

# Now & Then



Issue 4 November 2015

Affiliated with Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc

## Meeting Dates

**2015**  
December 5  
2016  
February 6  
March 5

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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Contacts:  
Sue Thompson 9761 9192  
Lorraine Smith 9735 1104

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Issue 4 November 2015

## Vale Dorothy Hill

Sadly, the society lost another of its much loved and much valued Life Members with the passing of Dorothy Hill on August 9, 2015 after a short illness.

Dot and her late husband Colin Hill were active in so many groups, organisations and causes in Lilydale. These included the Lilydale Show Society; Lilydale Hospital, Tullamore; and of course the Lilydale Museum Trust and our society.

manner. It was Dot who went out and secured sponsorship for the society to ensure each year we had enough money to pay our rent to the Shire of Yarra Ranges for the Old Lilydale Court House.

As a resident who had lived and



*A proud Dorothy Hill leads the team of Philip Burton, Sandy Ross and Sue Thompson on the day we moved into the Old Lilydale Court House in February 2011.*

An astute judge of character and a shrewd businesswoman, Dot helped raise thousands of dollars for the organisations she supported. Many were social activities such as Jazz at Tessalaars and Yarra Grange brought the community together, to have fun and raise money for a worthy cause.

Dot was a fine example of a community working together to provide the facilities and services they wanted.

As a member of the society's committee Dot insisted everything be done in a professional and commercial

worked in the district for decades we could always count on her if there was a family we needed information on.

Dot always knew someone who knew someone who knew the family we wanted to contact. *Continued page 3.*

### 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.

**Ian D. Carswell**  **& Associates**

Accountant & Business Adviser

**Ian Carswell**

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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)

## Season's Greetings

Another busy and successful year is drawing to a close.

Our final meeting of the year is our traditional short meeting at 11.30am following by our Christmas party at 12.30.

On behalf of the society's committee I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and hope to see you at the Old Lilydale Court House during sometime next year. I would also publicly like to acknowledge the support of the executive and the tireless work of our volunteers throughout the year. **Sue Thompson**

### 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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## Coombe Cottage Mystery solved



*Mino Scagnetti (left) with Valentino Celotti Jr and an unknown child outside the gardener's cottage at Coombe in the 1930s or 1940s. Note the verandah posts.*

Readers will recall we published a couple of photos of the Celotti family who lived and worked at Coombe Cottage in the 1920s and 30s. We asked if anyone could remember where the original gardener's cottage was located as descendant's weren't sure.

Life Member and builder Les Skate responded and called into the Court House to look at all the Celotti photos. One photo of the family relaxing in front of the cottage verandah interested Les. Without saying why he asked for an enlarged copy of the photo and left.

He later returned with the questions all answered.

Les knew where the gardener's cottage was at Coombe but was unsure if the Celotti's cottage was one and the same. He had demolished the original gardener's cottage but suggested the verandah posts be kept as they were red gum. They were stored at Coombe and used when a verandah was put up at the rear of the stables.

When the stables were re-developed, the posts were put aside and incorporated in the new building and are now proudly supporting the verandah at the wine tasting area.

This is real re-cycling 3 times spanning decades - and shows photos are more than just about people - what's in the background can be just as important.

Next time you visit Coombe be sure to check out the verandah posts at the wine tasting area.

## Can you help?

As part of our education program, the society recently purchased some record cylinders, the first form of music recording developed in the 1890s.

Melba's first recordings were on cylinders and the purchase means we can use them for school groups. Sadly, a cylinder record player (see the Edison phonograph), is harder to acquire at a reasonable price.

If you know of anyone who has a cylinder player - working or not -and would be willing to donate and/or sell it to the society, please contact Sue Thompson on 9761 9192.



## Vale Dorothy Hill (continued)

A large number of society members attended Dot's funeral and we all learned a lot more about her life and how passionate she was about her family and her community.

