

SPEECH NOTES

BOOK LAUNCH, "THE LOVE THAT BROUGHT US HERE", SUNRAYSIA MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTER FOR ETHNIC AFFAIRS, THE HONOURABLE PETER SPYKER AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE VICTORIAN ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION, MR GEORGE PAPADOPOULOS, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO LAUNCH "THE LOVE THAT BROUGHT US HERE", SPONSORED BY THE SUNRAYSIA MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

THIS IS INDEED A SIGNIFICANT DOCUMENT. NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT IS ETHNIC WOMEN FOCUSED AND WAS DESIGNED AND CARRIED OUT BY WOMEN OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND, BUT ALSO BECAUSE ETHNIC WOMEN THEMSELVES WERE UTILISED AS CHANNELS TO BRING FORWARD THE FEELINGS, THOUGHTS AND IDEAS OF OTHER ETHNIC WOMEN FOR ALL TO SHARE.

"THE LOVE THAT BROUGHT US HERE", GIVES US A GLIMPSE INTO SOME OF THE LIVES OF ETHNIC WOMEN IN THE SUNRAYSIA AREA. UPON READING THE VARIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS, THE CLEAR MESSAGE SEEMS TO BE "YES, WE ARE A PART OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY, WE TOO, ARE AUSTRALIANS. OUR TRANSITION FROM LIFE IN OUR FIRST COUNTRY TO LIFE IN AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN FILLED WITH SEPARATION, PAIN, LOSS, GRIEF, HOPE, ASPIRATION AND FOR MANY ACCEPTANCE. WHILE WE DO NOT RELINQUISH OUR PAST, WE ARE WILLING TO SHARE IT WITH YOU AS A CATALYST FOR CREATING A FUTURE OF EQUALITY AND ACCEPTANCE FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS.

AS HAS BEEN NOTED IN THIS BOOK, WOMEN WHO MIGRATED TO AUSTRALIA WERE RARELY THE INITIATORS OF SUCH A MOVE - THEY WERE THE FOLLOWERS - AS SISTERS, FIANCEES, DAUGHTERS, WIVES AND MOTHERS.

ONLY RECENTLY, IN THE PAST TWO TO THREE YEARS HAVE ETHNIC WOMEN'S ISSUES BEEN CONSIDERED AS SEPARATE TO THE GENERAL ETHNIC AFFAIRS AND WOMEN'S AREAS BY GOVERNMENTS. PIONEERS OF THE ETHNIC WOMEN'S ISSUES AREA HAVE BEEN ARGUING FOR THESE SPECIFIC NEEDS FOR MUCH LONGER. THE VEAC IS CURRENTLY THE ONLY STATE COMMISSION FOR

ETHNIC AFFAIRS IN AUSTRALIA TO EMPLOY AN OFFICER ON A FULL-TIME BASIS TO BE RESPONSIBLE SOLELY FOR THE ETHNIC WOMEN'S ISSUES AREA IN A STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT. AS YOU CAN SEE, WE HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO.

AS A DEMONSTRATION OF THE COMMISSION'S COMMITMENT TO ETHNIC WOMEN'S ISSUES, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ANNOUNCE THAT A PROJECT FOCUSING ON ETHNIC WOMEN IN SUNRAYSIA SPONSORED BY THE VEAC AND OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS WILL SHORTLY COMMENCE. THIS PROJECT WILL AIM TO CREATE A BRIDGE BETWEEN ETHNIC WOMEN AND GOVERNMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS AS WELL AS DISSEMINATE INFORMATION TO ETHNIC WOMEN ABOUT NEEDS THEY THEMSELVES IDENTIFY. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THIS IS THE FIRST SUCH INITIATIVE TO BE CONDUCTED IN A NON-METROPOLITAN AREA FOCUSING SOLELY ON ETHNIC WOMEN'S ISSUES AND IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED FROM THIS PILOT PROJECT MAY BE USED IN NON-METROPOLITAN AREAS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA.

ONCE AGAIN I WOULD LIKE TO THANK AND COMMEND THE WOMEN WHO CONTRIBUTED THEIR SKILLS AND TIME TO "THE LOVE THAT BROUGHT US HERE" AND TO THE SUNRAYSIA MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR FORESIGHT AND COMMITMENT IN UNDERTAKING THIS ANTHOLOGY AND RESEARCH. IN SO DOING, I LAUNCH "THE LOVE THAT BROUGHT US HERE".

“ The Love
That Brought
Us Here ”



" The Love That Brought Us Here "

- * THE LOVE OF FAMILY;
- * THE LOVE OF PEACE;
- * THE LOVE OF FREEDOM;
- * THE LOVE OF A BETTER FUTURE.

* A selection of multicultural women's writings on
resettlement in Australia.

* Report on 'Multicultural Women's Survey'.

MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
OF SUNRAYSIA

1987.

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

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* * * * *

FOREWORD

When the Multicultural Women's Association took over the task of carrying out a survey on the ethnic women of Sunraysia, we were aware that it would be quite a challenge. We were determined to look closely into the phenomenon of ethnic women from all different aspects and to be truly open hearted, that we can bring you an honest result. When we asked: "How are you?", we meant it; we stopped and listened - we were not just using the phrase out of mere politeness.

We received more than we bargained for. We had included all the different nationalities in this district (in the past only four major nationalities were considered), and so the answers were quite varied. As every case was personally different, we found it difficult and thought it would be too cold to bring you a report merely in numbers and percentages, therefore we decided to enhance the report with some stories and personal experiences in resettlement in order to give the picture more colour and force.

In general, there was a strong wish expressed by all the women to be accepted and respected in society without barriers, without anyone feeling better or above another. Only in that way could our children be proud of having a double culture, and proud to be Australians. We believe that Australian society is made up of pioneers - from two hundred years ago until today. We don't feel that we are 'wogs', 'poms' or 'dagos'..., we feel that we are pioneers of today. We respect and love Australia; we chose to live here and strongly believe that the 'true blue Aussie' is fair and tolerant - not racist. We believe in an ideal society and will continue to be idealists. Our men come here for economic or political or number of other reasons, but most women came here as girlfriends or young brides, naive and in love - therefore 'it is a love that brought us here'.

Jozica Gerden,

Chairperson

Multicultural Women's Association.

INTRODUCTION

George Russell.

The most significant phenomenon of social experience in post World War II Australia is unquestionably the large-scale arrival of migrants, earlier principally from Europe, more recently from Asia. The fact and the consequences of this great movement of people have made an indelible impression on Australian society and few would wish to deny that this movement has been an enriching and liberating force at both national and personal levels.

While most native-born Australians would concede this, even if sometimes grudgingly, relatively few of them have considered or evaluated the cost of the operation in human terms. They have been more ready to receive than to give; they have seen themselves as benefactors, the newcomers as beneficiaries. They have tended to demand compliance with existing social and personal patterns; they have tended to regard cultural difference as disruptive or otherwise undesirable and to demand conformity not diversity. And this, apparently, is to be achieved by means of some kind of magical formula.

To offer such an generalisation is not to ignore the very different responses of a significant and influential section of Australian society which has been welcoming, helpful and grateful and has put its responses into action. But even with such displayed goodwill, not enough has been done. Too few have acted positively; too many have remained indifferent, hostile or convinced that action, if required, was exclusively a matter for governmental or semi-governmental response.

Such attitudes are, at best, unfortunate; more honestly we would wish to say that they are intolerable and that there exists no case for their persistence.

The survey undertaken by the Mildura Multicultural Women's Association reveals a situation that calls for urgent, if belated, attention to real needs and legitimate aspirations of a section of our society which has given much but received little, and which can reasonably look to its adopted country for relief and help, not as a magnanimous handout but as a payment of a debt incurred and not yet discharged.

It is to be hoped that the picture that emerges from the survey will be closely studied and that the result will not be the usual polite shrug but a positive determination to analyse the facts and act upon the imperatives of the analysis. Far too often such surveys have been allowed to gather the dust of inaction. It would be a massive

ingratitude if local communities which have profited so handsomely from the immigration movement failed to make adequate response in visible and practical terms. For that is the challenge of this document which reveals a story of unfulfilled needs and serious disadvantage. There must be a hope, as there is certainly an imperative, that these will be addressed and remedied where possible. And this is very important.

But this book has much more to offer than the results of a survey. It offers a significant body of writing in English by a group of women who have, variously, endured the deprivations revealed by the questionnaire and who have yet, by an extraordinary display of courage and talent, overcome their inherited disadvantages and achieved a control of a notoriously difficult and recalcitrant language which is as moving as it is significant. The writing which they offer is impressive as an account of hardship endured and conquered, of courage and strength revealed and, perhaps even more importantly, as a tangible demonstration of talent liberated by opportunity offered and accepted. This opportunity is the key to the resolution of the problems faced by women of ethnic descent in our community. It must be made available to them and not in any cold and indifferent form. It is, then, no answer to the problems simply to allocate funds to governmentally controlled agencies and wait for the mendicants to come forward with appropriate humility. This is mere patronage. It has not worked in the past; it will not work in the future. Nor should it.

Adequate finance, of course, has its part to play. But the profitable harnessing of the financial assistance comes from community recognition of the existence of the problems and from determination to act and to help resolve them. The creation of this community recognition will be the fruit of genuine exchange between the native-born and the newcomer, with generosity on the one side and courage on the other. That such courage, with its readiness to respond, already exists in our community is the clear message of this body of writing; that generosity exists is also unquestioned. But there has not been enough generosity or, perhaps, it has not been given sufficient opportunity to emerge into positive and practical form. The creation of effective awareness and the readiness to translate this into action is the challenge given by this moving body of writing. It is morally essential that this challenge be accepted.

The question is "How?" This is not the place to argue a case. Perhaps it is enough to say that there exist voluntary organisations in which the migrant presence is strong and effective and which, consequently, have clearly defined aims and have both the incentive and the skill to put those aims into practice, if resources are made available in an appropriate form. It is only in this way that an overdue and

mutually rewarding operation can be managed. That operation must, before all else, be marked by commitment and understanding - commitment to remedy past and present neglect and ignorance; understanding to evolve means and opportunities to make the remedy effective and successful. And in this task the problem of language must occupy the central position.

This book is especially significant in displaying achieved control of the English language, and this must be seen as the essential element in any attempt to repay debts. Without this there will be no progress; disadvantage will remain the inevitable lot of both the newcomer and the long-time resident to whom no effective opportunity of breaking through the barrier has been given. This is intolerable because the resources for the removal of disadvantages are already available. They await only intelligent and generous management and courageous acceptance. This book demonstrates the presence of the latter; it is the creation and maintenance of the former that is in question.



"THE LOVE THAT BROUGHT US HERE"

- * The love of family;
- * The love of peace;
- * The love of freedom;
- * The love of a better future;



- * A selection of multicultural women's writings
on resettlement in Australia.

ETHNIC MOTHER

M.A. Nickels

Half a world away
Lies the land from whence you came.
How young you were, how gay
As you left your childhood home!

How could you know what lies ahead
Alone on a foreign shore,
Or dream how your heart would bleed
As countless hearts before?

Yet, as your sorrowing tears flowed down
Your heart began to perceive
The tears you shed were not just your own -
Other mothers grieve.

Out of travail, out of tears
A woman, a mother, was born,
Casting aside your troubles, your fears,
And the cloak of self-pity you'd worn.

Learning to give as you learned to take,
Learning to live again.
Knowing the future was yours to make,
Forging a link in the chain -

A chain that reaches across the sea,
One end in your children's hands,
A part of all they'll ever be
Lies in a distant land.

The courage, the strength that led you here,
Forsaking sister and brother
Nurtures your children, alien yet dear,
And proud of their 'ethnic mother'!



Trudi Lobl

For two years the address read: c/- C.I.C. Holding Centre, Mildura, Victoria. What did this address signify? It was a migrant camp, situated adjacent to the Mildura Airport.

After having been through several migrant camps (also called displaced persons' or refugee camps) in West Germany with my family in the space of ten months, on arrival in February, 1950, we were once again housed in a camp. This time, as with most of the new arrivals from Europe, it was Bonegilla, which was the transit point for Victoria.

During the forties and fifties, all "Government Assisted Passage" migrants had to sign a two-year contract, binding them to work for pay for that period in whatever position they were placed, and not to move in that time from state to state. Only the head of the family or single persons were required to enter into these contracts, and no matter what profession or qualification a person had in the old country, here, for those two years at least, and with very few exceptions, everyone was classified as a "labourer". True, in the majority of cases, it would have been a problem to step straight into one's profession because of the language barrier and also the very slight (if any) knowledge of the country's laws, culture, customs, and general way of life. It is not known to me how long, prior to our arrival, this contract scheme had been in force, but it must have had some teething troubles as no consideration had been given to the migrants' backgrounds. We found that city people had been sent to the country and vice versa. This added much strain to the already enormous task of adjusting to the vastly different way of life.

Back to Bonegilla! In this camp, for the first time, families were separated - men being accommodated with other men, and women and children together in other huts. After our stay in Bonegilla, most of the huts were remodelled into family units.

Only seven days after our arrival, almost all the men from our transport were sent to various grape harvest centres in South Australia - Berri, Barmora, Renmark, and others. At

this time the holding centre at Mildura was prepared and opened at the beginning of April, 1950, to house the families of the "grape pickers" as near as possible to where the husbands and fathers had been required to work.

