



MHP GOES GLOBAL



The Hon David Campbell, Councillor Val Zanotto and members of the MHP at the Website Launch

The first website for the Migration Heritage Project came into existence in April 2006. The Hon David Campbell, MP, NSW Minister for the Illawarra officially pressed the keyboard to launch the site for public access. The web site was developed by Wes Wickham with support from Gregor Cullen and Fidelia Pontarolo.

The site contains the history, projects, images and resources that have evolved since the MHP was formed as a cooperative group of individuals in 2001. Current projects are online and the site will expand as new projects and local content is generated.

The launch took place at the Old Court House in Belmore Basin, on a cool Thursday evening. The room filled with supporters, public and community organisation representatives. Attending councillors included the Lord Mayor Alex Darling and Val Zanotto. Franca Facci, chairperson of the MHP, spoke eloquently of the need for local heritage to be understood by a broader audience; for the cultural diversity that is Wollongong to be understood in the context of experience arising when people leave one culture to live in another – culture and history from elsewhere that is woven into the lived experience in the Illawarra.

The role of the MHP is to support individuals, community workers and groups to communicate their experience through heritage and cultural projects - perhaps in partnership with curators or heritage specialists and with technical and design support to record and illustrate this history. The website will enhance this role by going online and thereby allowing access to a larger, world wide, audience to view the projects.

The MHP extends its thanks to the IMB Community Foundation, the Migration Heritage Centre NSW and the Wollongong City Council for their continuing support.

MT KEMBLA MINING HERITAGE FESTIVAL SHOWCASING MT KEMBLA Festival 2006 - Sat 29, Sun 30 & Mon 31 July 2006

The historic Mt Kembla village, on the NSW South Coast, is where you'll find some of Australia's best storytellers, musicians, coal shovelers, artists and heritage buffs on the last weekend in July for the annual mining heritage festival. Now in its fifth year, the Mt Kembla Mining Heritage Festival is a commemoration of the past and a celebration of the future, offering everything from a Poets' Breakfast to the NSW titles of the national Coal Shovelling competition. Getting to the festival and around the mountain will be easy with the free Premier Illawarra shuttle bus operating hourly between Unanderra Railway and the village. It will also link the free festival car park, on lower Stones Rd, with all the events on the mountain, all weekend.

On Monday evening, July 31 (the actual date of the 1902 Disaster) at 6.30, we remember the 96 men and boys who lost their lives in Australia's worst mining disaster on this day in Mt Kembla in 1902. Rug up warmly for the beautiful and poignant "Lighting of 96 Candles" in Windy Gully Cemetery. Access is by free shuttle bus only to this event. This year's festival closes with the Mt Kembla Art Prize Ball & Art Auction on August 5, which is a "1902 Vintage – Turn of the Century" dress up or down evening.

Details: Cate Stevenson 4271 3737 or visit www.mtkembla.org.au

PhD STUDY ON DISPLACED PERSONS

One of our newest members is Jayne Persian, who has recently commenced a PhD at the University of Sydney focusing on the 170,000 Displaced Persons – predominantly Central and Eastern Europeans who ended up in the European DP camps after the Second World War - who arrived in Australia as IRO-sponsored refugees between 1947 and 1953. Jayne is interested in the themes of war, trauma, memory and commemoration, and is planning to conduct oral history interviews with Displaced Persons and their children as part of her research. For further information, or if you would like to be involved in this project, please email Jayne at mhp@learth.net

AT A GLANCE – MHP UPDATE

MHP Publication

There had been a flurry of activity between Meredith Walker and the MHP last month as Meredith prepared to hand over the first draft of the MHP publication (working title *Discovering Wollongong Migrant Heritage*). The first draft was delivered to the MHP committee two weeks ago. There is still quite a great deal to get through before we go to print but the publication so far is quite exciting and contains a lot of information about migrant life in the Illawarra. If anyone would like to assist please contact the MHP (mhp@learth.net).

Maltese Exhibition

Lorraine Vargas, together with Linda Raymond, has collected enough information now to come up with an exhibition on the Maltese Community in the Illawarra with the focus on the George Cross Club, being that the Club celebrates its 55th anniversary in September. Gregor Cullen has completed the designs for the exhibition panels and things are going quite well. The venue dates have to be altered so the exhibition, which was due to be staged in the foyer of the Wollongong City Council Administration Building in July, has been delayed until September. Arrangements still need to be finalised but the later scheduling of the exhibition sees it occurring to coincide with the Club celebrations.

Home Movies Animating Heritage

Stage 1 (Register of Home Movies) is now complete and much thanks goes to Beth Herbert who was engaged for this stage of the project. The next stage, Stage 2, involves the selection of film,

digitising them and then burning them to DVD. Stage 2 is currently underway. If anyone would like to assist please contact the MHP (mhp@learth.net).

