Though This be Madness:
Heritage Methods for Working in Culturally Diverse Communities

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It is sometimes said that the 1988 Australian Bicentenary was a catalyst for Australians becoming interested in their own history and heritage. If this is true, it was not until a decade later, in 1998, that Australia's two largest cities, Sydney and Melbourne, established heritage initiatives to ensure that their culturally diverse State histories and associated heritage collections were identified, conserved and interpreted. Today, four out of ten people in New South Wales are either migrants or their children,[1] and they were born in over 200 countries.

In that year, 1998, both the Melbourne Immigration Museum and NSW Migration Heritage Centre were established, following from the pioneering work of the South Australian Migration Museum in Adelaide in 1986 and to a lesser extent the Australian National Maritime Museum in 1991, which explored Australians' links by sea, and within that theme, researched some migration history. It later built a Welcome Wall for families to honour and record their migration history for posterity.

The model favoured by the museums was, and still is, the more traditional but worthy one – of capital city based and centralised museum buildings with community galleries or changing exhibition spaces researched by curators. These collecting bodies invite communities to enter the world of museums and to develop exhibitions showcasing their history, culture and collections through dialogue and facilitation with curators.[2] Travelling trunks of props (replica or non-collection accessioned objects of limited significance) and touring exhibitions cater for communities who cannot visit the central museum building. Increasingly, websites are used as an adjunct to the museum's core exhibition and public programs.

The NSW Migration Heritage Centre was conceived as a strategic project based in the NSW Premier's Department. It was a response to community leaders concerned that the generation of post Second World War migrants were ageing and that their memories and heritage legacy were in danger of being lost. Their stories might never to be collected and mediated by museums as a major chapter in twentieth century Australian History, if we do not actively record them now.[3]

Its purpose was defined back in 1998 as 'to research and promote the contribution made by immigrants to the State and nation's life'.[4] The Centre was 'to reach beyond the notion of a static museum of immigration'. It was founded as a museum without walls and as a virtual heritage centre on the worldwide web.

After starting as a research partnership grants program and a website with limited content, the Centre moved to the Powerhouse Museum in 2003. In an attempt to make the virtual museum concept a reality, the Centre was re-established with a strategic plan focussing on documenting collections, places and associated memories of migration and settlement. Elderly and ageing former migrants were an initial priority. The website was redeveloped.[5]

The International Council of Museums defines a museum as: 'a non-profit making, permanent institution, in the service of a society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purpose of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment'.[6]

Without a centralised museum building to present exhibitions or a heritage place to interpret, the virtual museum concept has enabled the Centre to develop a different approach to collecting. It does not collect objects into a centralised repository. Acquisitions are virtual. Instead, it documents migration memories, community histories and tangible and intangible heritage legacies and presents these as a virtual collection on the web. The Centre not only documents collections and associated memories, it also produces online and physical exhibitions to make historic research accessible. It works with collections held by private individuals, communities and families and draws from items already in museum collections. As a result of its research and interpretation program, significant objects held by private individuals, communities and families may be acquired by local and regional museums.

While based in one central location in Sydney, at the Powerhouse Museum, the Centre's research is decentralised and dispersed. It works with and inside culturally diverse communities through contractual research partnerships with trained curatorial and heritage staff in local government run museums, libraries and art galleries. The Centre also partners with volunteer run historical societies and ethnic heritage organisations across metropolitan Sydney and rural and regional New South Wales. The Centre recognises that locally based heritage trained staff have established and ongoing relationships with local migrant communities and the Centre builds on these relationships of trust and understanding rather than trying to quickly develop them from a position outside communities.[7]

After discussion, the Centre's partners determine how the research will be interpreted in their communities. The partnerships often result in exhibitions in regional libraries, museums and art galleries, or at heritage places, in the actual locations where communities of former migrants live across the State. The exhibitions are unashamedly local, featuring families, places, organisations and workplaces, contextualised in a broader national migration history. Unlike large city-based museums, the Centre's exhibitions are drawn

from local and regional heritage collections research. The exhibitions are not planned or programmed from the outset for their broad popular appeal or need to draw large visitor numbers. The Centre aims to record a more representative heritage legacy and more truthful accounts of migration and settlement histories through collections research. A pleasing result of this research is that the Centre's exhibitions and interpretation materials are very popular.