As history has it, the Mildura camp was originally set during World War II to house a contingent of the Australian Air Force. After the war it became a branch of Melbourne University, providing courses for students of Medicine, Dentistry, and Engineering. Finally, the available facilities were utilised to establish the Mildura Migrant Camp, with the capacity to house over two thousand people.

The administrative staff was appointed by the Department of Immigration, and most of the positions of cooks, nurses, cleaners etc., were delegated (for pay) to migrants. The camp was rather like a little city in itself, having postal and banking facilities, hospital and outpatient services, a school - some eleven teachers were employed to teach about 300 children - cinema, store, leisure centre and sports areas. There were four kitchens and dining areas - two large ones providing meals for one thousand people each - one staff mess and the hospital kitchen. At the Medical Centre there were one or two Australian doctors, a matron, and two sisters. The other staff consisted of migrant nurses and nursing aids. The hospital dispensary was looked after by three migrant doctors.

The citizens of the camp community comprised about eight different nationalities, and occasionally misunderstandings and arguments occurred, which was not surprising considering that in those days no common language (as English was to become later) was, with few exceptions, understood or spoken. Husbands came frequently by special bus service to visit their families at the camp, and at the end of the harvest season they were placed in other jobs, mostly in and around Adelaide. Gradually accommodation was found and families started to leave the camp. Eventually people moved further away and ultimately settled all over Australia. About two dozen families decided to make Mildura their home and have settled here very happily.

The camp closed down in March, 1952, and thereafter most of the buildings were progressively sold off, and there is hardly any visible indication now that once there was a very lively community experiencing their first few months in a new country, which most of us now call "Home".

Many changes have occurred and Mildura has grown enormously since 1950-52, and one wonders how many Mildura-ites still recall the Migrant Camp that was. This is a pity.

Post-war camps, mostly former military barracks, were of many different forms and standards. In my opinion the Australian

ones rank in the top section, because I personally treasured (what bliss!!) having shower and other facilities, with hot water available twenty-four hours a day.

After much consideration as to which of several available countries to migrate, we chose Australia and have never regretted our decision.



A POEM

Danny O'Rourke

To force a nightingale to sing like a kookaburra
Would be a cruel, cruel twist of fate.

To force a flamingo to dance like a duck
Would change it to a thing of hate.

And to force other cultures to be just like ours
Is a mindless thing, and so wrong.

We should share and enjoy and allow other folks
To dance and sing their own song.

We should give and accept and exchange our ideas
And take people just as they are.

When we as a nation decide to do this,
Our world will be better by far.



"WHATEVER IS IN GOD'S PLAN"

"Anna"

Part 2.

The time to leave home was approaching fast. I tried not to think about it, as I could not see myself able to go through the painful parting.

The whole family stayed home on the day we were to leave. We hardly spoke; we just kept working and pretending we were all so busy. We were afraid to show each other our silent cries. The trip to Genoa, Italy, would take many hours by car, so we should leave really early in the morning. We kept delaying the departure, when suddenly my mother turned around and whispered:

"Would you please leave soon? I can't stand it any longer. I want to cry".

"Mama, one more minute and I'll go".

I ran into the family room and knelt down in front of the cross in the corner of the room and prayed.

"Dear God, please give me the strength to go. Please give me the strength not to cry".

Like one reborn, I jumped up, covered my face with my brightest smile, and said:

"Farewell, Mama and Father, sisters and brothers - I am ready to go. Be happy and well!"

When we passed over our village bridge, nothing could stop my tears any more.

The trip to Australia lasted four weeks and it was not very pleasant at all. I was already pregnant and felt sea-sick most of the time. What was even worse was that nobody spoke my language. The ship, 'Marconi', was Italian, and so were most of the people. The food was boring; the menu consisted of spaghetti, roast beef and potatoes, day after day for thirty long, long days. We stopped in Naples, Sicily and Athens, where we visited the majestic hills of the Acropolis. Along the African coast we stopped first at the Canary Islands, then Cape Town and Durban. We were informed that the trip would take another two weeks non-stop over a rough Indian Ocean before we would reach the shores of Australia and the port of Fremantle.

Those two weeks were quite dramatic. I felt sea-sick almost

every day, so I stayed in our cabin most of the time. My husband found a group of men playing chess and he joined them. I couldn't understand anybody, so I preferred to stay behind - mostly lying on the bed, staring at the ceiling and thinking:

"This is supposed to be our extended honeymoon, and I feel so unhappy. What is the reason for running away? I love my family so much; I already miss them, especially my older sister who was like a spiritual mother to me. We shared everything. She taught me to count, read and write before I went to school. She even told me the facts of life, and she said: 'Because I am older and wiser, I'll find a good husband for you'."

Yes, I just realised, she had found a husband for me, and had sent me off. I felt so alone I wished I could stop the ship and turn it around. I would even have run back if I could, but that would be impossible. "No, no. Why these negative thoughts? Just be positive - things will be better -!"

After two of the longest weeks of my life, we were informed that the land of Australia was to be seen on the horizon. We all ran to the deck to catch the first sight. What a strange view it was! I imagined it would look green and rocky, just as in the movies, but now all we could see was the huge, brown, massive cloud hanging over the sky.

Is this Australia? my heart sighed. Our German companion told us that we were seeing what is called a dust storm. When we got nearer, it would look better. No! It didn't look much better! All I remember of the first sight was an old fence of sheet-iron and some half-demolished barracks. The land was grey, dry and barren. My impression of my new homeland improved next morning when we boarded the bus and went on a day trip to Perth. I liked the city of Perth. It was a fresh city with beautiful open, blue skies.

"One more week of 'ship life' and we will reach our final destination - the port of Melbourne", my husband kept informing me.

"You are telling me that from Europe to Perth takes three weeks, and from Perth to Melbourne one week ... one quarter of the way further?"

I wished we had stayed in Perth.

The trip to Mildura by car was incredibly long. I thought:

"We will never make it! Perhaps we are lost!"

My husband was very happy and he thought I was coping well.

"Please tell me what our home is like", I enquired quietly.
"Oh! Don't be too disappointed. It's not much, but it has four walls and a roof above our heads. It will have to do for a while until we build the new house".

Actually, the house was much worse than I could have even imagined. The walls were high, colourless and dirty. The floors had torn lino in bright colours. The kitchen, covered with smoke, had a broken wood stove and the house was made of a strange material - cement sheets. It was as hot as hell during the day and pretty cold at night.

How I longed for a shady tree or some wild flowers to pick and decorate my kitchen table. There was not a single tree around the house and not one flower in the garden. The grass was dry and prickly.

My husband said: "We are lucky to have as neighbours people of our country - a retired couple in their seventies".

Well, that was the first good news. The next day I visited them, but I was a bit disappointed because we could hardly understand each other. My neighbours spoke a different language, coloured with a strong dialect. We all tried hard, and soon I learned their dialect.

One day my husband brought me a bunch of colourful poppies which other neighbour sent me. They were just so lovely. At home I knew only red poppies that grew wild in the wheat fields. I wanted so much to thank my neighbour personally, but it would be too embarrassing as I only knew a few words of English. A few days later, a woman in the corner shop came to me, called my name and said "hello".

I was pleasantly surprised, and just guessed who she was.

"You, flowers?"

"Yes, yes," she replied.

"Oh, thank you very much!"

That was the end of our conversation. How I wished that I could talk to her much more!

One day I had a visitor, another neighbour from across the road. All I understood was that she had two sons: one was married, and another one was in the Vietnam war. She sounded very proud of them. I was tempted to tell her how I disapproved of foreign interference in the internal affairs of another country, but luckily I didn't know enough English to keep the discussion going. I would probably have lost my Australian friend I still have today!

All the neighbours were very good to me, and very supportive; I'll be grateful to them for ever.

My neighbours told my husband that ladies wear hats in the church, so my husband jumped into the car at the last minute, and rushed to buy me a hat. The hat was so pretty - pink, with a veil. I put it on my not-too-fancy head and I looked just ridiculous. So I put it on the top of the wardrobe and never wore it again.

My first Sunday here was a very special Sunday - All Saints Day, followed by All Souls Day. In fact, it was a beautiful and sad time of the year, which we used to celebrate so differently:

At home, the whole family went to the first morning mass at 5 a.m. The local church of St. Mariette would be peeping out of the snow, surrounded by the cemetery which glowed with thousands of lighted candles. Each grave bore baskets of fresh flowers, mostly giant, crisp chrysanthemums. Whole families would be gathered around the family graves, quietly praying for the souls of their beloved departed. The church choir would sing the songs of hope and sorrow - the Elegy.

I expected a similar ceremony here, but nothing happened. No one even mentioned that it was All Saints' Day! "How ignorant!" I thought.

My neighbours told my husband that I should visit a doctor regularly for my pregnancy check-up. My husband went with me as an interpreter. He talked to the doctor, but failed to tell me what the doctor said. I noticed the doctor's worried face at each visit, and I wondered why. I forced my husband to explain his concern, and was very surprised to hear that I had to watch my diet. Every two weeks I gained double the normal weight! How could this be possible? I was hardly eating, just drinking to ease my thirst. Fruit was pleasant, but the rest of the food was tasteless and seemed different.

The house was so hot. We had no air conditioner, not even a fan. It wasn't worth installing them; my husband was already building a new house. The vinyl chairs were hot and sticky, the bed was hot, cold water scalded me when I turned the tap on, and the humid, heavy air was suffocating me.

My husband worked from five in the morning to ten at night. I felt painfully lonely. I wished I had shade outside so that I could sit under a tree and watch the life on the street. Television wasn't much of a companion to me either, as I couldn't understand anything, so I just watched the pictures. I was longing for the world news, but there was none. The world seemed to be standing still!

Every week or two I wrote a letter to my parents and told them about every nice thing I could think of. I never complained; that would only make them sad, but I told them I missed them very much. I received back the most wonderful letters of support. My mother said that she could also read between the written lines, and she knew exactly what I needed to hear. She often said:

"Whatever is in God's plan..... Wherever you are, don't forget we all live under one's 'God cover'.

After six months of pregnancy, my doctor became suspicious and ordered x-rays.

"I have wonderful news for you. You're having twins!" the doctor informed us.

My husband was so happy and proud. He ran from house to house in the neighbourhood to spread the news. Everybody was delighted. One neighbour taught me how to read English knitting patterns and I knitted my first two baby jackets - one in pink, and one in blue. Another friend taught me how to sew.

The heat of April was still scorching, and I was so big and heavy; wider than I was tall! I was glad I didn't have a full-size mirror in the house to see myself and my alien body. One night at two a.m. my water broke and my husband took me to the hospital immediately. The doctor was quite relaxed in the morning, as the babies were only one week premature, and were both of good size. But he warned me that labour would be difficult, as one baby was in the 'bridge' position and I had already lost all the water.

My English had improved in six months, and I prayed that there would be no great problems. The sister who was attending me was a wonderful person. She talked to me, brought me fruit juice, rubbed my back, and did everything possible to make me feel more comfortable. After fourteen hours I had lost all my strength, and the doctor put me to sleep for the final delivery. When I awoke, sister put two little bundles into my lap - one in pink, and another one in a blue nappy.

"How wonderful. Two perfect babies - one of each. How lucky I am. Thanks, God!"

Sister is still one of my best friends today.

Visiting time: My husband called and brought me a bunch of petunias from the neighbour's garden. He was so proud that he wouldn't be childless after all, as everybody had been worried about him only a year before. He made a quick inspection to see that everything was good and normal, and

asked me to go back to sleep as he had to go back to work.

The young mother in the bed next to mine had a tiny daughter that day, too. She had a room full of visitors, many cards and flowers and more flowers. Her parents came to see her too, and stayed with her for a long time, talking and laughing.

How unfair!

I would have liked so much to show my babies to my parents! I felt so proud of being a mother of twins, but I had no-one to share my happiness with. I hadn't even told my parents I was expecting twins, because they would have worried so much about me. But now, when the anxiety was all over, I wanted them next to me so badly. The pain of isolation and homesickness was too much to bear at that moment, and my heart exploded with grief. Part of me went to sleep at that moment so bitterly, that it's still numb today.

Ten days later I was home with my babies. I noticed that we had night visitors in the house - rats and mice coming in from the fruit block. Each door was about ten inches from the floor, so mice and rats had fun. I was very worried for the babies, and often checked on them during the night to see if their limbs were still in place! I stuffed all the rags I would find under the doors, and caught many creatures in the mouse traps.

After a couple of months we were very excited about shifting into the new house. Unfortunately we had no money for furniture, but again, it was not worthwhile buying any. The house and the block were for sale, and if they were sold, then we could go back home.

I stopped breast feeding my babies at three months, and expected to return to normal life. Strange.... I felt morning sickness again, just like a year ago on the boat!

"Is it possible? Am I.....?"

"Yes, you are expecting a baby. Congratulations!, said the doctor.

My neighbours were shocked, but I calmed them down, explaining that it was okay. Two or three babies wouldn't make much difference!

Early in July, one year later, my husband took me to the hospital, again early one evening.

"Your doctor is away, and no doctor will be called until the delivery", an older sister informed me in her stern voice.

