



Farewell Jim Sawyer

Meeting Dates 2017

- June 3
- July 1
- August 5 AGM
- September 2
- October 7
- November 4
- December 2

All meetings are held on the 1st Saturday of the month (except as shown above) at 1pm at the Old Lilydale Court House 61 Castella St., Lilydale. Guest speakers start at 2pm.

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Sue Thompson

Sadly, Jim Sawyer, another of our members, has passed away leaving behind family and friends to mourn their loss.

I had the privilege of delivering the Eulogy at his service held at Lilydale Memorial Park on May 3 before many former employees, fellow farmers and local residents who remembered Jim's kindness, professionalism and love of the land.

Jim, the eldest son of Charles and Annie Sawyer was born in September 1928. He attended Box Hill High School after spending his primary years at Yeirng State School.

After high school he studied agriculture at Dookie Agricultural College which helped him cement his father's dairying and farming legacy in the Yarra Valley.

It was thanks to Jim Sawyer that the Lilydale & District Historical Society was formed several years earlier. In 1971 Maurice Seymour was the Shire President but it was Jim who pushed for the shire to celebrate its centenary in



Jim Sawyer and fellow Life Member Les Skate chat about life in the Yarra Valley during the presentation of Jim's Life Membership by LDHS vice president John Brown.

1972. A public meeting was called to compile a history of the shire and from that meeting the society was formed and helped with the research and development of *Lilydale The Billanook Country* book. Jim became a foundation member of our society and remained a member until his death. He actively supported our society in its bid to establish our museum in the former shire offices

in Castella Street and was only one of our two surviving foundation members.

He was made a Life Member in 2015 in recognition of his contribution.

To read my tribute, please cut and paste the link below:

http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au/Sawyer_Jim_Tribute.htm

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ANZACS

The society has now put up on line all the names of the local people who answered the call during World War I.

Our dedicated team of researchers are now completing the service records and family stories of our Diggers and each week more are being added to our website.

Sadly, we have ANZACS for which we have no information other than their name which was included on one of our many local honour boards. If you can

help us with more information please complete our special inquiry form.

To follow the progress of our ANZACS project, go to:

www.lilydalehistorical.com.au and click on the *They Answered the Call* link on the home page to see the listings.

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 events next year. If you have heard someone - not necessarily related to heritage - who you found interesting and entertaining, call Lorraine on 9735 1104.

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 or

www.nelliemelbamuseum.com.au

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**Contact: Judy Macdonald, mob. 0428263929
Judy is a highly valued member of our society as our librarian and indexer. Currently, Judy is heading up our book indexing team.**



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Another form of Melba's artistry

Out of the blue in February our Nellie Melba Museum website received the following inquiry from the United Kingdom.

"I have a large, though uncompleted, piece of crewel work by Dame Nellie Melba (with embroidered signature) which was given to my grandmother, Lady Lochore, I believe at some time between 1918 and 1923. Apparently they met on a ship when my grandmother was either going from or to Ceylon from Britain. Dame Nellie had done not quite half and decided she would be unable to finish it and so gave it to my grandmother who also did embroidery. However my grandmother never did any more as she did not do crewel work. Are you interested in this? I am clearing out our house and will otherwise probably send it to an embroidery guild or similar in the UK. There is also a large quantity of wool to complete it."

We quickly emailed back letting the donor know that our society could not accept the wonderful items as we do not collect textiles, but that the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum would be interested and ccd the museum into my reply.

Negotiations began and just before Easter the work and wool arrived at the museum. Staff were expecting a small piece but this work is huge - about 2.5m square. Staff invited us to call in and see the work which is truly magnificent. Textile expert Wanda



Melba's crewel work and the wools for it. The skeins of wool (above) are labelled showing where it is to be used.

McPherson and the staff are now busy doing research on the work which is the tree of life. It is a truly wonderful addition to the museum's Melba collection.

Workshops for Members

Following requests from our members wanting to gain new skills and learn more about the society's collection, we are holding cataloguing workshops once a month. This is an ideal way to meet other members, learn how to catalogue and make a valuable contribution to the society and the wider community.

The workshop will be held from 1 to 4pm on the following Fridays for the rest of the year:

- Friday, June 16.
- Friday, July 21.
- Friday, August 18.
- Friday, September 15.
- Friday, October 20..

- Friday, December 17.

Note: no cataloguing in November as we will be preparing for the Lilydale Show.

If you would like to join the group or want more information, call Phil Burton on 9735 3942.





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New interpretation boards for Silvan Reservoir

The society recently carried out some research and provided some images from our Silvan collection to Parks Victoria for its display boards at Silvan Reservoir.

While do a little research, the following article was discovered in the Lilydale Express which reported on the official opening of the dam on Tuesday, July 7, 1931:

In the presence of a party of commissioners and officers of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works on Tuesday, afternoon, the chairman of the board (Mr D. Bell) by moving a lever opened the main inlet channel to the new Silvan dam, allowing water to rush into the basin and thus augment Melbourne's water supply by a volume sufficient to cater for another 2,000,000 souls.

Excursions made by the commissioners of the Metropolitan Board of Works have a reputation for being characterised by a high degree of comfort, and Tuesday's outing was no exception to that comfortable rule. The commissioners were conveyed to the reservoir by a highly polished fleet of automobiles, after which they walked over part of the reservoir works, and then, after the opening ceremony, stimulated themselves for the 35-



Opening of a section of the Silvan Reservoir. 0651

mile ride home with the various refreshments invitingly arranged in the administrative offices.