A key element of the Centre's work is the presentation of beautifully designed online exhibitions based on the physical exhibitions. The research and exhibitions are 'centralised' as content on the Centre's website. This attracts web traffic from school students and teachers, many former migrants, the children of migrants, and anyone accessing themes or key words of interest through search engines such as *Google*, who might have very limited interest in heritage or museums. Sometimes research partners prefer to produce and host their own online exhibitions based on the physical exhibitions. The Centre's website cross-links to these and vice-versa.

As a virtual heritage centre, the Centre does the prerequisite cool and geeky website things – it uses social media to build audiences and draw people to the Centre's website. This is essential because without a centralised museum building, its profile as a cultural institution, in a physical sense, is invisible. It *Tweet*s snippets from oral histories on *Twitter* to grab the attention of a large and increasing number of secondary school teacher followers; it loads oral testimony videos on *Youtube* with links to the Centre's website; it will soon promote migrant accommodation centre reunions through websites by creating groups and circles of friends around the 38 known migrant accommodation and reception centres run by the Australian Government across New South Wales between 1946 and 1978.[8] The Centre has also produced an online story submission project to enable the public to load up migration memories, photos and mementos on its website.

Being a State-wide organisation the Centre serves an audience in rural and regional areas, as well as metropolitan Sydney. The heritage studies and resulting online exhibitions, researched through partnerships, are presented on the Centre's website as regional chapters in the State's migration and settlement history. Until recently, many rural and regional website visitors were on dial-up. This restricted the use of video history, oral history recordings, and

even images on the Centre's website which were all affected by slow download times, sorely testing the patience of visitors. Broadband allows the fast download of the larger files necessary for online exhibitions presented in multi-media. The web gives the research a national and global audience. Broadband is enabling New South Wales' classrooms to play web hosted videos on large screens. History, English, English as a Second Language and Drama teachers use the Centre's heritage collections and migration memories as inspiration for classroom activities.

The Centre's work gives recognition to local people and validates migration and settlement experiences which have not previously been acknowledged. It has so far resisted the trend of using the web as a democratic and cultural relativist means for the public to share information in an un-curated and un-moderated virtual place. The web can serve as a dumping ground where any photo, place or collection, personal insight or story can be uploaded, honoured and validated without supporting information, documentation or context. The Centre actively curates all the content on its website.[9] There are not many museums that open their doors each day and let the public do whatever they want without research, facilitation and curation. At the same time, the web provides a myriad of opportunities for sharing knowledge about collections, places and memories. Social media is as much about accessing information and building research relationships as it is about audience development. More democratic interaction in the future might assist the Centre in collection surveys and comparative analysis of collections and online facilitation with communities.

The use of heritage methods and partnerships is both a research framework and a means to moderate and curate content before it is posted on the Centre's website. The online exhibitions have the same content as the physical exhibitions they are drawn from (each themed panel accessed by a menu with pop-up photo and object images with captions) but some online exhibitions feature a smaller number of objects or images than the physical exhibition it is based on, if the physical exhibition is particularly object or image rich. This is to reduce web production time. The exhibitions are written to be useful for present and future researchers as well as students of migration history. Some online exhibitions are not based on physical exhibitions. It depends on the research partners' needs and capacities, and the Centre's resources.

The online story submission project has a small number of key fields relating to migration and settlement experiences that need to be completed before a memory is posted. Moderation is also in the form that racist or potentially libellous content would not be posted. Elderly migrants can be vulnerable and they do not always appreciate the power of the web and its highly public nature. The Centre would not post a person's address, or even suburb or real name, if there was a threat of potential harassment. It has an informal policy of not highlighting jewellery or other valuables as migration objects to help prevent theft.