"It will take hours, and I'm very busy. But you will be okay. You are a healthy mother". One of my neighbours came to see me and asked if she could be with me.

"No! You are not her husband or her mother! You can't see her!", the sister yelled.

Twelve hours was like an eternity for me. Nobody came to see me or to offer me comfort.

Sister came at last in the morning, when I was screaming with labour pains, and my body felt as if it was turning inside out.

When the baby was born, a doctor arrived to cut the cord. It was another daughter. She looked so, so tired and old, and her head was strangely long.

"Darling, I'll try to make up to you for the horrible labour I put you through."

When I went home I needed help, but my husband was so busy building a block of flats that he had no time to spare, or to help.

"What's for dinner? We haven't had a cooked meal for a week!", he said.

I cooked the dinner, bathed the three babies, and there was still much more work to do. But my body wouldn't let me do it. I started shivering and couldn't stop shaking. I felt so cold. My neighbour came over and ordered me to go to bed. She covered me with all the blankets and anything else she could find. I thought I might be dying, but luckily, after a while I stopped shaking, and felt warm again.

It was two years since I had arrived in Australia, and I still naively believed that we would be going home soon. I missed having a friend or a neighbour with a young family like mine. We would have had so much to share, and my life would have been more interesting - not just merely washing, changing, hanging out nappies, cooking and washing dishes, cleaning the house..... for ever, it seemed.

Soon I noticed I had a new neighbour across the road, and that I knew her. I had met her a year ago in the hospital, when we were feeding our tiny babies in the separate room. I had liked her a lot, and had wished that she would be my neighbour, too. Did God send her to me?

I visited her, and soon we became very close friends. I didn't drive, so she often took us out for picnics.

My life was gradually becoming more pleasant. I often felt depressed and numb with tiredness. I stopped caring how I looked, or how tidy the house was. Only when I expected my friend to come over I found new strength to make the babies, myself, and the house look pretty. She was a perfect person, and I wished so badly that I could be just a little like her. She made me care again.

My second daughter was a beautiful looking baby and she attracted much admiration from many people. I breast fed her for eight months, and we were very close - more so than the twins, who were quite independent from the beginning.

I expected that my body would at last become normal again.... but it wouldn't. Soon I realised that I was pregnant again. This realisation was an absolute shock to me, but my husband soon pulled me out with his fatherly pride.

"That's good. This time it will be a boy - two of each!"

Yes, I wanted and prayed for four children too, but not so soon. When my fourth baby was due, the twins would only be two and a half years old. How would I cope?

"You will! Die or survive! You will just do what you have to do!" My husband was optimistic.

My neighbours were also shocked by the news, but I managed to convince them that it didn't matter much whether there were three or four babies!

When I visited the doctor again, I begged him to perform a sterilisation on me as soon as baby was born. The doctor laughed at my impetuosity, but he was a very special person and understood my anxiety. He promised to give me special care, and he did give me a lot of attention and encouragement.

My fourth baby was born on New Year's Day. The doctor arranged for a spinal injection, and a pleasant, painless labour. My new baby was a very happy boy, and everybody just adored him. He had received more love and attention than the first three put together!

The strain on my physical and mental condition was enormous. I had only two or three hours rest at night; I was a light sleeper, and my four babies hardly ever went to sleep at the same time. I developed skin problems, and many other health problems, and was becoming more and more homesick. I hadn't heard anyone speak my language for five years! My thoughts were 'home' most of the time.

I tried to remember my parents' faces, but they were almost fading, even though I thought of them constantly.

After five years my husband gave in. We packed our trunks, rented the house, and fled home.

But home was not as homely as I had imagined. We were a family of six, and my parents' house, with four of my brothers and sisters still at home and at school, could not accommodate us permanently. My husband and his parents insisted that we stay in their house with the empty apartment upstairs.

For a couple of months everything went well until, one day, as 'out of the blue sky' I became guilty of everything possible!

My mother-in-law could not accept me, but it was even more hurtful to see how she rejected her grandchildren. To live with her became impossible, and my nerves suffered badly.

I decided to help myself.

The company where I used to work offered me my job back, and the children could stay in an all-day kindergarten. They provided a house, too. I packed the suitcases and arranged to shift the next day.

Early in the morning I woke the children, but couldn't believe my eyes! All four of them were feverish and had swollen glands on their necks.

Mumps! All four of them at once!

My plans were wrong, I realised. I asked my husband to return to Australia.

My parents were sad, but Mama said once again:

"Whatever is God's wish - IT MUST BE IN GOD'S PLAN!"



A NEW HOME

Bhati Purchase

What makes one leave the earth upon which one is born? Reasons abound, but mine was to be with my beloved. For us, South Africa meant heartache and never being able to spend our time together. South Africa does not acknowledge that people of different colours can love one another.

I vividly remember our arrival in Australia. There were so many feelings in my heart - fear, sadness, awe, excitement, confusion - but most of all, a sense of achievement. Suddenly realising that we had finally got out of that sad country and were, for the first time, free to show our love.

There was initially too much sadness to enjoy simple things like sight-seeing. I think all I really wanted to do was make this country feel like 'home'. Is it the trees, the rivers, the sky, the stars - or is it the people? I still don't know ...

At first the isolation was the most difficult problem to overcome. I was aware of not seeing 'my people' around. It was frightening to walk around town and not know a soul. Perhaps this being 'alone', (my little daughter started attending a kindergarten and my husband was at work) made me realise that I had to make an effort to fit in. I could not bear being alone, so even the daily shopping became a major event. Can you imagine what it is like to walk into a supermarket and have no idea of what tea to buy, or what the packaging of flour should look like? Just being able to see other human beings made shopping a meaningful chore; and it hid the loneliness for a while.

Then, oh so slowly, came the joys of finding other women like myself. The comfort of being able to share common feelings and have a wonderfully comforting shoulder to cry on. There were suddenly no barriers! There were women here who were also sad and lonely, but who tried to see the beauty of the environment and people. My sadness of leaving home had made me feel that only my people were kind and only my country was beautiful. I needed to hold on to what I knew - my language, my culture, my family - that was all I had in this new country.

Then came the emotionally exhausting task of learning to trust the 'unknown' people, learning about their lives, understanding their needs and hoping to gain their trust as well - the awesome task of 'letting go' of what I knew and trusted all my life. I had to make way for the customs of this country, even if so different to what I knew.

My best teachers were the people. I started working as a

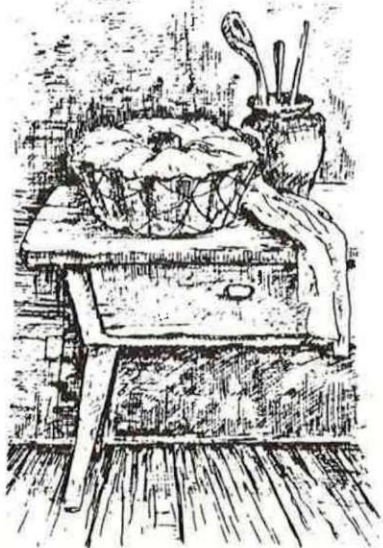
private secretary and found the joys of being amongst people again. It was a wonderful feeling to be able to share my experiences with the people around me, to know that they were interested in me! These wonderful people gave me so much love, so much caring. It was starting to feel like 'home', in fact it was 'home'! I now recognised faces in the crowd; and sometimes the crowd recognised me.

With all this caring came the warmth in my soul. I had space now to look for my god, my culture, my language and a longing to share it with my new friends. I was prepared to take on new roles. Life suddenly became a sharing experience - there was so much to learn and so much to share with them all.

And yet I still have pangs of longing. Why is it so difficult to forget your country of birth? Will I really ever be an Australian? Will I forget where I had come from? What I need to learn is that we are not Indians, or Germans, or Italians, or Greeks, but rather that we are just people. People who must learn to love and care for each other no matter where we come from.

We are the mothers of the children of tomorrow. Our role in life is to show that we can love and care beyond the human barriers of religion and cultures. We will learn from each other what is important for each of us.

What I have learnt from being 'different' in a new country is that there are in fact few differences between people if only we can open ourselves to share with them. Perhaps being here with my love will teach me to love this piece of earth called Australia.





LAKSHMI'S STORY

I still cannot fight the feeling of apprehension as the plane touched down at Sydney airport. It was the first time that I had ever been to Australia, and it was in such difficult circumstances that I had come to live here. It was the 18th of April, 1984.

What made me leave my beautiful country, Malaysia, and who made me leave the lovely job that I had had?

It all began one fine day in 1983 when my husband came to settle down in Malaysia. I had married him in Bangladesh, where I had been studying for my Doctor's degree in Homoeopathy, D.H.M.S. Having finished my studies, I went back to Malaysia to get a job. I found the job that I had studied for and, with it, a good salary. But, with the coming of my husband after the completion of his studies, everything started to change. I had to leave my job and my country to live with him in Australia. It was a very difficult decision for me to make, but finally it was the love for my husband and the future of our children that made me decide to come to Australia. We couldn't stay in Malaysia because my husband was an Iranian.

Anyway, when we arrived in Australia, with the help of U.N.C.R., there was not a soul that we knew. It was only the beginning of winter, but we were freezing cold. Luckily, the Bahai community of Sydney was informed by the Bahai community of Malaysia of our coming. A few Bahais were at the airport to meet us, and they took us to the Bahai temple at Ingleside, Mona Vale, Sydney, where we stayed for about four days in the hostel. I have always loved the countryside, having come from the country myself, so we left for Mildura. Once again, we were guided by the Bahai community, and we were welcomed by another Iranian family and invited to stay with them until we found a place of our own. We stayed with them for almost a month, and then rented a flat. Here I got to know the landlady and her family, who became my very good friends.

My memories of Mildura are of wonderful and beautiful things only. I remember having a lovely time with the other women at MADEC. I got to know many other immigrants in Mildura during our stay of two years - a pleasant and unforgettable two years.

When we finally decided to move, it was because of job

difficulties of my husband. When he got a job as technician with W.D and H.O. Wills, we had to move to Sydney. I was happy at the thought of my husband having a good job but very heartbroken at having to leave Mildura - a beautiful place and the fond memories of friends there.

Right now my husband has a permanent job and we are happy with our two children, Shabnam and Sarah, who are aged seven years and five months respectively. Life is, of course, very busy in Sydney, but we love Australia. It is a lovely, multi-racial country, and it always reminds me of my country back home. The only thing I miss is the Malaysian food, but even that can be found in Sydney at times.

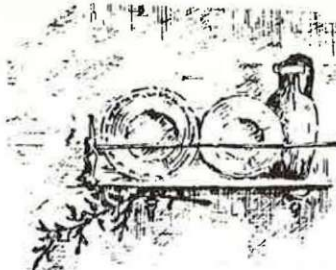
If I had a chance to go back to Mildura one day, I would. I really would like to thank my friends in Mildura for making us feel so much at home during our stay there.

HEADACHES

by Sylvia

When I first came to Australia I was very confused and sad. I had a headache all the time, and kept thinking of my family back home. I could not do anything because I was so confused - I just worked hard with my husband. It was better when our first child was born. My headaches got better, and now I am lucky because I go out and learn to sew, and talk with people at English classes.





ECHO FROM BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

A. Valente

[A young Italian girl, prevented by family misfortune from finishing her high school education is filled with sorrow and frustration. In her grief she seeks consolation in her books and her love of the natural beauty of her native country. She remembers these things as destiny takes her far from them.]

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Part 2

It was on a spring night when the Italian sky was a black velvet immensity, with its mass of stars, seeming to grow larger every night, that I met the young man who was to become my husband. He was already working in Germany and after our marriage we lived there for five years. Every Christmas we went back home and so I never felt homesick; Germany was not far from Italy. Meanwhile a very treasured little boy was born to us.

How suddenly things change. The tempest of inflation was approaching the countries of Western Europe and Australia seemed to be the safest country in the world. Television and radio carried advertisements which told us that Australia needed people; they could be heard at every hour of the day. By chance my husband went to the Post Office, and there on the counter were piles of brochures with colourful photographs of Australia. He brought some to show to me, and I was amazed at the beauty of the beaches and Ayer's Rock, with all the colours of the Australian sunsets. Cold Germany made those warm beaches look like paradise.

"Still", my husband said, "you had better think carefully, we don't know anything about the country and it is so far from Italy. We wouldn't be able to come home for Christmas, or maybe not for a very long time". He wanted us to make decisions together, but I knew that he was worried. Even in Germany work was becoming scarce. Australia and Canada were

the only two countries which were seeking workers.

We chose Australia from what we saw on the post cards and the promise of economic security.

How can I describe my feelings, while going aboard that ship. It was just as we say in my sweet tongue: "Partir e un po' morir", and I did feel like dying. I knew that Australia was too far away to allow us to come back; I knew that I would feel homesick; that I would miss my mountains, the sea and my sky. But also I knew that it was inevitable; we had to go.

It was in the summer of nineteen sixty-eight that we arrived at Port Melbourne, on a day so hot and so humid that only Melbourne can produce. The streets were so wide, the little weatherboard houses so small and lost, wrapped in a blanket of heat and low cloud. "Right now", I thought "the peaks are white and the sky clear and unbounded". I could not imagine a greater contrast. Everything was different from what I had imagined and I felt so small, lost like the little houses in that street near the port.

