

Now & Then



Issue 3 August 2013

Affiliated with Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc

2013

Meeting Dates

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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Issue 3 August 2013



RHSV President, Associate Professor Don Garden (right) with Sandy and Hazel Ross.

Sandy receives RHSV Award of Merit

At a special function on July 14, the Royal Historical Society of Victoria's President, Associate Professor

Surplus History Sale

As its contribution to this year's History Week (October 20 to 27), the society is staging a weekend selling surplus history brochures, publications, pamphlets, newspapers, special edition newspapers and magazines which are duplicates and therefore surplus to the needs of our

Continued Page 2.

Don Garden, presented Sandy Ross with the RHSV Award of Merit in recognition of his long service to local heritage.

Sandy is the fifth member of the society to receive the award. The others were Jack Lundy-Clarke,

Leigh Blackburn and Netta and Neville Lord.

Don Garden spoke of Sandy's untiring work for the society since its inception in 1971.

A copy of the society's nomination is published on page 4.

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HERITAGE & HERITAGE FUNERALS

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.

Recalling the Past

As our contribution to Seniors Week, the society is staging Recalling the Past and will put out a range of household items for people to pop in, have a look at, have a cuppa and chat about how they used them in earlier times. People can also bring along photos etc to show to society members.

Recalling the Past will be staged on Friday, October 11, from 1 to 4pm; Saturday October 12 from 11am to 4pm and Sunday, October 13 from 11am to 5pm.

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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archive. Prices start from just \$1 and will be a paradise for historians, lovers of history and the district and ephemera collectors.

The Surplus History Sale will be staged on Friday, October 25 from 1 to pm; Saturday, October 26 from 11am to 4pm and Sunday, October 27 from 11am to 4pm.

Society members will also be on hand at the Upper Yarra Museum Open Day from 11am to 4pm on Sunday, October 20. For any queries on the above, contact Lorraine Smith on 9735 1104.

Gun Alley project launch

Our Gun Alley Project will be launched at a special event to be held on Sunday, November 24 from 2pm. The launch will see the unveiling of Gun Alley online; our new display, book and ebook.

This has been a huge project with many members contributing valuable information and research hours.

The project has amassed 350 images and documents and almost 100 stories of families and life. All the images and documents have been digitised and added to our collection. This project has been made possible through a grant from the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities Your Community Heritage Program.

September speaker

Member John Brown will talk about his family history. John is a descendant of the Murphys, Mangans and many other early settlers of Lilydale.

He will also read his mother's story about the Murphy's and the memories of his aunt growing up at the family home *Woodside*.

Changed meeting date

The society has changed our meeting date in November to November 9 due to the Melbourne Cup weekend.

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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Putting walking tourism on the map

It has taken nearly two years but at last Lilydale has its first self-guided walking map featuring the town's rich heritage and points of interest.

John Brown and Sue Thompson worked closely with Donna Donovan from the Yarra Ranges Economic Development Unit and Yarra Ranges Regional Marketing providing information, advice and suggestions. While ideal for the local people to walk around their history, the map is designed for visitors wanting to explore the town by road or train.

Yarra Ranges Mayor Jim Child launched the map, fittingly in the centre of town at the War Memorial. He congratulated the society on its wonderful contribution. Representing the society at the launch were Sue Thompson, John Brown, Phillip Burton and Maree Phelan.

The walks include Melba, the Main Street, Rail Trail and Lillydale Lake.

Copies are available from the Old Lilydale Court House, the shire and businesses throughout the town.

Right are: Sue Thompson, Alister Osborn, Donna Donovan, Cr Maria McCarthy and Mayor Cr Jim Child.



The death knell for Detroit

It is not often society members are dumb-founded but the recent talk by Brian Churchill from the Model A Ford Club, did just that.

His talk was centred on Detroit the former automotive powerhouse of America. All the manufacturers had huge operations there – Ford, Chrysler, General Motors to name just three. They employed thousands and the plants worked day and night producing automobiles.

A visit today shows a very different picture. The plants are empty and vandalized; the workers have gone; shops and offices sit empty. Detroit City council recently filed for bankruptcy because it didn't have enough money to maintain the buildings and the city.

Through his slides, Brian showed the decline which started with the racial riots and lock-outs of the 1970s. The car makers decided it was time to diversify and built plants throughout the country rather than manufac-

ture solely in Detroit. It was the ultimate death knell of Detroit.

