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Lao

– *Written by Somphou Oudomvilay* –

The size of New Zealand, Laos is a land-locked country bordered on the north by China and Myanmar, on the south by Cambodia, on the east by Vietnam and on the West by Thailand – with a population of about six million. The Kingdom of Laos was also known as the Kingdom of a Million Elephants because of its large unspoiled thick rain forest, which was supposed to be the home of the most populous herd of pachyderms in Southeast Asia. The actual Lao borders were established in 1893 when Thailand ceded part of the Lao territories, mostly on the left bank of the Mekong River, to become a protectorate of the French Authorities. After a half-century of colonial administration France agreed to give Independence to Laos. The withdrawal of the United States after the fall of South Vietnam signalled a political change in the three States of former Indochina. After the communist takeover in 1975, the 600 year-old Lao Kingdom became the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The old red Lao flag with three white elephants heads, symbolising the union of the three Lao Principalities unified to form the Kingdom, was changed to a new flag with two red strips bordering a blue one in the middle with a white moon in the centre.

Exodus of Lao refugees

Before 1975, Lao peoples had only once before moved en masse to other countries, when in 1823, defeated in a war with Thailand, most of the population of Laos had been forced to settle on the right bank side territories of the Mekong river as prisoners-of-war. After the change of regime in 1975, with the policy of forced socialisation and the attendant fear of arrest and being sent to a political re-education camp, more than four hundred thousand people or one in ten of the population fled the country, seeking refuge in Thailand before applying to settle in Western countries, including Australia and New Zealand, under the United Nations Refugee Program. In 1975 there were no Lao people living in Australia apart from a small number of students under the Colombo Plan and some few government employees undertaking short in-service training programs. From 1976 Australia started to accept Lao people as refugees – alongside people from Vietnam and Cambodia. Nevertheless, when compared to other refugees from Indochina, Lao people re-settling in Australia are still small in number.

Settlement in Queensland

From the beginning Lao people were attracted to the State of Queensland by the relatively hot climate and its vegetation with trees and fruits similar to those of Laos. However because of the scarcity of factories many preferred to settle in more industrialised states. The first groups of Lao families arrived in Queensland in 1977 and lived temporarily in the old military compound in the suburb of Wacol, in Brisbane. Prior to 1975 in Laos the medium of instruction in secondary education was French. So, in most cases, Lao people didn't speak English but French and many had to undertake an intensive course in English before looking for jobs. Fortunately the area surrounding Wacol was an industrial estate with many factories. Here Lao people with limited English could easily find a job and in the few years which followed the Lao became the majority of the process workers in some factories. Some hardworking Lao became leading hands and supervisors. After a couple years most of them were in a position of owning cars and houses, the two things most necessary for integrating easily into the everyday Australian way of life. The area including Goodna, Gailes, Bellbird Park, Camira, Springfield and Redbank Plains has become today the urban region with the highest density of Lao residents.

With more arrivals, Lao people began to settle in the Woodridge area surrounding Logan City, and this soon became the second largest area of Lao population. The third Lao settlement in terms of population is in North Queensland, around Cairns and Innisfail, with most settlers being ethnic Hmong. According to the Australia Bureau of Statistics census of 2006 some 20,680 Lao lived in Australia. About half of them lived in Sydney's west, mainly in Fairfield and Cabramatta, and there were 2,000 in Queensland including the Hmong people. Though having fled from Laos the Hmong are a Lao ethnic group but prefer to be known as Hmong Australians, American Hmong or French Hmong once they attain their new citizenship. The first large Hmong group of people arrived in Tasmania in 1980 - about 60 families. Most of them moved to North Queensland in 1988 and in 1992 the total number of Hmong people was about 650 in the area, two-thirds living in Cairns and one third in Innisfail. By extrapolation—and using the estimation

of the Australia Bureau of Statistics with around 1.5 per cent of growth per year—the total Lao population in Queensland should now be around 2,500, most of them living in the suburbs of Ipswich and Brisbane, for a total Lao population of about 25,000 in Australia.

Popular activities of the Lao people in Queensland

When Lao people fled their homeland they lost everything: homes, properties and their most valuable possession, their Lao identity and citizenship. Therefore in their new adopted country, in order to maintain and preserve something of their identity, the first generation has always tried its best to keep their customs and traditions alive.

One of the traditional ceremonies most enjoyed by Lao Australians has been the popular Baci Soukhouane, social gatherings organised at weekends or during holiday breaks where every acquaintance, friend and relative is invited to take part. These gatherings include welcoming a relative or visitor, regardless of social status, from the poorest citizen to the highest dignitary in business or in government, to the King, the Prime Minister or the President. The ceremony is also held for every person who has recovered from an illness, or has returned from a trip, or is departing for a long voyage. The birth of a baby is also celebrated, or passing an exam, or being promoted in the public service. In brief, the celebration is for every important circumstance during the life of a person, and is therefore a frequent event in Lao social life. The most important Baci Soukhouane is the one organised to officially recognise a marriage and its moral value is greater than the legal commitment by an official celebrant. This ritual ceremony, unique to Lao people, practiced since time immemorial still follows the same sequence and pattern. A magnificent flower arrangement usually sits in a beautiful silver vase and is placed in the middle of the gathering, and the ceremony is directed and presided over by a senior elder of the community - uttering a traditional prayer and chant, supported and approved by the people attending the event. At the end of the ceremony, white cotton strings are tied around the wrists of both arms of the person for whom the event is organised—and in the case of a wedding—of the

new couple. After this ritual of white-string-banding, by tradition the couple are considered husband and wife. While banding these white strings each guest should make for them a wish, usually for good fortune and good health and a long life. At the conclusion of the ceremony of Baci Soukhouane there is always a lavish feast of varieties of food and drink. A Lao band entertains the guests and the celebration can continue for many hours.

