

PLACES PROJECT WORKSHOP



The Migration Heritage Project ‘Places’ Workshop was held at the University of Wollongong on 20 February 2009. This workshop brought together representatives from a cross section of the arts, cultural, academic and the heritage sector.

Wollongong’s Migration Heritage Places study was presented in 2007. The project investigated aspects of migration experiences, in particular first places of accommodation, and places of work for women, and worship. The resource contains essays, a places database, and a photographic database (Filemaker Pro 8).

This project is a work in progress as this project has to date collected a large body of material on migration heritage, and the next step is for the use/dissemination of that material/information.

Speakers spoke enthusiastically on the desire to research/record and disseminate migration history in the Illawarra. Participants had different interests/specialties and so saw different ways the project’s material could be of interest to them. All saw the importance of migration history, as it has been a significant part of the past of individuals in the Illawarra. The stories are so fundamental to our history.

It was noted that there are a number of other projects which are similar and which would be interested in this work. A number of recommendations were spoken to and examples were given. Participants found the photographs particularly interesting.

Information on the “Places Project” can be found at Wollongong City Library or on the MHP website (www.mhpillawarra.com).

(Article by: Peter Bestman)

MHP MEETINGS

The MHP Committee meets the first Thursday of the month (February-December) at 5.30 pm, Meeting Room 1, Level 10 Wollongong City Council Administration Building, Burelli Street, Wollongong. Members and other interested people or groups are always welcome. The meetings scheduled for 2009 are as follows:

2 April, 7 May, 4 June, 2 July,
6 August, 3 September, 1 October,
5 November (AGM), 3 December

(Venue for meetings provided through the Wollongong City Council Multicultural Services)

MHP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman

Franca Facci

Treasurer

Mendo Trajcevski

Secretary

Fidelia Pontarolo

Committee:

Gregor Cullen

Rina Montgomery

Olga Romano

Giulia Bonacina

Ludwik Ihnat

Peter Bestman

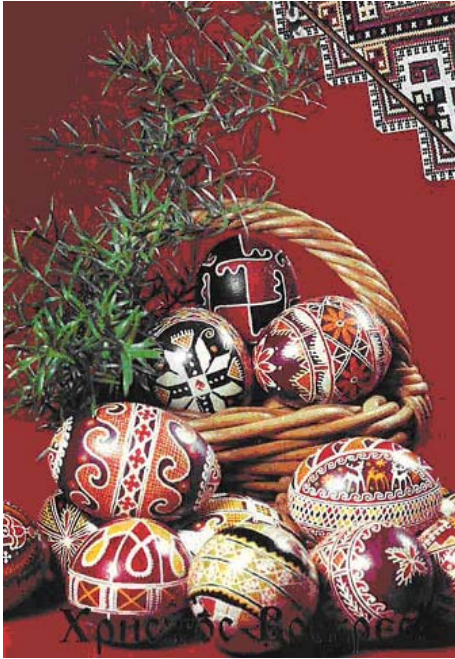
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Don’t forget to visit our website

www.mhpillawarra.com

EASTER

Ukrainian Decorated Easter Eggs (Pysanky)



Ukrainians at Easter time are hard at work creating beautiful works of art - preparing decorated Easter eggs – the PYSANKY.

The process is intricate and each design is drawn onto raw white eggs and progressively covered with bees wax, batik style, using a hollow-nibbed stylus. Beginning with light colours the egg is dipped in dye baths, dried and more wax patterns are applied. This process is gradually repeated with darker colours left till the end. The designs come to life after each dye bath. Finally the wax is removed by warming the egg over a candle. The yolk is blown out through pinholes after the egg is decorated.

Funding

The Ukrainian community received a small cultural grant from the NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission to revive the egg painting tradition in late 1980s. Electric nibbed stylus were purchased to improve the application of the wax.

History

In keeping with tradition this ancient craft is passed from generation to generation. Archaeological evidence shows the Pysanka tradition dates back to pre-Christian celebrations of spring when the eggs were made as offerings to ward off evil and bring prosperity in the year ahead.



Easter Food Basket

These days the eggs symbolize the rebirth of Christ and form part of the blessing of the food basket. Families present a basket of Pysanky, ham, cottage cheese, salami, salt, butter, horse radish, boiled eggs and decorative homemade paska bread to be blessed by the priest at Easter mass.

The Paska is a round shaped Easter bread, much richer than ordinary bread. The top is elaborately decorated with fancy dough ornaments, having the cross as the central motif.