Kelly Phillips Erb, Contributor, Forbes magazine wrote: Last month, Detroit became the largest U.S. city in history to file for bankruptcy. Nearly 3,504 pages of actual or potential creditors were included in court papers: the number of creditors tops 100,000 and the amount owed is more than \$18 billion. The city's anticipated budget is only about \$1.1 billion. It's a stark contrast from just sixty years ago when the city was still booming: it was the fourth largest city in the country; Ford and Chrysler ruled the roadways; and Motown was king.

Anyone wanting to look at or order our photos should go to www.lilydalehistorical.com.au and click on galleries on the home page. We now have Paypal so can sell photos all around the world.

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RHSV Award of Merit Nomination of Alexander (Sandy) Ross

Sandy Ross is the only surviving foundation member of the Lilydale & District Historical Society Inc. which was formed in 1971.

He has served on the society's committee in various capacities since that time – Archivist; Vice President and President (since 2001).

Photographic Collection

As the society's Archivist he combined his passion for photography with local history to borrow and copy photos relating to the then Shire of Lillydale which encompassed Lilydale and many surrounding townships. The result is a negative photographic collection of about 4000 images. He is still adding more to our collection as he photographs the changes occurring in the area today.

Sandy moved to the Lilydale township in the 1950s, married into a local family and began taking photographs particularly of the township from the early 1970s.

Every few years he goes along Lilydale's Main Street and takes photographs which form a wonderful snapshot of the changes that have occurred over time.

With the late Leigh Blackburn, the society's foundation president, Sandy was on the special history committee involved in the research and publication of the former Shire of Lillydale's histories on Lilydale, Montrose and Mooroolbark providing photographs for all publications.

Heritage Support

He also served on the Lilydale Museum Board of Management from 1989 until it was wound up in 2010.

Sandy has been instrumental in putting all of the local newspaper – the *Lilydale Express* - since 1886 through to the 1960s on microfilm. These have been made available to

researchers, history buffs and people wishing to trace family history. These newspapers have now been digitised at the society's expense to make them more user-friendly.

Sandy is a leader of tours of the Lilydale Cemetery and is extremely knowledgeable on the identities and history of its residents. He co-ordinated the erection of 28 markers telling the stories of pioneers buried at the cemetery. The project was jointly funded by the Lilydale Cemetery Trust, Matthews Funerals and the society.

He also carries out research for people wishing information about their families; homes or buildings in Lilydale.

Protecting our history

Not one to shirk a fight, Sandy has been involved in several battles to protect and enhance the heritage of the area including retaining the trees in Main Street; opposing the building of a mausoleum at Lilydale Cemetery which would have destroyed unmarked graves and succeeded in having a cairn and plaque replace the Oliver Memorial Gates after a council truck knocked them down.

Publications

Sandy has written four books and collaborated in many more drawing from his valuable collection of local photographs gathered over many years.

His books are: *Bricks by the Million; The Growing History of Lilydale's Trees; 30 Years of History (1971 – 2001) -The history of Lilydale & District Historical Society; and What's In a Name? Street Names of Lilydale.*

He has collaborated with other members on: Lilydale Cemetery Tours – 3 booklets and *Our History Our Heritage Walk.*

Court House Report 2012 – 2013 tabled at our AGM

Vice President Lorraine Smith read her annual Court House Report (July 1 2012 to June 30, 2013).

Activity	Number	Hours	People
Volunteers on duty at the court house		2233	
Visitors to the court house			598 people
Town walks	1	2	7 people
Car tours	3	9	31 people
Cemetery tours	3	6	55 people
Talks at court house	3	6	43 people
Talks at other venues	16	48	726 people
Christmas party	1	3	41 people
Flicker Launch	1	2	25 people
Thank you volunteers	1	2	17 people
Lilydale Show exhibition	1	17	
Research requests		9	
Research done at court house		220	
Gun Alley research		400	
Other research		500	
Totals:	30 events	3457 hours	1543 people

The above figures do not include our monthly meetings which have an average attendance of 18 people nor does it include the number of members involved in the various activities.

President's Report

Sandy Ross presented and read out his President's Report at our AGM:

We are again enjoying, and appreciative of having use of the Old Lilydale Court House as our home.

Our photographic displays have created much interest and enjoyed by members and visitors. The photographs and research material gained is proving a most valuable asset for the Society.

