

# Now & Then



Issue 1, February 2012

Affiliated with Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc

## 2011

### Meeting Dates

- February 4
- March 3
- April 14
- May 5
- June 2
- July 7 AGM
- August 4
- September 1
- October 6
- November 3
- December 1

All meetings are held on the 1st Saturday of the month (except as shown above) and at 1 pm at the Old Lilydale Court House 61 Castella St., Lilydale.

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Contacts:  
 President: 9735 1661  
 Secretary: 9761 9192

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Issue 1 February 2012

## Official opening of the court house

On Sunday, March 4 the society is staging a double celebration - the official opening of our new home and its first anniversary in the Old Lilydale Court House.

Yarra Ranges Shire Mayor, Cr Graham Warren will perform the official opening at 2pm. A special guest of the society will be former

councillor Ken Smith and Susie Smith. As a solicitor Mr Smith often appeared at Lilydale Court and he battled the state government to keep the Court sitting in Lilydale but to no avail. When the government closed the court, Mr Smith started the prolonged fight to secure the facility for the community.

He was involved in the negotiations which led to the Shire of Yarra Ranges purchasing the building and preserving the district's oldest civic building.

An invitation is included with this newsletter. If you are planning to attend, please contact Dot Hill (9735 0368) or Lorraine Smith (9735 1104).

## Grant success

Earlier last year the society applied for a grant from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria . The grant was part of the state's History Week celebrations and for banners for societies to promote themselves and their activities at various events throughout the year. The society was successful and the banner was picked up in late November.

It is portable so can be taken when members give talks etc. However it is also valuable every day as we put it out under the front verandah so people can quickly see we are open- four times a week.

It has already attracted comment from our visitors.

The society thanks the RHSV and the Vera Moore Foundation for the grant.



*The society's new promotional banner.*

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## Research

Due to the increasing demand for research and the failure of some people to pay for the information provided, the society's executive has now introduced a new system to ensure any inquiries are handled quickly and efficiently and payment is received.

All inquiries must be in writing and go to our archivist Sandy Ross at [aross35@bigpond.com](mailto:aross35@bigpond.com) Sandy will contact the people involved and provide a written quotation. No research will be done until the quotation is paid.

Our charges are \$20 per hour.

Anyone with any queries can contact Sandy 9735 1661 or Sue Thompson 9761 9192.

## Talks, tours and walks

Anyone looking for a speaker or a different place to go should contact Lorraine Smith as the society has several members willing to give talks about their area of special interest.

These include Melba, aspects of Lilydale township and its history, Lilydale Cemetery, the Lilydale Express newspaper and Lilydale's military history.

Contact Lorraine Smith on 9735 1104.

## Speakers program

Lorraine Smith is presently compiling a list of people to approach as guest speakers at the society meetings or special evenings next year. If you have heard someone - not necessarily related to heritage - who you found interesting and entertaining, please call Lorraine on 9735 1104.

## On the airwaves

Listen to the Radio Station 98.1 FM. The society is on the airwaves on the second Tuesday in the month from 9.30am to 10am. The other societies on other Tuesdays are Ringwood, Knox and Croydon

## Keep up to date

If you want to find out more information about the society, our local history, its people and places or about Dame Nellie Melba go to:

[www.lilydalehistorical.com.au](http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au) or

[www.nelliemelbamuseum.com.au](http://www.nelliemelbamuseum.com.au)



*Leading Constable Linda Handcock is part of the Confident Living for Older Victorians program.*

## Stay safe and secure

As many of our members are on the "right" side of 70 years young and living independently, the society felt it part of its role to promote their safety at home.

One way was to invite Leading Constable Linda Handcock to our November meeting.

Ld Const Handcock is part of a team of police officers in the region who work with councils and other groups to promote the safety of older people who may be living alone. Her sage advice and information such as a resident's security checklist were welcomed by everyone.

## Opening Hours

The society will open the doors of the Old Lilydale Court House on Wednesdays, Friday afternoons, the weekends, and public holidays throughout the year.

The hours will be 11am to 4pm and Friday 1 to 4pm.

## Christmas party success

It was a beautiful day for our Christmas party and after the men erected the marquee and trestle tables on the back lawn the 35 members and their guests were ready for our sumptuous Christmas dinner of roast pork, turkey and ham served with an array of salads and condiments made by society members.

Cr Len Cox took time out of his busy schedule to join members for lunch and had the privilege of drawing the Christmas raffle.



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## Older members are vital to the community

Catering for 200 primary school children in one day takes some doing but the members of the society took it in their stride.

The grades 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 children from Lilydale Primary School visited the court house as part of their heritage studies.

To cater for such a large groups and their teachers we had members sitting a four tables in the court house and another three at various points in and around Melba park.