Migration museums and other organisations interested in migration heritage are grappling with how to identify, record, preserve and interpret the heritage legacy of migration and settlement in their communities.

The Centre works from a movable heritage framework researched during the 2000 NSW Heritage Office and Ministry for the Arts Movable Heritage Project and influenced by the Carr Government's 1999 cultural policy. The resulting movable heritage policy and guidelines recognised the historic relationships of collections to people (including families, communities and private individuals) and places (including buildings, cultural landscapes, town or regions). Importantly, it broke away from the prevailing 'that ought to be in a museum' approach to collecting from context to one influenced by recent knowledge and experience of Aboriginal keeping places. It looks at the cultural heritage significance of a collection in context, including its relationships to people and place, and exploring ways to document it and retain it *in situ*.[10]

The distinctions between the identification and conservation of heritage collections and heritage places have diminished during the past decade in Australia but the museum sector is still one in transition. The revised 2004 edition of the *Illustrated Burra Charter: Good Practice For Heritage Places*,[11] the recognised standard for heritage place practice in Australia features sections on movable heritage recognising the potentially significant relationships between collections and places. The 2001 Heritage Collections Council's *Significance* and its revision in 2009 *Significance 2* set a process and criteria for assessing the cultural heritage significance of collections modelled on those used for heritage places since the 1990s[12]. Both publications are now almost universally accepted by Australian

museum workers for the assessment of significance. However, the implications for conservation planning and collecting from context, and the way objects can derive and maintain their significance from being kept *in situ* is not always understood.

The NSW Migration Heritage Centre – with the word heritage in its name – reflects this evolution in museum thinking.[13] Following from the new found interest in assessing the heritage significance of collections in Australian museums the Centre has adapted environmental heritage assessment methods for places, such as thematic and typology studies for collections surveys. The surveys and documentation are structured around the principle that heritage collections are associated with people and places.[14] The Centre's work is focussed on the use of history – researching key historic themes, timeframes, regions, linguistic and religious groups, and communities – rather than attempting to survey entire state-wide ethnic populations. It focuses collections research on manageable research partnerships with like-minded and locally based organisations around families, communities and private individuals and buildings, cultural landscapes, towns and regions.

The Centre's typology and thematic studies usually run for two years. The Centre tries to get to know local people and partners to develop and maintain relationships of trust. This is the basis for accessing local collections and knowledge and for fostering ethical approaches and mutual respect. Where additional expertise is required, the Centre encourages local partners to employ trained historians and heritage workers already living in their region. Part of the Centre's role is to strengthen the heritage skills and research capacity in communities. The Centre, in turn, learns a great deal from the partnerships. Among the benefits in bringing trained and untrained people together in local partnerships is that in many cases the research continues after the project is completed. New heritage skills are developed in local government organisations and the communities.

The Centre's virtual museum model is ideally suited to research partnerships across local government areas and the documentation of *in situ* collections in context. The stories and meanings can be documented and presented on the web without the need to collect the items from families, communities and private owners who may be loathe to donate them to a city based museum. The Centre encourages people to retain the objects and documentation as family

heritage items to be passed down through generations along with family photo albums. In other cases, migration heritage objects are donated to local museums. The documentation and family, community and private individuals' connections are maintained and continued in the region.

Meredith Walker developed a working definition of migration heritage for the Centre to assist the sector which tended to confuse migration heritage with multiculturalism, a government policy and model for settlement. The definition is published on the Centre's website:

> All people in Australia share the legacy of migration. Migration heritage is the legacy of people's experiences of leaving one country and culture, travelling, settling in and adapting to a new culture and place, and becoming familiar with it and its people, and continuing and adapting traditional culture.
>
> This legacy can be found in many things such as personal belongings, community collections, language, food, music, beliefs, traditions and places all of which have significance for individuals or groups.[15]

The Centre's model is that of a heritage organisation separating the processes of identification and conservation from interpretation.