Lao religious ceremonies

Laos was converted to Buddhism in the fourteenth century when it became the state religion under King Fagum, the first ruler to unify the Three Lao Principalities into one Lao Kingdom. Lao Buddhism follows the Theravada—a branch of Buddhism called the School of the Elders or Small Vehicle—along with Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand. The second branch is the Mahayana or Grand Vehicle – followed in Tibet, China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Singapore and Taiwan. In any new settlement the first and most urgent task of any community leader would be to find a Monk and prepare a Buddhist Temple for worship. The presence of the Monk is necessary as well as the place to serve as a temple. The Monk is the only person qualified to perform different religious ceremonies, to minister to and pray for a sick person to cure the illness and in particular to pray for the soul of a deceased person that it finds peace in Paradise. A funeral ceremony without a Monk is unthinkable. The Monk has to live permanently inside the Temple and in Laos it is a common practice to have from one to several Buddhist Temples in one village. In larger cities you can expect to see a dozen Buddhist Temples or even more. Before the French administration there was no public education: the Temple served as a school with the Monks as teachers. On many occasion the Temple might also be used by the poor as shelter. Different ritual ceremonies to commemorate the teachings of Buddha and the different important events that happened to Him when He was alive are celebrated at the Temple and, in principle, on every full moon of the Buddhism calendar. At least once in his life, a good Lao son should at least become a Monk for short period, before he gets married or when his father or mother pass away. Without a son or a male relative or a Monk leading his coffin during the procession of a funeral the deceased will never reach

Paradise. Paradise is the ultimate dream of every Lao person. The Lao Buddhist Temple in Brisbane was established first in Redbank Plains in 1989 and then moved to Bellbird Park few years later – to a permanent Temple location on a property of a hectare. The Temple—with a traditional designed brick fence—now has a residence suitable to accommodate up to a dozen Monks – and a Worship Hall with seating capacity for about 300 members is under construction and scheduled to be finished sometime in 2015.

Integration and participation

When settling into a new country Lao people are aware of the necessity of integrating into a new society by adopting the mainstream customs and traditions of that country. At the beginning the linguistic barrier poses some difficulties. By forging close relationships in the factory work-place and by encouraging Lao children to develop friendships at school, the Lao community was able to build good relations with Australians. In a very short period of time newly arrived Lao people were also able to extend their friendship during weekend family barbecues. The Lao felt they were accepted and soon there were inter-marriages with Australians, which have now become more frequent. The Lao community has organised many cultural exhibitions, with emphasis on their dance and music. It participated with considerable success at Expo 88, notably at the opening and the closing ceremonies. On many occasions Australian dignitaries—MPs, mayors and councillors—have visited the Lao Buddhist Temple at 33–34 Harris Street in Bellbird Park. The Temple often serves as a welcoming venue when government representatives wish to communicate with the Lao people during traditional gatherings. During such meetings the Lao people are given information relating to a variety of matters such as health, welfare and preparation for retirement. In the event of Australian natural disasters such as bush-fires or floods, the Temple also serves as a collection centre of funds to be given to the Red Cross. In brief, the Temple is a place of worship and serves as community centre for every Lao. Being a peaceful and grateful people, Lao people have experienced no difficulties integrating into Australian society.

Community organisations

In order to help each other individually and to give the Lao people a sense of belonging to a group, there are currently three registered Lao associations. Through these associations the Lao people can also liaise with other organisations, including government. The Lao Brisbane Association Inc. has about 145 members; the Lao Buddhist Temple Society Inc. has 500 members as any Lao person, regardless of his or her age, attending the religious ceremonies, is considered as members. The third Lao association, the Far North Queensland Lao Association has about 100 members. There is an unofficial Lao Women's Association in Brisbane with about 125 families as members. This unofficial organisation is nevertheless very active in dealing with the preparations of the Baci Soukhouane, the teaching of Lao customs and traditions to the younger generation, the ritual preparation for religious ceremonies at the Temple and the counselling and the provision of financial aid in case of illness or death among family members. In conclusion, Lao people are looking towards the future with confidence. Having had the privilege of receiving an Australian education, the younger generation has integrated with ease with the Australian mainstream society so that they can participate in and contribute to the development of this state and nation like other Australians.

Postscript

Although our human family is different in languages, customs and traditions we have to live in the same world. The more humankind advances in science and technology the more we realise our need for collaboration with each other to sustain this progress. The Lao are thankful to Australia for giving us refuge and we are grateful to the government at the state as well as at the federal level for reaffirming the importance of cultural diversity and Australian multiculturalism. During the settlement process of migrants and refugees, by also respecting and according importance to different cultures, Queensland and Australia have made the migrants feel comfortable as, in addition to providing practical assistance with finding jobs and housing, multicultural

policies also protect the moral and spiritual values of the newcomers. New settlers arrive with skills, talent and motivation for work, and these can help the entire nation to move forward. We want to share some of our lifestyle with Australians. Our culinary traditions and the many Asian restaurants and shops selling Asian food have become part of the Australian urban landscape and way of life, a testimony to Australian multiculturalism, which has also been widely embraced by the Australian mainstream population. Government is on the right path when promoting multiculturalism as a means of integrating the people of a pluralist society into a cohesive, harmonious and productive nation.

AUTHOR PROFILE

OUDOMVILAY, Somphou has a PhD from the University of Paris, France. He served as a Member of Parliament and Cabinet member of the Royal Lao Government. In Australia he was a senior adviser to the Lao Associations in New South Wales and a senior adviser to the Lao Brisbane Association and to the Lao Buddhist Temple Society (Brisbane).

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Latin Americans

– *Written by Libardo Saavedra Rivera* –

"They must be in a cauldron in that country", (she sighs) "Why do you say that?" her friend asks, to which she answers: "Because I've met several Latin Americans who want to stay here to live."

One can appreciate the difficult political or economic situation prevailing in less fortunate countries near and far by merely walking around the streets of prosperous and stable developed countries. For some, these may be difficult situations, but for others they turn into opportunities to reach 'paradise'.