Split into groups the children walked to each point and listened as the guides highlighted the points of historical interest. Inside the court house the members had various objects for the children to play with. Members also explained how everything worked as many of the objects the children had not seen or touched before.

Afterwards, the society received 22 letters from the children thanking us for the day and highlighting the things they found interesting.

The children - in no order - liked the butter churn, typewriter, lunch box, washing day, the tannery, the old library, the swimming pool,

the former Methodist Church and the oak tree.

Caitlin's letter was typical:

*Dear Sue, Louise, Dot, Phillip, Val. Margaret and Ros,*

*Thank you for showing the grade 3/4s at Lilydale Primary School the Lilydale Historical Society.*

*I enjoyed the washing system and the typewriter and I leant that acorn will turn into a tree.*

**Anyone wanting to read the letters is welcome to call into the court house.**



## Travelling show children



*The students from Queensland School for Travelling Show Children sketching our building.*

Being on duty at the court house can be a lot of fun as you never know who is going to walk through the door. While everyone was gearing up for the Lilydale Show in late November, a group of children and their teacher landed at the court house.

They were the children of showmen who travel around Australia to attend various shows and festivals. Accompanying them are teachers from the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children. Their teacher explained he and his wife are teachers and they travel with the showmen up and down the country. Usually they have a large semi-trailer which is fitted out as a school room but at Lilydale the number of students was so small, so they just used their caravan and the great outdoors. The children varied in ages but all wanted to know about the building; about the society before going outside to study its architecture and sketch the building.

statewide

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## *From Pages Past*

### **Reports from the 1860s**

As more and more newspapers are digitised by the National Library through Trove, we are able to access information about our district, previously not readily available.

Below are just two of those items. Note the two different ways Lilydale is spelt.

We understand that the cattle around Lillydale are suffering severely from pleuro- pneumonia. Some of the stock-owners have been compelled to slaughter several head.

*(South Bourke Standard (1861-1873) June 2, 1863 pg 2)*


A fatal accident occurred on Wednesday morning at the corner of Bourke and Williams streets. It seems that a young man named Isaac Rourke, residing at Lilydale, was following a young horse when he fell off the animal he was riding, and died shortly after he was taken to the hospital.

*(South Bourke Standard March 23, 1866).*

Isaac Rourke was aged 21 and was the son of Denis and Ann (Bolton) Rourke. He had been in the colony for 15 years. The Lilydale Burial Register records his interment as being on November 10, 1866, seven months after his death. In the column "If burial registered" has been left blank on his Death Certificate. This is probably because while the cemetery site was set aside in 1861 it was not until November 1866 that the appropriate books and plans of the graves and paths was carried out and earlier burials were recorded from that date rather than the burial date.

### **First lady to sit on the bench at Lilydale**

Cr Gwen Hardy was the first local woman to sit on the bench at Lilydale. At the time, many thought she was the first woman to do so. However recent research reveals she was pipped by several decades - 1938:



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Concomitant with her annual vacation a visit to the Lilydale police court was made by Mrs Warren, J.P. of Hawthorn, and when the lady justice made her appearance last Friday she was cordially welcomed by Mr C. Hotchkins, J.P., who was supported by Mr D. Eales (for the bar), Senior-constable McIntyre, and Mr Woods (clerk of courts). Mrs Warren who accepted a seat on the Bench, stated in reply that she had had 37 year' experience with children's welfare work.

*(Lilydale Express March 25, 1938)*

**Do you know anything about Mrs Warren? If so email us on [inf@lilydalehistorical.com.au](mailto:inf@lilydalehistorical.com.au)**

### **IOW! SNOW! YES SNOW !!**



### **The day it snowed in Lilydale**

On July 19, 1951 Lillydale Shire and Lilydale township was blanketed snow.

The *Lilydale Express* reported on it on page 1 the following week:

Lillydale Shire was blanketed with a heavy and totally unexpected fall of snow last Thursday. The morning dawned much the same as other mornings at this time of the year - cold, but not unusually so, and with murky, lowering skies. Rain set in steadily about 10 o'clock, and if anyone gave it more than a passing thought, such as is customary at the bleak period, it was to say to oneself, "Another miserable day." What was it that happened, then, that caused the skies suddenly at about 11.30 to send down extra large feathery flakes of pristine purity? They fell softly and almost as straight as a die, and they continued their descent until later into the afternoon. Lilydale's main street looked as though it had a coating of opalescent sugar and harassed housewives were accordingly amazed and unbelieving. Melba Park reserve appeared to have been heavily whitewashed the

**Continued page 5.**

## Speaker program

The committee has decided to have guest speakers every second month. If you know of anyone who would be a good guest speaker, please contact Lorraine Smith (9735 1104).