Christine Fyffe, the Member of Evelyn read out a letter sent to the family by the then Prime Minister Tony Abbott who wrote of Dot's 50-year membership of the Liberal Party and her tireless work for the party.

No-one mentioned Dot used her party connections to lobby hard to secure a lot of State and Federal money for

local community projects. But then that went without saying.

Her family - nephew Anthony Roberts and grandchildren Emma and Tom Ridley - spoke about their aunt and grandma just as she would have wanted - businesslike, straight to the point and with no tears.

Personally, I have lost a valued mentor and I only hope I can maintain the high standards she set herself and expected others to meet.

**Sue Thompson President.**



## Two society entries score two Commendations

This year the society submitted entries into two categories for the Victorian Community History Awards which were announced on Monday, October 19 as part of Victorian History Week. We were short-listed in both categories and received two Commendations.

In the Multimedia History Award we entered our re-vamped website.

The Commendation reads:

*'Outstanding presentation of history which uses non-print media and has a broad community reach.'*

We entered our project *Stories Behind the Headstones* in the Local History Project Award.

The Commendation reads:

*'This award recognises activities that enhance access to records of significance to local communities.'*

These awards recognise our volunteers who spent many hours helping with both projects.

**Footnote:** The society used the \$2000 prize money for *Gun Alley* last year to help fund our re-vamped website.



### On the airwaves

Listen to us on Radio Station 98.1 Radio Eastern 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.

## Wally's War: Vietnam 1969

As part of the lead up to the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Long Tan, veteran Wally Thompson will be giving his first and only talk at a special event for our society at the Old Lilydale Court House.

In our nation's bloodiest battle of the Vietnam war, Long Tan resulted in the death of 18 Australians on August 18, 1966.

During his 366 days of service in Vietnam, Wally spent many weeks in the bush following and repairing Australia's Centurion tanks. He also had time to take hundreds of photos of the lives of the soldiers and the villagers in and around Nui Dat, Australia's base in Vietnam.

The special talk will be on Saturday, November 14 from 1pm to 2pm and be followed by afternoon tea.

The cost is \$5 a head.

The proceeds, at Wally's request, being used for acquiring additional materials for our children's educational box.

For bookings call Lorraine Smith 9735 1104.



*Repairing a tank in the Vietnamese jungle.*

## Christmas Party

The society will continue to celebrate the end of the year and the arrival of the Christmas break with its traditional Christmas Party on Saturday, December 5.

Our regular meeting will be held at 11.30am and Christmas lunch at 12.30pm.

Lunch will include Wal Thompson's traditional Webber cooked roast turkey, cold ham, homemade salads and scrumptious desserts provided by our members.

The cost is \$12.50 per person.

For catering purposes bookings are essential, so either call Lorraine Smith on 9735 1104 or visit the Court House during opening hours and book and pay. All bookings must be made prior to Saturday, November 28.



*AIGS expert Wendy Baker during her presentation.*

## Where Do I come From? - a great success

Our society's first venture into working in partnership with family historians was a resounding success

People travelled from all parts of Melbourne to attend the weekend. Places included Reservoir, Oakleigh and Somerville.

The Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies provided the family history experts while we provided the venue and the opportunity for other groups to promote their family history resources – AIGS, our society; U3A Yarra Ranges; Eastern Regional Library and Descendants of Convicts Group Victoria Inc. The relationship between family history and historical societies was clearly on show. Genealogists highlighted the way of tracking down family members while the resources of groups such as historical societies can put the human stories to those names through photographs; newspaper reports; obituaries; daily events and community activities; property searches, rate books and more.

Over the two days we had 70 visitors most of whom attended one or two of the talks given each day.

Working each day were 10 or so volunteers making sure everything went smoothly. The weekend will now be reviewed and the society will make a decision on whether or not to stage a similar event next year.

