

No 1 in ENDURANCE 1000

Molonglo Masters swimmer, Geoffrey Llewellyn, 79, has become the first recorded swimmer to complete the new Endurance 1000 program. Geoff recorded the last of his times for all 62 swims ranging from 400m to three 1 hour continuous swims in June. Geoff is a real "Endurance man" as demonstrated by his story.

Geoff says, I've always enjoyed the water but did not have much opportunity for swimming during my time in India, UK and later the Royal Australian Navy from 1948 to 1957. My first swims were in the Dee Why rock pool in 1942, no coaching or guidance until I joined Canberra North sometime in the 1980s. By that time all my imperfect practice had ingrained swimming techniques that remain with me until this day (I know no one else who goes backwards when kicking with a kickboard).

I soon realised that I was 'a long way in a long time' swimmer and that I enjoy both distance and open water swims. A lot of people may not know that the Swimming Council of the ACT held Canberra Day Aquatic carnivals with a 3.3km lake swim from around 1979 for at least 3 years. AUSSI Masters and the National Heart Foundations held similar swims in the late 1980s. By this time I was in AUSSI and went with Tanya Collier to swim two 8km open water swims in Port Noarlunga in SA and by dint of being alone in my age group, picked up a trophy. Sri Chinmoy lake swims started in 1987 with 5km swim non-wetsuit swims in Lake Burley Griffin. I've been doing these pretty well every year since but soon learned that Canberra had a couple of older swimmers who could go 'a long way in a short time'. By this time I was well into triathlons and they enabled me to excuse poor swim performances by claiming that I was really a triathlete – and vice versa.

Since joining AUSSI I've had a go at all the form strokes with little success but to the great amusement of my fellow AUSSIs. The Aerobic program has been fun and motivational and I've been lucky in swimming and timing regularly with Tanya and Bev Purnell who have also tried fruitlessly to correct my more glaring defects. More recently we've been joined by John Oke and Gary Stutsel– and a very sociable mob we are.

Remember, persistence pays – I haven't had to buy a new towel since we became part of Masters Swimming New South Wales thanks to the wonderfully useful awards for completing all Aerobics swims and now with the change to Endurance 1000 I have managed to complete them all again..