



COLLECTIONS OF HOPES AND DREAMS

Migration Heritage Project Exhibition
Wollongong City Gallery 2011 - 2012



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The Migration Heritage Project acknowledges the Aboriginal people as the owners and custodians of the land upon which this exhibition took place and where many immigrants have come to settle.

Front Cover image: Central exhibition display for Drago Radinovic
Back cover image: Photograph of Terezija Vučko (centre) with her husband Ivan and daughter Katarina re-boarding the ship "Flamina" in Egypt during their journey to Australia. (Photo courtesy T. Vučko)



Displays for I. Csók and É. Gyarmati (back left), text from interviews on the wall (centre), Drago Radinovic (table and central display, right). Visible through the cabinet is the display for T. Vučko (left) and S. and É. Nyári (right)

MIGRATION HERITAGE PROJECT

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this booklet to you. It records our exhibition, which coincided with the 10th year anniversary of the Migration Heritage Project. The exhibition and this publication are an important contribution to the ongoing process of documenting the diverse heritage and culture of the City of Wollongong.

When the Migration Heritage Project was approached to develop a social history exhibition to accompany the Wollongong City Gallery "Generations" exhibition, we reflected on the ideas we wanted to explore. A perpetual theme that surfaced early and resonated with all of us was that of the hopes and dreams that migrants and refugees bring with them and develop on their journeys to, and on settlement in their new country. This collaboration with the Wollongong City

Gallery became a wonderful opportunity to present European migrant heritage in a new way to a gallery audience.

Through the sensitive and beautiful display of objects, images and documents, many stories about the hopes and dreams of migrants to the Illawarra were unlocked for all of us to read, hear and interpret. These stories form part of the history of the Illawarra. These are the stories that have helped Wollongong become the city it is today. These are the stories we can learn from and build on, to make our future prosper. The Migration Heritage Project is indebted to the contributors for sharing their experiences and collections.

Franca Facci
Chairperson, Migration Heritage Project



Exhibition displays (l to r) Daniela Lewandowski, Zofia Laba and Ron Matthesius

WOLLONGONG CITY GALLERY

One of Wollongong City Gallery's roles is to examine and present community stories that help delineate who we are. A defining story of Illawarra is about migrants who have come to this region. In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, the arrival of large numbers of migrants and their presence and active engagement in this community was a catalyst to social and cultural change, reflecting a wider Australian experience.

European settlements began in Illawarra in 1815. More than a hundred years later after WW II, significantly large groups of people began migrating to this area. People left Europe which was devastated by war. With the support of government sponsored migration schemes they found work in the local burgeoning steel and manufacturing industries.

Collections of Hopes and Dreams explores the sense of dislocation, isolation, assimilation and loss, experienced by many migrants. Significantly, their experiences are also of hope and the dream of a better life, which motivated their life-changing journey.

The MHP Chairperson Franca Facci enthusiastically embraced the idea of this exhibition, and the committee were instrumental in developing and producing this important exhibition. I extend a special thank you to the curator, Eva Castle whose passion, sensitivity and commitment to the participants, their stories and the project has produced such an interesting, emotional and insightful look into the migrant experience.

John Monteleone
Program Director, Wollongong City Gallery



Exhibition displays (l to r) G. Bánsági and T. Vučko (partially obscured)

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION

The brief for this exhibition was to record the experiences of people from Europe who arrived in Illawarra after World War II, where they established their lives and families. The Migration Heritage Project committee felt a sense of responsibility to research this group of residents - beginning with their motivations for leaving their place of birth and how their lives changed in Australia.

I began working on the project in March 2011. Five cultural groups (Croatian, German, Hungarian, Polish and Ukrainian) were identified and through cultural organisations and MHP networks, fourteen participants were selected. They included two Australian born children of European Australians, one couple, six people whose husband or wife had passed away, a woman who had died, and a relatively recent economic migrant.

Participants and families were interviewed over a period of weeks in their homes or at a day care group. Excerpts from interviews were included in the exhibition and are reproduced in this publication. The selection of objects for the exhibition was made in collaboration with the participants who loaned objects, documents and photographs; some of the images became large-scale reproductions in the exhibition. Every object had many associations including personal, familial, spiritual, social and historical. They were also associated with time periods or the passage of time, changing perspectives and creative expression.