Христос Воскрес
Christ is Risen

(Story and photographs courtesy of Ludwik Ihnat, OAM and Erika Ihnat)

An Easter Tradition Begins for Children of Italian Migrants

In 1979, we found out that there was a school called Greenacres which catered for children with disabilities and that many of them were children of Italian migrants. So my husband and I decided to visit the school to find out if there were any problems these children of Italian families may have had.



GEORGES BARBER SHOP - WARRAWONG

It was clear that the children with an Italian background didn't participate in school excursions. Why? Because their parents couldn't read English and therefore couldn't understand the request from the school.

When I visited, and I visited with not only Italian but also Spanish children from migrant families, I showed a spoon to a little girl saying "cucchiara". The little girl gave me a big, bright smile because she understood that I spoke the same language as her mother.

It was then I realised that these children had a big problem in understanding the teachers at school who were speaking English, whilst their mothers were speaking Italian or Spanish, or the language based on the nationality of their parents.

Through the CoAsIt (now ItSoWel) we applied for and received a financial grant through the Department of Disability for a social worker to help these families with disabled children. The grant allowed for a social worker for 8 hours a week.

During a meeting with the then CoAsIt, we spoke about the customs in our home town in Italy at Easter and how the men used to play in the city square with boiled eggs. They used to put the eggs in a circle and tried to centre the next egg and break it with their own eggs. If their egg got broken, then the other player would take it, but if their egg stood and the other one was broken, they took the broken egg, put it in their pocket and passed onto the next egg. The more eggs they broke, the more eggs they took home.

Talking about this tradition, we decided to have a BBQ and invited all the children from the school present to a competition to paint the boiled eggs. The child who did the best painted egg won a chocolate Easter egg. First place would get the biggest Easter egg, a smaller one for second place and a little Easter egg for all the other children. With the profit from the BBQ and the lottery we had funds to buy chocolate Easter eggs for all the Children at schools in the Illawarra area who catered for their needs.

There have been many years since the BBQs but the ItSoWel does organise the "Bingo Lunch" for the same purpose.

The first BBQ with the competition for the Easter egg was on 3 March 1980.

(Story and photography courtesy of Giulia Bonacina)



One does not just enter Georges Barber Shop for a haircut alone. One also enters it for the history. Dino opened his barber shop at Port Kembla in 1950 and George did his apprenticeship with him. George still had Dinos original barber chair. He opened his own shop at Warrawong 26 years ago and has been there ever since.





The shop is a shrine to Port Kembla Rugby League Football Club "Up the Blacks". There are many old photos, the oldest being around 1914. The floor is, as you would expect, black and white checks. Other sporting teams recognised are St George and a number of English soccer teams. There are also photos of famous local boxers of Italian and Macedonian origin (Vito Gaudiosi, Alex Temelkov, Loigi Farrina).



In one corner is a collection of historical implements used by barbers and for personnel use. George has a silver English shaving mug that is about 300 years old, a cut - throat (gold top) from Germany, and a bible that belonged to a John Cavanaugh, which dates before the First World War. All the items and photos in the shop have been given to him. It has become a repository of our past.

The shop is a male domain and it is said that when you go for a hair cut at Georges that it costs \$2 and you pay an extra \$8 for the abuse. But when you sit waiting, listening to the stories and looking at the history – it's priceless.

When you ask George why he does it the answer is simple – the memories.

(Story and Photographs courtesy of Peter Bestman)



SIMPLY LIVING – SHARE YOUR FRUGAL STORIES

We're living in difficult times. Families and individuals are having to find new ways of getting more with less money. For many migrants this is not new. If you have a story that you would like to share of what you or your parents did to save money and survive difficult times, we would like to include them in our next newsletter. Email your story to: mhp@learth.net or send by mail to: Migration Heritage Project, PO Box 1589, South Coast Mail Centre NSW 2521. Images accompanying a story are particularly welcome. Don't forget to include your contact details.



www.mhpillararra.com

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Joining Fee:	Individual	\$5.00
	Pensioners	\$2.00
	Organisations	\$10.00
Annual Fee:	Individual	\$10.00
	Pensioners	\$5.00
	Organisations	\$10.00

Joining fees payable within fourteen days of receipt of advice of membership approval. Annual fees payable by 30 June of each year.

The Secretary
Migration Heritage Project Inc.
PO Box 1589
South Coast Mail Centre NSW 2521
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We would love you to join but you don't have to be a member to participate.