

'Blended voices' in the library

'When we left Croatia my husband packed his cabinet making tools and I filled my bags with books...' (Nada, *Blended voices*, p39)

As part of Australian Library and Information Week 2001, Kingston Information and Library Service held a successful public event, featuring contributors to the recently published book: *Blended voices: Kingston residents tell their stories of migration*.

Demographically, it would seem that Kingston is fairly similar to the rest of Melbourne, however there are distinct areas of ethnic diversity within the municipality. In recognition of this diversity, the City of Kingston sponsored and produced a book, and accompanying CD-ROM, featuring the stories of thirty-nine migrants who live in the communities of Clarinda, Oakleigh South, and Clayton South. The commonwealth government, as part of the Centenary of Federation celebrations, also contributed to the project.

The men and women featured in the stories come from twenty-four different countries, and migrated to Australia between 1950 and 2000. Some came to Australia to re-unite with family members, some came as refugees, others came simply for a chance at life on the other side of the world. The stories in the book are individual and personal, united by the common theme of finding a voice in a new country.

On Thursday 17 May, at Clarinda Library, five people who were featured



Assembled guests at Clarinda Library, in Melbourne on Thursday 17 May, attending an Australian Library and Information Week function featuring readings and stories from *Blended voices: Kingston residents tell their stories of migration*.

in the *Blended voices* book, shared their stories with an enthusiastic audience. The audience were laughing, at times, as the storytellers recalled the more absurd tales of learning English; and at other times were near to tears, as people recounted stories of imprisonment and torture, or were simply overwhelmed with emotion at the thought of their homelands.

Staff at Kingston Information and Library Service felt that it was particularly appropriate to feature this book and its

contributors during Library and Information Week, because it is a book that celebrates diversity — and public libraries have been providing diverse services to their communities for many years.

Blended voices sells for \$15.00, and is available from The City of Kingston, and the Parkdale and Clarinda Branches of the Kingston Information and Library Service, phone 03 9580 4377.

Kathie Olden

Breakfast celebrations...

Thirty Canberra library technicians and supporters celebrated National Library Technicians Day with breakfast at the Brindabella Restaurant, Parkroyal. In traditional technician fashion which included much chatting, laughter, catching up and networking, everyone enjoyed the breakfast fare including sweet rolls, coffee, fruits, cereals and hot foods before setting off to work.

Guests included Jennefer Nicholson and Marie Murphy from ALIA National Office, representatives from ACT Branch Council and the Canberra Institute of Technology library studies staff and students. Beryl Pedvin, library technician from the University of Canberra Library entertained the group with a repeat performance of her poetry reading from our last year's breakfast. Beryl finished her act by bursting into song to the delight of the breakfasters.

Positive comments from those present suggest that this celebration will be even bigger next year.

Beth Clary, president ALIA Library Technicians (ACT)



Margaret Drury and Mary Gosling catch up during the ACT Library Technicians celebrations marking National Library Technicians Day held during Library and Information Week 2001