



The Complete Forrest Experience:

Don't leave town without crossing these off your list, or before planning your return trip!

- Explore the wonder of an Otways waterfall
- Experience our world class mountain bike trails
- Try a locally brewed craft beer
- Sample the best of paddock to plate
- Discover Forrest's fascinating history
- Come face-to-face with native wildlife
- Take home some Otways produce

To make the most out of your visit, contact the Colac Otway Shire Visitor Information Centres.

P: 1300 OTWAYS (689 297)
 W: www.visitotways.com
www.visitapollobay.com
www.forrestvictoria.com



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land in which Forrest now sits, the Gulidgan and Gadubanud, and pay our respects to the traditional Elders, past and present



Explore Forrest

OTWAYS VICTORIA



www.visitotways.com
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Mountain Biking

Forrest's mountain bike trails are among the best in Australia, hosting a number of premier mountain bike events throughout the year. The mountain bike trails in Forrest are not just a must-do activity, they are worth a trip in their own right. With over 60km of signed mountain bike trails, there are two main trailheads – Yaugher to the north and one on the main road at the south end of the town.

Graded mountain bike trails and micro fibre maps are available from local businesses and Visitor Information Centres. All the dollars raised from the sale of the micro fibre maps goes towards the trails fund!

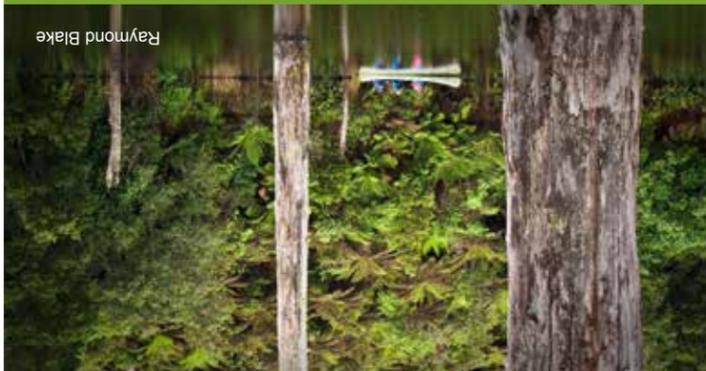
Detailed information about the MTB trails, the Forrest MTB Club, the Forrest MTB Strategic plan and the trails fund can be found at www.rideforrest.com.au

Fungi

Forrest Fungi Forays in Australia's Otway Ranges operate from March to September, which is the main Australian fungi season. Join a fascinating guided fungi foray from Forrest where you are likely to identify more than 10 fungi species!

Wildlife spotting includes bird watching, platypus tours, fishing and horse riding. Birdwatching enthusiasts are in for a treat as more than 150 species have been seen and recorded in the Otways region – experience cockatoos, gang-gang cockatoos, parrots, rosellas, frogmouths, kangaroo or echidna sighting on any of the trails. You also have a good chance for a koala at dusk. The best viewing times are often dawn and at night, the best viewing times are often dawn and through weak electromagnetic pulses. Mainly active sensing its prey (mainly flies, larvae and molluscs) platypus swims with its eyes closed underwater, short brown fur, a leathery bill and webbed feet, the elusive egg laying platypus in the wild. With dense, Lake Elizabeth offer a rare opportunity to spot the kookaburras and many more. Canoe tours on gang cockatoos, parrots, rosellas, frogmouths, kangaroo or echidna sighting on any of the trails.

Wildlife



Raymond Blake

The hiking trail ends at a viewing platform at the base of the falls.
 Take the shorter 500m return walk from the day carpark via the second bridge (20 min return, easy) or start the longer 4.6km return walk from the campground (1.5hr return, easy).
 The camping area at Stevensons Falls is perfect for adventurous holidaymakers and is budget friendly. Fifty free camping sites are available with about half well-shaded and other open sites set among oaks, pear, plum and apple trees. All sites are level but surrounded by beautiful steep forest. The camp sites are also well grassed and maintained by the local kangaroo population. Wood barbecues and picnic tables are also on site for visitor convenience.
 The downhill ride back to Forrest from the lake offers some of the best single track mountain biking that Forrest has to offer. You can also start your walk from the Lake Elizabeth carpark with a 1.5km return walk to the lake (easy) or a 4km circuit walk following the lake's edge (moderate).
 The elusive platypus can be found here - wake up early or head out at dusk to catch a glimpse of these shy egg-laying Australian natives, with this one of the few places on the planet to spot platypus in the wild! Camping is available at the walk-in campground (approx 100m from the carpark) next to river, where dogs and fires are permitted. Advanced bookings and payment are required year round: please plan your stay at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au
Stevensons Falls:
 A serene rainforest experience just a short drive south of the township in the Otways Forrest Park. The walking track provides a beautiful stroll along the edge of the Gellibrand River to the day visitor area. The track then continues across the river, through forest and down to the edge of the river where you can start to hear the distant roar of Stevensons Falls.

