeing Megan around for some time.

CW

LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

January

19-21 **Deans Marsh Dog Trials**, Commencing 10am at Deans Marsh Reserve.

21 **Festival of Colours**, Colour, Music, Dance, Friends, Food. 11am-4pm at Lorne Foreshore. www.festivalofcolours.com.au

27-28 **Cadel Evens Great Ocean Road Race**

27 **Lorne Foreshore Market**, 10am – 4pm

February

3 **Victorian Surf Life Saving Masters Championships**, at Lorne Beach

4 **Victorian Surf Life Saving Senior Carnival**, at Lorne Beach

17 **Lorne Castle and Candle Competition**, at St George River

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