The large wordworking table physically connected the audience with the glassed exhibition. People gathered around the table to talk and inspect its construction. It became an object of beauty,



Displays (l to r) T. Vučko, S. & É Nyári and G. Klavins

transformed from a purely functional design item in the gallery setting.

Each story was presented in a sequence beginning with the Ukrainian display of Olga Isaksson. This featured a hand-sewn tapestry on hessian made in the 1940s. It is a copy of the Ukrainian 'Tryzub' (three teeth or trident) and one of the few items Olga had from her mother. Historically it has a symbolic connection to Ukrainian independence (the Tryzub) and represents the intangible connection to Ukrainian landscape with the blue and yellow colours.

The short biographies in the exhibition created a context for each story and reflected the diversity of the participants -

a microcosm of the wider community. Photographs of the participants and brief biographical information is included in this publication. The exhibition was an important and historical record that visitors, including a group of local poets, found inspiring and beautiful. Aunty Barbara Nicholson, an elder of the Wadi Wadi Nation, read her poem Blessings from Abroad, at the reading of poems in response to the exhibition. It was an important moment, creating a connection between cultures. Dr Merlinda Bobis (co-presenter of the event) felt the exhibition and the poetry responses were an expression of communal storytelling and the beginning of conversations that should be continued.

Eva Castle
Curator, Collections of Hopes and Dreams

I wish I had listened to my parents more and learnt to speak their language, but when you are young you think there is all the time in the world. And then they are gone (O. Isaksson 2011)

OLGA ISAKSSON

Olga Isaksson's father and mother lived through the Holodomor in 1932-33, "one of the most heinous acts of genocide in history."¹ Departing from Germany, Olga's parents and older sister came to Australia as refugees in 1950. Olga says she was '*planned in Germany, conceived in Italy and made in Australia.*' (O. Isaksson 2011)

As a young girl Olga was encouraged to be involved in the Ukrainian community in Sydney. After her mother passed away she received gifts from Ukrainian women who knew her family. There is a permanent Ukrainian display in her home and she has kept a small collection of books about Ukrainian history and culture in Europe and Australia. Although Olga regrets that she did not have more time to spend with her parents - her mother was a good cook and her father could 'really tell you stories' - she achieved a successful working life and has a long involvement in the Ukrainian and German communities in Wollongong, continuing her father's legacy of supporting the Ukrainian community in Sefton.

¹ Holodomor: Ukrainian genocide in the early 1930s, (n.d.)

Ukrainian table runner purchased as a souvenir in England 1973



DANIELA LEWANDOWSKI

"They wanted to be happy, they wanted what everyone wanted, to have a family and work and that's it - to get away from the war and bad memories." (D. Lewandowski 2011)

This collection charts the changes in the lives of Daniela's parents and brother, and Daniela who grew up in Australia. Elisabeth and Tadeusz, and their baby Marian, came to Australia from Germany in 1950 as refugees. Tadeusz was in the resistance in Warsaw and then a prisoner-of-war. Daniela was born in Bathurst Hospital soon after they arrived. Her desires in life were to study piano, ballet and painting, which she did, studying piano seriously in her late teens. Independence became a theme in Daniela's life. With her mother's support she achieved her ambition of having a career and a successful working life, while continuing to support her parents as they aged in a country far removed from their cultural and familial home.

Lewandowski family picnic late 1950s (Photo: D. Lewandowski)



Elisabeth Wachholtz and Tadeusz Lewandowski, Göttingen on their wedding day, 1948



I never wanted to leave. It was the hardest thing to be an exile. I thought I could go back (S. Nyári 2011)



Gunda Weiss and Willi Klavins, Nuremberg 1949

GUNDA KLAVINS

Gunda Klavins came to Australia from Germany with her Latvian husband and their two children in 1950. Gunda and Willi met after the war and married in St. Elizabeth Kirche in Nuremberg, Bavaria. Her wedding dress was made of parachute silk, bartered by a US Army officer for laundry services from Gunda's mother. The parachute was also used to make blouses and scarves for Gunda and her sister. The veil was borrowed in exchange for cigarettes and chocolates. There is no photograph of the white horse and carriage. In Australia Gunda has made traditional Easter cakes and Christmas gingerbread houses for her children and grandchildren for many years, and uses her handicraft skills learnt from her parents to make presents throughout the year.