Walks and Camping

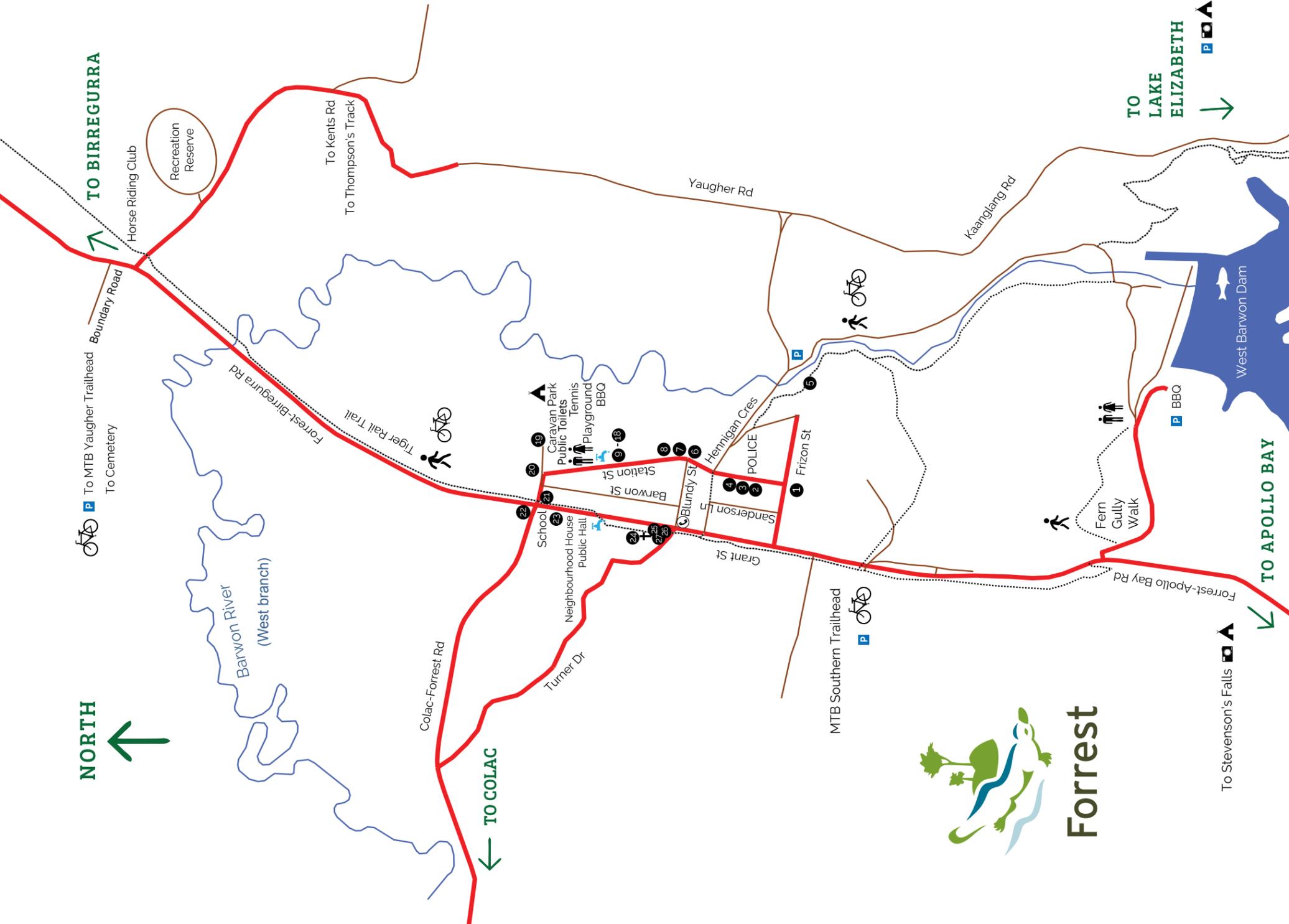
Lake Elizabeth:

Located 10 mins drive from Forrest and a hidden jewel of the Otways. Following one of the heaviest periods of rainfall on record in 1952, explorers were sent to find out why the East Barwon River had stopped flowing, to discover that a massive landslide had dammed the river and created a new lake! There is a 7km path leading from the town all the way to Lake Elizabeth, a demanding yet rewarding walk that can be done over the course of a day on a shared bicycle/walking trail.

