



Migration Heritage Project

Presents

Women in Work

UNPICKING THE WORKING LIVES OF WOMEN IN THE ILLAWARRA
TEXTILE, CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY FROM THE 1940s TO 2009



A presentation by Eva Castle in conjunction with the Migration Heritage Project Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 5 November 2009, 5.30pm, Wollongong City Gallery (BlueScope Steel Gallery, Level 3) Corner Kembla and Burelli Streets Wollongong.

Many women and some men in the Illawarra have spent part or all of their working lives in the textile, clothing and footwear industry – in factories, at home, as outworkers, or managing and running businesses. A small number of people have been interviewed about their experiences, kept objects and archives. This exploratory research aims to understand more about the people behind the TCF industry image: their life choices, attitudes, their families, cultural, social and educational background, professionalism, aspirations, the meaning of work, and the transmission of skills between generations and countries.

MHP researcher, Eva Castle, has interviewed women and men, whose mother's worked in the TCF, women who worked and still work in the TCF, or worked at home; factory managers, supervisors and owners, and people who supported the TCF industry employees and businesses. They have generously given access to photographs showing former factories and women at work, and clothing, raw materials, and personal records and archives. A request to local museums resulted in locating some objects in the Illawarra Historical Society museum.

The Migration Heritage Project would like to invite you to this annual event, which is used to highlight one aspect of the MHP program. The presentation, which will be given prior to the Annual General Meeting, will be followed by light refreshments and time to meet some of the people involved in the project.

**RSVP: 31 October 2009 Ph: 0438 832 094
or Email: mhp@1earth.net**



Eva Castle commenced her association with the Migration Heritage Project in 2002 when the MHP received its first grant, from the IMB Community Foundation. The grant, to fund a project officer and to develop an inaugural exhibition, resulted in the Celebrations Exhibition and public program, held at the Wollongong City Gallery during Viva La Gong in September 2002. This was the MHP's first exhibition and collaboration with community groups and the success of the exhibition was largely due Eva's commitment to the MHP vision of acknowledging the role of culturally diverse groups and

individuals in Wollongong's history. Eva continued to work at Wollongong City Library until 2005 when she took on the role as the first Wollongong City Council Museums Development Officer (2005-2009). She worked to achieve greater recognition of and collaboration in the volunteer museum sector and developed ways to acknowledge diverse lived experiences in the community.

In 2009, Eva has completed the Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies at Sydney University and focussed on developing a local cultural research practice. She has also worked as an intern at the Powerhouse Museum, on this exploratory research about the relationship between women and the textile, clothing and footwear industry, through personal objects and collections. The MHP's 2007 *Places Project*, a heritage study into places of significance for migrants, had established that many women, and particularly migrant women, were employed in the local TCF industry. Eva's research draws on, and expands, the *Places Project* research.

Eva was born in Wollongong, has a Hungarian cultural background and is a member of the MHP and Museums Australia. She has a commitment to creating cultural content that reflects the lives of people who live in Wollongong. The MHP is very fortunate to have her expertise to draw upon. The MHP are delighted that Eva based her internship research on the *Places Project Study* and it is with much pleasure that MHP can present her research at the MHP AGM Annual Presentation.



Migration Heritage Project
Define Record Protect Promote
migrant heritage in Wollongong and the Illawarra

www.mhpillawarra.com

NOT MISSIN' THE NISSEN



Local artist, Flossie Peitsch interprets domestic heritage and the experience of migrants to Wollongong seeking work in the mining and textile industries. Small scale replica Nissen hut installations will roam the streets of central Wollongong during the festival week. Street performers will tell stories through the life of domestic objects and artefacts. On Saturday 7 November the huts will be located in MacCabe Park for the festival.

Locations: Hut installation Friday October 30 Wollongong Mall

Performances: Tuesday November 3 and Thursday Nov 5 at 12.30

Street performance: Janys Hayes and actors

Image credit: Nissen Huts, Berkeley Hostel, south-west view, early 1950's, Illawarra Images, from the collections of Wollongong City Library and the Illawarra Historical Society.

www.vivalagongfestival.org

