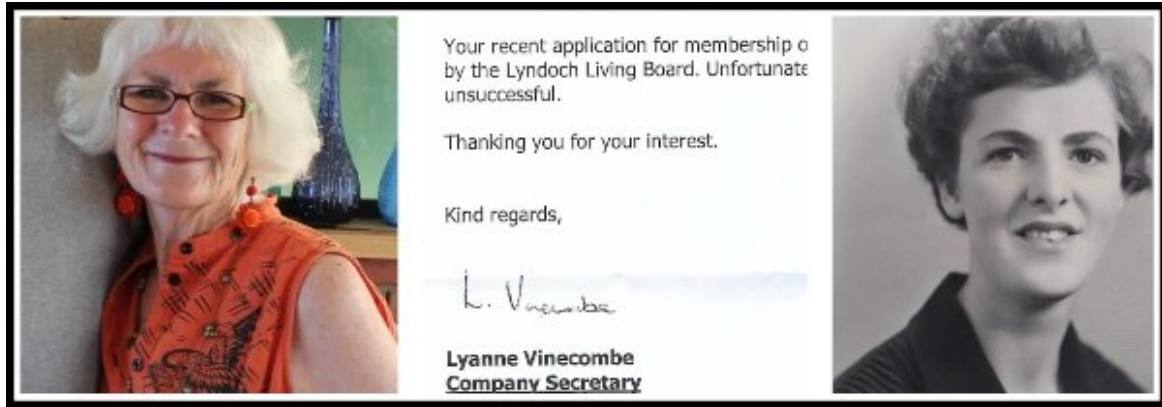


Lyndoch Living moves past the community that created it



Claire Macrae Drylie's late aunt, Gwen McKellar, did the pays for Lyndoch in the 60s for free. Claire's membership application was among those rejected.

Carol Altmann – The Terrier

My final profile from the roll call of the rejected. This is Claire Macrae Drylie and her late aunt Gwen McKellar.

In the 1960s, Gwen, or Mate as she was called by family, sorted out the pay packets for Lyndoch staff each week for free.

But now her niece Claire, who has lived in Warrnambool for more than 40 years, is among the 115 people whose membership application to Lyndoch was rejected without reason.

It doesn't matter a squit that her aunt Mate was one of the many, many people who Lyndoch once relied upon to survive.

Claire is the final person from the long roll call of rejections that I will profile here, and I have chosen her story because it captures the community spirit that sustained Lyndoch for decades.

When Lyndoch was still in its infancy, Mate volunteered her

time each week to “do the pays” for the Lyndoch staff, working from the kitchen table in her home in Henna St.

At the time, Mate was working as a secretary and raising two young children, Margie and Andrew, with her husband Colin.

But still she found time each week for her Lyndoch work.

Claire remembers the “pay days” as something like this:

“Mate sitting at a 1960s Laminex table (yellow) with a stack of cash and Lyndoch envelopes, with my sister Annie and I ‘helping’.

“Margie and Andy could be crying in the background because they are hungry, but Mate always put the needs of her community, ie. Lyndoch, first.

“And that’s how Lyndoch was born, on the sweat of ordinary people like Mate.”

Claire has nailed it.

Lyndoch was born on the sweat of ordinary people like Mate.

The Lyndoch board, led by chair Sue Cassidy and vice chair Kerry Nelson, has now decided that these ordinary people are no longer welcome and membership is by invitation only.

They don’t want people like Mate. If Mate was alive and had applied, she would not have made it through.

Such is the new corporate Lyndoch, where residents are customers, and progress is measured in concrete.

It is a community owned asset that has no community members.

And nobody knows why.

Tomorrow night I will write the responses from our community leaders – MPs Dan Tehan, Roma Britnell, Bev McArthur, Mayor

Vicki Jellie and the Warrnambool City Councillors – to the blanket rejection.

Thanks for hanging in here this week. On we go.