Steve and Éva Nyári, Bonegilla Migrant Hostel 1957 (Photo: S. & É. Nyári)

STEVE & ÉVA NYÁRI

István (Steve) and Éva came to Australia in 1957 as political refugees. Their collection includes Stephen's High School graduation photograph and Éva's wedding present from her sister, sent to the camp in Yugoslavia where they were married. Many years later Stephen reflected, "psychologically [it was difficult], you had an education, a job and then from one day to the next - nothing. It's not an adventure. I had homesickness for a very long time. There is guilt of leaving parents who were destitute." In 1976 he returned to attend his school's 20-year reunion. "Most [of my fellow students] were vets, doctors, lawyers etc. and I always wonder what would have happened [if I had been able to stay]. But I don't feel at home there anymore." He wrote for his address to a CWA function in Shellharbour in the 1990s - "I owe the sweet gifts of childhood and youth to Hungary, the harmony of my philosophy on life to my religion and the fruits of my working life to Australia."



Steve Nyári (white shirt, no tie) was the Occupational Health and Safety Supervisor. The photograph captures the marking of the exceptional 5-year accident free safety record his team achieved at the Australian Iron and Steel Coke Ovens in 1972. Some are holding the presents, which Steve presented to his team

*I wanted to be beautiful, to wear nice clothes and to be educated.
I went on a hunger strike for two days when my family didn't
let me go back to school after the war (J. Vučko 2011)*



Terezija Vučko (L) aged 16, with her friends in Zarovnica (1950) (Photo: T. Vučko)

TEREZIJA VUČKO

Life has taught Terezija the wisdom and meaning of her grandmother's saying, 'You must live to learn, but you must also learn to live'. Her education was cut short by the war in 1941 and after marriage her family commitments left little time for herself. Somehow Terezija has nurtured and developed her 'voice'. Since the 1980s when a poem she wrote was printed in her workplace newsletter at the Tin Plate Mill, she has written poetry, stories, and autobiography, and sings and recites poetry in an active local Croatian folk group.



Workbench made by G. Bántási in the 1980s. He replaced the original washing machine motor with one from a concrete mixer

GYÖRGY (GEORGE) BÁNSÁGI

George believes in life-long learning and making a useful contribution to society. George was a junior national high jump champion and trained as a fine instrument maker. He was married with two children when he and his family left Hungary in 1956. In Australia once the decision was made not to return, all their energy was put into establishing a life here. He studied English and worked for many years at Australian Iron & Steel as a specialist instrument designer. His life is founded on resourcefulness, and his pride in his knowledge of history and cultural heritage of Hungary is matched by his interest in world history. He has achieved his ambition to work in his field, and is proud of his contribution to Australian manufacturing.

ÉVA GYARMATI

Éva and her husband came to Australia as political refugees in 1957, determined to make the best of their new home and live with an open mind. By 1980 Éva had decided she wanted to do something for herself, after helping to raise their family and working for many years. She began studying porcelain-painting techniques, visiting factories and studios in Europe and the US on their holidays, to learn about different styles and techniques. Her inspirations include distinctive Hungarian Kalócsai patterns, Australia's natural environment, and mastering new paint and finishing techniques. Éva has created pieces for retail, special commissions, and gifts for visitors to Australia. Éva has achieved her creative ambition by developing her own designs.

Plate with Australian wildflowers (detail) hand painted by Éva Gyarmati, 1986



ILONA CSÓK

From an early age Ilona wanted to be a writer. However, education officials in the pro-Communist post-war Hungary rejected her applications to study journalism. Aged in her 50s she began to write about her life, which became an autobiography entitled "My Story". She has also written about her life with her husband who was a Hungarian dissident after the 1956 uprising in Hungary, and their journey to and life in Australia. In 1996 she began writing poetry and some of her more than 60 poems are translated into English. Poetry has become her 'friend and confidante' as she continues to reconcile her life as an immigrant with the dreams of her youth.