Heritage collections are a form of historic evidence that can take people to another time and place and remember experiences they might otherwise have forgotten. As primary sources of evidence, if documented properly, they will help us communicate the history of migration and settlement in our museums and websites in the future and hopefully be handed down through the generations.

Like other types of heritage or primary source material, collections provide historical information about people's experiences, ways of life and relationships with the environment. They also help us to learn about people who may have been left out of written historical accounts, including migrant communities.

The Centre has commissioned and managed some 40 research projects, fairly equally shared between city and country from 2004-10. So what has worked and what has failed?

In the early years it commissioned state-wide overarching ethnic histories, sometimes with community liaison officers.[16] While these

successfully documented small numbers of State significant places and collections – perhaps rather obvious ones – they tended to universalise the experiences of migrants across different cultures, generations and regions. The histories dissolved communities that exist within communities and did not meaningfully access regional heritage places and collections or necessarily engage with local people who knew about them.[17] Migrants were not always given a voice. The overarching nature of the histories did not go to the level of researching local families, communities and private individuals or buildings, cultural landscapes, town or regions – so the histories were not particularly useful for collections survey research because all collections are associated with places and people, or for recording associated oral history. Interactions between different ethnic groups and local communities were usually not recorded in the histories.

Rather than working through peoples' associations with their countries of birth, the Centre has looked at twentieth century migration and settlement as a series of chapters in Australian history – reflecting changing Federal Government migration policies as entry or restriction points – and working through regions and places where different migrant groups have settled. Post Second World War migration and settlement can be researched through the regions surrounding the 38 known migrant accommodation centres that settled migrants to work in local industries, often under assisted passage schemes. Migrants were given temporary accommodation in exchange for two years work on government projects or in facilities.[18] Work, worship and recreation places have also proved a useful means to focus histories and record heritage legacies.[19] A notable feature of locally based research, as opposed to ethno-specific histories, is the way it uncovers relationships between different ethnic groups and local communities, and in many instances, shared experiences of the same heritage places.

The Centre *does* work ethno-specifically when communities approach it to develop partnership projects. It assists communities with skilled staff or volunteers and sustainable strategies to record and interpret their history and heritage. These collaborative projects have been particularly successful. The Centre tries to be balanced and inclusive of small and large community groups, ensuring that better-established communities are not served at the expense of smaller ones.

After decades of multicultural arts and associated migration exhibitions there is now a degree of transference across communities where former migrants give the sorts of responses they think museum workers want to hear, constructions around their community's 'cultural contributions', 'celebration' or 'successful migrants' for example, or offers of traditional costume or other cultural items as migration exhibition objects. In this regard, the access gallery model used by centralised museums can be fraught with difficulty. This includes the potential limitations of working ethno-specifically and also for curators to treat other people's cultures as exotic. Alternatively, a commissioned history, and using thematic and typology studies to document objects and associated memories, is useful for prompting and anchoring migration and settlement memories in historic evidence, and focussing recollections on the sorts of experiences that might be otherwise regarded by people as unimportant.

The Centre's major typology study *Belongings-Post Second World War Migration Memories And Journeys*, curated and co-ordinated by Andrea Fernandes has recorded 150 oral histories of migrants, in people's homes across the State and documented over 400 privately owned photographs and migration collections through research partnerships and Andrea Fernandes' own interviews. The project has a series of prompt questions to anchor the oral history to dates, collections and places, in a bid to map the migration. The participant is also given ample opportunity to tell their story in their own words and at their own pace.[20] These memories linked to objects, images and places can often be more specific and vivid than traditional oral histories.