On our arrival we had the desperate problem of housing with all its pain. Then followed the obscure years of my hard work in the factories, so that we might be able to buy a home and so feel that we were in Australia for a purpose. They were lonely years. I used to read every piece of paper written in English that I could put my hands on. I felt that I would always be a stranger until I could speak the language. I bought children's books from supermarket stands, children's stories that I was familiar with, filled with wonder when I found a word with a Latin root resembling the Italian equivalent; each word was a triumph. I battled hard and long with the tongue of that great poet who created "Romeo and Juliet".

The first time that I felt confident, I went to the library and asked for a book by Shakespeare. The librarian smiled gently and said: "I think that it would be better if you read some Lawson stories - Henry Lawson". Later I realised that she knew her job well. I loved the Lawson stories, with his style so easy to understand. Most of all, he took me everywhere in Australia and he taught me to respect this country.

After I managed a reasonable knowledge of the English language, I realised that the media weren't always fair towards the new arrivals. For some papers we were "wogs"; for others we were "dagoes". It was when I read such insults that I felt homesick and that I asked myself whether it was really better to know the language or not. I felt anger when I first read the word "Ethnic". I swore never to speak to an Australian for the rest of my stay. But how rash I was in

making that decision, and how wrong I was proved to be.

It was a cold winter night. I was coming back from the city where I used to work to Coburg where we lived. That night the tram was crowded from door to door. I was standing behind a seat, when I felt a tug at my coat. I turned to look and there was an old man, his walking stick between his knees, indicating to me that he wanted to offer me his seat. He had probably noticed that for most of the time my feet were being crushed by the feet of the man in front of me, but, anyway, I said that I was all right. He must have been one of the "fair and square Australians". He stood up and nearly pushed me on to his seat, and then I heard him say: "Watch your bloody feet, will you," and with his stick he tapped the shoulder of the man in front. Then he looked at me and winked. How happy I felt because of that little act of justice. I felt that for him I wasn't an "ethnic" or something else. Just, perhaps, a New Australian sheila. That happened twenty years ago, but I am not likely to forget it.

My views changed completely when we came to live in Mildura thirteen years ago. What a difference from the city! The people were just like Lawson's Australians, warm and human. For the past four years I have been employed in home care service, a job which takes me into the houses of large numbers of people from all walks of life and of all nationalities. It has helped me to see, to share and to comprehend the Australian way of life, as with sweet "Mrs X". As soon as she hears my car approaching, she prepares my cup of tea and gets out her lovely pumpkin scones. I care for her very much indeed.

Mildura is an ideal place to live in, quiet, with nights that are starry like the nights of my native country. The fragrance of the orange blossoms is strong at night and the breeze coming through the open windows carries it into the room. I cannot say that I don't feel homesick and I cannot always agree with something that I once read somewhere: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". That is impossible and would be inhuman. We can never change ourselves; our country is in our blood, in the names we have, in the colours of our eyes and hair; it is in us and will be there until we die.

Although I feel very close to Australia and its people, my homesickness is sometimes so tangible and real that, like physical pain, it seizes my heart with a cold hand. But usually reason prevails and, with the children to look after and work to be done, I have so little time to think or be sad. I am contented with my home, my little property on the river. The peace of the river I treasure very dearly, and nature and its beauty is all around me there, as I am reminded by an incident like this:

One summer morning a family of mallards walked under kitchen window - mother and eleven ducklings, while the of us had our noses pressed against the window pane watching them pass by. Nature is a gift of God, wherever we may be. Creation is beautiful everywhere. The laughter of the kookaburra at twilight, or when the shadow of night falls with the clusters of the far gum trees and the waters of the river turn gold at sunset.

Every country is beautiful in its particular way; the country that I live in is blessed with beauty. My hope is that, one day, there will not be old "Australians" or "Ethnics", but just people living in Australia.

But there remains the problem of the media. They use words and people alike to sell their damned newspapers. But what really counts is people like us - me and "Mrs X", ordinary people. My feelings for Australia are very deep; everything I have is Australian. If necessary to defend its shores I would give my sons as other mothers have done before.

MOTHER

A. Valente

You told me, try to be happy,
Your lips were set tight,
In your eyes a tear, dry, hard.

Remember you said: Be proud
You are Italian!
As if I could forget!

New lands, new country
My years, like a tunnel of time,
My blood, my mind, how can that be changed.

How to forget the Alps, the gorges
The valleys, the sky I know so well,
My soul and my memories an unbreakable communion.

I know in my last moment alive, whatever I am
I will always remember
That spring day when the swallows arrived.





TORN BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Dharini

After a stay of eleven eventful years in this country, it is now time to analyse my thoughts, feelings and impressions as to what I am doing here so very far away from the country of my birth.

I was born on and grew up in the most beautiful little island which used to be known as the "Pearl of the Orient". This little isle, so rich in scenic beauty, and famous for its tea and spices, had its share of European invasions from the sixteenth century. The Portugese were the first white settlers to our shores, and they were followed, one hundred and fifty years later, by the Dutch, who in turn were followed by the British, who remained in power till the island gained its independence in 1948.

I grew up in the era of the British raj, and had a very 'English' education. English was the medium of instruction, trade, commerce and government, and the national language of the indigenous population was relegated to second place.

The indigenous population was comprised of four major nationalities, who got on amicably, despite their language and religious differences, as English was the common bond.

My childhood and formative years bring back many happy and pleasant memories of a large, closely-knit family, warm, loving and protective parents, shielding their offspring from the harshness of the world outside. We lived in a carefree, fun-filled world, taking in the natural beauty all around us and making full use of our parents' solicitude to eke out our childhood to its limit.

The National Day and religious celebrations used to be looked forward to with great anticipation and delight; the immediate family assembled in the home of the head of the family to partake of the first meal of the day together, after which the financial transactions would take place, and we would exchange money and gifts. Before the day ended, a visit to the temple was essential to make offerings of sweet scented flowers, to light joss sticks, and thank God for the favours bestowed upon us.

This idyll came to an end with the gaining of independence in 1948. All those years we had been under a foreign yoke, and had been told what to do. But now we were free to govern our

country as we thought best. There was a resurgence of nationalism and everything pertaining to our culture was reintroduced. National folk dancing was introduced in schools, (which, until then, had taught western ballet), and the national language was given pride of place.

When it was time for our son to commence his education, my husband and I decided we would like him to have a similar type of education to that which we had received. To give him that opportunity, we felt we would have to leave our country and seek fresh pastures. This decision was not taken lightly - we knew it meant leaving our beloved country, family, friends, and everything we held dear and were an integral part of, to seek a new beginning elsewhere.

When we finally made the decision to leave, my husband was able to secure a position in an institution in Mildura. Then came the worst part - going through the official channels to enable us to leave the country. We managed to get through this with the able assistance of my husband's prospective employer in Mildura. In the process of the long and protracted correspondence that went back and forth, we got to know the gentleman who wrote on behalf of his employer from his letters, and we felt we would at least have one friend out there in the far-away, distant and unknown world to which we were planning to go.

When all our plans were finalised and we were ready to leave our country to start afresh in a strange, unknown land, we had many misgivings and fears, but we had decided on our future, and there was no turning back.

We arrived in Melbourne and telephoned my husband's employer to inform him of our arrival in the country and were informed that the gentleman with whom we had been in correspondence was seriously ill and not expected to recover. We were devastated and felt the earth crumbling from beneath our feet. We had so looked forward to meeting this gentleman, whom we had counted on as a friend and ally in an unknown world, but now we might not even have the pleasure of meeting him.

However, the manager of the institution met us on our arrival in Mildura, and he, together with his wife and family, made us welcome and took us under their wings and helped us along until we found our feet. We formed a close friendship, which has grown and developed during these eleven years. It is very easy to communicate with each other, provided there is no language barrier. People of an era, irrespective of whether they are from the East or the West, have similar basic values and ideals, and if the different cultures and skin complexions could be disregarded, it would just be a natural process to get acquainted with each other and form close friendships.

We were very fortunate in meeting lovely people who welcomed us to their world and gave us their friendship so spontaneously. These friends are very dear to us, just as our friends back home are. Their caring has assisted us in settling here and making Mildura a home away from home.

The lure of the country of my birth is very strong, but Australia has a special meaning for me, as it is the home of my daughter-in-law, who is very important to me. I would very much want to be here when my children start planning their families, and very selfishly look forward to the pleasure and the new lease of life I could gain by watching my grand children grow up.

I have no control over my "Karma", and do not know what fate has in store for me.

Time alone will tell!!

SWALLOWS

Where is the swallow
The old walls, the hollow windows
With red geranium.

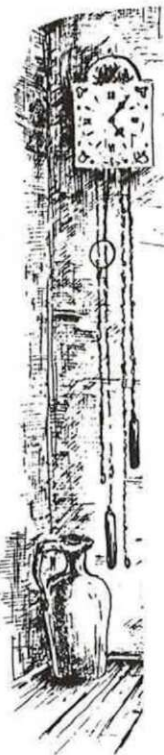
The tall grasses, the blue sky
And primroses on the dry banks,
My years of youth.

The swallows return,
I do envy you so,
My wings are cut.

My being wanders,
Breeze on my face
The blue fills my eyes.

How lucky you are!
You finish your winter exile,
To your familiar walls you fly.

But I..
How can I?
I am a condemned exile!



Amalia Valente

The following are extracts from an H.S.C. History option on migrant women, undertaken in 1986 by Jillian Pattinson, Red Cliffs High School.

* * *

In Greece the mother is very important in supervising the family's religious practices, the children's education, the householder and the family income, but is dominated by her male relatives, especially her father or husband.

Esther, now aged 30 years, was born in a small village of 300 people, in the south of Greece, where she lived comfortably with her parents and brother.

After she completed primary education in the village, her parents had a big argument to decide whether she should be allowed to continue her education or whether she should come to work on the farm or in the village and prepare for marriage. Her mother won the argument and Esther, at eleven years of age, was sent to the nearest town where she had to look after herself, while living alone, and complete her secondary education.

Esther said she had always rebelled against the fact that all males - even her brother who was fifteen months younger considered themselves her masters. Women were expected to marry young (at 14 or 15 years of age) so that their husbands could mould their ideas and attitudes.

Esther said that although arranged marriages are still a part of Greek life, they are less common and girls and boys are allowed to form their own relationships now.

In Southern Greece, girls are still given dowries by their fathers when they are to marry.

Esther said that life was very hard in the villages, and until female tourists from other European countries brought the western influence into the village, the women rarely went to the next town. During winter there was very little to do before television arrived, and gossip - which mainly afflicted women (as people did not dare gossip about men!) was all the people had to occupy themselves.

She said that while the villagers are still aware of each other's families and lives, they are not as extended as they used to be.

When she was in about Form 6, Esther became involved in a student political group which actively demonstrated against the Greek government and the way in which Greece was being run. When she was studying at the University of Athens, her

studies were made very difficult because her parents were not wealthy enough to finance her education, and the Government had ways of making life very difficult for its adversaries.

When Esther was seventeen years old, her parents said she must either marry or choose a life away from Greece. She knew it would be difficult for her to conform to the Greek lifestyle, so she decided to emigrate.

Esther migrated to Australia because her financial position and political opinions and activities were beginning to have a bad effect on her life and study in Greece. She chose Australia because the Australian government had signed an agreement with the Greek government for exchange students to study in Australian universities. She applied and was successful. Esther chose to come to Melbourne because her mother had some distant relatives living there and her mother wanted her to be safe and secure.

Esther had dreamed of getting to know the world, and felt that she had enough of Greece. Although the influence of other women had some effect on Greek attitudes, Esther could not accept the traditional Greek lifestyle. She had heard stories from many Greeks who had migrated about how rich Australia was, and how you could get on well if you worked hard.

Esther did not speak English when she arrived in Australia, but was expected to continue with her law degree and care for herself with the aid of a meagre amount of tertiary assistance. She and some other students shared a house and general expenses. Apart from the language barrier, Esther found it difficult to adapt to the Australian life-style and, especially, to accept the equality between men and women in Australia. She said that, where in Greece men were often domineering and rude, in Australia people were generally kinder, well mannered and considerate.

Because of her lack of English, Esther found it difficult to make friends and acted out of character for a while to gain attention. She also made friends with Greek people, simply because she needed the contact. She would normally have avoided them because she disagreed with their way of thinking.

Esther is comfortable living amongst Australians because she likes the lifestyle and because she knows that she could not have conformed to Greek ways.

Esther was brought up to tell her parents what she did and, although she still 'did her own thing', their disapproval made her very uncomfortable.

She decided to try the lifestyle they wanted her to lead,

and lived with a Greek man for many years. She hated this life, and only put up with it because she was not sure that her ways - i.e. trying to change the attitudes of Greek women and live a liberated life - were right.

She has talked to many Greek girls who tell her that their mothers are constantly unhappy with their lives and role in the family.

Esther said that as the education, abilities and personal awareness of migrant women developed, they became accepted as any other woman would be. Esther has never been treated differently because she was a migrant woman, and believes it is your individual qualities which count, rather than your national origins.

Esther has returned to Greece twice since migrating, and is glad to see changes, including greater power and liberation for women, but still feels that she could not live there and fit into the Greek community. Her attitudes have always been like this, but have developed to a greater extent than they might have, had she remained in Greece.