Detail from a souvenir flag with Budapest city crest



Sándor Csók and his aunty at his family home in Vizvár, Hungary 1991. It was his first visit to Hungary since he left in the late 1950s (Photo: S. Csók)



S. Csók as a young boy in Hungary (Photo: S. Csók)

SÁNDOR CSÓK

In the first decade of the 21st century Sándor received one of a number of honours recognising his role in the Hungarian uprising in 1956, in the aftermath of World War II. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 Hungary has returned to holding democratic elections. The Hungarian Government and organisations similar to the Australian RSL have begun to identify the living and deceased participants of the uprising. Their acts of defiance against the Communist regime and invading Soviet Army, has meant a lifetime of maintaining a vigil honouring those who died during or after the revolution. The Hungarian Government, more than 50 years later, is legislating to offer Hungarian citizenship for exiles. For many who participated, recognition has still not been granted, and their stories are unrecorded.



Elizabeth Mózár and her first husband Elemér in Vienna, 1948 (Photo: K. Hiess)

ELIZABETH MÓZÁR

Elizabeth Mozar was a free spirit. She left Hungary as a young woman to seek a better life; first in Vienna where she married and then migrating to Australia. Elizabeth loved beauty and throughout her life was at pains to present her best self to the world. Her dream was to be beautiful, youthful, wealthy, and have a family of her own. After her death, her niece Klara, inherited Elizabeth's photographs, sketches and a diary (1949 -1974). A year after Elizabeth's death in 2009 Klara compiled a photo essay of Elizabeth's life beginning with a photo of Elizabeth on her Holy Communion. It was given to Elizabeth's youngest granddaughter Chantelle, on the occasion of her Holy Communion. It was a gift representing an enduring bond arising from compassion and an understanding of the importance of belonging and acceptance.



Wedding bible and corsage, from the wedding of Drago and Zora Radinovic in Salzburg 1959

DRAGO RADINOVIC

As a young man Drago saw the hardship and suffering faced by many war-widowed women and children and was angry that the families were left destitute by a dictatorial regime. He wanted freedom and a better life. He formulated a plan to escape and come to Australia where it was warm and there was a promise of work. He escaped with his sweetheart across the border from Croatia into Austria, and with a new baby daughter born in Salzburg, came to live in Wollongong. His skills with

timber show his dedication to excellence in craftsmanship and reflected in his approach to life. To build the bench displayed in the exhibition, Drago used the skills that he had first learned as a young man undertaking his carpenter's apprenticeship in Ljubljana (Slovenia)².

² Information provided by Darinka Radinovic from an interview with Drago Radinovic, November 2011

I want to know who was here before I came, and what things they did. I don't feel like I matter or that I am valued, unless they are recognised too (Z. Laba 2011)



Ron Matthesius' West German tiling tools including the heart shaped trowel made by Jung, sent to Australia by boat 1969

RON MATTHESIUS

The egalitarian lifestyle, good weather, owning his home, and a community of care are how Ron describes living his dream. In East Germany Ron experienced the absence of community, social kindness, and a persistent denial of physical and intellectual freedom. He could not make a living, and there was no foreseeable future when things would improve. These were some of Ron's motivations for leaving what became East Germany after the war. In West Germany he again found himself ostracized as 'other' because he came from the 'East' and his search for acceptance and a 'free' life led him to Australia.



Pencil sketch to scale for a stained glass window at St Michael's Church, Market Street Wollongong by J. Radecki

ZOFIA LABA

Zofia's ambition is to create a mainstream dialogue about who we are as a community. University educated, she came to Australia in 1988 from Communist post-war Poland, wanting to work as a historian and achieve a financially independent life. She is 'cosmopolitan', culturally knowledgeable and interested in Australia and the world. Zofia is inspired by her recent research about migrants who have been coming to Wollongong since the 1800s. 'I became curious about their contribution to Illawarra and how they were acknowledged in the public record.' Her feelings of belonging have been strengthened on discovering kinship with earlier migrants, including Polish migrants, who have left their mark on the city.