The photos of conditions in the migrant accommodation centres taken with the Box Brownies of former migrants participating in *Belongings* are in stark contrast to the thousands of images held by the National Archives of Australia taken by Federal Government employed photographers which look very much like propaganda photos in comparison. These official photographs are still used as a form of curatorial shorthand and are heavily featured in Australia's migration exhibitions because of inadequate community collection surveys in the exhibition research and development phase. Migration memories show the variation in conditions at migrant accommodation centres during the decades and often show a system

straining to cope with numbers. They also show a very human aspect – tears, people crying at night, grief, brutal and insensitive administrations – are strong themes across the decades represented in the oral histories. The pain and suffering of post Second World War migrants are under-represented in many histories and exhibitions – and the experiences of migrants are more diverse and complex than the museum exhibition clichés of suitcases, rotten food and lousy coffee.[21] Recent exhibitions in regional museums and art galleries like *The Bonegilla Story* at the Albury Library Museum (2009), *Fairfield: Evolution Of A Migrant City* at the Fairfield City Museum and Gallery (2008), *Half A World Away* at the Orange Regional Gallery (2007), *From All Four Corners* at the Museum of the Riverina (2007), *The Other Side Of The World* at the Tweed River Regional Museum (2007) and many others across New South Wales reflect recent scholarship and research partnerships with the Centre. They draw nuanced narratives from material culture collections and associated oral histories and are helping rewrite our migration histories.

In the rather adult world of the web, the Centre has been able to move away, to a significant extent, from the more sanitised and celebratory nature of many migration narratives. The web permits more detailed contextual histories and higher word counts than physical exhibitions.[22] The Centre's use of history and heritage method drawn from all available forms of historic evidence enables it to present raw and otherwise hidden histories such as the internment of Australians from German backgrounds during World War One,[23] a curious omission from the Australian War Memorial's website and exhibition program, and disturbing memories of former refugees and Holocaust Survivors.

The Centre's thematic study about the child migration scheme at Fairbridge Farm School, Molong with the Fairbridge Heritage Association was researched by David Hill in 2007 and culminated in his book *The Forgotten Children*.[24] On 16 November 2009, former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a formal apology in the Federal Parliament to the 'Forgotten Australians'. 500,000 people, including over 7000 former British child migrants, were part of the apology, which acknowledged the many instances of neglect and abuse that was the result of their time in government institutions, church organisations, orphanages, homes or foster care.

Many people were shocked not only by the loneliness and limited education provided, but disturbingly, more than half of the 39

oral histories of the former migrants, now in their 60 and 70s, recorded physical and sexual abuse. Ten unedited transcripts appear in the Centre's online exhibition entitled *The Forgotten Children*.[25] In 2010, this research, and additional oral histories by Andrea Fernandes for the Centre's *Belongings* project, informed the Australian National Maritime Museum's exhibition *On Their Own: Britain's Child Migrants*. Collection surveys and the objects reflected the basic conditions and deprivation. Smiley Bayliff still has a cheque for $1.22 from when he finally left Fairbridge Farm – his earnings for working there less the Farm's boarding expenses. He recalls,

> The Fairbridge account held your trainee [earnings] and anything people sent. I ended up with $1.22 after all that. I couldn't cash it because it made me angry. The bank book pages were cut out [so] you didn't know what money was taken. It shows you the deceit of the Fairbridge Society.[26]

When the Centre commenced a new project recording video histories with refugees who arrived after 1974, it was commonly believed that refugees tended not to have objects because they fled their countries, lost or traded their personal possessions along the way. The Centre's survey by curator Andrea Fernandes is finding that refugees do have objects that were secreted away that tell us much about the horrors of fleeing. Sometimes the objects were sent to people many years after settling in Australia and sometimes they are newly created to help people make sense of their experiences. Phiny Ung, a former Cambodian refugee, fled Phnom Penh for Bangkok and then settled in Sydney via Brisbane in 1980 has 90 drawings from memory of harrowing experiences. Her video history is on the home page of the Centre's website,

> Bunheang, my husband, is trying to put all of his memory into the drawing. We cannot take any photo, we cannot keep anything at all apart from our brain that we witness that kind of horrible situation. We sit together every evening when I arrived in Brisbane so we can remember everything to start to draw. After it's built up for more than 90 drawings, then he start to show people.[27]

In addition to objects, intangible forms of heritage such as dancing or cooking traditional meals are worth recording and have assisted the Centre in recording the experiences of former refugees. Like objects, intangible forms of heritage allow former migrants to talk openly

about experiences that might not otherwise be recorded by a traditional oral history interview. Rather than the traditional dichotomy of tangible and intangible heritage, object based research is often a window and pathway into the intangible aspects of heritage – or vice-versa.