One of the attitudes Esther had when she came to Australia which changed due to her life and experiences in Australia, concerns the life of a 'traditional' Greek woman in Australia. Contrary to what Esther had believed, she has found that the status of Greek women in the family, their level of independence and self-confidence, their lifestyle and freedom are essentially the same as in traditional Greece. The only difference is that Greek women in Australia enjoy more material comforts than in Greece, but that this gain is balanced by the hard work many Greek women have to do in Australia.

Many Greek women Esther has been associated with in Australia have been forbidden by their husbands to see her, because the men fear her attitudes and efforts to change the lives of Greek women in Australia will cause disharmony in the family. Esther sees herself as "a member of the multicultural Australian community".

Esther has always tried to integrate into Australian life to gain the relatively individual and free life of the Australian woman compared to that of Greek women in Australia. She made friends with people of many other nationalities, including Australians, Indians, and some Greek women with similar attitudes to hers.

She realises, however, that she is an exception, and that most Greek women in Australia are unable to integrate effectively. There are some Greek traditions she wants to retain such as the idea of family unity, and she knows that she will always retain the traditional teachings of her

parents, although many of them conflict with her own ideas.

Esther believes that multiculturalism may actually isolate migrant women to some extent. As their communities are supported and develop, there will be less and less need for them to go out and learn from and share the cultures of others. There are not many people who, when placed in an unfamiliar environment, would not automatically search for the safest, most familiar niche, that they could occupy, as these women are likely to do.

Esther feels that the Greek community keeps to itself because members are unsure of their position in relation to the Australian culture, and are afraid of the Australian influences on their way of life. Therefore they will tend to keep their traditional customs to themselves in order to maintain important aspects of their culture, such as family unity. They do this also, Esther said, because they are not willing to accept that other cultures may have something to offer to their own, and they are afraid of change and outside influence. She feels that Greeks and other ethnic groups are not willing to bridge the gap, to share and learn from each others' cultures because they wish to keep their own intact. Therefore the opportunity to learn from the Greek culture may actually be hindered by the effects of multiculturalism on Greek and other ethnic communities.

Esther says, however, that there will always be people in most ethnic groups who are willing and eager to learn about each other's cultures and customs.

Esther feels that ethnic women have a great deal to offer Australians and each other. She says that their experiences and knowledge of their culture puts them in a position to positively contribute in cultural areas such as cooking, dancing and entertainment. She feels that other ethnic groups could benefit from learning about Greek traditions such as family unity and respect for fellow family members, although the Greeks could also learn a lesson or two from the more liberated countries.



Lisa, aged 84 years, an earlier migrant to Australia, came from Bremen, a large city in Germany. She said that although education was the same for boys and girls in that you did what you wanted to, boys generally worked in the gardens while girls did indoor, domestic work. Lisa did her Diploma in Secretary Studies, and was able to get a good job in Germany.

Lisa came to Australia after meeting her husband who had an offer to come here to work. She said it was a big decision, but she wanted to see the world and knew that she could always return to Germany if she did not like Australian life. Her husband migrated first to see if Australia was a good place in which to make a new life, and after a year, he sent Lisa her boat ticket to join him here.

Although many Australian customs were strange to her, Lisa was able to learn and adjust. "You have to fit in, don't you?" Australians were concerned with her problems and were eager to make her feel at home. On her arrival, she went to live at Pinnaroo where, she recalls, the Australians were kinder to her and her husband than were their fellow Germans!

Apart from Australian customs, Lisa had to learn how to speak English. She was eager to learn and found that people responded positively to her efforts. The local school teacher provided her with a good dictionary in which she would look up any new words she encountered. One day when she was shopping in a grocer's store, the grocer said:

"Mrs Strutz, why don't you teach my wife and me German, while we teach you and your husband English?"

They did this and it was an enjoyable and often amusing way to learn English.

Lisa has been well accepted throughout her life in Australia, even when the war was in progress and her husband was interned. She had the status of a wife and business woman, and felt that as long as you are genuine and try to fit in, people are nice to you.

"Australia has been good to us, but we have been good to it, too! If you take it as it is given to you and are not always finding fault, well, then you are happy! It's up to you, isn't it? Your feelings and attitudes towards the people and all, it helps to make it [life in Australia] satisfactory."

Lisa has returned to visit Germany six times, but she still prefers to live in Australia. She expresses her dual loyalties thus: "At my heart I am still German, but I am Australian and I love Australia ... and I would never go back home for good".

* * *

Chidam Bakir, aged 14 years, was born in Adana, a large Turkish town, and moved to Sarbajia when she was three. She lived with her grandparents, mother, and two brothers in Turkey. Her father emigrated to Australia when Chidam was seven, and the family joined him here when she was thirteen.

Chidam didn't really know what she was coming to, or what to expect of Australia, and she wasn't sure she really wanted to come. She had thought that Australia was just a big city because it was well developed and she had been told that people lived better in Australia.

She flew out to Australia in 1985 with her family, and was surprised to find that Mildura was a country centre. She came to a wide network of Turkish relatives and potential friends in Sunraysia. She did, and still does, find it difficult because most of her friends speak English, television is in English, as are her classes at school.

Chidam has made a lot of new Australian and migrant friends during her one year in Australia, and believes that when she ceases to need the help of these friends in communication they will stay her friends because they like her for herself.

Her teachers show a lot of concern towards her education. She has approximately fourteen hours of specialised language teaching a week, and there is usually someone to help her in her ordinary classes at school. She sometimes finds it difficult to get sufficient help in larger classes.

At Cardross Primary school, which she attended for one year, there was no program designed for migrant children, and she was taught necessary English skills to help her survive in Australia. Because there are no teachers trained to cope with migrant children at her present school, it has been difficult for classroom teachers to know what to teach Chidam, and to cope with a non-English speaking student.

Chidam is, however, learning quite a lot of English and expects to resume her ordinary education in another year.

* * *

Vittoria came to Australia with her family, following her father who had emigrated to Australia because of economic hardship on the island of Sicily.

* * *

Sonia came to Australia from Croatia, and was educated in Australia. She experienced very difficult times at the

large High School she attended in Melbourne. She was accepted by the children and got a little help there. Every day she decided to leave, but she persevered and gained her H.S.C.

She was not allowed to socialise as much as her Australian counterparts. Her social activities were limited to visiting friends in their homes. She said there was little help for migrant women then, and not sufficient qualified interpreters.

After twenty years in Australia, Sonia was disappointed and hurt to hear herself called "wog", and it took her a long time to make friends in the area. She feels that there is a need to integrate, but she is not prepared to assimilate totally into the Australian way of life.

* * *

The British were the preferred migrant after World War II, and were encouraged to migrate to Australia, even to the extent that a scheme whereby British families paid only ten pounds to emigrate, was introduced.

* * *

Jenny's family came here under such a scheme, and Jenny said that Australia was not what the British propaganda had made it out to be.

* * *

Many migrant women experience problems concerning child care and the maintenance of the household. They tend to become socially and culturally dislocated and will sometimes accept poor working conditions, simply for the company.

Feelings of isolation, mainly due to household duties and language barriers, often mar the memories migrant women hold of their experiences in Australia. Although many have had fulfilling and enjoyable lives in Australia, there would obviously be those who could not tolerate life here. While many of these unhappy women have returned home, many more remain, silently accepting the fate that led them here, and their unhappy state.

* * *

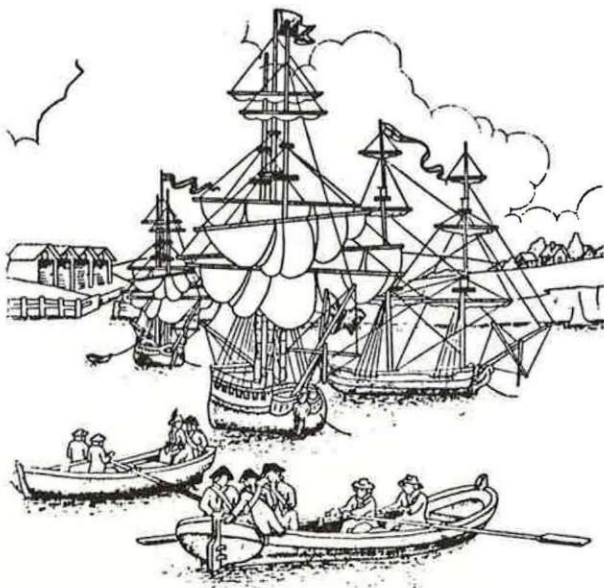
CLOSING THE GAP

Danny O'Rourke.

Help close the gap 'tween young and old
Help close the gap 'tween old and new
Help close the gap 'tween shy and bold
Help close the gap 'tween me and you.

It's thinking we're God's chosen few
That keeps our several worlds apart
Instead of saying: "I love you"
Which really would be very smart.

If we extend the hand of friendship
And say "I like you gal, or chap,"
We will be doing our small bit
We will be helping "Close the Gap".



FINALE

Australians are often promoted as a nation of people prepared to help a mate in trouble. Our helping skills have, in fact, been so successful that we have developed a welfare system which is now a major industry, often absorbing the traditional roles and responsibilities of family, friends and neighbours.

As Australians, our national pride and often fierce independence have also been a block to our own learning opportunities. We have, in a desire to assist new-comers to our country, historically ignored the richness of other cultures and endeavoured to make everyone the same as us.

Education must then surely be the key to a better way; not only for the opportunity it provides a new-comer in adjusting, but for long term Australians to look outside their island and better understand the skills and talents of others.

Our organisation, M.A.D.E.C., its clients and others, will benefit from the research carried out by the Multicultural Women's Association. Just as important, however, has been the endeavour shown by a group of women to make their community and, therefore, our country, a better place in which to live.

Peter Greed,

DIRECTOR

MILDURA & DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL.



MULTICULTURAL WOMEN IN SUNRAYSIA

Develop Mildura Council Inc.
Sunraysia Research and
Information Centre

July 1987

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.

1.1 SUNRAYSIA IN CONTEXT

Sunraysia is a remote area covering 36,739 square kilometres around the Murray River in north west Victoria and south west New South Wales. It incorporates the Victorian municipalities of Mildura City and Shire and the New South Wales Shire of Wentworth, and at June 1986 had an estimated resident population of 45,620 persons. Mildura City, the major commercial centre in Sunraysia, is around 550 kilometres north west of Melbourne, 1100 kilometres south west of Sydney and 390 kilometres north east of Adelaide. In recent years Mildura City has been the fastest growing regional centre in Victoria and the most rapidly growing inland City in Australia.

The major industry in Sunraysia is horticulture although it has a strong tourism, recreation and leisure sector, with developing manufacturing and business service industries. It is Australia's major producer of dried vine fruits and has a growing reputation for production of a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables, and wine. In 1986, Mildura City became Victoria's "Premier Tourist Town". The intensity of horticulture and, in particular viticulture, has contributed to the broad cultural mix in Sunraysia's community. Mildura City and Mildura Shire have among the highest concentrations of residents of non-English speaking origin of all major regional centres in Australia.

In summary, Sunraysia has a diverse community involved in a wide range of economic activities, and service provision and infrastructure requirements need to be planned accordingly. An active community sector in Sunraysia contributes to effective economic and community development in the area.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

As part of the process of ensuring that needs of individual groups in Sunraysia are met, the Multicultural Womens Association of Mildura conducted a survey of overseas born women in Mildura City and Shire during the latter half of 1986 and first three months of 1987.

The objectives of the survey were to

- * identify the characteristics and attributes of multicultural women in Mildura City and Shire
- * identify services used and needed by multicultural women in Mildura City and Shire.

The survey was funded by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and was designed, and conducted by the Multicultural Womens Association with assistance from bi lingual field workers. Computer analysis of results were undertaken by Warrnambool College of Advanced Education.

The Develop Mildura Council Inc., Sunraysia Research and Information Centre was contracted to interpret and report results of the survey. The project was supported by Mildura and District Educational Council and Ms. Cheryl Hardie provided assistance in collating survey material, and Ms. Anneke Cisera gave invaluable support in developing the survey questionnaire.

Subsequent chapters of the report are

CHAPTER 2: MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY IN SUNRAYZIA

A brief review of socio demographic characteristics of Sunraysia's overseas born population.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF MULTICULTURAL WOMEN IN MILDURA CITY AND SHIRE

A discussion of main results of a survey of 215 overseas born women in Mildura City and Shire.

CHAPTER 4: IMPLICATIONS ON SERVICE PROVISION AND DEMANDS FOR SERVICES

An analysis of the main services and their capacity required in Mildura City and Shire to effectively accommodate their multicultural women residents.

APPENDIX A: FURTHER TABLES OF RESULTS APPENDIX B: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

There have been numerous studies and published reports on Sunraysia's socio demographic, economic and migrant community characteristics and trends in recent years. As well, the Sunraysia Research and Information Centre maintains an extensive information bank on community characteristics and developments. It is not intended to duplicate this information in this report. However, it is important that a brief review of the size and origin of the overseas born community be presented in order to provide a background against which survey results can be interpreted. As the vast majority of Sunraysia's overseas born community reside in Mildura City and Shire, and the Multicultural Womens Association survey was conducted in this area, discussions will concentrate on these two municipalities.