CUSHION

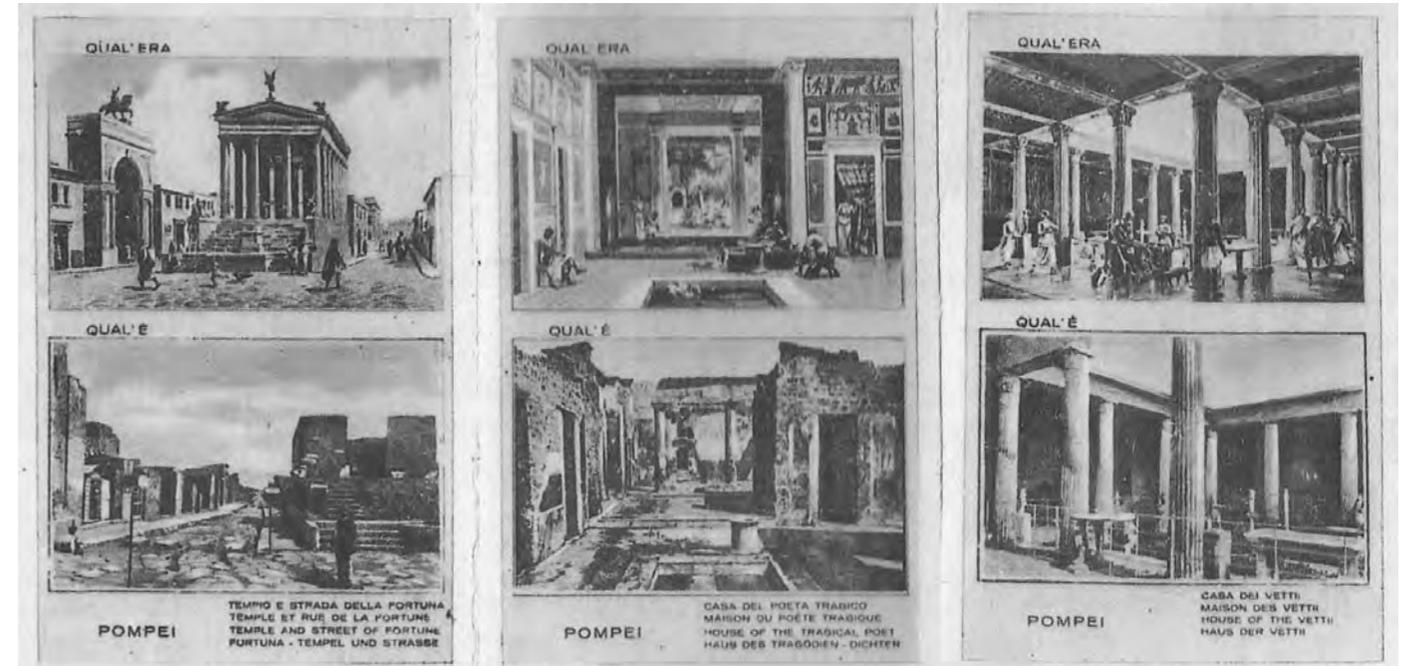
Terezija Vučko (née Jakopovic) came to Australia with her husband and daughter in July 1961 and gave birth to her son soon after arriving. She crocheted this decorative pillow after a pattern she came across at the Croatian St John's Park Cardinal Stepinac Aged Care Village and Nursing Home in Sydney. The Croatian colours - blue, red and white - are combined with yellow symbolizing Australia. Terezija crocheted this when the 2000 Olympic games were held in Sydney.

The pillow is used in Terezija's home and it was made as an affirmation that acknowledged that her life in Australia, compared to her life in Croatia is better. It is unfinished, because she planned to embroider the number 2000 on one side. She expresses her gratefulness to Australia and Australians for accepting her and her family, in her poetry. Two poems appearing in the exhibition, describe her feelings about Croatia and Australia. These are part of a repertoire she recites or sings, during public performances with the Aged Care Folk Dancing Group she belongs to.

In spite of a limited formal education, Terezija articulates her values and political position, using handicraft and poetry. Like other objects in the exhibition, this pillow with its use of colour, embodies lived experience that crosses cultural boundaries of geography, familial and political allegiances, and historical periods.