## Research

Due to the increasing demand for research, all inquiries must be in writing and go to Sue Thompson via [info@lilydalehistorical.com.au](mailto:info@lilydalehistorical.com.au). A quote for the cost of the research will be provided and no research will be done until the quotation is paid. Our charges are \$20 per hour. Contact Sue Thompson 9761 9192.

**For the latest news on the society, its projects and activities go to: [www.lilydalehistorical.com.au](http://www.lilydalehistorical.com.au) and click on What's New.**

## Birmingham Primary School Talk & Walk

On August 26 eight of our members were up and about early preparing for the arrival of 98 Year 2 children and their teachers from Birmingham Primary School, Mt Evelyn from 10am.

The children were split into four classes each doing a different activity: one session each at the Old Lilydale Court House; another a walk of Castella Street; another visited the Yarra Ranges Museum and the other group played games in Melba Park.

Our children's collection boxes were pulled out and set up on tables around the court house. The items in the boxes have been donated by members to show children what was used in homes and at school in different eras - old typewriters, butter churn, kitchen implements, apron, pantaloons and school books were just a few of the items the children were allowed to touch, try and ask about.

As the children were also learning about Dame Nellie Melba, Sue Thompson spoke briefly about the

technology of her time compared with today; how famous she was and finished by playing a Melba record.

The society has had many visits over the year but all the members working that day were impressed with their politeness, discipline and the many questions which showed a real interest in what they were seeing and experiencing.

While our members were exhausted at the end of the day all were excited that the youngsters and their teachers showed such an interest in our own local history. Who knows in a few years time they may decide to study history or join our society.

As a result of the school's visit, the society has now purchased its own gramophone record player so we can now play Melba's 78rpm records, just like everyone else did in the 1910s and 1920s.

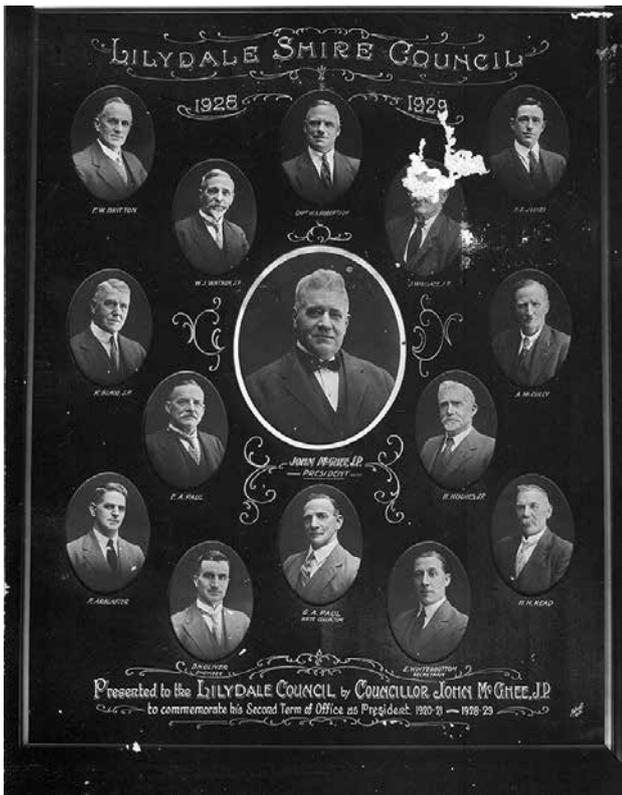
To read a couple of the letters go to: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/87368280@N06/with/21791670542/>

## Donations

We also received images from Bob Gilmour of Geelong whose family owned Yarravale in St Hubert's Lane, which was part of the original St Hubert's vineyard.

Another couple who were at a Melba talk given by Sue Thompson donated a Melba record to the society for our children's box.