Discussions presented in this section of the report draw heavily on information from the "Sunraysia Social Profile" by the Sunraysia Research and Information Centre and "Migrant Resources in Sunraysia" by Street Ryan and Associates Pty. Ltd.

2.1 ORIGIN OF RESIDENTS FROM NON ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUNDS

A detailed study of Sunraysia's migrant community of non-English speaking origin was conducted in 1983*, and showed that Sunraysia and its wider service area had a resident population of non-English speaking origin equal to 6.9% of its total population. A density which, in 1981, gave it a ranking of three among major Australian regional centres, after Queanbeyan and Cairns but ahead of Albury-Wodonga, Shepparton-Mooroopna, Whyalla, Townsville and Launceston.

*. Street Ryan and Associates Pty. Ltd. (1983), "Migrant Resources in Sunraysia: An Analysis of the Italian, Greek, Yugoslav and Turkish Communities" Sunraysia Ethnic Advisory Council.

Table 2.1 shows the number and proportion of overseas born people in Sunraysia, in 1981, highlighting the major five countries of origin; United Kingdom, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey. Figure 2.1 presents the overseas born distribution graphically. There is very little variation in the distribution of country of origin of overseas born men and women.

The table and figure reveal that Sunraysia has well above average proportions of Italian and Turkish residents, and that concentrations of people with non-English speaking backgrounds mainly occur in the Shire of Mildura, where they are engaged in grape growing and other horticultural production.

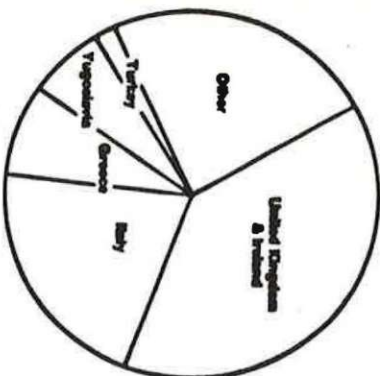
TABLE 2.1

BIRTHPLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN RESIDENTS,
SUNRAYSIA 1981

	United Kingdom No.	%	Italy No.	%	Greece No.	%	Yugoslavia No.	%	Turkey No.	%	Other Overseas Born and Not Stated No.	%	Total Overseas Born No.
Mildura City	591	38.8	319	21.0	121	7.9	100	6.6	28	1.8	363	23.9	1,522
Mildura Shire	453	19.9	764	33.6	148	6.5	191	8.4	314	13.8	405	17.8	2,275
Wentworth Shire	146	26.7	184	33.6	34	6.2	34	6.2	3	0.4	147	26.9	548
Sunraysia	1,190	27.4	1,267	29.2	303	7.0	325	7.5	345	7.9	915	21.1	4,345
Non- Metropolitan Victoria		41.8		10.9		2.2		6.4		1.0		37.7	110,826
Victoria		29.8		13.2		8.3		6.8		2.6		39.3	873,059

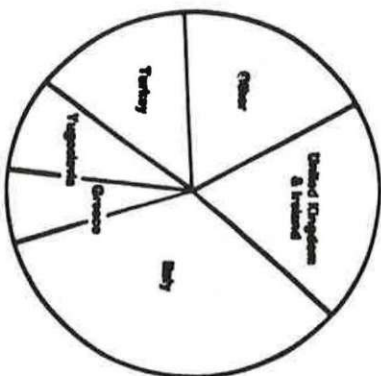
SOURCE: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing, 1981.

BIRTH PLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981 (Percent)
MILDURA CITY



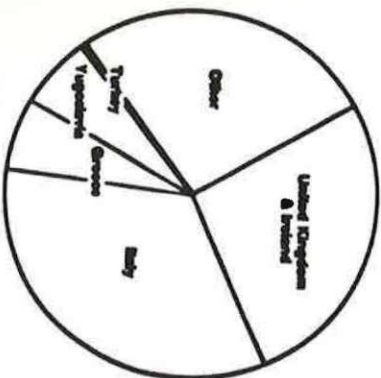
TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981

BIRTH PLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981 (Percent)
MILDURA SHIRE



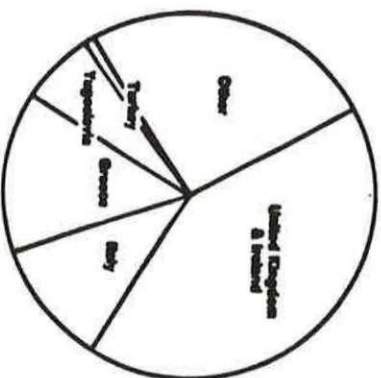
TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1978

BIRTH PLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981 (Percent)
WENTWORTH SHIRE



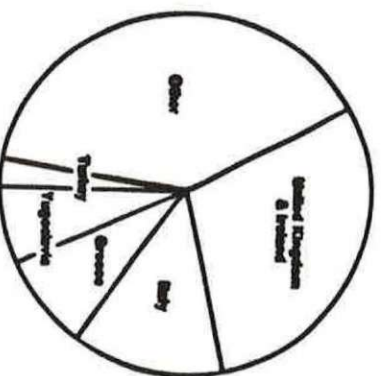
TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981

BIRTH PLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981 (Percent)
COUNTRY REGION



TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981

BIRTH PLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981 (Percent)
VICTORIA



TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN PEOPLE 1981

FIGURE 2.1: BIRTHPLACE OF OVERSEAS BORN:
SUNRAYSIA & VICTORIA, 1981.

The total number and concentrations of persons born in non-English speaking countries in Sunraysia and its trade area ranks highly among Australian regional centres. Further, the density of persons with non English speaking backgrounds in Merbein, Irymple and Red Cliffs is comparable to density in major metropolitan areas of Australia.

2.2 AGE-SEX STRUCTURE OF SUNRAYSLIA'S OVERSEAS COMMUNITY

The age-sex structure, in 1981 of Sunraysia's migrant communities is summarised in Table 2.2.

The overseas born community is distinctly older than Sunraysia's total population and, with modest levels of new immigration, will demand increasing specialised services for the aged.

TABLE 2.2

AGE-SEX STRUCTURE OF OVERSEAS BORN PERSONS, SUNRAYSLIA, 1981

Age-Group	Males	%	Females	%
0 - 4	5	0.2	8	0.4
5 - 14	112	4.8	85	4.2
15 - 24	199	8.5	195	9.7
25 - 49	1,079	46.2	948	47.3
50 - 64	539	23.1	429	21.4
65+	402	17.2	338	16.9
TOTAL	2,336	100.0	2,003	100.0

SOURCE: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing, 1981.

The size and the age-structure of the overseas born is of considerable importance in assessing the resources they require. By the year 2001, almost 60% of the overseas born population are expected to be aged 50 years or over, more than twice the proportion in the total population (26.7%). Further, the relative "ageing" of the overseas born population is expected to be more pronounced among women. For instance in 1981, 38% of Sunraysia's overseas born females and 40% of overseas born males were aged over 50. In 2001, it is expected that 60% of overseas born females and 59% of overseas born males will be over 50 years of age. The number of overseas born females aged over 65 is expected to increase from 338 in 1981 to 560 in 2001, a growth of 66%.

While the overseas born community will undoubtedly be supported by their Australian born children, there is an increasing desire in old age by most people to adhere to the customs and culture of their origin. Also there is apparently a tendency to lose the fluency of the English language and understanding of Australian customs in the later years of life.

2.3 COMPETENCE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Consistent with the significant proportion of residents born in non-English speaking countries, bilingual people are much more numerous in Sunraysia (with 57.5% speaking English and at least one other language) than in most regional centres (36.4%), and even more than the Victorian average (53.2%). Similarly there are slightly more people speaking "no English", on average in Sunraysia. Table 2.3 summarises

TABLE 2.3

ENGLISH LANGUAGE USAGE OF OVERSEAS BORN
PERSONS (AGED 5 YEARS AND OVER)
1981

	Speak English Only		Speak No English	
	No.	%	No.	%
Mildura City	804	52.9	38	2.5
Mildura Shire	785	34.6	71	3.1
Wentworth Shire	252	46.6	11	2.0
Sunraysia	1,841	42.5	120	2.8
Non-Metropolitan Victoria	75,620	63.6	1,254	1.0
Victoria	504,448	46.8	18,100	2.1

SOURCE: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing 1981.

Generally, English language competency is greater with overseas born women than men.

2.4 EMPLOYMENT

Over half (58%) the employed residents born in non English speaking countries worked in Agriculture, suggesting that a large proportion are either employers or are self employed on farms. Table 2.4 summarises the occupations of Sunraysia's residents born in non English speaking countries.

TABLE 2.4

OCCUPATIONS OF SUNRAYSIA RESIDENTS BORN IN
NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING COUNTRIES,
1981

Occupation	% of the Employed Labour force of non-English Speaking Origin	
	Sunraysia	Melbourne Metropolitan Area
Professional	5	8
Administrative	3	5
Clerical	3	5
Sales	5	6
Farming	58	2
Transport	1	6
Trades	10	55
Service, Sport and Recreation	4	6
Inadequately Described or Not Stated	11	7
TOTAL	100	100

SOURCE: Street Ryan and Associates Pty. Ltd.
(1983), Migrant Resources in Sunraysia.

It is apparent that, workforce participation rates among Sunraysia's residents born in non English speaking countries is substantially lower than the general community. For instance in 1981, in Mildura City, 53.5% of all persons aged 15 years or more were either employed or seeking employment compared with 30.6% of the Yugoslav born community, 45.5% of the Greek born community and 49.0% of the Italian born community.

The difference between the total community's workforce participation rate and that of the overseas born population is even more pronounced among women, where

- * 40.3% of all women in Mildura City were members of the workforce in 1981
- * 26.5% of Yugoslav born women were members of the workforce
- * 29.6% of Greek born women were members of the workforce
- * 35.1% of Italian born women were members of the workforce.

3. RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF MULTICULTURAL WOMEN IN MILDURA CITY AND SHIRE

While there have been a number of studies undertaken on the characteristics and needs of the Sunraysia community in general, and the ethnic community in particular, none have concentrated specifically on women. The characteristics, attitudes and needs of overseas born women living in Sunraysia have not been canvassed and identified as a step in planning for effective service provision and assimilation of Sunraysia's multicultural society. As a result, the Multicultural Womens Association commissioned a survey of 215 women living in Mildura City and Shire who were born overseas.

The survey was conducted by personal interview from July 1986 to March 1987. This section of the report presents major findings of the survey.

3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

3.1.1 Country of Birth

All interviews reported were with women born in a non English speaking country# or, in the case of Canada, a non English speaking province. The vast majority (80%) originated in Western Europe, with a further 13% born in Eastern Europe, 3% in the Arabian Gulf area, and 3% in Asia. The most frequently represented countries of origin were

- * Italy, accounting for 27% of respondents compared with 39% of the total community in 1981 born in a non English speaking country

- * Turkey, accounting for 23% of respondents compared with 12% of the total community in 1981 born in a non English speaking country

A small number of Australia born women with parents of non English speaking origin were included in the survey, however their responses are not discussed in this analysis

- * Greece, accounting for 20% of respondents compared with 10% of the total community in 1981 born in a non English speaking country
- * Yugoslavia, accounting for 10% of respondents compared with 11% of the total community in 1981 born in a non English speaking country

Figure 3.1 presents details of country of origin of women interviewed.

In summary, survey results show that 81% of women interviewed were born in Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia. Most recently available Census results (1981) show that 72% of persons born in non English speaking countries and living in Mildura City and Shire originated in the same four nations. While there may be some discrepancy in "weighting" of country of origin, results of the survey of multi cultural women appear representative of the general overseas born community.

The main reasons given for immigrating to Mildura City and Shire were

- * family (nominated by 27% of women interviewed)
- * marriage (20%)
- * economic consideration (23%)
- * work (17%).

While family and marriage were the main reasons for immigration of Italian, Yugoslav and Greek born respondents, economic conditions and work was the main reason for nearly 85% of Turkish born families (and also significant for Greek born women (37%)).

Length of time spent in Australia by country of origin of women interviewed is summarised in Table 3.1.

