

Heather Kolb receives Lifetime Achievement Award 2025



In this edition we would like to celebrate the life and achievements of Heather Kolb, Heather is the founder of Qii House Lorne and has featured regularly in our recent editions so many of you will need no introduction to the award winning service that she provides. In today's article celebrating her lifetime achievement award we will delve into the inspiration behind setting up her business and the challenges she's overcome over the years getting her to where she is now.

Heather launched Qii House Lorne on Christmas Day in 2016, however this wasn't her first choice of profession. Prior to this Heather had a primary background working in both the nursing and property development sector. As a child and in married life she has always been driven to find good inspired energy and calmness from the medicines of the forest. She was introduced to what has become known as Qii House by a local real estate agent whilst taking journeys down the Great Ocean Road during her widowhood in 2007. Heather was immediately captivated by its serene, pristine environment, fresh misty mountain air and rainforest canopy set in the heart of the Otway National Park. To Heather, it was love at first sight but she knew it was desperate for TLC. She immediately envisioned it as a place for renewal, relaxation and wellness through nature, a space for healing. Heather adds, "I had found my happy place. I had found my calling; your calling isn't something that somebody can tell you about. It's what you feel."

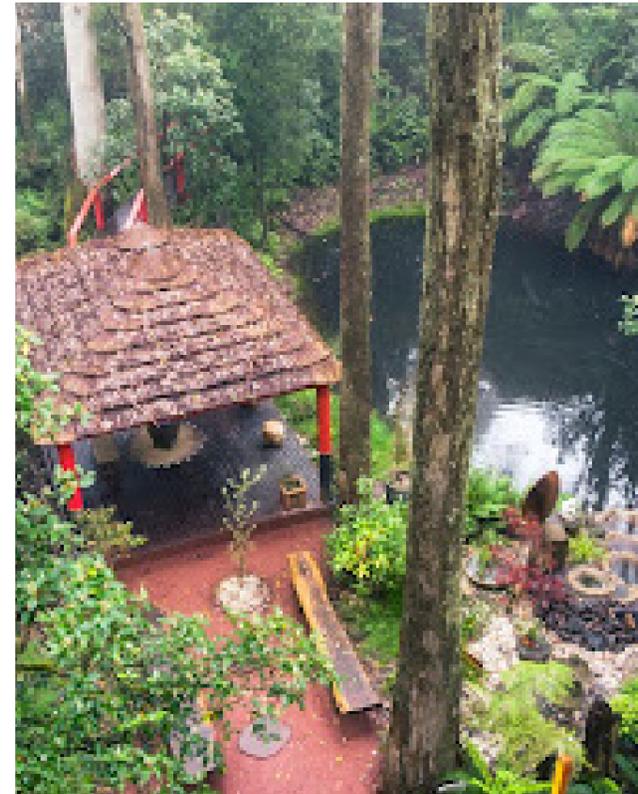
Heather began restoration work on Qii House in March 2015, and it became known as Qii House Eco Meditation and Relaxation Retreat. Heather engaged the original architect to design a small upscale retreat having further capacity to accommodate 24 persons, but faced council objections. This was part of a larger vision and involved construction of other buildings. Heather adds, "The evolution of Qii House Eco Relaxation & Meditation Retreat has been like a waking dream, a voyage of the imagination, a journey of self discovery and is a culmination of my life experiences. It is my greatest accomplishment during the course of my life."

Like everyone, we all face challenges throughout our life. During the outset Heather came across some unforeseeable roadblocks. During her time working in the property development sector, Heather lost a sizable proportion of her Property Development dividend through the reckless actions of a financial advisor who did not believe in her and without her authority ended up with 90 per cent of the distribution being invested within the share market.



Soon after it crashed and we went into a global financial crisis, Heather had no knowledge of the stock market which induced fear. Under her financial advisor's advice Heather borrowed the full purchase amount for Qii House knowing she could receive the distribution to fund the project. At the time she owed \$1.2m for the purchase of two Lorne properties. During this time Heather preferred to take responsibility and be accountable for her own financial decision making. She did so under the advice of her business partner and accountant who were concerned for her welfare early in her widowhood. During the process of making her financial advisor redundant he suddenly passed so she had a lengthy 6 year court case. In 2014 Heather was awarded a small portion of the losses and used that to start up the renovation.

As the vision to build on Qii House, Heather had to find other ways to boost cashflow she was already working 2 days a fortnight as a Registered Nurse in a managerial role and also invested in the Ipswich City Heart Trust Building giving her a monthly income stream.



Knowing this alone wouldn't be able to fund the whole project Heather decided to engage a stockbroker. Using the stock market app and studying their movement daily, she ended up becoming an active trader making £23,000 income in the first 5 weeks of trading.

With the funding coming in at a steady pace, in 2016 the first stages of the project at Qii House Lorne were finally completed and Heather was able to start operations of her short-term rental accommodation. Heather continued to actively trade in the share market up until 2018 with some success, making 40 straight profits which apparently was not usual. Heather adds, "The process required sharp focus, clarity, creative drive, passion and an ability to get out of my comfort zone and a strong self-belief system. I was able to listen to my inner voice, and to nurture my body on a daily basis at Qii House. It was a matter of pushing on, little by little."

In late 2019, the process to upscale Qii House Lorne started. Adding 3 tiny houses, a couple of pavilions, expand the Outdoor Bathhouse to include a large deck with outdoor shower, a billabong and extensive landscaping. What Heather has managed to achieve and overcome over the years is truly inspirational.

Heather empowers her guests to self care through development of a deeper self-awareness and wellness through nature. At Qii House Lorne Heather has created a space with Japanese inspired 'sit spots' peppered throughout the forest to facilitate the process. At Qii House Lorne, they have an INFTA Forest Therapy accredited walking trail onsite called the The Zaborin Walk, a place to sit and to forget amongst the trees.

This is the first and only one on private property in Australia, adding a unique experience that guests can enjoy during their visit to Qii House.

Having just received the Lifetime Achievement Award from us at E2 Media Heather expresses, "Receiving this award is monumental and a very proud moment, and I am very grateful to your team and for all the support along the way and to one and all who have been part of my journey. Thank you. No one who achieves success does so without the help of others. In ordinary life we hardly realise that we receive a lot more than we give. We can only be alive when our hearts are conscious of our treasures. I feel so blessed to have forged a fulfilling career path that is close to my heart and gives so much joy. Achieving this award gives increasing credibility to Forest Therapy and wellness through nature and Qii House. It also assists processes in achieving partnerships e.g. in researching forest therapy wellness outcomes further and in the possibility of contributing to knowledge. Thank you all kindly for giving us the opportunity to do so."

Looking to the future we asked Heather what she is most excited about, Heather "Professor Kotte has assigned a Master's student to research the effectiveness of the Zaborin Walk Forest Therapy trail using testimonials of guest experiences which is very exciting. I approached him to see if it would be a viable prospect which he thinks it is! The outcomes should lead to more focused marketing and also support the health benefits of forest therapy." Heather's personal journey serves as an inspiration to aspiring business leaders, demonstrating the profound impact of passion, integrity, and perseverance in achieving professional excellence.



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