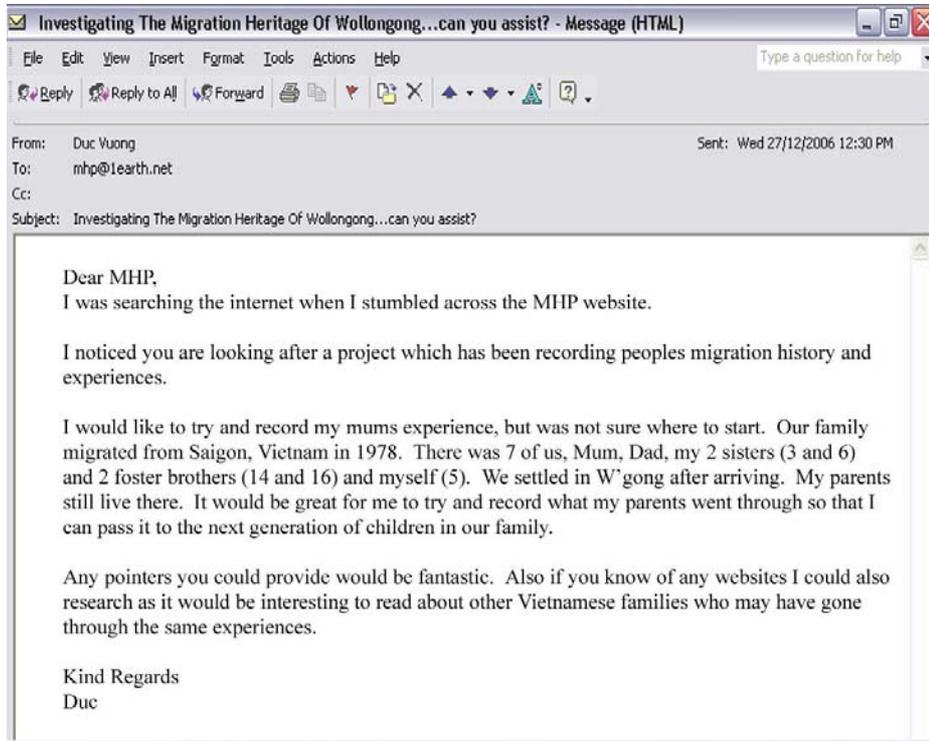




FAMILY HISTORY RECORDING - CAN WE ASSIST?



Like many of us, Duc is about to embark on that time-consuming but rewarding endeavour to record his family's story so that the coming generations will know this story. But where to start? From Duc's email above you can see he is looking for pointers. It is always nice to hear from someone else who has done a little family research, particularly from someone who is tracing a non-English family. The MHP has one such person who kindly responded to Duc's enquiry and we thought we would share her response for others who may be considering starting to trace their family roots. Our correspondent would like to emphasise that she is no expert, but someone who began this hobby 12 years ago and has learnt a couple of things along the way.

Dear Duc,

Thank you for your email and visiting the MHP Website. I have done a little oral history recording myself and below is a list of things I have learnt along the way:

Invest in a tape recorder, preferably a Dictaphone, to accurately record the conversation. Having a Dictaphone makes it easier to transcribe. I also use a video recorder and it is nice to have their image as they talk and it becomes a keepsake. Try to use themes at each interview. It is difficult to cover everything in one long sitting, so I choose a theme and spend a couple hours on that. For example, Interview 1 will be about where they were born, how they grew up, where they lived as they grew up, mother, father, brothers, sisters, etc. Interview 2 might be about school. Interview 3 might be about work. Interview 4 might be about meeting husband/wife etc.

(continued over)

2007 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 remaining meetings scheduled for 2007 are as follows:

3 May, 7 June, 5 July,
2 August, 6 September,
4 October, 1 November (AGM),
and 6 December
(Venue for meetings provided through the Wollongong City Council Multicultural Services)

MHP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman

Franca Facci

Treasurer

Mendo Trajceviski

Secretary

Fidelia Pontarolo

Committee:

Gregor Cullen

Rina Montgomery

Olga Romano

Giulia Bonacina

Ludwik Ihnat

Peter Bestman

MHP WEBSITE

Don't forget to visit our website
www.mhpillawarra.com

BACK TO KEMBLA HISTORY OPEN DAY

Sunday 15th April 2007
Anytime between 10am-4pm

Kembla Heights
Community Hall

Harry Graham Dr
Kembla Heights

(Details page 4)

(family history recording- can we assist continued from page 1)
I searched bookshops and the internet for books about researching my particular heritage and read a lot of books about the subject. Here are some tips I first happened upon:

When you record an oral history, remember that you're an interested relative, not a hard-nosed reporter. Recording an oral history should be an enjoyable experience for everyone involved, and you're more likely to get good results if that's the case. Below are a few tips.

