



2009 MHP ANNUAL REPORT

EXTRACT OF REPORT AS PRESENTED AT THE 2009 MHP AGM

Our Purpose: To define, record, protect and promote migration heritage in the Illawarra

I wish to begin my report to the Annual General Meeting this year by recalling a part of the speech I made in 2003 at the opening of the MHP's first exhibition, the Celebrations exhibition, which was put together as part of Viva La Gong in 2003. I made a comment in my speech about having grown up in Wollongong, a city rich with diversity but a diversity which was poorly reflected in the symbols and memorials around the city. Today, as we sit inside the Regional Art Gallery we walked past a series of photographic panels adorning the exterior of the building. These photographs, taken by renowned artist Mayu Kanamori, record present day images of people who migrated to the City and who have helped shape and characterise its community.

In addition the exhibition of portraits that we enjoy today was the product, not of the direct work of the MHP, but the collaboration that the MHP enjoys with many partner organisations across the City – in this instance with Wollongong City Council and the Viva organising committee who commissioned the work from the research the MHP carried out in 2007 in the Places Study.

Not Missin' the Nissen which is an installation of small replica huts accompanied by a performance piece in the Wollongong City Mall on the day of the Viva Festival is another example of how the Places research and the recent Heritage listing of the Nissen Huts in Fairy Meadow, have germinated ideas for creative expressions of the first place of accommodation for many immigrants to Wollongong. These works are products of local artists Flossie Peitsch and Janys Hayes.

This exhibition of portraits, installations and the performances provide vivid examples of the work the MHP wishes to continue to generate and produce in the coming years.

Every year I mention that our work is a like a continual building block where one project builds on and leads to another. This year is no exception.

The Places Project – NSW Heritage Office, MHC, WCC

The 2007/08 Wollongong Migration Heritage thematic Study (The Places project) which was completed by Louis Thom, Meredith Walker and Glynis Cummins, has provided a rich source of material from which a wide range of collaborators have drawn inspiration – such as the portraits and the Nissen Hut exhibition.

When the project was handed over, there was much discussion by the partner organisations at the time to ensure the work didn't get lost and was expanded upon.

As a result of the discussions, the then Wollongong City Council Cultural Services Museum Development Officer, Eva Castle collaborated with the MHP and the University of Wollongong School of Art and Design to conduct a workshop in early 2009 on the potential to expand this initial work. *(continued over)*

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 2010 are as follows:

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

Eva Castle

Louise Thom

Zofia Laba

Migration Heritage Project
PO Box 1589
South Coast Mail Centre
NSW 2521
Ph: 0438 832 094
Email: mhp@learth.net

Don't forget to visit our
website

www.mhpillawarra.com



The workshop was well attended by a variety of representatives from the heritage sector, creative arts, history and the broader community cultural development sector.

As a result of this exposure, Annette McLernon who took over from Eva as the Museums Development Officer for the Council sought funding to further the work and make some of the elements key themes for the Viva La Gong Festival in November 2009. The portraits and the Nissen Hut installation and performance pieces are the outcomes.

Powerhouse Museum Internship

Carrying on with a different theme highlighted by the thematic study, we were please this year to be able to assist Eva Castle to carry out an internship at the Powerhouse Museum that focused on researching the lives of working women in the Illawarra in the clothing, textile and footwear industries. Eva's presented at the AGM this year and will be provided to the MHP as another body of work.

Sirens of Woolungah at Brighton Beach

The MHP also provided input into the ceramic installation at Brighton Beach that was designed by Michael Keighery. This is part of the Blue Mile project funded by the Wollongong City Council and the installation provides images of the local Aboriginal community, the environment as well as other important events and times in history that occurred in and around the Harbour. Images of Immigrants to the area are part of the project.

Migration to Wollongong Publication

As we have mentioned last year, Meredith Walker has provided the MHP with the completed manuscript for this publication. We are greatly indebted to Meredith for the work she has carried out to complete the manuscript and while we had expected to have it published already, we know this isn't far away with editing and the design for a new layout having already commenced.

We know the publication will be used and referenced by people interested in migration history in the Illawarra and across Australia. It is intended to not only document the impact that migrants and refugees have made in the Illawarra, but also to act as a thematic guide for people wanting to explore and research the heritage of migrants in the Illawarra and Australia.

