

# Now & Then



Issue 1, February 2013

Affiliated with Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc

## 2013

### Meeting Dates

- February 2
- March 2
- April 6
- May 4
- June 1
- July 6 (AGM)
- August 3
- September 7
- October 5
- November 9
- December 7

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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*Lilydale & District Historical Society*  
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 Lilydale Vic 3140  
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 or  
[suethompson50@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suethompson50@ozemail.com.au)

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

Contacts:  
 President: 9735 1661  
 Secretary: 9761 9192

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Issue 1 February 2013



*Above: Sue Thompson helps Val Sheehan launch our photo galleries.*

*Below: Sue Thompson explains the project.*

When launching the society's Faces, Places and Events photographs on line octogenarian Val Sheehan showed anyone can use a computer.

With a few minutes spent explaining what a mouse was and how to click it to launch the new galleries pages, Val expertly launched the society's latest project with one mouse click

Anyone can now go onto our site and sit and look at more than 180 images from our collection of over 4000 negatives. Progressively more images will be added to the various galleries. The project was funded by the Shire of Yarra Ranges and the society and the work carried out by our Gold sponsor Paradigm4.

**It only took one click**



**Anyone wanting to look at our photos should go to [www.lilydalehistorical.com.au](http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au) and click on galleries on the home page.**

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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.

## Gun Alley project

The society is now collecting information and photographs of the families and homes in John Street area locally known as Gun Alley.

The photos can be of families, businesses, homes and people along John Street from the Olinda Creek to Hutchinson Street.

If your family lived there and you have information or family photos you would like to make available for the project, please call or email Sue Thompson 9761 9192 [suethompson50@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suethompson50@ozemail.com.au)

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

## 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.

## Putting heritage on the tourism map

For the last couple of months members have been working with the Shire of Yarra Ranges' Donna Donovan of the Economic Development unit and Yarra Valley Tourism on the information to be included in the upcoming visitor's brochure of Lilydale township.

Township heritage walks have been included as Lilydale has always been the centre of commerce and government since it was first settled. Features such as Lillydale Lake have also been included.

It is a brochure many of our members have been seeking for a long while as it is so difficult to give people directions without a map.

## Changed meeting dates

Please note that the society has had to make a couple changes to our meeting dates. The dates for our April and November meetings will be April 6 and November 9 due to Easter and Melbourne Cup weekend respectively.

## On the airwaves

Listen to us on 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.

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## Opera at the court house

The society is discovering the court house has many uses and enormous potential.

What started off many years ago as an inquiry handled so expertly by Ruby Kwijas turned out to be a day those present will never forget.

After Ruby supplied Christine Chamberlain information about her great grandfather Sgt William Waters, the family starting searching the world for information. Earlier this year, Christine approached us and we offered to mount a special display on Sgt Waters who with his family of 11 children moved to Lilydale in the 1890s. As the local police sergeant the family lived in the house next door to the courthouse. His children went to the Lilydale State School and the family worshipped at St John's Church across the road from the school. Sgt Waters would have appeared before the bench every time it sat during his tenure at Lilydale.

Sadly on Christmas morning 1891, two of his children drowned in a clay pit water hole in Beresford Rd – a tragedy that stunned the township.

To celebrate the family's time here the 15 surviving family members organised a special re-union held at the court house. After lunching at the Harvest Café the family walked up the hill and took over the court house. Several speeches from the bench were made before one member, a former Opera Australia singer and John Brownlee Vocal Scholarship winner, Russell McGregor, burst into song as a tribute to Dame Nellie



*Re-union organiser Christine Chamberlain and Russell MacGregor during the Waters family reunion.*

Melba who had taught his teacher's teacher using the Melba method.

He sang the Prologue to *Pagliacci* and proved acoustically the court house would make a wonderful venue for Music in the Court House. It was a wonderful few moments no-one present will ever forget.

Everyone stood and listened in stunned silence as the walls and roof resounded to his wonderful singing. He was captured on video and a copy has now been added to our collection. Perhaps it's time to organise Opera in the Court House as a fund-raiser for the society. The acoustics were perfect as were the venue.

## For the diary

The society's guest speakers for the first half of the year will be Ron Bell and Jim McMinn.

Ron Bell contracted polio twice as a child. He will share his story and the affects the disease is still having on his life many years later.

He will be speaking on Saturday, March 2 from 2pm.

Jim McMinn has been a volunteer at the Healesville Sanctuary from many years. He will talk about his experiences and the history of the sanctuary.

He will be the speaker on Saturday, May 4 from 2pm.

The cost is free to members and a gold coin donation for non members.

For more details, call Lorraine Smith on 9735 1104.

## Leave them on

The Lilydale electric light committee recommends that street lights in Lilydale be kept burning on Saturday nights until 11.30pm.

(From the Shire of Lillydale Secretary's report published in the *Lilydale Express* July 27, 1923 pg 3.)

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If undeliverable return to:  
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 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](mailto:suethompson50@ozemail.com.au) and I will email a copy to you. Back copies are also available electronically.

**Christmas luncheon.**

The society again had 38 people attend its traditional roast turkey Christmas lunch. Also present for the lunch were three possible future members Lynn Wales' granddaughter Violet and Sue and Wal Thompson's grandsons Joshua and Ashton. It was great to see so many of our members attend and what a crew we had in the kitchen afterwards washing and drying dishes and cleaning up. Thanks to everyone who contributed a bowl of salad or dessert. In all the society made a profit of \$208.

*Top right: All ages enjoy a party just ask Ashton, Violet and Joshua.*



*Bottom right: After a party the clean up has to be done. Phil, John, Lynn and Dot were part of the kitchen crew.*



*Below: It's time for a natter with friends Les, Joan, Val, Mary and Trevor.*



Photos: Wal Thompson

**Membership Subscription 2012-2013 now due**

**Membership Subscriptions 2012-2013 were due on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012.** (If you are not sure if you are financial, please ring Lorraine on 9735 1104 to check.)

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

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

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

- Family Membership ..... \$20.00
- Single membership ..... \$15.00
- Pensioners ..... \$10.00
- Students (under 16 years) ..... \$5.00
- Amount enclosed: \$ .....

**SEND TO:**  
 The Treasurer  
 Lilydale & District  
 Historical Society  
 P.O. Box 834,  
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