This has occurred in Australia since 1972, when the Socialist president, Salvador Allende was ousted and thousands of Chileans fled from military dictatorship. Argentineans went through something similar when fleeing from their military regimes as well as the Spaniards who fled from the dictator Francisco Franco in the 60s. Furthermore, Salvadorans started arriving in Australia in the 80s due to a civil war between the left and right political factions in their country.

It is the accent when speaking English that is the first indicator of being an Hispanic migrant in Australia (or coming from other non-English speaking countries); one only needs to utter a couple of words before being identified as a migrant to Australia, even if one's interlocutor cannot pinpoint exactly where you're from.

The children of Latin American migrants born in the new country are often encouraged not to continue using Spanish, in the belief that it will help them to integrate more easily into the society that welcomed them. Some parents even think that their children may get confused if they hear two languages at home. 'Big mistake!' – the brain of a child is capable of absorbing several languages simultaneously – any psychologist will confirm this principle.

Learning several languages while at school will provide children with a greater capacity to socialise, which, by the time they reach adult age, will result in a better ability to deliver as a professional or tradesperson. It is of great added educational value for students to speak two or three languages, especially when entering the race to gain employment. Bilingual or trilingual jobseekers will have a higher probability to find a job.

Argentineans are not the only Hispanics using the informal 'vos' – in other words, using the term 'vos', instead of 'tú' or 'usted' as a second person singular pronoun. Uruguayans, Peruvians, Colombians and Salvadorans use it, but only in the singular form because they do not use the plural form 'vosotros' to address a group, as it is mostly used by older Spaniards.

Despite the fact that there are twenty countries in the American continent where Spanish is spoken, each country has its own colloquial expressions that are understood only by local communities. This is not surprising, as even within Spain (the 'conquering' country in 1492) people use different idioms and even different languages to refer to the same things. However, a well-educated Spanish speaker will be able to communicate with other Spanish speakers despite their place of origin. Besides Spanish, the Catalanian, Basque, Galician and Valencian languages are spoken in Spain.

On arrival in America these languages were mixed with Castilian Spanish, which was also enriched with expressions and intonations derived from 'Indigenous and Negro' languages, both populations being forced to learn Castilian and abandon their native languages and roots. At present there is only one Latin American country, officially bilingual Paraguay, where people also speak the Indigenous language, Guaraní whose romantic and melodic intonation is heard everywhere.

"They are fierce in their meat-eating" – the Argentineans say about the Uruguayans, who are now the largest producers and consumers of beef in the south of the continent. The same exclamation of surprise could be used for Cubans, alluding to them as 'fierce' in their 'caraota' eating, this being a smaller and more affordable bean than the common one and is consumed every day throughout all the Caribbean islands and Venezuela. Preference for this type of bean is not shared by other countries in South America with the same levels of poverty.

In Queensland, Latin Americans interact at parties celebrating their former home country's independence or the historic formation of their country of origin. These parties usually relate only to one country and its community in Queensland. These events showcase national folklore and food from the diverse

participating nations. Central American countries and Mexico showcase food based on corn, such as empanadas (pasties), arepas (corn meal rolls), tortillas (corn meal flat bread), pupusas (cheese, bean or mince-filled tortillas), whereas the countries from the south of the continent use wheat flour to make empanadas, cakes and other breads. In South America as well as in Central and North America green plantain is consumed after deep frying and in soups. Queensland also grows bananas, but they are not frequently used for cooking, but are eaten as a fruit. There is also a fruit that is used as a vegetable, called palta (avocado) by Chileans, and it is very abundant in Queensland and throughout Australia; avocado is used as a basic ingredient for salads.

In 2011 there were 15,605 overseas-born Hispanics in Queensland, 8,095 females and 7,510 males, most of who live in Brisbane. In Queensland 9.8 per cent of the population (or 423,838) speak a language other than English at home; this per centage is considerably lower when compared with New South Wales and Victoria where the per centage of bilingual and trilingual people represents over 22 per cent of the population. The preservation of the migrants' cultural riches needs to be promoted in the home and through the churches and other institutions and places where human values are fostered.

During the first three centuries of colonisation, despite the fact that Hispanics are descendants of the Spanish that lived in the European Peninsula, the 'bloodlines' of the Spanish colonisers began to decline in the New World, as they merged with other ethnicities, such as the Indigenous Indian people, the Black people, and others from the Iberian Peninsula and other parts of Europe. With the passage of time, the advent of modernity and the cultural complexities of the different nations that make up the Hispanic group, as well as the 'dilution' of kinship links, the result is that the only common tangible and cultural legacies that exist nowadays are observed in the architecture of the country and the language of the New World.

At present, the differences between Hispanics and the Portuguese-speaking Brazilians are even greater as there were never common elements with them to start with, neither in architecture nor linguistically speaking. With them, nevertheless, Hispanics share other common cultural aspects, such as the love of football, carnivals, music and partying.

Before 2000 there was little evidence of an African-Hispanic community presence in Brisbane as is observed today after the first decade of the new century. Africans were taken to the New World as slaves from 1492 onwards to do domestic work or to undertake mining and agricultural tasks.

"You don't look Latin American", a Hindi lady remarked to my black Colombian friend.

"Why do you say that?" he replied, in response to such categorical value judgment where ethnic origin is so erroneously mixed with national origins.

"Black people are from Africa", she replied.

"Yes, but my ancestors also arrived in Colombia five centuries ago from Africa", [he noted].

This happened towards the end of the fifteenth century, when the Spanish discovered these new lands far from Europe, which in the beginning was called New World, but later America. The Spanish endeavoured to give every place a name and founded cities whose names were reminiscent of those in the Iberian Peninsula.

The Spanish first conquered the Caribbean Islands and followed on to Central America and Mexico, where the Aztec nation had built a great civilisation. This is where the Spanish first came across chocolate, *chocolatl*, by its original name in the Nahuatl language, which they took to Europe and assigned to it aphrodisiac virtues. They also banned its consumption by the black population, Indians, *Mestizos* (mixed blood Indians) and *Mulatos* (mixed blood blacks) in America by order of the tribunals of the Holy Inquisition, and declared chocolate an enemy of Christian morality. Although no longer condemned by churches, chocolate is said to retain this attribute by lovers and romantic partners. The Catholic Church continues to play a significant role in the lives of Latin Americans.