There are limitations to the Centre's work. Working in English and presenting history on the web to an English speaking audience distorts the research. It reflects the experiences of communities of former migrants who are better assimilated in Australian society. This limitation occurs in the work of all Australian migration museums and the heritage sector generally. Many elderly migrants have lived isolated by their language barriers. Their experiences in the labour market and relative disadvantage in the community would be worth researching as a counterpoint to migrants who successfully learned English. Their living cultures and traditions might also be different to those adapted by English speaking migrants.

The Centre's work began some years too late to fully explore the experiences of the first wave of post Second World War migrants. Many had died, others were too frail and ill. Some had moved into aged-care accommodation and objects and photos and associated memories were lost in the process. The Centre's project with Orange City Council, *Half A World Away*, became an intergenerational history project where the families of the elderly migrants facilitated and assisted their parents when they experienced difficulty in participating.

The memories of the children of migrants and the experiences of intergenerational exchange and adaptation of traditions, cultural practices and languages are worth recording. The Centre's 2004 strategic plan focussed, though not exclusively, on first hand memories of elderly migrants and their collections. This history and heritage legacy had been poorly documented by New South Wales' museums (the State's historians had also failed to engage with material culture when researching migration history) and was in danger of being lost for posterity. How will this major chapter in Australia's twentieth century history be mediated to students of Australian History through collections and stories in our museums or on our websites in 50 years time?

The work with elderly migrants has often been in the presence of their children and family for moral support or assistance with language. Sometimes the oral histories have been dialogues between

elderly people and memories of other family members. The Centre's models are not rigid but are adjusted to circumstances of families, communities, private individuals and project partners.

Working in communities and through volunteers requires a loose and exploratory approach to heritage method, rather than rigorous. Sometimes the methods have not been more than an outline to work through to get collections documented. The quality of the work depends on the human element of local personalities, relationships, skills and interests.

Communities do not always know about their cultural heritage. They cannot, and do not always, want to give us clear answers to the questions we as heritage workers want answers to.

In the *Macedonian Aprons: Hidden Treasure* partnership project, which later became the *Ties With Tradition: Macedonian Apron Designs* exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum,[28] heritage consultant and volunteer Meredith Walker researched aprons belonging to elderly women in a Daycare group run by the Illawarra Macedonian Welfare Association at Port Kembla near Wollongong. Meredith Walker (who pioneered the use of *EBay* alerts in a typology study as an adjunct to on the ground and face to face apron collections surveys) found that even working through an interpreter, the group of 23 elderly women were not able to decode the meanings behind the patterns and colours of their 40 hand woven village aprons, brought to Australia in the 1960s and 70s. This was even though her research uncovered that the patterns and colours were distinctive to their villages. The aprons were perhaps as much a part of their traditions and identities as rugby or football team colours. One woman alluded to the red splashes of colour pattern on black wedding aprons as being associated with blood and wedding nights – but she was too embarrassed or did not know how to elaborate on this to another woman from outside her community. A broader sample of aprons and further interviews are needed to progress this research.

Although it might seem obvious, it is important to define the community being researched, have a clear project rationale, a brief and an agreed research or heritage method. It produces better quality research than an ad hoc unstructured approach of a heritage worker going out into the community – or a community gaining access to a museum. It also assists heritage workers and communities to shed any preconceived notions or constructions about the migration and

settlement history, establishing a clear process for research and community participation and engagement.