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Forrest History Trail

- 1 Frizon sawmill** – site of one of the first sawmills in the township. The extension of the railway from Birregurra to Forrest marked the beginning of a whole new era of forestry in the Otways, thriving in the early 1900's and with the last of the mills closing in 2003. In 2006, the public forest areas were conserved as the Great Otway National Park.
- 2 Methodist Church** – site of the old Methodist Church.
- 3 Original community site** – the site of the original community hall. Dances, shows and performances were both popular and regular activities enjoyed in the first 60 years of the last century.
- 4 Odd Fellows Lodge Hall** – also known as the Buffaloes, the Lodge provided sickness and funeral benefits for members and was virtually a men's club until 1974.
- 5 Timber tram lines** – the railway from Birregurra to Forrest was completed in 1889 (and closed in 1957). From the rail-head, tramways were built into the bush to transport timber, some of which have been adapted to mountain bike trails. This is the site of the only visible remaining tram lines. Warning: steep track
- 6 Station Street** – before improved road transport, the railway station and timber yards were focal points of the town with the main road aptly named "Station Street".
- 7 Originally Henry's sawmill** – the Henry company had several sawmills in the bush south of Forrest and built some of the first tramways to transport timber to Forrest. Henry eventually abandoned the bush mills and built a mill on this site in 1948. The sawmill continued operating under various owners until 2003.
- 8 Mrs Frizon's post office and sweet shop** – this was a popular sweet shop for many years and later served as the Post Office and Telephone Exchange.
- 9-18** – see boards on site describing the former businesses along Station Street and the site of the Forrest railway station.
- 19 Sports ground and cow paddock** – the annual sports day attracted hundreds of people from the district and others coming by special train. Down at the river was the popular swimming hole and also a virtual town common for townspeople to graze their cows.
- 20 Terminus Hotel** – the current pub shares the same site as the original Hotel. The Hotel and nearby boarding houses were home to many timber workers as well as providing a hostel for visitors.
- 21 Blacksmith shop** – the Blacksmith Tom Curtis ran the coach service to Apollo Bay, with the Blacksmith shop also accommodating coaches and carts. In earlier days passengers transferred from the train to coaches which took them on the gruelling eight hour trip to Apollo Bay!
- 22 Former Catholic Church** – the difficulties of maintaining community services in a small town can be seen by the closure of its Catholic Church which could no longer be sustained.
- 23 School** – The School, once attended by up to 100 children' (as per Norm Houghton's History of Forrest & Barramunga), reminds us that before Forrest existed there was a small settlement at Yaughar where the recreation reserve now is, about 2km towards Barwon Downs. As Forrest grew, the church and school were relocated here.
- 24 Jennings' shop** – a convenient stop on the way to and from school, May Jennings Milk Bar is fondly remembered by many local residents.



25 St James Anglican Church - like the school nearby, St James Anglican Church was originally located at Yaughar on the property of Mr Alf Blundy across the road from the homestead. It was dedicated in February 1889 but unfortunately lost in a bushfire in 1906.

26 Former General Store - by 1927 the horse drawn mail coach to Apollo Bay was replaced by Tom Sim's motor service and from then on there was a need for auto maintenance.

27 A Changing Town - the arrival of the motor vehicle brought about many changes at Forrest. Logging trucks replaced the bush tramways. Cars replaced the rail service. The focus of the town moved from Station Street to the main road.

Tiger Rail Trail

Gadubanud and Gulidgan people lived in the Forrest area for thousands of years before European settlement and some of their descendants remain in the region.

In 1890 the town of Forrest grew up around the terminus of a railway line. The town was originally known as Yaughar until it was renamed Forrest, after Charles Forrest, the local Member of Parliament who was a tireless advocate for having the line built.

This sounded the charge for settlers, who under section 32 of the Lands Act 1884 - 90 took up their acreage for the great expense of tuppence an acre. Sadly the local lands department interpreted the Lands Act to mean that settlers had to clear their acreage of all timber, when in reality they were only permitted to clear dead or useless timber.

District saw millers were heard to comment in 1899 that the value of the timber cleared 'would have paid the national debt'. The 1899 Royal Commission into the Management of State Forests found that settlement in the Otways was a great administrative blunder and that the majority of the land should be reserved for watershed purposes and for milling timber.

Forrest was the largest traffic generator on the line for passengers and outwards and inwards freight. Passenger loadings were the highest overall on the line. Inwards freight was general supplies for the area, stock fodder, chaff and hay for the sawmill horses and road gravel. Outwards general loading was agricultural produce, root crops and hops.

Rail facilities were the most elaborate on the line. There was a departmental residence, a four road layout, dead end siding for the split timber traffic, a siding for a locomotive turntable, a 60 metre passenger platform with office, parcels shed and waiting room, a goods platform, two goods sheds and a six tonne crane. The Post Office was operated from the railway station office for over fifty years, with the Post Master also being the Station Caretaker.

Six timber tramways, in use from 1892 to 1939, delivered large quantities of sawn timber to the railhead from the bush to the south and west. Bullock wagons also conveyed timber by road and, after 1934, motor trucks performed this function. The sawmill companies built loading skids, store sheds and locomotive service facilities in the yard. Timber loadings averaged 8700 tonnes per year (almost 7400 cubic metres sawn) from 1899 to 1950. The highest tonnages were despatched from 1901 to 1912 and 1938 to 1942, with peak years being 1905 handling nearly 15,000 tonnes (12,700 cubic metres sawn) and 1942 totalling almost 14,000 tonnes. From 1947 two sawmills (Sharp's and Henry's) were established in the rail yard, and loaded their output direct into rail trucks until interruptions sent a large proportion via road transport.