The Africans were initially sold to the *encomenderos* (owners of big expanses of land), who would re-sell some of them. African people in Latin America preserved and lived their own culture and their own ways of praying, dancing and cooking. For example, they took pumpkin, which they called *zapallo*—the Indian population called it *ahuyama*—and used it in a dish where they cooked and ground it and mixed it with a sauce made up of tomato and many other spices. They called this puree *zamba* and it is still served with rice nowadays.

From the Mexican Aztecs the Spaniards also learnt to grow corn and the diversity of ways to prepare it for consumption, for example, tortillas, arepas or pupusas, which are names used to refer to a kneaded handful of corn meal flattened and grilled over a fire or an adobe plank.

Spaniards took possession of American land, creating Viceroyalties on them to facilitate their management. At the southern end of the continent they established the Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata, where Argentina and Chile are located at present. Going further north they founded the Viceroyalty of Peru, under the spiritual protection of the Madonna of Santa Rosa. It spanned from Bolivia to Venezuela. Further north they established the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada, where Colombia is now situated, where single women who thought marriage was eluding them would pray to Saint Anthony saying: "Please, Lord, give me a husband, no matter whether he's old, one-armed or weak". Further north they established the Viceroyalty of New Spain, which included the Caribbean Islands, Central America, Mexico and the southern United States, where the Madonna of Guadalupe inspires both sanctuaries and miracles.

Through these three Viceroyalties the Spaniards tried to control the entire continent. The San Agustin Foundation (in what is now Florida) marked in 1565 the start of the Hispanic colonisation within the current borders of the United States. This means that Spanish started to be spoken in the United States before English was spoken in Australia, and that Spanglish has robust roots that extend all the way back to the sixteenth century. There are now 54 million Hispanics in the United States. In early 2014 the Hispanic community of California displaced the Whites as the largest community in the most populous State of the United States and a similar demographic shift is likely to occur in Florida and Texas.

Languages most spoken in Queensland, after English:

01	Mandarin	38,117
02	Cantonese	22,258
03	Vietnamese	21,852
04	Italian	21,711
05	German	16,352
06	Spanish	15,602
07	Hindi	13,188

AUTHOR PROFILE

RIVERA, Libardo Saavedra is a Colombian-Australian anthropologist writing in Spanish. Some of his publications have been translated into English. He published in Brisbane Hispanic communities. An anthropological view from Australia (Las comunidades hispanas. Una mirada antropológica desde Australia). He is the author of four books and many of his articles were published in Colombian Social Science and Education journals. He was an advisor to the Department of Education in Colombia. Libardo arrived in Australia in the year 2000 seeking asylum from the difficult and violent situations his country experienced, and with his family he found a new life as a migrant settler in Queensland. After overcoming several brain haemorrhages he continues to write about cultural expressions and experiences of Hispanic communities.

(Libardo's article Latin Americans was translated into English by National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited conference interpreter/translator and educator Patricia Avila, formerly of El Salvador.)

Latvians

– *Written by Arnis Sikсна* –

Where we came from

Latvia is a northern European country, about the size of Tasmania, on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. Latvians have lived there from 2000 BC, but since 1200 AD came under German, Swedish, Polish and Russian rule. Latvia became an independent, successful nation of some two million people from 1918 until 1940, when the Soviet Union annexed Latvia. During World War II about 10,000 Latvians fled to Sweden and Germany in 1944–45 and later emigrated to other countries, including Australia. After the war the Soviet Union reoccupied Latvia for 45 years and many Latvians were politically oppressed and deported to Siberia. During that time it was impossible to leave for a better life elsewhere. Latvia regained its independence in August 1991, became a free, democratic country and joined the European Union in 2004. For the last 20 years Latvians are again free to travel, study and work in other countries, and have done so in fairly large numbers in Europe, but a few have also been attracted to Australia.

Early settlers and post-war immigration

Some individuals arrived before World War I and there were about 80 Latvians in Queensland in 1933. Most Latvians came as refugees in a short period from 1948 to 1952, as part of the immigration drive by the Australian government after World War II. By 1952 there were 20,000 Latvians in Australia, but only 1,500 settled in Queensland, mostly in or near Brisbane. Queensland was not a popular destination because of its hot and humid climate, and its Latvian community has always been one of the smallest in Australia. Very few additional Latvian migrants came after 1952, but the community grew as the younger generations produced their own families, and children were encouraged to maintain the language and cultural heritage.

The recent migrants

The Latvian community witnessed with great interest the rise of an independence movement in Latvia in 1988 and celebrated the restoration of Latvia's sovereignty in 1991. In the following years links with people in Latvia were renewed, and much effort went into providing humanitarian aid—parcels of food, clothing, medicines, and books—and financial assistance for the restoration

of churches, cemeteries and memorials in Latvia, which all gave renewed purpose to the community. Since 1991 people from Latvia have been able to visit Australia to see family and friends, or as tourists. Also visiting choirs, musicians and actors from Latvia have enriched the range and level of cultural performances available to our community.

In the last 15 years some Latvians have also come to Queensland for longer periods, mainly to study, or to settle here permanently. They are mostly in their 20's or 30's and have varied social and occupational backgrounds. Some have a profession or were in business in Latvia. Their reasons for coming to Queensland and their hopes and expectations are varied. Several came as spouses or partners in a relationship to an Australian and some have small children. One girl came as a teenager as a result of her mother's marriage to a Latvian from Brisbane. Students come to gain particular qualifications, ranging from Bachelor to PhD degrees, or to undertake English language courses, and can use the opportunity to work for the 20 hours a week allowed by the student visas to finance their studies.

