

# Now & Then



Issue 1 February 2016

Affiliated with Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc

## Meeting Dates

### 2016

February 6  
March 5  
April 2  
May 7

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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## Goodbye Brenda

Our society has lost another of our stalwart members with the passing of Margaret (Brenda) Crawshaw aged 84 years.

A resident of Kalorama since 1965 Brenda with husband Steve and sons Robert and John settled into life in the hills and became active in many organisations including the local school and the CWA.

In 1976 following the shock resignation of Keith Fraser, Brenda stood for the bi-election for the Shire of Lillydale just six weeks before the ordinary election were scheduled.

She won that election by a handful of votes and became the first elected woman councillor in the Shire of Lillydale. (Gwen Hardy was the shire's first woman councillor but she was elected unopposed in 1973).

Six weeks later she retained the seat with a larger majority. At both elections she was opposed by Len Cox.

Brenda was a strong advocate for the people and included the establishment of the Lillydale Library Service as a highlight of her time on council.

After council Brenda continued to be involved in the community and through the Lilydale Aged Care Council which built Tullamore stage by stage to the facility that now cares for so many aged people in Montrose.

Brenda was one of those people who loved a challenge. Words such as "it can't be done" didn't exist for her. It was "this is how, can we do it?"

After Steve's death 25 years ago, Brenda joined the Ringwood War Widows and was its president for many years. Legacy and Probus were other interests for Brenda.

Always interested in



Brenda Crawshaw at our 2015 Christmas party.

history, Brenda was a member of our society for many years and was a regular at our meetings.

Brenda passed away on January 3, 2016 and is survived by sons Robert and John and grandchildren Joseph, Sally, Rusty, Scott and Jessica. Sue Thompson

## First Meeting of 2016

At our first meeting of the year we will have a special Life Membership presentation to long time member Jim Sawyer.

The presentation will be followed by a talk by landscape architect John Brown on Melba's two makeovers of the Coombe Cottage Garden 1910 and 1927 which are featured in our current displays.

The presentation will be at 2pm after our general meeting. Afternoon tea will be provided.

## 75 years of funeral care

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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.

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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](http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au) and click on the *They Answered the Call* link on the home page to see the listings.

### 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)

## Volunteer Awards

Federal member Tony Smith presented society members Evelyn Tull and Phil Burton with Casey Community Volunteer Awards at a special morning tea in December. Both have been society members for many years and work tirelessly doing research, duty and promoting the heritage of our region.

### 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, call Lorraine on 9735 1104.

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# Society negotiates new licence



affordable options which we will put to our members at our regular monthly meeting on Saturday, February 6 which we hope will ensure our society can continue to call the Old Lilydale Court House home.

## Society's alternative

The society has now advised the council that as the U3A uses the facility 3½ days a week and will contribute 25% of the utility costs, we also use it 3½ days a week so will also contribute the same - 25 per cent of the costs.

The council with its central booking service can organize groups wanting to book the court house during the evenings to recover the remaining costs.

We are awaiting council's reply.

## Wonderful Support

The society has been overwhelmed by the groundswell of support we have received from individuals, historians, heritage groups, the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and the local media.

In his letter to the shire's CEO, Associate Professor Don Garden president of the FAHS wrote that "the Lilydale society is one of the most hard-working and successful in Victoria and has won a number of awards that recognize its work, especially its website and digital programme. It is highly regarded and I often cite it as an exemplar society."

This support shows how much communities across the state value their history and the work of historical societies.

## Background

When in 2010 the Shire of Yarra ranges agreed to allow the society and U3A to share the occupancy of the Old Lilydale court House it was to be on a peppercorn rental plus we pay all the utility costs.

However, on further investigation the shire discovered that in 2009 and 2010 the utility costs totalled \$10,000 during the occupancy of the staff of the Yarra Ranges regional Museum. The costs were electricity bills of \$2750.00 for July quarter and \$3437 for the October quarter. These costs were due to heaters installed to overcome the difficulty of heating the 1876 building which features 30ft high wood lined cathedral ceilings.

The council recognised we could not pay those sort of costs so agreed to a fixed amount of \$1200 a year plus a 3% CPI increase while the U3A paid \$800 and they used the facility 40 per cent during the week and we used it the remaining 60%.

The shire also agreed to allow us to rent the court house out on the times we weren't using it to help us fund the annual charge and generate income for heritage projects.

In August 2015, the society contacted the shire of Yarra ranges wanting to meet and talk with staff about our new licence and also discuss a series of "housekeeping issues" we wanted addressed.

Numerous emails back and forth resulted and, despite promises to meet, there was no meeting until November 25, 2015 when shire staff came to the Old Lilydale Court House to talk about the new licence they had sent us the week before.

This licence included a \$270 annual licence fee plus us paying 75% of the utility costs (\$4000) which amounted to a total cost to the society of over \$3,000 a year. U3A would pay the other 25%.

Suddenly the cost of being in the old Lilydale Court House has risen from \$1300 in 2015 to over \$3000 or 138% in 2016. We were told this was council policy and was not negotiable.

We told them we did not have that money and wouldn't pay. After much lobbying, press coverage and community support via our Facebook and Google+, your committee met with council staff and great progress was made, particularly ways of reducing the utility costs in such a special, historic building.

Issues with the Licence Agreement and its conditions were discussed at length and agreement reached on most items. The shire has also agreed to investigate a number of options to reduce the utility costs and will report back to us in a couple of weeks.

Everyone appreciates the unique design of this 1876 building which has a large open space and 30ft high cathedral ceilings which means higher than usual energy costs. With the shire, we are now exploring alternative



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.

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For the latest news, listing of events and our publications, go to our website at

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

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Lilydale Historical Society

**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 2015-2016 now due**

**Membership Subscriptions 2015-2016 were due on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015.** (If you are not sure if you are financial, please ring Lorraine on 9735 1104 to check.)

Name of Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Membership .....	\$25.00
Single membership .....	\$20.00
Pensioners .....	\$15.00
Students (under 16 years) .....	\$5.00

Amount enclosed: \$ .....

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