

Now & Then



Issue 2 May 2019

Affiliated with Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc

Meeting Dates

2019

June 1

July 6

August 3

September 7

October 5

November 2

December 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 2.15pm.

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Issue 2 May 2019



Sadly, another of our society's Life Members has passed away and left our society and Lilydale all the poorer for her passing.

For 10 years Ruby Kwijas has battled cancer. It was a challenge she continually overcame and throughout the years never lost her sense of humour, her love for Horst and her family and the love of her home town of Lilydale.

Ruby Humphries was born in John Street, Lilydale where she remained until she married Horst and together they made their home in Victoria Road. From her front verandah, Ruby witnessed the winds of change of her beloved Lilydale – from a small country town Lilydale grew street by street and house by house to a big bustling town on the edge of the Yarra Valley.

After completing her schooling at Lilydale Primary School and the Lilydale Higher Elementary School Ruby went to work at the Lilydale telephone exchange before taking



Top: Ruby at the launch of *Reminiscences Volume 2* and above after the Launch of *Gun Alley* talking with Harley Brown.

on other jobs. It was to this family or that family. her we turned when we If she didn't know them needed information about *Continued page 2.*

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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

On the airwaves

Listen to us on Radio Station 98.1 Radio Eastern FM. The society is on the airwaves on the second Monday in the month from 10.30am to 11am.



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Want to learn more about your heritage?

If you have an hour or two to spare and want to learn more about your local and or family heritage then contact the society. We have many things volunteers can do depending on their interests and skills, and we have fun doing it.

We have members who, thanks to our support, can now do much needed data entry for us. And age is no barrier. One volunteer is 80 years young but has conquered her fear of the computer and is completing some wonderful small projects for us.

Others are interested in our photographs and just love cataloguing them for us.

We also have walkers who are learning to do our township, cemetery and other guided tours. If you would like to visit and have a chat, please phone our president Sue Thompson on 0475 219 884.

Vale Ruby (continued from page 1)

personally, she knew someone who did and we were able to complete our research.

For the society, it was Ruby who pestered and pestered us to make sure we recorded the stories of the older residents. She took the project on herself and produced two volumes of *Reminiscences of Life Notes and Memories of Lilydale residents*. She contacted the residents and often helped them with the writing up of their story. Today, those books are key references in our society's library.

After those two publications, Ruby decided it was time we wrote about the workers of Lilydale and our Gun Alley project was the result. Ruby was again at the forefront. She gathered the people and their stories and made sure we had photographs as well. These are now in our photographic collection. As the society secured a Federal grant for that project, we created the Gun Alley section on our website which has text, images, audio and video from several of the residents.

The launch of our award-winning Gun Alley project was a highlight for Ruby. She felt the stories of the town's working-class people had finally been recorded and recognized.

Ruby was 82 years old when she passed away surrounded by her family. At her funeral it was standing room only and she would have been so pleased to see so many friends celebrate her life as told so well by her children and grandchildren.

To see the videos made by various Gun Alley residents including Ruby, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTQ4TaZzqG334XPBZwGgYQg>

Award of Merit



RHSV president Don Garden presenting Christine Gray with her Award of Merit at Armstrong Creek.

On Thursday, March 21, Royal Historical Society President Don Garden and secretary Carole Woods, hopped on the train and travelled to South Geelong to present the society's Award of Merit to one of our Life Members Christine Gray.

Wally and Sue Thompson picked them up and drove to Christine's new home at Warralily Gardens at Armstrong Creek.

Ninety-three-year-old Christine had organized the staff to provide light refreshments after the simple but moving presentation. Don Garden read out Christine's citation before formally presenting Christine with her award.

Carole Woods also gave Christine a small gift.

Christine, a retired school teacher spoke of her love of words and writing and of her other love of history. She wrote the society's first booklet when planning a walk

around Lilydale and today, our walks still incorporate her research.

Her interest in geology and aboriginal history was well known and her role in planning the society's displays for the centenary celebrations of the Shire of Lilydale is well documented.

Christine and Harley Brown are our only members who attended the first meeting which formed our society in 1972.

At the state level, Christine was also active in the RHSV and spent many hours organizing day and weekend tours to various parts of the state.

Soon after being made a Life Member of our society in 1989, Christine moved to Grovedale but has continued to take a vital interest in our activities.

The society acknowledges the wonderful financial contribution made by the Estate of the Late James Sawyer to the development and promotion of our local heritage.

&

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Welcome

Aboriginal footballers from the Yarra Valley

On the weekend of May 25 and 26, the AFL celebrated the Indigenous round of matches. The aim is to stamp out racism and acknowledge the contribution to football our indigenous players and their culture have made to the game.

A recently released book written by Roy Hay *Aboriginal People and Australian Football in the Nineteenth Century They Did Not Come From Nowhere* is a great read and well researched.

A feature of the book is a chapter on the role of Coranderrk where the Aboriginal game of marngrook was played in the 1860s a few years after the establishment of football in 1859.

Roy Hay has included documented reports of Aborigines at Coranderrk playing the games and included detailed descriptions. The ball was believed to have been made of twine from the twisted hair of opossum.