They have settled mostly in Brisbane, Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast, but some also in Cairns. Though small in numbers, recent Latvian migrants and their children have injected much needed 'new blood' in the life of an aging and diminishing community.

Arrival, integration and participation

The recent migrants have not had many issues or problems after arrival in Queensland and settling into life here. Of course English language has been the major problem. Even those who arrived with some prior knowledge of English found that it was not always sufficient to cope with everyday life, and certainly restricted their ability to find employment similar to their previous jobs in Latvia, or to undertake tertiary level studies. However, this was soon overcome with English courses and with the passage of time, and daily use of the language, they became accustomed to Australian accents, expressions. Housing posed few problems apart from its expense.

Several have successfully undertaken further university studies, some even while working, and appreciate the high standard of the courses even though tuition fees are high. Those with children are satisfied with the day-care centres and education available here. Cultural and religious practices are not considered to differ too much from those in Latvia. Apart from missing their families in Latvia, their concern is that some marriages or relationships with Australian partners have not survived.

Mostly they find Australians to be open minded, polite, tolerant and receptive to migrants in general, but not always keen to develop personal friendships. They get along very well with Australians where they live, work or study, and most have already adopted several Australian habits of food, drinks, and socialising. They appreciate the weather, relaxed life style and gatherings around the outdoor pool and barbecues, and particularly the fresh fruit and vegetables available all year round. All indications are that they are happy with life here and intend to stay in Queensland.

Outstanding individuals and economic contribution to Queensland

Many earlier settlers gave long years of voluntary service to the Latvian community and some outstanding individuals also received Australian and Queensland awards:

- Inara Svalbe – Officer of the Order of the British Empire (1985)
- Eriks Ozolins – Medal of the Order of Australia (2000)
- Janis Kukums – Queensland Migrant Service Award (1988).

The following have made significant contributions in the arts:

- Andris Toppe – ballet dancer and choreographer
- Janis Balodis – playwright.

Most first generation Latvians and their children valued education and soon achieved economic security. A high proportion obtained university degrees and own their homes. Their main economic

contribution has been in the professions as doctors, dentists, engineers, architects, teachers and academics. Recent newcomers are similarly contributing to Queensland's economy – for example, someone who completed a Master's degree in Mineral Exploration at the University of Queensland is now working as a geologist in the new field of coal seam gas exploration. Many Latvians also preserved their own language and ethnic heritage and, while focusing on the internal needs of the community, they continue to share their arts, crafts, dances and music with Australian audiences. Both the earlier settlers and recent migrants have integrated into the Australian community and are at ease in their two cultures. Many are multilingual and easily interact with others in Queensland's multicultural society.

Community associations

Latvian community life in the 1950s commenced as soon as the first few hundred people had arrived. The first Lutheran church service (in German) for Latvians was held on 24 November 1949 and in Latvian in March 1950. Within two years all essential community activities and organisations were in place: Brisbane Latvian Association, Queensland Branch of the Latvian Relief Society 'Daugavas Vanagi,' Latvian choir and folk-dancing group, two Lutheran congregations and a Latvian school on Saturday mornings. During the 1950s there were also Latvian Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, student fraternities and sororities, basketball and volleyball teams, theatre ensemble, a literary group and the 'Okers' group of painters. Two Latvian book and craft shops and a book publisher also served the community. In 1960 a former Seventh Day Adventist Church in Buranda was purchased and adapted to provide a physical focus for the community – the Latvian Hall. Additional land was later acquired and the enlarged premises were opened in October 1987.

These organisations and activities served the internal needs of the community of the post-war Latvian settlers and their next two generations for over 50 years. In the 21st century the community has refocused its activities for a significantly smaller and aging population. Monthly meetings for senior citizens have supplanted the youthful social functions of earlier times, and most events are now held during daytime. From 1995 to 2008 a seniors' folk-dance group gave regular performances – keeping themselves fit and entertaining others.

The most significant difference between the young recent migrants and the older generation is that they came here by choice as migrants, not as refugees. They are familiar with new technologies and find information relevant to them by using the internet and social media, rather than print, and maintain contact with family and friends by email, Skype and regular trips to Latvia. That may be why some recent migrants do not seek opportunities to meet fellow Latvians, or request help from Latvian organisations with settling-in issues. They appear to be content and able to cope and enjoy their new life in Australia – as migrants! Two Latvian Honorary Consuls appointed in 2009 in Brisbane and Cairns provide assistance to visitors and migrants from Latvia when needed.

Clearly all these aspects pose challenges for contacting and integrating the new arrivals into the existing Latvian community. Their involvement is often limited and selective, and they are not interested in joining and maintaining all the organisations or events considered important by the older generation. However, those who have decided to engage with it have triggered positive changes to communication and new activities within the community. A quarterly newsletter ‘Brisbanes Zinotajs’ of coming events is now increasingly sent out by email so as to also reach the newer, younger members. At the initiative of one of the mothers from Latvia, since 2011 a twice monthly bilingual pre-school maintains Latvian language and cultural heritage for children of recently arrived and third generation mixed-parent families.

Recent migrants readily attend major Latvian festivities at Midsummer Night and Christmas, when Latvian Hall is full of old and new members and their Australian partners and friends, and all take great delight in the presence of some 20 children, who were not here ten years ago, and now make up a fifth of participants – the new arrivals are certainly rejuvenating the Latvian community in Queensland!

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AUTHOR PROFILE

SIKSNA, Arnis was born in Latvia. He arrived in Australia in 1950 and completed secondary and tertiary education here. He worked as an architect in Adelaide and as a town planner with the National Capital Development Commission in Canberra (1968 to 1978). He came to Queensland in 1981 and was a Senior Lecturer in Urban Design at the University of Queensland until 2002. He was president of the Brisbane Latvian Association (1989 to 1996), chairman of the Baltic Committee of Queensland (1991 to 1998), and since 1995 is Vice-President (Queensland) of the Latvian Federation of Australia and New Zealand.