FIGURE 3.1 NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING ORIGIN
WOMENS SURVEY

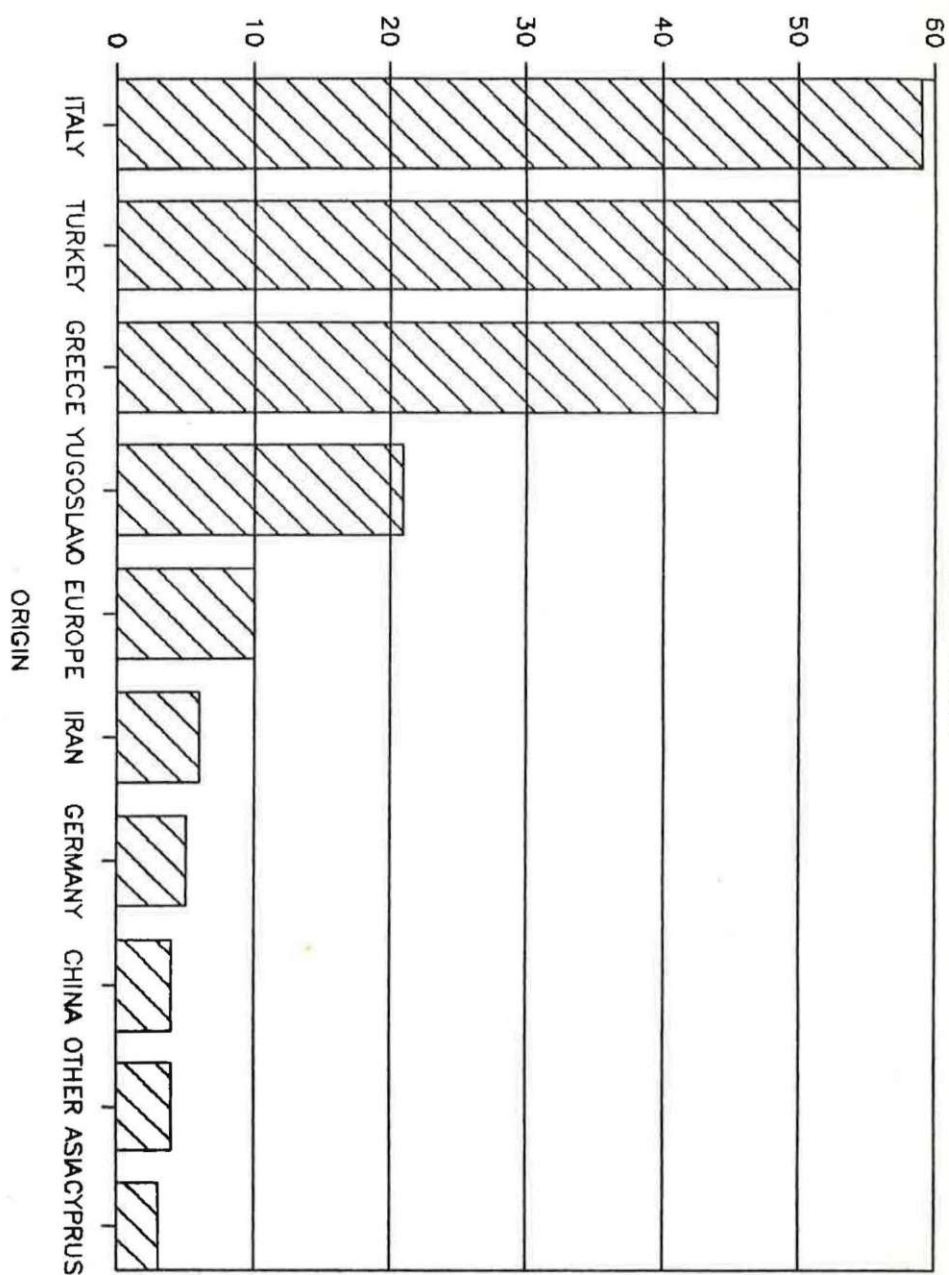


TABLE 3.1

TIME SPENT IN AUSTRALIA BY
COUNTRY OF BIRTH
% RESPONSE

	Italy	Turkey	Greece	Yugoslavia	Other	Total
Less than						
1 Year	-	8.0	-	-	14.6	4.7
1 - 2 Years	-	2.0	-	-	2.4	0.9
2 - 5 Years	-	-	2.3	-	9.8	2.4
5 - 10 Years	-	4.0	2.3	-	7.3	2.8
10 - 15 Years	3.4	42.0	16.0	-	4.9	14.9
15 - 20 Years	11.9	40.0	20.5	28.6	14.6	22.3
More than						
20 Years	84.7	4.0	58.9	71.4	46.4	52.0

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987),
Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

Table 3.1 clearly demonstrates the fact that women born in Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia have lived in Australia for a considerable period of time. In fact, 55% of these women have lived in Australia more than 20 years (77% of women born in Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia). Survey results suggest that Turkey is the only one of these four main nations to have had recent women immigrants to Sunraysia.

3.1.2 Age and Marital Status

The age structure of survey respondents by country of origin is presented in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2

AGE STRUCTURE OF MULTI CULTURAL WOMEN
IN MILDURA CITY AND SHIRE BY
COUNTRY OF BIRTH*

% RESPONSE

Age	Italy	Turkey	Greece	Yugoslavia	Other	Total Over- seas Born Women Sur- veyed	Total Comm- unity 1981
20 - 29	5.1	24.0	6.8	-	29.3	14.0	24.7
30 - 39	20.3	34.0	20.5	19.0	29.3	54.0	20.5
40 - 49	23.7	34.0	36.4	33.3	19.5	62.0	16.7
50 - 59	39.0	6.0	13.6	33.3	9.8	43.0	16.1
60 +	11.9	2.0	20.5	14.3	12.2	25.0	22.0

NOTES: * % response is calculated as a proportion of all persons aged 20 years or more

SOURCE: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1981), Census of Population and Housing
Multicultural Womens Association (1987),
Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

This table shows a vastly different age structure among the women surveyed to the total community in Mildura City and Shire. Over two thirds of the Multi cultural women surveyed (68%) were aged over 50 years compared with only 38% of the total community in 1981. Conversely, only 14% of the women interviewed were aged between 20 and 29 years compared with 25% of the general community in 1981.

Consistent with time spent in Australia the older age structure is evident amongst women of Italian and Yugoslav descent. Overseas born women who were not born in Italy, Turkey, Greece or Yugoslavia had a relatively younger age structure than the general community with only 22% aged over 50 years and 29% aged between 20 and 29 years.

Results of the age structure of respondents and time spent in Australia suggest that the major ethnic communities (Italian, Greek, Yugoslav and Turkish) in Sunraysia are relatively old and well established. New "migrants" moving to Sunraysia and, those who have spent a shorter period of time in Australia, tend to be of different ethnic origin, reflecting an increase in Asian and "other European" women in Sunraysia.

A comparison of marital status of the women interviewed and the total community in Mildura City and Shire is presented in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3

MARITAL STATUS OF OVERSEAS BORN WOMEN
AND TOTAL COMMUNITY IN MILDURA CITY
AND SHIRE
% RESPONSE

	Overseas Born Women Surveyed 1987	Total Community 1981*
Never Married	4.7	24.9
Now Married	83.7	62.5
Divorced	1.9	2.8
Separated	0.9	2.2
Widowed	8.4	7.6

Notes: * % response calculated as a proportion of all persons aged 15 years or more

SOURCE: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1982), Census of Population and Housing
Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

As with the age structure of the overseas born women interviewed, there is a major variation from the marital status characteristics of the total community. Almost 84% of the multi cultural women interviewed are married compared with just over 60% of all persons aged 15 years or more in Mildura City and Shire. Similarly, less than 5% of the Multi cultural women are single compared with around one quarter of the general community. Discrepancies in proportion of separated divorced and widowed persons are not nearly so large.

Results clearly demonstrate the dominance of "family environment" for women born in non English speaking countries. It provides an explanation for the lower workforce participation rate in this segment of the community.

3.1.3 Level of Education

As may be expected with the age structure and ethnic background of many of the women surveyed, the level of education attained is relatively low, as table 3.4 demonstrates.

TABLE 3.4

LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN % RESPONSE

	Italy	Turkey	Greece	Yugoslavia	Other	Total
None	11.9	4.0	11.4	4.8	4.9	7.9
Primary	67.8	74.0	56.8	52.4	4.9	53.5
Secondary	18.6	20.0	20.5	19.0	48.8	25.1
Tertiary or Further Education	1.7	2.0	9.0	23.8	41.5	13.0
Not Stated	-	-	2.3	-	-	0.5

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

Once again there is a major variation between women born in Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia, and other non English speaking countries. Table 3.4 shows that almost three quarters (74%) of women interviewed who were born in the four main nations have either no education or primary education only (79% of women from Italy and Turkey). Conversely, 90% of women interviewed who were born in other non English speaking countries had either secondary or tertiary level education.

The low level of education attainment of women interviewed who were born in Italy, Turkey, Greece or Yugoslavia is not surprising given the relatively old age structure of these women and customs of their land of birth. What is significant, however, is the diversity in characteristics between women born in these nations and other immigrants to Mildura City and Shire.

3.1.4 Skills in English

Slightly over half the women interviewed (52%) regarded their English speaking skills as "confident" or "excellent", while 18% could speak minimal or no English at all. Only 37% had ever attended English classes. Table 3.5 shows English speaking skills by country of origin.

TABLE 3.5

ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH % RESPONSE

	Italy	Turkey	Greece	Yugoslavia	Other	Total
Nil or						
Minimal	11.9	34.0	25.0	-	9.8	18.1
Hesitant	33.9	40.0	34.1	14.3	4.9	27.9
Confident	25.4	22.0	34.1	71.4	41.5	34.0
Excellent	28.8	2.0	6.8	14.3	39.0	18.6
Non						
Response	-	2.0	-	-	4.8	1.4

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

It shows that least English speaking skills are evident among Turkish and Greek born women; 74% and 59% respectively of whom could not speak English or were "hesitant" with the language. While almost half the Italian born women also had problems speaking English, skills among the Yugoslav and other overseas born women were quite good; 86% and 81% respectively indicating that they were confident or had excellent English skills.

English speaking skills by length of time spent in Australia is presented in Appendix A. Generally, results suggest that there is minimal improvement with longer periods of residence. For instance, 50% of those who have been in Australia for less than 2 years cannot speak English or are hesitant with the language. However, 52% of women interviewed who have been in Australia for 15 to 20 years, and 39% of those who have been here for longer than 20 years were also unable or hesitant with English speech. These results suggest that English speaking skills may depend more on the country of origin than on length of stay in Australia.

The relationship between English speaking skills and those who have attended classes is also spurious. For example

- * 54% of Italian born women have confident or excellent English skills but only 37% have attended classes
- * only 24% of Turkish born women have confident or excellent skills, and 44% have attended classes
- * 41% of Greek born women have confident or excellent English skills but only 27% have attended classes
- * 85% of Yugoslav born women have confident or excellent English skills, and only 14% have attended classes

- * 81% of other overseas born women have confident or excellent English skills and only 49% have attended classes.

The majority of respondents (59%) taught themselves English and/or were assisted by family and friends. Of those who attended classes, the largest percentage (46%) went to MADEC to learn English. A further 18% of women who attended classes learnt English in Melbourne and 10% in Sydney.

Only half the women who had limited or no skills in English were interested in attending English classes, most of these (40%) interested in a beginners class.

The pattern of skills in written English is similar to that of spoken English as tables A2 and A3 in Appendix A demonstrate. The major distinction is that skills were less evident in written English than in spoken English. Just 17% of women interviewed regarded their written English skills as either very good or excellent, while two thirds had little or no skills in written English. Once again, Turkish and Greek born women had relatively fewer written English skills than other overseas born women.

As with spoken English, there is no evidence to suggest that skills in written English improve with time spent in Australia. In fact, the reverse appears to be true, as over 65% of women who have lived in Australia for more than 15 years have little or no skills in written English compared with 58% of those who have lived in the country for less than 2 years, possibly due to the English speaking requirement of the current family migration program.

Perhaps one of the reasons why such a large proportion of respondents survive in Mildura City and Shire without skills in English is access to ethnic newspapers, magazines, books and movies.

Table 3.6 shows that access to these services is almost as great in the womens native language as it is in English, particularly for newspapers, especially Greek, Italian and Croation.

TABLE 3.6

ACCESS TO NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, BOOKS
AND MOVIES

% RESPONSE

	Access in Native Language	Access in English
Newspaper	66.0	78.1
Magazines	54.0	75.3
Books	55.3	70.2
Movies	56.7	83.3

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987),
Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

3.1.5 Employment Status

The majority of women interviewed (62%) were not members of the workforce, and were involved in full time home duties. The workforce participation rate suggested is 40.0% less than the estimated female workforce participation rate of 43%. Only 11% were employed in full time positions, a further 10% in part time positions and 10% of all women interviewed were unemployed. Of those who were employed the majority occupied unskilled positions. The most popular occupation categories were

- * horticultural workers
- * shop assistants
- * labourers.

Survey results suggest that the rate of unemployment amongst women in Mildura City and Shire who were born in non English speaking countries is 32.3%; i.e. 32.3% of women interviewed who wanted to work were unable to find employment. This rate is alarming and at least two and a half times the estimated rate for the total workforce in the area. It must be remembered however, that the rate is calculated on a small number of persons (65) but is consistent with other studies conducted in the Sunraysia area which indicate that unemployment rates are higher among the ethnic community, and higher for women.

Limited skills in spoken and written English and relatively low education standard may be contributing factors to the high rate of unemployment among women born in non English speaking countries and would certainly impact on the relatively narrow range of occupation categories available to these women.

.2 ATTITUDES TO SERVICES PROVIDED

3.2.1 General Community Services

Respondents were asked their opinion on a range of community services available. Results are summarised in Table 3.7. Generally, they suggest that of the women who need the services, most are satisfied. However, there are a number of features of Table 3.7 which are of note.