The Museums and Heritage Wollongong Website

Along with a wide range of other heritage and cultural groups and centres in the Wollongong area, we are participating in a website to promote the unique cultural characteristics of our region.

The participation in the website not only increases our exposure, it also provides a closer link to the heritage sector in the area.

The Migration Sculpture Project

The MHP is represented on the Wollongong City Council planning committee that is scoping the work for the production of a sculpture to commemorate and celebrate the contribution of immigrants to the region.

This project is still in the early stages but could potentially play a significant role in securing civic recognition of the impact of migration to Wollongong and surrounds.

Membership on the Advisory Panel of the NSW Migration Heritage Centre

As chairperson I was invited this year to join the Advisory Panel of the NSW MHC at the Powerhouse Museum. I was honoured to have been recommended and I will seek to ensure regional issues are shared with the rest of the Panel and the Directors of the Museum.

Ties with Tradition – Macedonian Aprons at the Powerhouse

It came as a great surprise to learn that the Directors of the Powerhouse Museum were keen to collaborate with the Macedonian Community in the Illawarra to produce an exhibition of traditional Macedonian Aprons to be opened during Design Week in July 2009.

While the MHP wasn't directly involved in the project it is an example of how all the community linkages, of which MHP was a part, can come together to produce such a significant result. We wish to congratulate Mendo Trajcevski, our Treasurer, and Meredith Walker on this truly magnificent result.

Linkages with other Heritage Groups

The MHP continues to liaise and collaborate with other heritage groups in the Area and most recently a formal meeting was held with the Illawarra Historical Society to explore possible joint projects or initiatives. There were lots of ideas exchanged but it was evident that funding will be required to develop any firm proposals.

With sincere thanks

The MHP is indebted to many agencies and individuals for their support and generosity throughout the year. Wollongong City Council merits many thanks for allowing us to utilise meeting rooms on a monthly basis and costs associated with printing and mailouts throughout the year. Council officers Darinka Radinovic from Multicultural Services and Eva Castle and Annette McLernon Museum Development Officers have provided great support in their respective roles.

Our ongoing thanks to Meredith Walker, Louise Thom and Glynis Cummins for the Places project which has generated so many creative pieces of work this year. With thanks also to the funding bodies of that project, Heritage NSW, The Migration Heritage Centre for NSW and Wollongong City Council.

Franca Facci
Chairperson

MIGRATION PUBLIC ART PROJECT



The migrant experience is a shared and familiar one. Our sense of who we are as a nation has been indelibly shaped by this experience of migration. In Wollongong migrants have made significant contributions to the social, cultural and economic fabric of the city since its foundation and in particular in the post World War II migration period of the 1950's and 60's. Today Wollongong is a culturally diverse city with almost a quarter of its population born overseas.

The *Migration Public Art Project* has been developed from an idea initiated by local members of the Calabria Centro Culturale. The project aims to produce a significant art work for display in a prominent public space in Wollongong that recognises and celebrate the important contributions migrants have made to the city.

A project committee comprised of representatives from culturally diverse communities has been convened with the support of Wollongong City Council to facilitate the project. A series of community consultations will be run in early 2010 to develop ideas for the artwork which will assist in developing an art plan and artists brief for the project. Funding for the art work is yet to be identified and once this is confirmed calls for expressions of interest to create the artwork will occur and will be open to artists from all over Australia.

Individuals or groups interested in supporting the project can contact the Multicultural Community Worker at Wollongong City Council on 42277111.

ANNUAL PRESENTATION AT THE MHP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



At the 2009 MHP Annual General Meeting held on 5 November 2009, Eva Castle presented a progress report on her research project *Women in Work: Unpicking the working lives of women in the Illawarra textile, clothing and footwear industry from the 1940s to 2009*. Many of the participants were able to attend Eva's presentation.



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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
Email: mhp@1earth.net

We would love you to join but you don't have to be a member to participate.



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR READERS FOR YOUR CONTINUED INTEREST AND SUPPORT

May we take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season and a Merry Christmas to all those who are celebrating Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all.