Lebanese

– Written by Anne Monsour –

Since their arrival in increasing numbers in the second half of the nineteenth century, Lebanese have confronted two significant divides in Australian society, race and religion. As non-Europeans, Eastern Christians, and Muslims, they experienced legislative discrimination and were considered ‘undesirable immigrants’. Yet despite the barriers they faced, the Lebanese who came to Queensland sought to contribute positively as full and active citizens, and worked hard to achieve economic security for their families and better prospects for their children. Although small in number, these Arabic-speaking immigrants have contributed to Queensland’s cultural and religious diversity.

Situated on the Mediterranean, the modern state of Lebanon is the smallest country in the Middle East. Located at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa, for thousands of years, Lebanon was a centre for commerce but was also on the route of many conquering armies and consequently, has had a succession of foreign rulers and absorbed various ethnic populations. Over an extended period, a number of persecuted religious groups sought refuge in the mountains of Lebanon creating a multi-religious yet religiously segregated society. So although the population of Lebanon is often simplistically characterised as being divided between Christians and Muslims, the reality is more complex. Muslims are divided into three major sects: Sunnis, Shiites and Druzes, while Christians include Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Melkites, Syrian Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Chaldeans, Orthodox and Catholic Armenians and Protestants. After the Arabs defeated the Byzantines in 636 AD, Arabic became the dominant language. Following approximately 400 years of Ottoman rule, and then twenty-five years as a French mandate, Lebanon became an independent state in 1943. Since its inception, the Lebanese State has been fragile and often destabilised by external events, such as the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 which triggered the Arab/Israeli conflict, and internal conflicts, most notably the long civil war from 1975/76 to 1991. Consequently, in the twenty-first century, Lebanese still face an uncertain future and the ever-present threat of violent conflict.

The arrival of increasing numbers of Lebanese in Queensland in the last two decades of the nineteenth century was part of a mass emigration from the Syria/Lebanon region. While many factors contributed to

this massive movement, the primary reason was deteriorating economic conditions which provoked a search for better economic opportunities overseas. As they were from Greater Syria, until the 1940s, immigrants who came to Australia from modern Lebanon were generally identified as ‘Syrians’, and prior to the defeat of the Turks in World War I, were officially classified as Turkish subjects. From 1 January 1939, Lebanese and Syrian nationals in Australia were officially classified separately. However, the early immigrants did not have a common national identity but were loyal instead to their religious sect, family and village; and, with the exception of four people who were Druzes, were predominantly Maronite, Melkite and Orthodox Christians. From its inception, Lebanese immigration included a significant proportion of women, including some who came without their husbands or as single women. While it is often assumed these immigrants were poor, illiterate peasants, in fact they had varied occupational backgrounds, often an elementary education, and a few were wealthy and highly educated. Their intention to settle was effectively demonstrated by their migration in family groups and their desire to buy land/property and to become citizens.

In the 1890s, Australia experienced a period of economic decline, drought and high unemployment. In this context, non-Europeans were increasingly considered undesirable immigrants and anti-Chinese legislation was extended to all Asian and ‘coloured’ persons. A dramatic increase in Lebanese arrivals throughout the 1890s was effectively reversed by the implementation of the Immigration Restriction Act and consequently, until the late 1960s, the number of people born in Lebanon and living in Australia was always small. Although almost one quarter (23 per cent) of these immigrants was in Queensland in 1901, in subsequent years, the percentage declined and has remained low. After 1901, the decision to come to Australia was no longer as simple as being able to afford the fare; for Lebanese, entry was now dependent on either passing the dictation test or having an exemption permit. Consequently only those with family and friends already in Australia were accepted as immigrants and a pattern of chain migration and, subsequently, clustered settlement within geographic regions was entrenched. For example, almost all the Lebanese who settled in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs came from KfarsGhab or Zahle. Lebanese settlement

in Queensland was dispersed. Although Brisbane was the only recorded settlement location in 1885, by 1890, Lebanese were also in Townsville, Charters Towers, Barcaldine, Rockhampton, Maryborough and the Darling Downs. While the numbers in Brisbane continued to increase, so too did the dispersal of Lebanese throughout Queensland. By 1895, Lebanese were located as far north as Thursday Island, in western towns such as Normanton, Croydon, Winton, Longreach and Charleville, in the Darling Downs, and in towns and cities along the coast. Although numbers fluctuated, throughout most of the twentieth century, there was a continuous Lebanese presence in many towns and cities throughout Queensland. Since the 1950s, Lebanese immigrants to Queensland have included those sponsored by a relative or friend, those fleeing the civil war, and also people moving to Queensland from other Australian states. Since the 1960s, Lebanese immigrants have been Christian and Muslim.

Of all the disabilities Lebanese faced as 'Asiatic aliens', exclusion from naturalization was the most significant. In colonial Queensland some Lebanese were able to become British subjects but from 1904 to 1920, they experienced total exclusion from citizenship based on their racial classification. The Nationality Act of 1920 removed the racial disqualification embodied in the Naturalisation Act of 1904 and subsequently, Lebanese immigrants could be granted naturalisation at the discretion of the Governor-General. However, naturalised non-Europeans did not receive full citizenship as they were still disqualified from the right to vote, denied access to some social services, such as the old age pension, and were excluded from employment in a wide range of occupations. Indeed, the existence of widespread legislative discrimination against non-Europeans in employment restricted choices and contributed significantly towards most of the early Lebanese immigrants in Queensland being self-employed in commercial occupations. Hawking and shop keeping were viable options which Lebanese immigrants were able to develop and sustain because they were marginal economic activities. While hawking was an enduring occupation for Lebanese, many also established successful retail businesses, which were characteristically family enterprises. Lebanese women both single and married played an important

economic role. In the cities, towns and remote areas of Queensland, these women worked as hawkers, operated stores, sewed clothing and other articles to sell, reared children and managed households. Although many of the second generation continued to be self-employed in commercial enterprises, a significant number entered professions in fields such as medicine, dentistry, law, commerce, and education.