A research or heritage method is also useful for museums to manage potential political interference in the form of community leaders keen to infuse their interests in the work, and also to defend conflict with rival communities. Sometimes local leaders are keen to be featured (highlighting their political achievements in the community) alongside the oral histories of 'ordinary' residents in the Centre's projects. They are able to be dissuaded when they do not fit the project criteria or method.

The *Ties With Tradition: Macedonian Apron Designs* exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum attracted an email campaign of complaints from a minority of people angry about the use of the word 'Macedonian' to describe the aprons from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, even though this was clearly stated in the exhibition. The Centre was able to clarify that the aprons were researched through a typology study and selected from a group of elderly women attending the Port Kembla Day Group, run by the Macedonian Welfare Association, who preferred to describe their cultural background as 'Macedonian' in its efforts to quell speculation that the exhibition had a broader political agenda.[29]

Using a thematic approach is not so much about placing limitations on research but simply the need for any history or heritage project to have a clear topic for investigation. This is preferably negotiated with input from local communities and framed after a review of histories previously written. Heritage organisations with limited resources wisely focus their programs on heritage at immediate risk of being lost. During the last six years, many elderly people who participated in the Centre's oral history and collection documentation projects have died, but their memories and heritage legacy lives on.

The Centre, as a virtual museum, is not presenting a single and centralist grand narrative of the State's migration history and heritage legacy. Its website is a mosaic of regional histories and heritage legacies: places, collections of objects and photographs, oral and video testimonies; that reflect a diversity of voices. These complete and illuminate other narratives of Australian history with everyday memories of migration and settlement that are closer to people's experiences than research produced by outsiders. The

Centre's research is source material that is assisting Australian historians in rethinking and rewriting the State's histories.

Every project has advanced the knowledge of the State's migration and settlement history in some way. The places, collections and associated memories that document this major chapter in twentieth century Australian History will be useful for highlighting the experiences of the post Second World War wave of migrants in Australian museums after that generation dies. The result is a legacy for the next generation and a resource for historians, communities, artists and writers.

Endnotes

[1] Webber, K. 2005, Australia's Migration History, Belongings: Post-Second World War Migration Memories And Journeys (Online). Available: http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/belongings/ (Accessed 5 October 2010).

[2] The Melbourne Immigration Museum advertises in *The Age* newspaper inviting communities to have an exhibition in the Museum through a competitive application process.

[3] Communication with Kylie Winkworth, NSW Migration Heritage Centre, Panel of Advisors and former Powerhouse Museum Trustee.

[4] NSW Ministry for the Arts, 'New Body To Showcase Migrant Heritage', *Arts Bulletin*, August 1998.

[5] John Petersen, 'Migration Heritage Centre, State of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia' in L. Prencipe (ed) *Migration Museums*, Centre For Migration Studies, Rome, no 167, 2007, pp556-564.

[6] International Council of Museums Statutes 2007, Definition of Museums (Online). Available: http://icom.museum/who-we-are/the-vision/museum-definition.html (Accessed 20 October 2010).

[7] John Petersen, 2007, The Museum, Democracy and Domesticity: Who's In Whose Web, paper presented to Museums Australia National Conference (Online). Available: http://www.museumsaustralia.org.au (Accessed 20 October 2010); Jennifer Barrett, *Museums And The Public Sphere*, Blackwell Publishing, West Sussex, 2011.

[8] 'Migrant Hostels In New South Wales, 1946-78' National Archives of Australia, Fact Sheet, no 170 (Online). Available: http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/publications/fact-sheets/fs170.aspx (Accessed 20 October 2010).

[9] Petersen, *The Museum, Democracy and Domesticity: Who's In Whose Web*, op cit.

[10] John Petersen, *Movable Heritage Principles*, NSW Heritage Office, Parramatta, 2000; *Objects In Their Place: An Introduction To Movable Heritage*, NSW Heritage Office, Parramatta, 1999. The Carr Government's 1999 cultural policy noted in the museum section that "our policies uphold the principle of communities retaining heritage collections in the places where they have most significance".