Hand crocheted pillow cover, by T. Vučko, 2000

I don't know what to do with all of these things, I've kept them, I don't know if they are important and I don't have anyone to leave them to (D. Lewandowski 2011)



Detail from souvenir book of postcards, purchased 1950, by E. Lewandowski on her journey to Australia from Germany (D. Lewandowski)

POMPEII POSTCARDS

Elisabeth, Daniela's mother, bought a book of postcards during a stop on their journey to Australia. Their ship had to stop in Italy and Elisabeth went sightseeing. She bought the book and picked up a piece of pumice as a souvenir, later throwing it away in case it brought bad luck.

Daniela described the association of the souvenir for Elisabeth - she felt that what was happening in Germany was like the destruction of Pompeii. The effect of the war on her life was catastrophic. Elisabeth was cultured and lived a socially engaged and bohemian life in Pomerania and later Göttingen. Throughout her life, she sought

to recreate this environment and in Australia, when the war challenged her faith, she continued to search for spiritual guidance.

The book of postcards comparing Pompeii before and after Vesuvius, made the Italian disaster comprehensible with historical distance, although it cannot fully express the personal cost and effort to rebuild a life affected by the war.

Souvenir purchased by Elizabeth Lewandowski (née Wachholz)
Hand dated on inside back cover '5 March 1950.' The postcards show 20 images of Pompeii before and after the volcano.



PAINTED PORCELAIN

Éva Gyarmati (née Varga) had been interested in drawing as a child and in midlife began studying porcelain painting with the Illawarra Porcelain Artists. Her creative work is an expression of her life in Hungary and Australia. These particular pieces reflect a historically and culturally significant practice in Hungary – of household and highly decorative porcelain production and hand-painted designs. This plate has a distinctive Kalócsai pattern easily recognizable to Hungarians. This pattern was created and hand drawn and painted by Éva. The floral border is typical of Hungarian tapestry and porcelain work, using the motif of flowers found in gardens and fields, and sometimes incorporates the red chili, which is hung to dry in ‘corsages’ from house roofs. This floral motif has a strong association of familiarity for Hungarians with their country, which was dominated by farmland and small farm holdings. Typically each village house is surrounded by garden beds and adorned with hanging pots of colourful flowers. The Kalócsai patterns, often seen as embroideries, are used on household crockery, clocks and wall plates as well as on highly prized display pieces.

Top image: Cup and saucer with cake plate (from a set of six) hand painted with a design by É. Gyarmati (1983)

Bottom image: Large plate with design and hand painting by É. Gyarmati (2011)



Ukrainian hand-decorated Easter eggs made by Erika Ihnat given to Olga Isaksson (1980-2000)

PYSANKY (DECORATED EGGS)

Hand-decorating eggs is an old practice in Europe with pagan associations. In the 9th century Ukrainians came under the influence of the Pope in Rome and the custom became an Easter tradition. In the 1980s Ukrainians in Wollongong were a larger cultural group with their own community centre. Although it is traditionally something young girls and women do, it has become a craft for all. In the 1980s the Ukrainian Parents’ Association organised local egg decoration demonstrations in Wollongong shopping centres. It encouraged the younger Ukrainian children to learn the skill and display their work in the community. The local Ukrainian priest was also skilled at making Pysanky, and exhibited eggs in the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Erika Ihnat learnt how to decorate the eggs by hand using a nib, from other Ukrainians and from her parents. She used a master book of patterns, which also explains the meaning of the colours.

With the closing of the Ukrainian centre in Auburn Avenue Wollongong, and decline in numbers of the Ukrainian population, few people continue the practice, and the beautiful handcrafted eggs are rarely seen. In

Wollongong Ukrainians still attend Easter services at the Eastern Right Ukrainian Church in Kenny Street, where the Catholic service follows the Byzantine Rites, and is conducted by a visiting priest from Lidcombe. At Easter the congregation will take a basket of food to be blessed by the priest which is then offered to family and friends. It includes coloured boiled eggs, sweet bread baked at home, butter, meat, salami and cheeses.