1. Schedule the oral history session in advance. Don't just show up on a person's doorstep unexpectedly.
2. Bring a tape recorder, or pen and paper, or both. If you want to use a tape recorder, make sure you get prior permission from the person you're interviewing. You may want to take a few notes even if you use a tape recorder, perhaps to get the correct spellings of places and people's names. If you use a tape recorder, be sure to test the recorder as well as the tape to make sure that each is working.
3. Make sure you record the date and location of the interview, as well as the name of the interviewer and the interviewee.
4. Ask questions to start things off, but don't be afraid to let the person you're interviewing talk "off the subject". You may get some of the best stories this way. If they really start rambling, gently steer them back to your questions.
5. Don't push for answers. If you're asking questions that seem to make the person uncomfortable, ask if they want to continue or if they would rather talk about something else.
6. If you ask "when" something happened, the answer will often be I don't know, because the individual doesn't recall the exact date or year. Instead of asking "when," ask the question in relation to another event. For example, did an event take place before or after the individual got married, or before or after the individual's parents died? You can also begin the question with: "About how old were you when....Using these techniques, you're more likely to get answers.
7. If you have any old pictures or other items that you have questions about, bring them along. You may get answers to your questions, and you will probably hear some good stories, too.
8. Keep the session relatively short, no more than one or two hours. Recording an oral history should be fun, not hard work. You can schedule another session at a later date if you want to continue recording the oral history.

I have generally kept to these basic rules. I also have learnt to verify what was told by getting copies of birth certificates, marriage certificates etc. The State Library of NSW occasionally runs courses on conducting oral histories. I am sure if you contact the State Library of NSW about oral history courses they

will direct you to right person. The LDS website may have some information on Vietnam for you. Just go to www.lds.org.au Click on Library, then Family History Library Catalogue and in Place Search type in Vietnam. Another website for novice family historians is Cyndi's List www.cyndislist.com Many of the websites are American. However if you just type in Vietnam+oral history or similar strings you may happen across a useful website for your particular heritage. When I first began I just surfed the net constantly and came away with some helpful hints. The MHP will shortly publish a guide to recording migrant history and this I believe will be of great assistance to you. In the meantime I hope the information I have supplied will be of use.

Good Luck with your research.

Kind Regards

Migration Heritage Project

If you can help Duc with his research please write to the MHP or send an email to mhp@leearth.net The MHP would like to thank Duc Vuong for allowing us to publish his email in this newsletter.

ORAL HISTORY GOES DIGITAL

The Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA) presents *Oral history goes digital*, a demonstration of the latest technologies in recording and editing as well as a practical seminar. Date: Saturday 5 May 2007. Venue: Metcalfe Auditorium, Macquarie Street Wing, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW. Cost: \$48 full price, \$42 (Friends), \$38 (OHAA members), morning or afternoon sessions \$18 or \$30 with lunch. For more information: contact State Library of NSW Bookings ph (02) 92731770 or email bookings@sl.nsw.org.au

MEET THE MIGRATION HERITAGE PROJECT COMMITTEE



Franca Facci – Chairperson

Franca is the inaugural chairperson of the Migration Heritage Project. Franca has worked in multicultural affairs for over 20 years and was consequently very

interested in getting involved with a project that sought to recognise and value the incredibly rich contributions that migrants have made to the Illawarra and to the day to day lives of the residents of the region.

“My vision is to see the Illawarra grow and mature as a region building on the strengths, talents, creativity and stories of all the people that live here. We can learn so much about who we are by looking at our history and we can make our plans for the future more robust by taking the best elements from all the cultural groups in the area. Working to promote and preserve the heritage of migrants is one way of highlighting the diversity of experience that we have to draw on in the city.”

The MHP also provides avenues for developing new and exciting ways of presenting history and of getting people from diverse backgrounds to work together to create something new and beautiful, this is also one of the great aspects of being involved in the project. Franca has lived in the area all her life and her family is of Italian background. “Whilst as a child I wanted to hide my Italian background I now believe that I am one of the lucky ones blessed with the rarest of gifts, being able to negotiate two languages and cultures and reaping many benefits from the transactions across the two worlds.”



Gregor Cullen – Committee Member

Gregor is one of MHP’s founding members. He was born in Wollongong, his parents migrated to Australia in the early 1950s from Glasgow, Scotland. He lives in Port Kembla with this wife Tania and young son Carlo.

“I grew up knowing that I had two cultures one Australian the other Glaswegian. It wasn’t until I had the chance to visit my parents place of birth that I understood the deep sense of belonging and pride my parents had for their Scottish homeland and heritage. My wife’s parents are Italian, we share a common bond that our lives have been shaped by our parents experience as migrants and their decision to come to

Australia and build a better life. My generation has an obligation to ensure our parent’s story of migration and settlement is recorded and celebrated. It’s a defining period in the cultural, social and economic history of contemporary Australia”.