In the absence of their own churches, the early immigrants attended other Christian churches. As they are affiliated with the Roman Church, Maronites and Melkites joined Catholic parishes, while Orthodox Christians worshipped in both Catholic and Protestant churches. In 1936, Saint Clement's Melkite Church, South Brisbane, Queensland's first Lebanese church, was opened for public worship. Although its establishment was initiated and supervised by Monsignor Khoury, a Melkite priest, the church was built due to the combined efforts of Melkite, Orthodox and Maronite Lebanese. This uniting of the three Rites, was unusual and a source of pride for many of the Lebanese in Queensland. However, in 1989 the Maronites established their own church, St Maroun's at Greenslopes, Brisbane; and St. Paul's Antiochian Orthodox Christian parish, established in 1990, held the first service in its own church in Woolloongabba in April 2002. In Queensland, Lebanese Muslims worship at the existing Sunni and Shi'a mosques. While obviously established to meet the spiritual needs of their communities, these religious organisations also fulfil important social and cultural roles and provide support and advice for newcomers. However, for many Lebanese immigrants and their descendants, family and village ties remain strong and a primary source of support and identity.

Despite the extensive legislative discrimination they faced as non-Europeans, the early Lebanese immigrants believed Australia offered opportunities not available in their homeland. Since the 1880s, these immigrants have worked hard, actively participated in their local communities and encouraged their children to become Australian. For 130 years, Lebanese have contributed to the multicultural and religiously diverse character of Queensland. Welcome or not, they embraced Queensland as their home and their personal and collective stories are part of the State's heritage.

AUTHOR PROFILE

MONSOUR, Anne, the daughter of Lebanese immigrants from Rass Baalbec, Lebanon, was born in Biggenden, Queensland where her father was a general storekeeper. She has a PhD in history from the University of Queensland and is currently an Honorary Research Fellow in the School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics. Her thesis, *Negotiating a Place in a White Australia*, is a study of the settlement of Lebanese in Australia from the 1880s to 1947. Anne is currently, the President of the Australian Lebanese Historical Society and coordinates its Queensland branch. For almost two decades, Anne has been researching, writing and speaking (in academic and community forums in Australia and overseas) about the history of Lebanese settlement in Australia. She is the author of *Not Quite White: Lebanese and the White Australia policy 1880 to 1947* (Post Pressed, 2010), and has edited two books about Lebanese in Queensland: *Raw Kibbeh: Generations of Lebanese Enterprise* (2009) and *Here to Stay: Lebanese in Toowoomba and South West Queensland* (2012).

Liberians

– *Written by Mucktar Kamara* –

Liberia is located on the west coast of Africa bordered by Sierra Leone to the west, Guinea to the north and Côte d'Ivoire to the east. Liberia is one of Africa's oldest nations that were not disrupted by colonisation. In 1822, the American Colonisation Society negotiated with the first nation people of Liberia to settle the emancipated American slaves being returned to Africa. By 1847, the Americo-Liberians established what is today known as Liberia and named the Capital City Monrovia in honour of the then United States President James Monroe, a prominent supporter of the American Colonization Society and the Americo-Liberians establishment. The first President of the Republic of Liberia was Mr Joseph Jenkins Roberts who was born in Virginia in the United States, one of many Americo-Liberians that were settled in Liberia.

The legislative government of Liberia and the country's education system were shaped after the United States. English is therefore the official language spoken and taught in all schools. Liberia is a presidential, representative and democratic republic. The President is the head of state and head of government. Unlike the United States, Liberia is a unitary state as opposed to a federal system in the United States. Liberia has a multi-party system whereas the US has a two party system.

In 1980, a military coup led by Samuel Doe ushered in a decade of authoritarian rule in Liberia. In 1989, Charles Taylor launched a rebellion against Doe's regime that led to a prolonged civil war in which Doe was killed. A period of relative peace in 1997 allowed for elections that brought Taylor to power, but major fighting resumed in 2000. As a consequence of the civil war, many Liberians sought sanctuary in neighbouring countries. A peace agreement of 2003 ended the war and prompted the resignation of former president Charles Taylor. President Madman Ellen Johnson became the first democratically elected female President of Africa and she was re-elected in 2011.

The first wave of migration of Liberians to Queensland began in 2002. They settled mainly in Brisbane and Logan and some went to live in Toowoomba. In 2003, the Liberian Association of Queensland (LAQ) was formed by a group of Liberians residing in the greater Brisbane area. LAQ was established for the purpose of assisting Liberians in their settlement and integration into the Australian society. The Liberian Association of Queensland has been able to expand its range of services, which includes settlement support, police and law enforcement issues, family reunion support, youth development, housing, child safety related issues, educational support, conflict resolution and capacity building projects. LAQ works in collaboration with other stakeholders such as local, state, federal and non-governmental organisations. LAQ consequently assists its members in working towards their individual life objectives. African parents place much emphasis on their children's education. They realise that peaceful and richly endowed Queensland offers great opportunities for their offspring and for their future generations.

Currently, there are about 1,500 Liberians living across Queensland. They are particularly attracted to life in urban situations although some of them had rural lifestyles in their country of origin. Liberians in Queensland retain a great love for tasty African food and many of them like to dress up in their colourful traditional African outfits for celebrations and when meeting other fellow Africans and other Australian people. Intermarriages are common. Liberians in Queensland are married to Africans from different parts of Africa, to Europeans and other multicultural Australians and to Indigenous Australians. 'Home' is where you live and work, where your kids go to school and where you are accepted and where all people have equal rights.

AUTHOR PROFILE

KAMARA, Mucktar was born in Sierra Leone and grew up in both Sierra Leone and Liberia. He migrated to Australia in 2002. Before migrating to Australia, Mucktar worked as a support case worker for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He has worked for Queensland Rail and for Serco Ltd as a custodial correctional officer. He was employed by Corrective Services (Queensland) and facilitated the therapeutic rehabilitation programs. He currently works for Access Community Services. He has also undertaken volunteer work with the Queensland Police Service. Mucktar is actively involved in the African community and has served on the management committee of the Queensland African Communities Council (Social Affairs Coordinator and Community Relations Officer). Mucktar is a founding member of the Queensland African Football Association of which he is the current chairperson. He is also actively involved as a volunteer in the wider Australian community. He has a Certificate II in Event Management, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice from Griffith University and a Master's degree in Forensic Mental Health, also Griffith University. Mucktar is currently a postgraduate student in the Law School at the University of Queensland.