[11] Meredith Walker and Peter Marquis-Kylie, *The Illustrated Burra Charter*: *Good Practices For Heritage Places,* Australia ICOMOS Inc., Sydney, 2004; Sharon Sullivan and Mike Pearson, *Looking After Heritage Places: The Basics Of Heritage Planning For Managers, Landowners And Administrators*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1995.

[12] Kylie Winkworth and Roslyn Russell, *Significance 2*, Heritage Collections Council, Canberra, 2001.

[13] This evolution in thinking is due to a continuity of methodology development with the influence and support of Kylie Winkworth on the Centre's Panel of Advisors from 2003-10 and the influence and support of both Kylie Winkworth and Meredith Walker on the NSW Heritage Office's Movable Heritage Project Reference Group 1998-02.

[14] Meredith Walker and Kylie Winkworth, *Places, Objects And People: Retaining Significant Relationships – A Discussion Paper*, Australian Heritage Commission and Museums Australia, Canberra, 1995.

[15] Walker, M. 2004. Frequently Asked Questions, NSW Migration Heritage Centre website (Online). Available: http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/about-us/frequently-asked-questions/#7 (Accessed 21 October 2010).

[16] Later the Iemma Government's State Plan included the work of the Centre under the plan for 'Building Harmonious Communities' which encouraged it to draw communities together in its work. In reality, the State Plan amplified the way the Centre was already working rather than setting it a new direction.

[17] Petersen, *The Museum, Democracy and Domesticity*, op cit.

[18] Mary Hutchinson has described the Commonwealth Government's assisted passage schemes and provided insight into the administration of migrant centres. Non-British migrants were directed to work on government projects under a two year work contract while British migrants could choose their location and type of employment. The newly arrived displaced persons or assisted migrants were housed in temporary and basic accommodation provided by the government until they could afford their own. After two years, rent was paid by those able to find private employment. Mary Hutchinson, 'Accommodating Strangers: Commonwealth Government Records Of Bonegilla And Other Migrant Accommodation Centres', in *Public History Review,* vol 11, 2004, pp 63-79.

[19] Elisabeth Edwards, *Half A World Away: Postwar Migration To The Orange District 1948-1965*, Orange City Council, 2007 is a good example of the benefits of recording oral histories and collections to understand and document the community history of former migrants and the history of a place – in this instance the district of Orange and the Westinghouse factory.

[20] A. Fernandes, Belongings: Post-World War 2 Migration Memories And Journeys, Paper presented to Moving Cultures, Shifting Identities Conference, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia, 2008 (Online). Available: www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/belongings/aboutbelongings/belongings-paper (Accessed 19 October 2010); Janis Wilton, 'Belongings: Oral History, Objects And An Online Exhibition', *Public History Review*, vol 16, 2009, pp1-19.

[21] John Petersen 'Settled And Unsettled: Accommodating Post-Second World War Migrants In New South Wales', *History Magazine,* no 92, 2007, pp10-12.

[22] The conventions and narrative constructions used in migration museum exhibitions are summarised by Jennifer Cornwell, *Fruits Of Our Labour: The History Of Griffith's Italian Museum*, Griffith City Council, 2007, p1.

[23] Thompson, S. 2006, Zivil Lager (Internment Camp) World War One Prisoners Of War At Trial Bay Gaol (Online). Available: http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/zivillager/history.shtml. (Accessed 19 October 2010). Stephen Thompson, curator NSW Migration Heritage Centre, has documented the material culture of World War One Prisoners of War following the Centre's partnership with the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation in 2004. It commissioned a history of internment by Gerhard Fischer and Nadine Helmi. This body of research will assist the Museum of Sydney's exhibition in partnership with the Centre, *The Enemy At Home,* in 2011.

[24] David Hill, *The Forgotten Children*, Random House, Sydney, 2007.

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