As a graphic designer and lecturer at the School of Art & Design, University of Wollongong I’m able to provide MHP with valuable professional skills in publication and exhibition design. I have 26 years of experience working for community organisations and have been teaching at UOW for the past 13 years. As a graphic designer and artist I have a professional interest in the way visual images, heritage and culture shapes identity and beliefs. My work for MHP defines my academic practice and research. I’m currently working on the “Animating Heritage – Home Movies” project for MHP in partnership with Film Illawarra. When completed the project will incorporate film footage documenting migrant family arrival and settlement in Wollongong along with still image, sound and written text in a multimedia display. It’s a challenging project.

If I had one wish for MHP it would be for a Museum of Migration where all our hard work, research and projects could be on permanent public display.



Fidelity Pontarolo - Secretary

Fidelity holds the positions of Secretary, Public Officer and Website Manager, as well as Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor. She has been with the MHP since 2002 (prior to its incorporation).

Born in Wollongong she is of Italian heritage, her father immigrating to Australia in 1952 arriving in Wollongong in the same year via Bonegilla. Her 2 sets of maternal great grandparents both immigrated to Australia in the 1920s and her mother was also born in Australia of Italian parents who met and married in Australia. Fidelity’s interest in migrant heritage stems from her own research into her family’s history. She has traced her family back to the 1850s and admits she still has a long way to go. She feels great admiration of the courage shown by those who left their country of birth to come to a new country with very little and

doubts whether she would have the courage to do the same.

Fidelia served in the Royal Australian Navy for 21 years before returning to live in Wollongong where she is employed as an Executive Assistant. Like most of the MHP committee she is a volunteer and performs her MHP duties in her own time. "My admiration for those who chose to come to Australia, and in particular Wollongong, is why I am committed to being part of the MHP whose aims are to ensure the preservation and documenting of the valuable contributions of all migrants".

MHP PROJECT UPDATES

Migration to Wollongong Publication

The editing process has almost been completed by Meredith Walker on this sizeable project, and the publication in this form will be back with the MHP after Easter. Following this, additional editorial processes will be conducted through the MHP committee so it can be prepared for the layout design for printing.

Home Movies Animating Heritage

A great deal of footage has been converted to tape and with the assistance of Louise McBryde from Film Illawarra a sample piece has been compiled and will be available for viewing on the MHP website in the near future.

Wollongong Migration Heritage Places Study Project - Call for Contributions and Contacts

We would like to hear stories from Post World War Two migrants. About where they lived and about where they worshipped. If you are a woman we'd like to know about your work place. And finally we would like to know about the use of Wollongong Harbour at this time by migrant communities. If someone you know would have stories to share we'd appreciate if you could help us to contact them too. Contact Louise Thom on 4227 1150 or email: lcthom@ans.com.au

BACK TO KEMBLA HISTORY OPEN DAY

To help us collect, record and share photographs, documents or anything of heritage & historic significance of the greater Kembla area such as your family sporting, military, school records or family stories of life in the Kembla area. Donations of items and information on all subjects are welcome to add to our ever growing archived collection. There will be several collection points set up for your convenience copying & scanning photographs, and recording devices including digital photography to record images of items which people wish to take back home. Morning and afternoon tea will be available – why not bring a picnic lunch and share the day in the park catching up with old friends Contact Phil Donaldson: 4261 9196 Email: phildon2@bigpond.com

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF POST-SECOND WORLD WAR MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

To commemorate the 60th anniversary, the NSW Migration Heritage Centre, in association with *Sydney Morning Herald online*, is featuring a compelling mini-documentary on the *Misr* entitled *The First Wave: Beyond A White Australia* featuring special interviews, personal recollections and a searchable passenger list. *Sydney Morning Herald online* is also hosting a discussion forum and showcasing the NSW Migration Heritage Centre's online exhibitions throughout 2007. You can view the interviews on the Migration Heritage Centre website at: www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au

FUNDING TO PRESERVE COMMUNITY HERITAGE COLLECTIONS

The National Library is calling for applications for the 2007 Community Heritage Grants. The grants of up to \$15,000 are available to community groups around the country to help preserve and manage locally held nationally significant cultural heritage collections of documents and objects for future generations. Representatives from Australian, not-for-profit community organisations such as historical societies, museums, public libraries, archives, and Indigenous and migrant community groups are encouraged to apply. Applications close on Friday 8 June 2007. Information, guidelines and application forms are available at: www.nla.gov.au/chg/



www.mhpillawarra.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

Email: mhp@1earth.net

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

