

Jack Lundy-Clarke

Journalist, Poet and Historian

Researcher: Jeanette Dodson



Mr Jack Lundy-Clarke, 86 years of age – working on another booklet of poems about his beloved Shire of Lillydale. (Lilydale Express December 1, 1987 pg2.

Biography

Jack was born 12th November 1901 in New Zealand. He came to Australia when he was seven years old, following the death of his father. His mother was not well, so he spent his youth living with his mother's sister Annie Price.

He worked his early years as a carpenter and farm labourer and then went into journalism with country newspapers.

In 1927 he married Gladys Evelyn Shanks in New Zealand. In 1939 they purchased 20 acres of land in Burlock Ave. Ringwood. At this time Ringwood was still part of the old Shire of Lillydale, and Jack was always proud to be part of this Shire. They had five children Teresa, Terence, Hilda, Raymond and Gladys.

Following a stroke in 1970 he was invited to write a history of Mt Dandenong School, this book re kindled the enthusiasm to go back to writing. He collected many photographs and a huge amount of history of Mt Dandenong, Kalorama, Olinda and the early settlers.

A life's work and dreams, writing ballads and poems that is truly tremendous. In all he produced 28 booklets, 12 of prose and 16 of poems, and an autobiography "My Delayed Inspiration". The following are parts of his many ballads of the Dandenongs and surrounds.

Jack joined the Lilydale & District Historical Society in 1971 in its inaugural year and presented to the Society a copy of his book "History of Mt. Dandenong & Kalorama District". Jack became the first Life Member of the Society in 1987 and also in the same year was awarded a "Certificate of Merit" from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

Jack died 25th February 1993 and Gladys in 1991. They are both buried at the Lilydale Cemetery.

The Brooklyn Drag

Ballads of the Dandenongs Book 9

The Brooklyn's pride
is on the mountain side
but only its steel remains,
with the calcined bones
and mossy stones
where the horses lost their brains.

The mountain run
was for the tripper's fun
of the guests of the Brooklyn Farm.
A picnic day
of a few hours' stay
with never a hint of harm.

On each horse's head
was a cap of red,
with a flashing silver gleam.
The harness shone
when it was placed upon.
The flanks of the prancing team.

On the steep way back
where the Jeeves's track
had pierced the saddled range,
they left the farms
and the valleys charms
as their fortunes came to change.

The highly nervous team
went ahead full steam
to the devilish hair-pin bend.
At the steep cliff face
straight along they raced,
they had reached their journey's end.

The splint ring drag
gave some seconds' lag
to the ringlets and the frocks,
ere they reached an end
to the steep descend
that spared all the pretty locks.

In a record time
Doctor A E Syme
was reached on the telephone,
and the big Rolls –Royce
was the doctor's choice
for the race up the mount alone.

For the locals tell
of the doomed drag's knell
that rang over red heath flower,
when the doctor's car
took the road's rough scar "AT TWENTY MILES
AN HOUR".

Tom Brook ran the Brooklyn Farm Guest house in Mt Dandenong Road Kilsyth from 1908 until 1918, the accident happened on 27th December 1911, on the way back home from a trip to the Olinda Falls.

Research: Jack's books of prose and ballads, BDM Victoria, Lilydale and District Historical Society files, Lilydale Cemetery Index.



15034 Horse drawn vehicles coming up Old Coach Road from Montrose, ready to turn up the 'Devils's Elbow' corner where the Brooks coach had the accident in 1911. The guests were only slightly injured, but the horses were killed.

Little Train Along the Creek

More Ballads from the Dandenongs

It was shaggy and cluttered
it hissed and it spluttered
it clanked as it lurched up and down.
Its track it was crazy
its efficiency hazy
'twas a wonder it ever reached town.

As it wove through the manna,
smoke plumes for its banners,
its whistle as shrill as a pipe,
its load measured in cording,
its dull effort rewarding.
The sweat that took many a wipe.

The ballast was ashes,
feet deep in the washes
that moved like a creek tiger snake.

Its load it was shedding
as it bounced on its bedding.
And strewed the cord wood in its wake.

With its frequent derailing-
Cave manager wailing-
it succeeded to nourish the fires.
All signals were wanting,
its safety was haunting
and no messages went along wires.

It outlasted its running
like a horse that is cunning
and it stood in the grass by the Cave.
No one came to applaud it,
the town couldn't afford it.
And now it is resting with Dave.



03148 David Mitchell's steam train about 1920. It ran from the Lilydale Quarry (Cave Hill) to lower Mt Evelyn along the Olinda Creek carrying timber.

The Billanook

Book No. 7

The River Yarra long ago
through marshy flats was seen to flow.
Where golden wattle was aglow
and tribesmen wandered to and fro.

Those dusky people soon forsook
the place they knew as Billanook,
The plains made famous in a book
when farmers bridged the Running Brook.

With patterned plan they could not fail
to build the town with plank and nail.
And then as name to set a sale
they called it for a song "Lilly Dale".

Where through the hills the echoes rang
when wine was made by rugged gang
whose voices carried only slang,
there came a voice that sweetly sang.

A maid of stalwart Scottish stock,
with will as steady as a rock,
the melody within her voice.
The foreign monarchs voted choice.

She now and then returned to look
at what she loved, the Billanook.
And when at last she came to rest
'twas in the spot she loved the best.

A verdant hillside held a cave
to be exploited by our Dave,
for through the years its working gave
prosperity in steady wave.

And as the clamor is to sell
there still are some who wistful tell
Olinda Creek was once a brook.
That wandered through the Billanook.



David Mitchell with his daughter Dame Nellie Melba at Coombe Cottage.



Olinda Creek, between Main Street and Beresford Road, beside the football oval.

Photo: Jeanette Dodson

Jack Lundy Clarke's Bibliography

Ballads from the Dandenongs Nos 1--12

Catalogue of the writings of Jack Lundy

Corrhanwarrabul, the sleeping woman

Dandenong volcano and settlement in its great forest

Lowland ballads

Marriage in Roma, a wandering girl's descendants in Queensland

More ballads from the Dandenongs

More tales from the Dandenongs

Mountain of struggle

Ride Billy, ride

Ringwood memories No 1 Loughnan's Lake

Ringwood memories No 2 Ringwood Lake

Ringwood's sorrow and other ballads

Tales from the Dandenongs Nos 1---8

The Mountains of Mooroolbark



BALLADS

From the Dandenongs ~

THE BILLANOOK

HARMONY VALE

UNCLE ERN'S CART

WHAT DID THEY FIND AT "THE BRIARS" ?

No 7

By Jack Lundy



BALLADS

From the Dandenongs ~

No11

THE MOUNTAIN TRAIN

THE OLINDA SPLITTERS

THE BOUNDING LOG

OWNER DRIVERS

THE WHIP BIRD

THE SASSAFRAS SCHOOL

GO TO THE FOREST

IN SHERBROOK FOREST

ISN'T HE ?

By Jack Lundy



BALLADS

From the Dandenongs ~

THE BROOKLYN DRAG

THE BUSHMAN'S COT

No 9

By Jack Lundy