Meetings, Events and Speakers					
Month	Date	Event	Time	Members	Non Members
March	3	Meeting	1pm	free	free
	4	Official Opening by Mayor Cr Graham Warren	2pm	free	free
April	14	Meeting - moved due to Easter	1pm		
May	5	Meeting	1pm	free	free
		Rob Simpson speaking on the hunt for the Mahogany Ship	2pm	free	\$2.00
June	2	Meeting	1pm	free	free
July	7	Annual General Meeting	1pm	free	free
		Catherine Turnbull will talk about the Laour men buried at Coburg Cemetery	2pm	free	\$2.00
August	4	Meeting	1pm	free	free

## New displays

Research is already underway for the new display panels to be erect in the April school holidays. If you have any photos or information you are willing to add to the displays please contact the members listed below:

### Families

Kerr family - Val Sheehan. Poon Kee - Sue Thompson

### On the bench - JPs

Ralph Goode – Dorothy Hill

Before the court - Sue Thompson

### Cemetery

Artists - Ernest Buckmaster and Blamire Young -

Lorraine Smith

### Main Street

Lilydale Hotel - Sandy Ross

### School

St Patrick's Primary School - Maree Phelan

### The day it snowed in Lilydale continued

large open area over the railway gates behind Moulded Products seems seasonably set of ice-capades, and the contiguous branches of the Olinda Creek paddocks and football ground appeared as scenes from Switzerland but with snow-besprinkled gum and weeping willow trees instead of pines. It was all so lovely while it lasted, and strange to say, the temperature seemed milder than when the day began. Snow frolics were extraordinary diversions, snowmen grew surprisingly in most surprising places; and the girls at factories in Main street pelted themselves and those who chanced by with snowballs; and really everybody had a most unusual time. It was a pity, though that the electric light was off on Thursday night for we nearly had to go to bed in the dark. Last time the Snow King called on us here in the township was in August 1932.

**Does anyone of photos of snow falling in Lilydale in 1932 or 1951?**

### Businesses

Olex Cables - Dorothy Hill

From Carts to Cars Lilydale's garages - Sue Thompson

### Melba

The Mitchell family - Mt Evelyn History Group.

### Can you help?

**After his death everything in Poon Kee's shop was auctioned and the proceeds sent to his family in China? Did you or your family buy any of the stock from his shop?**

For our display on carts and cars do you have any signs from any of Lilydale's garages we could photograph and us? Call Sue Thompson on 9761 9192.

### Forbidden apparel in public

#### Women

- \* A bathing costume
- \* Bloomers for cycling
- \* Skirts slit to expose ankles
- \* Bustle extension over 10 inches.

#### Men

- \* Detachable collar and neck tie removed from shirt
- \* Shirt sleeves unlinked and rolled
- \* Hair closely cropped (unless bald or have disease of the scalp).

*(From Rules of Teachers 1872 issued by M Wagner Superintendent September 15, 1886)*

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**Now & Then by email**

With the rising costs of paper and postage, the society is inviting members who are happy to receive their newsletter by email to contact Sue Thompson at [suethompson50@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suethompson50@ozemail.com.au) and I will email a copy to you. Back copies are also available electronically.

Lilydale & District Historical Society Inc  
P.O. Box 834,  
Lilydale Vic 3140  
email: [aross35@bigpond.com](mailto:aross35@bigpond.com)  
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[www.lilydalehistorical.com.au](http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au)

### Support your society - buy a book

Throughout the years, the society has continued its publishing program. Our program has always been aimed at promoting and preserving our history and also providing income so we can continue our many heritage activities.

You can help us by simply purchasing our books and adding them to your book shelf or giving them away as gifts to relatives and friends.

Our website [www.lilydalehistorical.com.au](http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au) has a complete list of our publications or alternatively, call into the court house where we have a display of all our publications.

- Melba A Family Memoir*, Pamela Vestey      \$20.00
- Reminiscences Volume 1                              \$14.50

### Your Membership

Members are the life blood of any organisation and that includes your society.

As a member you receive many benefits:

- Free access to our extensive archive of families, places and events in our community;
- Free access to our digital archives such as the Lillydale Express and rate books;
- Four issues each year of our newsletter

Now & Then by either mail or email

- Invitations to all our special events, talks and tours;
- Discounts on all our publications; and
- Opportunity to learn more about our local history.

Renew your membership or invite a friend to join our society today by filling out the form below.

### Membership Subscription 2011-2012 now due

**Membership Subscriptions 2011-2012 are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011.** (If you are not sure if you are financial, please ring Lorraine on 9735 1104 to check.)

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- Students (under 16 years) ..... \$5.00

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