New Project

The MHP was successful in obtaining a grant through the NSW Heritage Office to undertake a study of Migration Heritage in Wollongong, together with other funding negotiated with Migration Heritage Centre and the Wollongong City Council. Louise Thom will be overseeing this project and more information will be advised by this newsletter.

Workshop on Archival Practice for Clubs and Societies

Louise Thom has arranged for an archivist and a conservator from the Powerhouse Museum to deliver training in Wollongong. The aim of the training is to help people understand how important it is to keep records and which records are most valuable if there is a limit to what can be kept. Training will also include how and where to store records. For further information please contact the MHP (mhp@learth.net).

Meetings

The MHP Committee meet the first Thursday of the month at 5.30pm in Meeting Room 1 Level 10, Wollongong City Council, Burelli Street Wollongong. Members and guests are most welcome to attend. Please contact the MHP to confirm attendance (mhp@learth.net).

ELIZABETH'S STORY



Elizabeth proudly sits in front of the 'continuous photo album' of her family.

If you think you'd like to put together your own family story and thought that it was only something experienced authors were able to do, well sit back and read how Elizabeth Dilevski did it.

Born in Poznan Poland, Elizabeth Nowacki lived in Israel for three years before migrating to Australia via a four week sea journey arriving in Fremantle in January 1961. With her parents, brother and two younger sisters, the family had a short stay at Bonegilla before coming to live at the Fairy Meadow Hostel as her father, like many others' fathers, managed to secure employment at AI&S. Elizabeth attended Wollongong High School and received the equivalent of today's HSC. Elizabeth was employed at the ANZ bank in Wollongong for ten years during which time she married and had her first daughter. After the birth of her second daughter in 1976 Elizabeth went to work for Rowena Milgrove at the Regent Theatre where she stayed right up until the death of Mrs Milgrove in 2004 when the Regent closed. "During my most pleasant working years at the Regent Cinema my personal life was often discussed over a cup of coffee and as we all shared our stories, Rowena would often remark 'Elizabeth should write a book about her life it could one day be made into an alternate movie'". And that's just what Elizabeth did!

"My family history mystery alone had a lot of intrigue, together with my life experiences and hundreds of photos taken by me over the many years was a great basis for my book and so the idea for my book was born", said Elizabeth. So for the next six months Elizabeth would spend many afternoons and nights in her downstairs office where she compiled all her photos, sticking them onto A4 pages then typing the relevant information pertaining to each photograph. Her book was taking shape. "With each passing page I was getting more excited and enthused about my first project, but the best thing about it was I was working again, the only difference being I wasn't getting paid".

Finally her book 'Elizabeth's Story' was complete and the next step for Elizabeth was to get it printed and bound. Up until this stage Elizabeth had not considered getting outside funding so she took her pages, 252 in total (70 pages of text plus 182 pages of photos) to a local retailer who also had printing services but because of the thickness of the book they suggested binding the book into three volumes but because the photo pages were copied onto thick glossy paper while the pages of text were on ordinary paper, the glossy pages started coming out of the book. "Now I had this great idea! Why not donate 'Elizabeth's Story' to the Wollongong City

Library so that everyone who so desired could read my story at no cost to him or her". So Elizabeth met with Library staff and left her book with them, falling out pages and all. Elizabeth suggested that the Library run off one or two copies for the Library but that wasn't an option as it would set a precedent so she did the next best thing. "I took the three volumes to Betta Books and Binding and had another two copies (this time all in one hard cover) made. One of these I donated to the Local Studies Library in November 2005". Elizabeth also arranged to have her story appear in the Illawarra Mercury in the same year after which she was approached by many people wanting to purchase her book. Unable to afford to print more copies of her books, Elizabeth began to pursue funding. "I could donate the book to the Wollongong Cancer Ward. After all it would benefit the public and I would have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done something worthwhile".

Elizabeth applied for funding but was not successful. "I never let rejection deter me as I believe that rejection only makes you stronger and even more determined to succeed. You shouldn't let a few minor rejections hold you back from pursuing your goal and dreams. Life is good all the same, more and more people have already read my first book and my letter to the editor at the Illawarra Mercury advising interested parties as to where they can find my story, appeared in the paper last year so I am pleased with the progress I have made and very proud that I have achieved this on my own!"

Today Elizabeth has just completed her second book titled 'A Pictorial Tribute to a Great Lady of the Regent Theatre' which is also a tribute to all the many wonderful staff that have helped make the Regent so memorable. Elizabeth plans to have the book bound and printed and hopes the Illawarra Mercury will again feature it to alert the public of the book's availability at the Local Studies Library from the end of June 2006.

"Today I feel fulfilled, if I were to go tomorrow at least I have left a legacy to show that I have been here and did something worthwhile during my lifetime".

'Elizabeth's Story' by Elizabeth Dilevski is available at the Wollongong Local Studies Library (Catalogue No. LR304.894DIL).

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

