

## Pine Rivers Workshop – 14 May 2013

Margaret Ridley

Tuesday 14 May was bleak and cold. The workshop at the Pine Rivers Heritage Museum was held in a cosy meeting room named after the legendary oral historian Leith Barter. While it was grey and uninviting outside, Suzanne Mulligan facilitated a workshop that was in distinct contrast to the weather for its warmth and inclusiveness. I attended to give support which I enjoyed thoroughly.

Only one of the six participants had any significant experience in oral history. Suzanne led them from a brief history of oral history to the steps in an oral history project with due acknowledgement to Ariella Van Luyn and Helen Klæbe.

Each of the participants spoke of who they were and why they were attending. Dianne and Roger Hendley are a retired couple who are involved with the Redcliffe and District Family History Group. Currently, they are working on a project for the



Genealogical Society of Queensland to undertake research about the names of World War I soldiers on Honour Boards and memorials in their area. Liz Wielemaker felt that in retirement that she had a responsibility to record her family history “properly” particularly as she was about to return to her native Scotland. Teena Saulo is a documentary photographer who has just completed two oral history

projects in two indigenous communities in south-east Asia. See her website <http://sampleworks.carbonmade.com/>. She was very keen to learn more about how to conduct oral history projects with a particular focus on cultural sensitivity. William Hamilton was encouraged to attend the workshop by his wife. A written family history had been done for his Scottish family and Wil found it fascinating. He thought having some skills in oral history interviewing would be useful in researching his English heritage. Marion Neish, now retired, had done some interviewing and wanted to gain some further knowledge.

The most poignant activity during the day was when participants talked about the objects they had brought with them that were redolent with memory. Each spoke with such emotion and nostalgia. I thought it was a very effective exercise to prepare for the following interviewing activity.



The Moreton Bay Regional Council through the Museum added to the success of the day by providing fantastic facilities and catering. Carly Hughes, Museum Curator, and David Knoble from the Council gave us wonderful support particularly with the activities.

The feedback from the participants confirmed my experience of the day. The workshop was engaging, informative and of lasting value.