- * less than 6% of women interviewed were satisfied with the interpreter service provided
- * 14% were unaware that an interpreter service is available

TABLE 3.7

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES PROVIDED
% RESPONSE

	Satis- fied	Dissat- isfied	Indiff- erent	No Such Service	Have No Need	Non Res- ponse
Inter- preter Service	5.6	27.9	10.7	13.5	32.1	10.2
Doctor	31.6	27.4	6.0	7.0	21.9	6.0
Social Security	28.4	13.0	7.9	2.8	37.7	10.2
Solicitor	27.9	18.6	8.4	3.7	32.1	9.3
School	23.7	10.2	7.0	3.7	32.1	9.3
Multi Cultural Womens Newsletter/ Paper	26.5	6.5	12.1	5.1	14.4	35.3

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

* 7% of respondents believe they do not have access to a doctor

* of least one third of women interviewed have no need for Social Security, schools and solicitors.

The only service where dissatisfaction outweighed satisfaction was the interpreter service, with attitudes toward the service provided by doctors being relatively evenly split between satisfied and dissatisfied.

3.2.2 Child Care and Education

Bearing in mind the high proportion of women interviewed who are involved with full time home duties and the age structure of respondents, it is not surprising that 89% have children. The average number of children for those with families is 3.5; 1.7 boys and 1.8 girls.

- * 9% of women had children below pre school age
- * 9% of women had children at pre school
- * 28% of women had children at primary school
- * 35% had children at secondary school
- * 10% had children at a tertiary institution
- * 53% had adult children.

Relatively few women used babysitters (18%) and only 9% had used a playgroup. Around one third, on the other hand, had used a kindergarten and 20% use grandparents. Results suggest a heavy reliance on the immediate family in bringing up children with little use of outside services. The only exception is the health centre which was used by over half (52%) of the women interviewed.

Very high levels of satisfaction were expressed with primary school education. Of those who responded

- * 103 were pleased with the standard of education, 13 were displeased
- * 108 are pleased with their children's progress, 10 displeased
- * 103 are pleased with primary school facilities, 10 displeased.

The most common problems, among the minority of women who noted any concerns, were

- * discipline (9 responses)
- * language (4 responses)
- * culture (3 responses).

Level of satisfaction with post primary schooling although still high, is lower than primary with 77% of women with children at secondary school satisfied with educational standards and facilities.

Less than 7% of women interviewed indicated that their children experienced problems at secondary school

- * 6% had problems with communication
- * 5.1% with school administration
- * 2.3% with culture
- * 2.3% with transport
- * 4.7% with finance
- * 1.9% with other school issues.

The majority of women with children indicated that both their daughters and sons would be able to attend a university or college. 74% said their daughter would be able to attend a university or college despite the fact that 89% believe their daughter would have to leave the area and 81% said their sons would be able to attend a university or college. These results suggest quite a departure with tradition and a vast change in educational expectations. Most of those indicating their daughter and/or son would attend a university or college believe they will experience financial (59%) and accommodation (62%) problems, but few (16%) believed there would be cultural difficulties.

Throughout the survey, interest or need for additional services to be provided was canvassed. In summary, results show

- * 46% of women need an interpreter service
 - 80% of Turkish born women
 - 68% of Greek born women
 - 29% of Yugoslav born women
 - 24% of Italian born women
 - 23% of women born in other non English speaking countries
- * 24% of women interviewed would like to have someone visit them
- * 12% would like someone to read to them
- * 26% need someone to talk to them in their own language
- * 63% need family counselling services
- * 76% need a migrant resource centre
- * 78% need a legal aid service
- * 17.7% need more guidance with the future careers of their children
- * 18.6% need more career counselling.

It is clear from these results that greatest problems are experienced with communications with consequent social isolation. General comments noted that women from small ethnic groups, in particular, are very lonely. Others indicated that most women who live on blocks go to town once a week and their husband's wait for them in the car, again limiting the extent of social contact.

3.3 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

3.3.1 Practice of National Customs

The extent to which women interviewed maintain the customs of their country of birth is summarised in Table 3.8.

TABLE 3.8

PRACTICE OF NATIONAL CUSTOMS % RESPONSE

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Cooking	79.1	18.1	1.4
Working	24.2	20.5	31.2
Shopping	35.3	36.7	17.7
Medical	9.3	26.0	44.2
Social	47.0	38.6	7.4
Religious	50.2	28.4	16.3
Speak national language	79.1	19.1	0.5

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

Closest links are maintained in cooking and language with almost 80% of women interviewed indicating that they frequently cook "ethnic" food and speak their native language. The social customs and religious beliefs of their country of birth are practiced frequently by around half the women surveyed.

3.3.2 Interests and Hobbies

Past, present and future interests and hobbies of the women surveyed are presented in Appendix A. They indicate increasing involvement in a range of activities, particularly

- * cooking
- * gardening
- * movies and videos
- * homemaking
- * art and craft.

These activities generally can be undertaken alone and do not necessarily involve contact with other members of the community. It is interesting to note that least interest was expressed in discussion groups.

Almost half the women interviewed (48.8%) expressed interest in becoming members of the Multicultural Womens Association.

3.3.3 Membership of Clubs / Community Groups

Only a minority of the women interviewed were involved in clubs or community group.

- * 23% were involved in clubs
- * 29% were involved with community groups
- * 14% were involved in volunteer groups
- * 12% were involved in sport
- * 38% were involved in a religious group.

These results again support the premise that relatively few Multicultural Women are involved in activities or groups which bring them in contact with other members of the community, particularly those from different ethnic backgrounds. At least a quarter or more of the women interviewed, on the other hand, indicated that they would like to learn new skills, continue their education or join a group suggesting a preparedness to broaden their community involvement and interests.

Another indication of attempts made by women surveyed to become involved in the general community and a measure of their isolation is the extent to which they watched current affairs programs

- * 39% of women watched the T.V. news "a lot" and 38% an average amount
- * 22% watched T.V. current affairs programs a lot and 35% an average amount
- * 25% watch T.V. movies a lot and 40% an average amount
- * 21% watch general T.V. shows a lot and 33% an average amount
- * 28% watch videos a lot and 23% an average amount.

Overall, results suggest considerable interest in a range of activities but not necessarily involvement in programs or activities that bring women in contact with "mixed" groups. The extent to which T.V. news and currents affairs programs are watched indicates a preparedness to be involved in events in the community (or at least to be aware of them) but this does not seem to be converted into actual physical involvement.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE PROVISION

4.1 OVERVIEW OF MULTICULTURAL WOMEN IN SUNRAYSLIA

The main features to emerge from the survey and other studies conducted in the area are

- * over three quarters of women in Sunraysia who were born in non English speaking countries are from Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia
- * the age structure of women born in non English speaking countries is relatively older than the general community's age structure
- * the level of education attainment is particularly low among women from Eastern Europe with the majority of overseas born women (60%) having only primary level or no formal education
- * around three quarters of women living in Sunraysia who were born in non English speaking countries have lived in Australia for more than 15 years
- * there are relatively few new migrants to Sunraysia from Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia
- * almost half the women born in non English speaking countries had hesitant or no English speaking skills
- * fewer women born in Turkey and Greece were able to speak English (around two thirds of these women could not speak English or were hesitant)
- * skills in written English were more scarce than in spoken English, particularly amongst women born in Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia
- * there is little evidence to suggest that skills in written and spoken English improve with length of time spent in Australia

- * over 80% of women born in non English speaking countries are married compared with only 63% of the total community aged 15 years or more
- * workforce participation among women born in non English speaking countries is lower than among women in Sunraysia generally
- * the rate of unemployment among women born in non English speaking countries is substantially higher than the rate for women in Sunraysia generally, and the rate for women is substantially higher than the rate for men
- * of the multi cultural women employed, the vast majority work in unskilled positions
- * general dissatisfaction was expressed with the standard of interpreter services available, particularly among Turkish born women
- * around half the women born in non English speaking countries need an interpreter service; 80% of those born in Turkey need the service
- * a number of women indicated that they were lonely and would like some "personal contact" services such as someone to visit them, read to them and speak to them in their own language
- * most maintain national cooking, language and religious customs
- * there appears a general preparedness to participate in the general community but limited physical involvement.

4.2 IMPLICATIONS

There are three features which may have a major impact on demand for service in Sunraysia. These are

- * the variation in characteristics between women born in the four main countries (Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia) and those born in other non English speaking countries
- * the age structure of women born in non English speaking countries
- * low level of education and English language skills.

Clearly, women born in Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia comprise the bulk of Sunraysia's Multi cultural community and represent the greatest demand for services. The danger is that the needs of smaller ethnic groups will be overlooked. Over time, the dominance of the four main nations will decline as most new and younger immigrants to Sunraysia come from other countries.

Further, the size of the Italian, Greek, Turkish and Yugoslav communities means that, in many instances, their own communities are able to provide the vital support and social contact needed. This is not necessarily the case with smaller ethnic groups.

On the other hand, the age of women born in Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia suggests that demand for a range of domestic support services is likely to intensify over the short to medium term. In many instances, these services may be provided by family members but in others, access to general community services will be necessary. This places particular pressure on the need for effective means of transportation and communication. Existing interpreter services are, apparently, not meeting the needs of the community, and most women expressed the desire for information about the full range of commercial and community services to be made available to their native language.

The problems with lack of English language skills is severe and compounded by the relatively small proportion of women interested in learning English. Oral and written skills are fundamental to social contact, confidence and employment opportunities. Every effort must be made to find an effective and attractive way of improving the level of English language skills. It is a major barrier to social assimilation and, in many instances, financial security. Encouragingly, survey results suggest that the next generation will not have the same language problems. This does not, however, lessen the importance of improving language skills of the current generation of overseas born women.

Employment opportunities appear very limited for women born in non English speaking countries. Despite the fact that they have a lower workforce participation rate, their rate of unemployment is substantially higher than the general rate of unemployment for women, and the range of occupations employed Multi cultural women occupy is extremely limited. Access to skill up grading and retraining services also appears to be a fundamental need of women born in non English speaking countries.

While there is no conclusive evidence from results of the survey, it appears that many of the existing support services for "migrants" in Sunraysia are not reaching their target audience. The women surveyed as part of this study indicated their **willingness to become involved** with community groups and activities but few were involved. Lack of English language skills is perhaps the major contributing factor to lack of involvement in general community activities. Unless this can be overcome, many "isolated" communities will exist within Sunraysia and it will be particularly difficult to improve employment prospects.

FURTHER TABLES OF RESULTS

TABLE A1

ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL BY LENGTH
OF TIME IN AUSTRALIA

% RESPONSE

	Nil or Minimal	Hesitant	Confident	Excellent
Less than 1 Year	40.0	10.0	40.0	10.0
1 - 2 Years	50.0	-	50.0	-
2 - 5 Years	20.0	20.0	40.0	20.0
5 - 10 Years	-	50.0	50.0	-
10 - 15 Years	34.4	34.4	21.9	9.3
15 - 20 Years	18.8	33.3	35.4	12.5
More than 20 Years	14.3	25.0	34.8	25.9

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a
Survey of Overseas Born Women

TABLE A2

ENGLISH WRITING SKILL BY
COUNTRY OF BIRTH

% RESPONSE

	Italy	Turkey	Greece	Yugoslavia	Other	Total
None	40.7	52.0	59.1	28.6	4.9	39.1
Little	20.3	38.0	20.5	47.6	19.5	27.0
Good	22.0	4.0	13.6	14.3	26.8	16.3
Very Good	3.4	2.0	2.3	9.5	12.2	5.1
Excellent	13.6	2.0	4.5	-	34.1	11.6
Non Response	-	2.0	-	-	2.4	1.0

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

TABLE A3

ENGLISH WRITING SKILL BY
LENGTH OF TIME IN SUNRAYSIA

% RESPONSE

	None	Little	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Less than 1 Year	20.0	40.0	20.0	10.0	10.0
1 - 2 Years	-	50.0	50.0	-	-
2 - 5 Years	20.0	-	60.0	-	20.0
5 - 10 Years	16.7	50.0	33.0	-	-
10 - 15 Years	50.0	34.4	6.3	-	9.3
15 - 20 Years	45.8	22.9	14.6	10.4	6.3
More than 20 Years	39.2	25.0	16.1	4.5	15.2

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a
Survey of Overseas Born Women

TABLE A4

METHOD OF TRAVEL TO SERVICES

% RESPONSE

	Church	School	Shopp- ing	Visiting Friends	Doctor	Other
Bus	1.4	0.5	3.3	1.9	2.8	-
Taxi	0.5	21.9	0.5	0.5	0.5	-
Car as Driver	32.6	10.7	48.4	45.1	46.5	10.7
Car as Passenger	25.1	0.5	40.9	46.5	43.7	3.7
Motorbike	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.9	-
Bicycle	4.7	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	-
Walk	23.7	34.4	2.8	1.9	2.3	0.5
Don't Go	11.6	30.2	1.4	1.4	0.5	-

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women

TABLE A5

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

% RESPONSE

	Past	Present	Future
Art and Craft	19.1	27.4	1.9
Cooking	3.7	54.0	2.8
Reading and Writing	14.0	20.5	4.2
Singing and Acting	12.0	7.4	0.9
Gardening	6.5	41.4	2.8
Sport	16.7	3.7	4.2
Homemaking	8.8	35.3	6.0
Movies and Videos	7.0	35.3	2.8
Discussion Groups	7.0	14.4	8.4

SOURCE: Multicultural Womens Association (1987), Results of a Survey of Overseas Born Women