All the state's other missions and stations are also covered.

The Aborigines also played cricket at Coranderrk and on October 20, 1883 played against Lilydale at Lilydale. In 1888 football in the Yarra Valley had three teams: Healesville, Lilydale and Coranderrk and in the next decade some Aborigines were also playing for outside teams.

Roy Hay carefully documents the growth of football at Coranderrk and the close relationships with the surrounding teams of Healesville, Yarra Glen and Lilydale, merger attempts, development of their own uniforms etc. Most of the aboriginal players were named making it a valuable book to add to any local history bookshelf.

One of the most fascinating sections of the book is the life stories of various early players and their roles in developing the game. The players included Robert Wandin, Thomas Dunolly, Dick Rowan and Teddy McDougall.

Roy Hay is no stranger to sports history but was more familiar with the round ball game than Aussie rules. He was educated at Glasgow University and

Talks, tours and walks

Anyone looking for a speaker or a different place to go should contact us 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.

Balliol College, Oxford and came to Deakin University in 1977. He contributed to 25 different courses at the university and became a part-time journalist with the Geelong advertiser covering soccer from the under 9 teams to the National League, the Socceroos and Matildas. With Bill Murray he wrote the standard history of the game: *A History of Football in Australia*.

Roy Hay kindly donated a copy of his book to our society and it is now in our library.

Published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing 315pp, \$99.95

Membership Renewal

It's that time again, memberships become due on the 1st of July. We value your support and hope that you will continue to be a member of the society and help us maintain the history of the Lilydale district.

The times they are a-chang'n

The Association of Eastern Historical Societies' 2019 regional conference will be held at the Karralyka Centre, Mines Road, Ringwood on Saturday, June 22 from 9.15am. The cost is only \$40, all meals provided.

Times are changing but what can historical societies do to respond to these changes? The speakers will provide valuable information on what to do.

The keynote speaker is Dr Andrew Lemon who will speak on "Heritage Advocacy - the role of historical research and historical societies"

The other speakers are:

Anthony McAleer OAM - "La Terra Promessa"

Ken Briscoe "User Experience with Victorian Collections"

Panel of Four Leading Historical Society

Representatives - "Moving On - Historical Societies 201"

Rachael Cottle - "The Sustainability of Community Museums - El Dorado Museum Case Study"

Patrick Watts - "The Quest for Provenance"

Bookings close on June 14. To pay online the banking details are: AOEHS account BSB: 063-465 account No. 10042954 or send a cheque to: AOEHS, 11 Ripley Court Ringwood 3134.

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.

Grant Success

More of the Lilydale Express to be on Trove

Thanks to the wonderful letters of support from the Victorian and National libraries and from our local heritage groups, the society has secured funding of \$6989 from the Public Records Office of Victoria to digitize for Trove the *Lilydale Express* from 1900 to 1913 and 1919 to 1920.

Already the 1914 to 1918 newspapers are available

on Trove. The society has also agreed to fund two years 1888 and 1889 from its own funds. This means people around the world can now search the pages of the *Lilydale Express* from its formation in June 1886 through to 1920.

We will advise everyone when the additional pages are up online so we can all start searching.

‘dhumba nijan dhumba njarr’ (speak-I speak-you).



Saturday, May 11 saw the launch of the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum exhibition ‘dhumba nijan dhumba njarr’ (speak-I speak-you).

This exhibition to mark the UNESCO International Year of Indigenous Languages was curated by Brooke Wandin from the Woiwurrng speaking Wurundjeri-wilam clan to celebrate the Woiwurrung language which

is still spoken today in the Yarra Valley today.

After a smoking ceremony Major Cr Tony Stevenson opened the exhibition.



Top left: Exhibition curator Brooke Wandin speaking at the launch.

Above: Everyone watched the smoking ceremony in Melba Park. Is this a first for the park?



This year the society was delighted to continue its involvement with Lilydale RSL and ANZAC day commemoration.

Lest We Forget

The day before treasurer Phil Burton picked roses and rosemary from his garden and gave it to committee member Robin Childs to formally lay during the dawn service.

Once again, the people of Lilydale showed their appreciation of our servicemen and women in a moving service organised by the Lilydale RSL.



Far Left: Lilydale's war memorial after the ANZAC Day service.
Left: Philip Burton's roses complete with rosemary just before the service.



Above: The production team filming inside the Athenaeum and below right: all the production trucks at the Lilydale Showgrounds.

My Life of Murder

It was Lights, Camera Action aplenty in Castella Street on May 9. Worldwide Production services Pty Ltd was at the Athenaeum Theatre filming interior and exterior scenes for its upcoming TV series “My Life is Murder”.

Our on-the-spot photographer Phil Burton captured a couple of shots for us but had to be careful what he photographed.

According to the company, the exterior scenes involved the arrival of two police cars during which traffic was stopped for a short time.

We will keep you up-to-date with things as we receive them. We have asked the production company for images of the actors etc to add to our archives.