One of our displays on Sergeant Waters created such interest that a family reunion was arranged by family members and held in the Court House.

In December we received a grant to start a project called "Gun Alley". This area was located in John Street from Hutchinson Street to the creek. This is proving to be a very intriguing and interesting project.

A donation from Ian Pollock of \$250 was received and used to buy a cabinet. To mark his generosity we have put a plaque on the cabinet dedicated to his late parents. We were also recipients of three generous donations from Yarra Ranges Councillors.

A book on the history of the Lilydale Fire Brigade, written by Robert Bethell, was launched and a copy was purchased by the Society. It is most informative with photographs and information to interest all.

Our display of old and present day photographs at the Lilydale Annual Show in November 2012 was well received and created a lot of interest. Ray Oliver had his model of "Oliver's Grocery Store" in Main Street, Lilydale, on display, which also received a lot of attention.

Les Skate was presented with a Life Membership Certificate in appreciation of his work over the years and his assistance in setting up the Society in its new home. Certificates of Appreciation were also handed out to 19 hard working members who had volunteered their services for duty during the year.

The Montrose Historical Society has closed down and they have handed over their collection to Lilydale for safekeeping. They have also transferred their funds to Lilydale and we have welcomed Jeanette Dobson to our Committee and all members are welcome to attend our meetings.

It was decided at our February meeting to do research on the names of early subdivisions. This task has been allotted to Jeanette Dobson and Sandy Ross.

We have also appreciated Judy McDonald, a trained librarian, who is cataloguing our library collection.

Fifteen copies of Jack Lundy-Clarke's book "Mountain of Struggle" have been reproduced and twelve copies have already been sold.

We will be taking part in the Museum of Lilydale's "Pop Up Museum" that will be held at various venues throughout the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

A second computer has been obtained and this will

be used mainly to record our extensive photographic collection, thanks to Sue for getting this organised.

The Court House will be used by the Lilydale Lions Club for their monthly meetings (the 4th Tuesday night). This money will assist in our monthly payments. We are also negotiating with other groups.

The Eastern Regional Conference was held at the Karralyka Theatre, Ringwood on 26th June.

A variety of speakers were enjoyed during the year, including Christine Fyffe MP, Member for Evelyn; Alister Osborn, President Lilydale Chamber of Commerce; David & Shirley Williams, artists; Ron Bell of Kilsyth talking about his battle with polio; and Jim McMinn from Healesville Sanctuary. Thanks to Lorraine for organising this part of our meetings.

Lastly, but most importantly, I would like to thank our Committee and all our members for their efforts and enthusiasm including the production of our informative newsletter.

To our hard working and efficient secretary, Sue, and to Phillip and Lorraine for our financial expertise and to each one who has made us a valuable asset in providing information, photographs and history to our widespread community.

Our new displays

During the school holidays society members have been busy changing all our display boards. The work is the culmination of months of painstaking research which included contacting people for photographs and information.

The displays feature:

Families – John Gardiner;

Before and On the Bench – The murder of Luigi Marchesi;

Their Legacy Lives On – Jimmy Ah Tak and John Dallas the Benecia Boy;

Along Main Street – The hut of artists Fred Williams, Ian Armstrong and Harry Ronsegrave;

Schools – Lilydale High School;

Businesses – Lower Main Street, Lilydale;

Melba – Her Memory Lives On. The display features some of the on-going recognition of Dame Nellie Melba including the \$100 note; Melba Highway, Melba Tunnel and Melba Hall;

Court House – the history of the court house;

The Old Lilydale Court House, 61 Castella St, Lilydale is open Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays 11am to 4pm and Fridays from 1 to 4pm. Other times by appointment.

For the latest news on the society, its projects and activities go to: www.lilydalehistorical.com.au and click on What's New.

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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Books for sale

Reminiscences of Life Volume 2	\$12.00
Reminiscences of Life Volume 1	\$14.50
Prosperity & Progress - The history of the former Shire of Lillydale offices	\$5.00
Lilydale Primary School Register	\$15.00

All are available from the Old Lilydale Court House, 61 Castella St, Lilydale. For a complete list of our publications visit our website at www.lilydalehistorical.com.au and place an order.

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 2013-2014 now due

Membership Subscriptions 2012-2013 were due on the 1st July 2013. (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: \$

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