The 12 Pesanky in the exhibition were made by Erika Ihnat. From the 1980s onward when Olga moved to Wollongong, Erika presented her with one of her hand-decorated eggs at Easter. Each took over 10 hours to complete and some have words included in the decoration such as ‘Christ is risen’ and ‘Thanks be to Christ’. The duck egg is the largest in the collection, and some are varnished. The shiny varnished eggs, which involve ‘blowing out’ the raw egg, are kept as they are less fragile and keep their colour.³

³ Ludwik Ihnat contributed background information for this section.

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

The participants in this exhibition were born between the 1920s and the 1950s. Their places of birth were villages, towns and cities in Europe and Australia; some of the countries in Europe no longer exist after borders and countries were changed following World War I and World War II.



Daniela Lewandowski was born in Bathurst (NSW) in 1950 soon after her parents and baby brother arrived in Australia. Her father Tadeusz was Polish and her mother Elizabeth was Prussian.



Steve Nyári was born in Pécs (Hungary) in 1938. Éva Nyári (née Bota) was born in Veszprem (Hungary) in 1935. They arrived in Australia as refugees in 1957.



Olga Isaksson (née Fufalko) was born in Parkes (NSW) in 1950 shortly after her Ukrainian-born parents Wasyl and Maria, and four-year old sister Helena arrived in Australia as refugees.



Gunda Klavins (née Weiss) was born in Nuremberg (Germany) in 1926. She migrated to Australia in 1950 with her Latvian husband Wili Klavins and their two children.



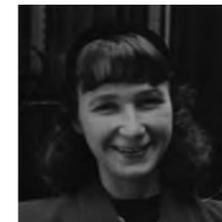
Terezija Vučko (née Jakopovic) was born in Zarnovica (Croatia) in 1934. She migrated to Australia with her husband Ivan Vučko and their five-year old daughter Katarina in 1961.



György Bánsági* was born in Pancsova (Hungary, formerly Yugoslavia, now Serbia) in 1920. He arrived in Australia as a refugee with his wife, two children and a baby in 1958.



Ilona Csók (née Megyer) was born in Iharosberény (Hungary) in 1935. She and her husband Sándor Csók arrived in Australia as refugees with their son in 1957.



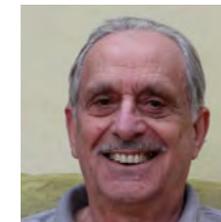
Elizabeth Mózár was born in Sopron (Hungary) in 1928. She migrated to Australia with her Hungarian husband Elemér, and her oldest brother János in 1949.



Ronald (Ron) Matthesius⁴ was born in Brotteröde (Germany, formerly East Germany) in 1943. He arrived in Australia with his wife Siggie and son as assisted migrants in 1969.



Éva Gyarmati (née Varga) was born in Székesfehérvár (Hungary) in 1937. She arrived in Australia with her husband Miklós Gyarmati as refugees, with their two children.



Sándor Csók was born in Vizvár (Hungary) in 1930. He migrated to Australia as a refugee with his wife Ilona and their son in 1957.



Drago Radinovic was born in 1931 in the town of Bosiljevo in Croatia. He came to Australia in 1959 with his wife Zora, and their daughter.



Zofia Laba (née Lipinska) was born in Krakov (Poland) in 1958. She migrated to Australia with her husband in 1988.

⁴ Exhibition content based on interviews by Andrea Fernandes, NSW Migration Heritage Centre, curator of *Belongings: post-WW II migration memories and journeys*. www.belongings.com.au

(Photographs: E. Castle except E. Mozar (courtesy K. Heiss from E. Mozar collection) and R. Matthesius (A. Fernandes))

The value of an object lies not only in how beautiful it is but in the stories that it holds, the emotions that it evokes and the lessons that it teaches us... (Franca Facci - MHP Chairperson)



xxxxxx

STORY CIRCLE

Story Circle: Bearing Witness to 'Hopes and Dreams'