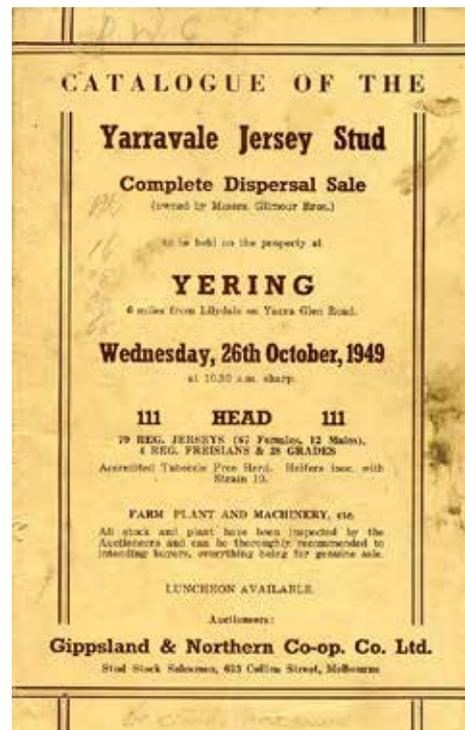
Also, one of our members donated a ticket from the last train from Lilydale to Warburton which when combined with the photos and negatives she had previously donated of the day, creates a special collection for a future display.



The society is very grateful to members and non members who have donated images to the society's growing image collection.

Elizabeth Harvey recently allowed us to scan a copy of the Lillydale Councillors photo from 1928 to 1929 an image which we didn't have in the society's Sandy Ross Collection.

Elizabeth also kindly donated three beautiful aprons of different styles for our children's activity boxes so the children can touch them, try them on and find out more about our past.



## Members research on display

Members have worked hard researching, finding images and writing the text for our new displays. Then it was a case of spending a day transforming blank boards into history.

Lynn Wales continues her series on local murders with the tragic shooting in 1875 of a young lad John Nicholson. Through coronial inquest and murder trial documents Lynn has traced the location and the events surrounding arguably Lilydale's first murder.

Lorraine Smith continues her series on people buried in Lilydale Cemetery, this time featuring Reverend James Proctor.

Vice President Jeanette Dodson developed her first display for the society featuring the history of the Montrose Store and Post Office focussing on the various families who provided a vital link to the outside world for local residents.

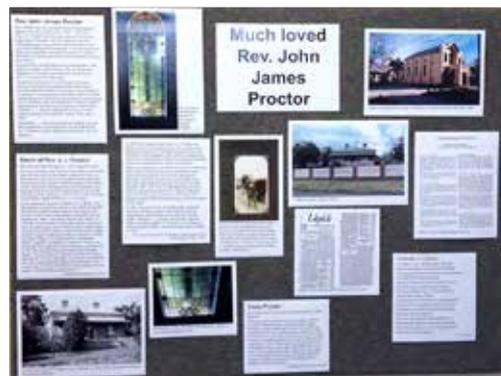
The society's oldest member Evelyn Tull has created a wonderful display featuring her family's home built on the Warburton Highway in the 1910s. Her board depicts life at the time from the dunny down the back to the wood heap, outdoor copper and wood stove.

Maree Phelan shows the value of our internet tools in communicating with members and the rest of the world – our website, Facebook and Google+.

Twelve months ago the late Val Sheehan showed Vice President John Brown two photos overlooking the garden at Coombe Cottage. With permission, the images were copied and John started in his 12 month quest to find out all he could about the photos. His research turned up others images of other eras and his result over two display boards shows the original development of the garden and its later 1920s makeover. Both were overseen by Dame Nellie Melba.



*Top: Evelyn Tull describes her family home to Joy Gothe. Right: Lorraine Smith's Rev. James Proctor's display board.*



*Left: Lynn Wales puts the finishing touches to her murder display. Below: Maree Phelan's internet display.*



*Above left: Ray and Jeanette Dodson put the finishing touches to their Montrose Post Office and General Store display. Left: Lynn Wales and Joy Gothe working on the displays. Above: John Brown working on one of his two Coombe Cottage garden display boards.*

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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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:

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*Now & Then* by either mail or email

- Invitations to all our special events, talks and tours;
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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.)

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