

DORRIGO, New South Wales

New South Wales' Tidiest Town 2007 & National finalist 2008

Location: Approx 80kms west of Coffs Harbour

Population: approx 1 200

1 Welcome

DORRIGO is situated adjacent to a World Heritage listed National Park which contains one of the nation's most accessible and magnificent stands of lush rainforests famous for their exceptional natural beauty and international conservation significance. Perched on the eastern escarpment of the Great Dividing Range, DORRIGO features a host of historic facilities complemented by land devoted to agriculture and grazing. DORRIGO's Tidy Towns commitment is well established and has been recognised over the years due to the dedication and hard work of its members.

2 High School

DORRIGO High School students and teachers are totally committed to the school's environmental education programs. The school's Youth Environment Committee (YEC) assists in extending the awareness levels and understanding of protecting the environment. The program aims at involving children within and external to the school community to participate in extensive environmental initiatives. It complements numerous school beautification and improvement projects together with external community programs, such as the 'Adopt-a-Road' project. Congratulations to Ian Judd and his YEC environmental network.

3 Museum

DORRIGO's Steam Railway Museum is a great example of a group of volunteers with the foresight to collect, restore and share the delights of times gone by. The area is home to an extensive collection of railway memorabilia from around New South Wales and is one of the largest collections in the World. DORRIGO's Guy Fawkes Museum is also another great example of one of the numerous heritage restoration programs coordinated by the community. Living home to numerous artefacts, the facility is a significant example of maintaining DORRIGO's proud history.

4 Landscape

The DORRIGO World Heritage listed rainforest is a major drawcard for locals and visitors to the Plateau. Combined with Dangar Falls and the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside, DORRIGO is a popular tourist destination. Combined with the appealing nature of the town, DORRIGO has a unique charm that is more than welcoming. The town's community work in numerous partnerships to achieve a secure future, agriculturally, commercially, environmentally and sustainably. Farmers are encouraged to be proactive and farm sustainably with a commitment to quality and a holistic view to caring for the land.

5 Appearance

The Bellingen Shire Council continues to be supportive of all the voluntary work contributed by groups in and around DORRIGO. The active Garden Club members, whose average age is 74, work in partnership with Council's workshop team in maintaining numerous areas throughout the town. Council provides grants, technical support as well as in kind assistance to numerous tasks associated with ensuring the town continues to be well presented.

6 Alternative energy

DORRIGO's high rainfall has led to numerous innovative practices that have reduced water use and promoted sustainability. Leading example is small hydro electric turbines have been introduced and promote electrical self sufficiency in reducing reliance on generators for electrical produce which in turn reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Local company, Pelena Energy estimates that over 8 000 tonnes of emissions per year could be reduced using this approach.

Further highlights

DORRIGO plateau makes up part of Council's Environmental Management Plan. Management plans exist for the Chamber of Commerce, schools and numerous Government and NGO's. Many of these plans relate to one another ensuring an integrated approach to sustainability.

DORRIGO's population is approx 1 200 and has over 120 volunteer community groups committed to contributing to maintaining and developing the warm and welcoming ambience.

Extensive revegetation and restoration work has been completed in DORRIGO over the past year. Strong links have continued with National Parks staff and Landcare to promote sustainable practices of removing noxious weeds and revegetating with native species. Land holders are encouraged to fence off waterways and gullies and to plant trees to stabilise banks.

DORRIGO – Where mountains reach the sky.

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