Vale Reg Kenealy

It was with great sadness that our society learnt of the passing of Reg Kenealy in his 90th year.

Reg and Mary Kenealy were instrumental in the development and preservation of Marysville’s history for more than 20 years. Their contribution and knowledge were much valued by the community of Marysville away in his ninetieth year.

Sadly, during the disastrous Black Saturday bushfires, much of the society’s collection was lost but Reg and Mary reached out to the heritage and wider communities and day by day Marysville was able to re-build their collection.

Reg and Mary were given Awards of Merit by the RHSV.

Go to the link below and watch Reg and Mary tell their story:

<https://www.abc.net.au/innovation/blacksaturday/people/regandmary/>

Vale Tom O’Meara, Educator and Mentor

Our thanks to Mount Evelyn History Group’s Things Past

The sudden death of Tom O’Meara on 18 March came as a shock to the local history community.

Thomas Brian O’Meara was born in Preston on 12 September 1948, the second of three boys. He attended the local school, where he showed academic promise. He then attended school run by the Presentation nuns and received a scholarship to the Christian Brothers’ College.



At the age of 20 Tom was called up for National Service, but was permitted to defer while he completed his degree at the University of Melbourne.

Teaching would be his career, but first he had to fulfil his National Service obligations. It was while he was doing his basic training that he met his future wife, Rhonda, another teacher. Tom served in Vietnam and Papua New Guinea with the Education unit of the Australian Army. This was in the early 1970s, when conscripts were no longer being sent into combat.

After Tom and Rhonda moved to Mooroolbark, Tom began a long association with Pembroke College (now Yarra Hills) as teacher and Principal, first at the Cambridge Road Campus and then at Mt Evelyn. He believed every child had the right to a good education and was capable of learning. He never gave up on any student, even the most difficult. He was a good friend and mentor to the staff.

After his retirement Tom devoted himself to local history. He was President of the Upper Yarra Historical Society, the Association of Eastern Historical Societies and the Yarra Ranges Heritage Network. Recently he steered the *Guide to Heritage in the Yarra Ranges* through to publication.

Tom will be sorely missed by the local history groups in Yarra Ranges, and by his many past colleagues, students and their parents. Our sympathy to Tom’s family for their loss.

Talk, talks and more talks



Philip Burton and his talk about Lilydale's hotels.



President Sue Thompson presenting Gus Ward with a small gift after his fascinating talk on his life on a Port Campbell dairy farm.

For Ron it was delivering the mail on bike and foot twice a day and he always made sure he rode down Victoria Road from the highway not up as it was too steep for bike and car.

Ray Oliver told about his apprenticeship and his exacting boss who made anything and everything but gave a young Ray all the skills he would need as builder for the rest of his working life. He fondly compared early builders with a saw and hammer in a sack over the shoulder to today's tradies with big cars full of power tools.

Farming at Port Campbell

Farmer Gus Ward highlighted the tough life of dairy farmers in the Port Campbell area. His slides showed the various equipment used on the farm from harvesters, tractors, rakers and bailers. The daily routine was tough and isolated but he loved his life. Now he enjoys his retirement at Valley Views, Lilydale.

Dates for the Diary

Norfolk Island

People with Norfolk Island ancestry should make sure they attend our June 1 meeting when from 2.30pm Joy Olney will speak on her Norfolk Island relatives from her own family and those of her late husband Peter.

After a lot of research Joy and her family went to Norfolk Island to walk in their ancestors' foot steps.

Lilydale A change in Pace and others

Our July 6 meeting from 2.30pm will be a film day with a difference. We will be screening the Lilydale *A Change in Pace* film narrated by Tom Mitchell and follow that with a short video on the building of Lilydale Lake and a video made by the Lilydale High school students for the Centenary of ANZAC.



The packed Old Lilydale Court House listening to the Builder and the Postie talk.

For the past three meetings we have had some very interesting and different speakers.

Philip Burton gave a great talk about *The Hotels of Lilydale* and their role in our history. On hand was Lilydale Hotel's former publican Fred Bramich who was able to fill in many gaps for Phil's talk. He later gave the presentation at the Lilydale Library which was enjoyed and appreciated by everyone.

The Postie and The Builder Q & A

On Saturday, April 6, it was standing room only as we staged a society first when we hosted *The Postie and the Builder Q & A session*.

Former postie Ron Norman and builder Ray Oliver gave fascinating accounts of their very different lives in the Lilydale of the 1950s onwards.

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
P.O. Box 834,
Lilydale Vic 3140
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info@lilydalehistorical.com.au
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Please help us

A vital source of income for the society is its membership subscriptions. If you are yet to pay your membership renewal for the 2018-2019 which was due of July 1, Please renew by using the form below or by emailing our treasurer Philip Burton who will provide you with banking details for your renewal. We value your support and your membership by offering a range of services and discounts as listed below.

Philip's email is: philip.burton6@bigpond.com

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 2019-2020 now due

Membership Subscriptions 2019-2020 are due on the 1st July 20189 (If you are not sure if you are financial, please ring Phil on 0488 403 155 to check.)

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