The courtesy of an invitation to the presidents and councillors of the Lillydale Shire was not extended, an omission which has caused surprise and comment. As the land resumed is wholly situated in the Lillydale Shire councillors were naturally deeply interested in such a mammoth undertaking. They have co-operated with the board in every way possible since the inception of the work..... (*Lilydale Express* July 10, 1931 pg 3.)

Volunteers Honoured



Yarra Ranges Mayor Cr Noel Cliff congratulates society president Sue Thompson at the recent National Day of Thanks Mayoral Breakfast organised by Yarra Ranges Regional Ministers and the Shire of Yarra Ranges. Sue was one of 10 volunteers recognised for their voluntary work throughout the Yarra Ranges.

Cave Hill Submission

The Heritage Council of Victoria has issued a Determination to include the Cave Hill Quarry in Victorian Heritage Register. The society put in a detailed submission to the Heritage Council on the Register listing urging the filling of the quarry while retaining key elements which demonstrate the operation of the quarry and the protection of many heritage structures on the site.

Since community discussions were initiated by previous owners and operator Sibelco, the society has worked with the Shire of Yarra Ranges and various consultants evaluating various aspects of the site including its rare heritage features.

The society has also had discussions with the new owners of the site and offered to our assistance to help them secure the heritage of the Cave Hill for future generations to learn more about this vital early industry and its role in our development.

Our submission is on our website: http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au/events_lilydale_melba_yarra_valley.htm

Support our Sponsors

Our sponsors are local people who love their history and support us in every way. Their sponsorship contributes to our rent and court house costs. Without them we would not be able to remain in the Old Lilydale Court House. So please support those who support us.

Les's Shed Officially Opened

With the help of members family and friends Life Member and project manager Les Skate and Cr Tim Heenan officially opened Les's Shed.

Speaking at the launch Cr Heenan revealed his great passion for history and applauded the efforts of our society and its members.

The shed a labour of love for many members, is already doing sterling service caring for some of our research and non-collection items. The society also received a donation of a bookkeeper's safe by a sponsor Lilydale Locksmiths..

The society has purchased one set of shelving and has received a donation from two members which will go towards the purchase of a storage cabinet and additional shelving.



Members and friends at the official opening of Les's Shed.



Les Skate and Cr Tim Heenan jointly cut the ribbon to open our new storage shed.

Dates for the Diary

Saturday, July 1:

General meeting at 1pm followed by afternoon tea.

Saturday, August 5:

Our AGM followed by afternoon tea.

Saturday, August 26: Exploring Family History.

The society will again be holding a family history day as part of family History month. The one day event will be held at our home The Old Lilydale Court House 61 Castella Street, Lilydale. There will be two sessions 10am to 12pm and 1.30 to 3.30pm. The cost is \$5 a per person with tea and coffee provided.

Participants can either bring their own lunch or take a short walk to Lilydale's Main Street and purchase lunch from one of the many eateries. The presenters for each session will be announced closer to the date. As places are limited to book phone Lorraine Smith on 9735 1104.

Saturday, September 2:

General meeting followed by afternoon tea.

Saturday, October 7:

General Meeting followed by afternoon tea.

Saturday, November 4:

General meeting at 1pm followed by the launch of As It Happened Volume 4 and the society's new associated display on Coldstream, Yering, Gruyere and Killara.

Saturday, December 2:

Christmas party. General meeting at 12 noon followed by lunch at 1pm.

Permanent Recognition of Melba at Mount Morgan

Following Sue Thompson's visit during her research on Melba's 1909 Back Blocks Tour, Catherine McIntosh of the Mount Morgan Historical Museum in Queensland made contact.

Thanks to her efforts Melba is now featured in the museum's musical section. The framed poster contains the details of the 1909 visit and Melba's concert items.

Catherine has also organised a detailed story for the local Mount Morgan newspaper.



Proudly sitting on top of a piano is Melba's framed story of her concert at Mount Morgan on Wednesday, July 7 at the Mount Morgan School of Arts.

If undeliverable return to:
Lilydale & District Historical Society
P.O. Box 834, Lilydale Vic 3140

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 and I will email a copy to you. Back copies are also available electronically.

Lilydale & District Historical Society Inc
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Patron Visits Court House

During her holiday at Coombe Cottage our new Patron, the Hon. Saffron Foster and her daughter, spent a couple of hours chatting with the society committee and inspecting our facilities. Ms Foster was delighted to continue the tradition her grandmother Pamel, Lady Vestey established when she became our Patron in 1976.

Melba's 156th Anniversary Remembered

Members of the society spent a few minutes remembering Dame Nellie Melba's contribution to her country and her community on May 19th, the 156th anniversary of her birth at Doonside, Richmond. Flowers from members' gardens were put on her grave. Flowers were also placed on her granddaughter, Pamela, Lady Vestey's plaque. Lady Vestey's ashes are interred with her great grandparents David and Isabella Mitchell

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 2016-2017 now due

Membership Subscriptions 2016-2017 were due on the 1st July 2016. (If you are not sure if you are financial, please ring Lorraine on 9735 1104 to check.)

Name of Member: _____

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If a red dot appears on your address label your membership is due.

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