



Comment on suggestions 70

Sue Thompson

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7 December 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Comment on Victorian federal seats redistribution suggestions

I would like to provide written comments on the importance of the retention of the Federal seat of Casey which some submissions made as part of *Step 2. Invitation for suggestions – Victorian federal redistribution*, suggest should be abolished.

Background

As a young married couple we built and moved into our home at the above address on Australia Day 1972 – that is 51 years ago.

We were surrounded by orchards which gradually disappeared as suburbia encroached.

In those 51 years our family has helped build and maintain our local kindergarten been involved in our sons' state school which was closed by the Kennett Government and helped initiate many things which were innovative at the time: after school programs, holiday programs, campaigned for the Shire of Lillydale Library Service to name a few.

With each of these programs lobbying was important and we actively lobbied our local state and federal members and of course our Senators – later Dame Margaret Guilfoyle who was often in touch.

In those days it was snail mail and phone calls. Now it is emails and texts. No matter what form the communication took we were in contact with our local members and I stress LOCAL members.

To consider the abolition of Casey would be a great disservice to the people of Kilsyth, Chrisnide Park, Mooroolbark, Lilydale and the Yarra Valley as it would remove the community of interest of the residents in the Yarra Ranges Council area.

In 1990 I became a councillor representing the South Riding of the Shire of Lillydale. I was re-elected in 1993 only to be sacked when amalgamation of local government occurred and the Yarra Ranges Council was created.

As a councillor of the time, I was deeply involved in the amalgamation process and one of the key elements which led to the creation of Yarra Ranges was its community of interest – social, physical, economic, cultural and civic. Where do people travel to? Where do they work? Where do they shop? Where do they go for professional and trade services?

For some it is Lilydale, others Chirnside Park and for work Lilydale and Bayswater, while still others catch the Lilydale train and head off to work each day in the city. The common element to all of this is the travelling patterns – they all go through the township of Lilydale which has always been the main service centre for the Yarra Valley.

As a councillor I was heavily involved in the expansion of bus services in the Yarra Valley – again using the established routes of Melba, Maroondah and Warburton highways and Canterbury Road which all lead to Lilydale.

As a local historian I have spent years writing and speaking about, among many other things, the development of Local government and why Lilydale township was not only the civic centre for the Shire of Lillydale but also the service centre for Healesville, Yarra Glen, Warburton and Yarra Junction.

The Shire of Lillydale was created in 1872. It replaced the Upper Yarra District Road Board which was established in 1860 when the first land sales were held in the Lilydale township.

The shire incorporated Ringwood until 1925 and Croydon until 1958. Since 1958 until the creation of Yarra Ranges Council, Lillydale Shire included the townships of Lilydale, Chirnside Park, Wonga Park, Mooroolbark, Coldstream, Yering, Gruyere, Wandin North, Wandin East, Seville, Seville East, Monbulk, Silvan, Mount Evelyn, Olinda, Mount Dandenong, Kalorama, Montrose, Kilsyth and Kilsyth South.

In the 1994 amalgamations most of Lillydale Shire was joined with all of Healesville and Upper Yarra shires and most of Sherbrooke shire to form Yarra Ranges Council.

In the 51 years we have been in Kilsyth, we have moved in and out of state and federal seats on a regular basis leaving us as voters unsure who our local member was and where we could contact them. Not an ideal situation. We have been in Aston, Deakin, La Trobe over the years.

The seat of Casey was first established in 1969. It was then determined in 1977 for the seat to include the Lilydale district and Yarra Valley region.

Since 1977 and over the course of numerous redistributions, the Lilydale district and Yarra Valley region have remained an integral part of the seat and have cemented themselves within the seat.

At present time, the division has grown to include more parts of the Yarra Valley and the Dandenong Ranges and almost identically maps the Yarra Ranges local government area.

Throughout the years, I have through my various roles in the community met with Casey representatives including Peter Falconer, Bob Halverson, Michael Wooldridge, Tony Smith and more recently our current member, Aaron Violi.

Comments of Submissions

As noted above Casey mirrors the present Yarra Ranges Council as does the neighbouring seats of Menzies, Deakin and Aston mirror Manningham, Maroondah and Knox councils respectively.

I understand it has been the view and practice of previous redistribution committees to maintain existing known boundaries, such as LGAs, within seats in order to keep communities together and I urge the Victorian Redistribution Committee to continue this practice.

Additionally, it should be noted that the seat of Casey meets the quota for both actual and projected voters.

I note that the Committee received four submissions, being submissions 32, 42, 49 and 57, that suggested Casey be abolished and be split into four or five seats being Aston, Deakin, La Trobe, McEwen and Menzies.

For example, submission 57 seeks to place:

- Chirnside Park into Menzies;
- Lilydale, Montrose and Kilsyth into Deakin;
- Coldstream, Yering Gruyere, Wandin, Seville and Silvan into McEwen.

Additionally, submission 57 would split Mooroolbark into both Menzies and Deakin which would ultimately split the long-standing historical, social and economic connections between the Chirnside-Lilydale area and the Yarra Valley region.

This connection has expanded over the past few decades to our region's growing tourism industry based around our vineyards, orchards and berry farms.

I was a member of the Lilydale Place Plan Committee from 2017 which laid the foundations for the Lilydale Structure Plan which is currently with the state government. The key elements of the structure plan were:

1. Recognising that Chirnside Park and Lilydale are the gateway to the Yarra Valley.
2. The value of public transport network via Lilydale Station and buses connection to and radiating our from the station north, south, east and west.
3. Strong Sense of Place in Lilydale and the surrounding area.
4. Lilydale is the civic, commercial and industrial hub of Yarra Ranges Council and the therefore the seat of Casey.

Summary

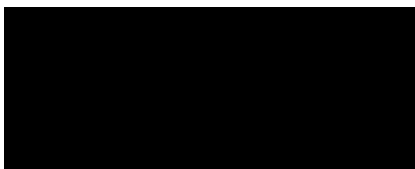
In summary, the Chirnside Park-Lilydale area has strong historical ties to the Yarra Valley region which have and continue to revolve around our sense of community, social ties, economic and industry links. These connections have existed since the formation of Shire of Lillydale over 150 years ago and continue to remain today.

I believe, for the reasons I have stated above, the seat of Casey should be retained and continue to be based around the Chirnside Park-Lilydale area and the Yarra Valley region.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and may I also take the opportunity to thank the Committee for its work in determining the boundaries of the State of Victoria, particularly with the need to reduce the number of seats in our state.

If I can be of any additional assistance to the Committee, you are more than welcome to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



SUE THOMPSON

Local historian,
51 years a resident
51 years working for my community