Poetry reading 26 February 2012, Wollongong City Gallery

Story Circle Writers and their poems, University of Wollongong

Document of Identity by Patrick McGowan

Mother Ganga/From the shores of the holy Ganges by Donna

Waters

Tools by Tara Goedjen

Banknotes by William Alister Young

The Dress by Elisa Parry

Tectonics by Matilda Grogan

Kosa: Hair by Merlinda Bobis

Spanish Writers Group and their poem, South Coast Writers Centre (SCWC)

Home Hogar by Maricarmen Póo, Gil Póo, Juan Quiñones, Emilio

Jañez, Cleo Pacheco (read by Maricarmen Póo and Cleo Pacheco⁵)

Story Circle: Bearing Witness to 'Hopes and Dreams' was a special poetry project jointly organised by Dr. Merlinda Bobis, Senior Lecturer at the University of Wollongong (Faculty of Creative Arts) and Dr. Friederike Krishnabhakdi-Vasilakis, Director of the SCWC. The Story Circle writers responded to the 'Hopes and Dreams' in the exhibition by writing a poem inspired by an artifact of migration - a story and a life - that inspired them. Each of their poems is an honouring of the migrant story.

Aunty Barbara Nicholson gave the Welcome to Country and read her own response poem. The Spanish Writers Group also presented their collaborative bilingual poem about home, echoing the hopes and dreams of their migrant experience. And so stories were told and listened to again, extending the story circle and inspiring new kinships.

Thanks to Merlinda Bobis for contributing text to this section.

⁵All poems presented at the Story Circle, will appear in the catalogue of the exhibition, published by the Migration Heritage Project Inc. in 2013.



Aunty Barbara Nicholson during the Welcome to Country (photo: E. Castle)

BLESSINGS FROM ABROAD.

Response poem by Aunty Barbara Nicholson, Aboriginal Elder of the Wadi Wadi Nation

I am so glad you came here Dear Immigrant Friends,

You have enriched my life with the many blessings

You brought with you, I thank you for them.

Through you I have done the grand tour, yet travelled but a little.

I thank you for your music, I now dance to other beats,

I thank you for your languages, I have learnt their music too

Enhancing my understanding of you.

I thank you for your vibrant style and colour,

In clothing, in your craft and art, your jewellery,

Your film, your theatre, your furnishing, your architecture.

I thank you for your cuisine, in particular I thank you for Zucchini,

Seldom absent from my table, they were unknown to me till you came.

Now I grate them, add some Garlic (never heard of that before),
Mix in some Basil and Besan Flour, (what is that?) gently fry spoons full
In Olive Oil (previously unobtainable), and drool at the flavour.
Other times I marinate them in garlic and lemon juice,
Serve grilled on Bruschetta with a dash of Romesco sauce.
Or perhaps make a Soufflé topped with Anchovies and Feta Cheese.
None of these tempting morsels were possible dear Immigrant Friends
Not till you came, bringing them with you, from your homeland...
...to mine. I am so glad you did. Yulunga.

Presented on 26th February 2012, at "The Story Circle: Bearing Witness to Hopes and Dreams", exhibition and poetry responses at Wollongong City Gallery.

Displays for Elizabeth Mózár and her granddaughter Chantelle (left) and Sándor Csók (right)



Displays for Olga Isaksson (left), Drago Radinovic (centre), Daniela Lewandowski and Steven and Éva Nyári (freestanding), and György Banskagi, (right)

EXHIBITION

Collections of Hopes and Dreams

Curated by Eva Castle

Mann-Tatlow Gallery

Wollongong City Gallery

19 November 2011 – 4 March 2012

An exhibition about motivation and inspiration in the lives of individuals and families, forever changed by the events of World War II. The exhibition includes photographs, ephemera, objects, and creative works (1940s to 2011). Selected from the collections of Illawarra residents with origins in Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine.

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Special Events

Official launch 2 December 2011

Participants Viewing 6 December 2011

Curator's Talk 12 February 2012

Storycircle 26 February 2012

Exhibition Participants

Olga Isaksson

Daniela Lewandowski

Gunda Klavins

István Nyári

Éva Nyári

Terezija Vučko

György Banskági

Drago Radinovic

Ilona Csók

Elizabeth Mózár

Éva Gyarmati

Sándor Csók

Ron Matthesius

Zofia Laba