Lithuanians

– *Written by Eve Puodžiunaite Wicks* –

Lithuania—Lietuva in the Lithuanian language—is a country of gently rolling hills, numerous forests, and myriad rivers, lakes and streams. It is situated on the south-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea: opposite Denmark and Sweden on the Baltic Sea’s western shore. It borders Latvia to the north, Belarus to the east and south, and Poland and the Kaliningrad region of Russia to the southwest. Europe’s geographic centre is near Vilnius, the capital. It is similar in size and shape to Tasmania, covering an area of 65,300 square kilometres, though it is more populated, with approximately 3,000,000 inhabitants. Currently, Lithuanians comprise about 84 per cent of Lithuania’s population, with Poles (6.6 per cent), Russians (5.8 per cent), Belarusians (1.2 per cent) and Ukrainians (0.5 per cent) the most prominent among Lithuania’s 115 ethnic minority groups. The Lithuanian people’s Balt forebears settled the lands on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea in very ancient times, around 2300–2200 B.C. Lithuanian, the national language, uses a Latin alphabet of 32 letters. It is an ancient Indo-European tongue, one of only two surviving members of the Baltic language group, and regarded linguistically, among Indo-European languages, as closest to Ancient Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit – the oldest known member of the family. Lithuania’s position as a power in medieval Europe – its lands reaching from the Baltic to the Black Sea – was diminished during ensuing centuries within a joint Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, so that it fell under Russian rule in 1795. Great exoduses from Lithuania resulted in the nineteenth – early twentieth centuries to escape Czarist oppression and draft into the Russian army, or to seek better economic opportunities. However it was a period of national re-awakening, and Lithuania’s independence for twenty-two years in the interwar period between World War I and World War II, since its declaration of sovereignty and independence on 16 February 1918, was a time of successful nation building. Unfortunately Russian-German ravages during World War I were repeated during World War II, and its short-lived independence was lost again for many decades.

Lithuania today is a parliamentary republic and a member of NATO and the European Union since 2004. Almost 22 years have passed since Lithuania regained its independence from the Soviet Union on 21 September 1991. It was the first Soviet Socialist Republic to restore its sovereignty with a declaration of independence on 12 March 1990, followed soon after by the other Baltic States. The Baltic peoples’

ancient, rich singing traditions produced the ‘Singing Revolution’: peaceful, sung, mass protests drove their nations’ push for independence. The most famous was the ‘Baltic Way’, on 23 August 1989, when approximately two million people joined hands from Tallinn, Estonia’s capital, across Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to Vilnius, Lithuania’s capital. Before independence, both emigration and the return or visitation of émigrés and others to the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic were severely restricted.

Lithuanians in Australia have always been a tiny minority, never more than 0.1 per cent of Australia’s total population at the time of Lithuanian people’s greatest influx – when approximately 10,000 came as political refugees (Displaced Persons – DPs) post-World War II, between 1947 and 1952. Extremely small numbers had migrated to Australia earlier, during the great exoduses from Lithuania. There were only about 200 in 1935, the majority residing in Sydney. In 1939, at the outbreak of World War II, there were only two Lithuanian men in Brisbane: Paliulis and Michael Orzewski (Ruskey), and Ruskey’s four children, his Lithuanian wife, Mary (Bachinska), having died in 1935. Both men established businesses, Paliulis building flats and operating garages, while Orzewski was a successful tailor. Soon afterwards, on 6 December 1940, Lithuanian numbers increased in Brisbane. After the first Soviet occupation of the Baltic States, 32 Lithuanians were among 173 persons who journeyed for seven weeks from the Baltic States, via the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostok, and by sea on the SS Haitan to Australia, evacuated by the British Government as British Nationals. Only one third were British: the majority were of Baltic ethnicity – Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians. Many had little or no English language fluency since most had lived almost, if not their entire lives in the Baltic States. An Australian government decision meant 150 persons with limited financial means, including 28 of the 32 ethnic Lithuanians, disembarked in Brisbane. Local residents, including Roman Catholic Archbishop James Duhig, enjoyed their first exposures to Lithuanian national songs and dances. The Australian Military Forces employed three of the Lithuanian men, and others worked for the Australian war effort. Lithuanian numbers increased in Brisbane during the war: new births occurred and Lithuanian Americans were among the Brisbane-based American troops. After the war, singles and married couples without children left Australia, mostly for the UK. There were 18 people in the community of 5 Lithuanian families left in Brisbane,

four families remaining permanently. The most notable among the 'earlier' Lithuanians and their descendants include the Orzewski – Ruskeys' daughter, Lena Ruskey A.M., the honour awarded for Lena's services to women's hockey in Queensland, and Sally Wicks, granddaughter of Haitan evacuees Francis and Klara Puodžiunas, a dancer and choreographer, and member of Graeme Murphy's Sydney Dance Company and Expressions Dance Company. Currently, the Ruskeys' great grandson, Gavin Bannerman, is collecting Queensland history at the John Oxley Library, in his role as Acting Manager of Original Content, Queensland Memory.

Post World War II, the initial compulsory labour contracts required by the Australian government, no matter what the people's occupational qualifications were, dispersed the Lithuanian Displaced Persons over the continent. Of the many sent to Queensland to labour in the cane fields and forestry, and to build infrastructure throughout the state, most left immediately or soon after the contracts were fulfilled. The vast majority gravitated to the cooler, southern industrial hubs, with about 3,000 settling in both Sydney and Melbourne, some hundreds in nearby industrial cities, and another 1,500 in Adelaide. Much smaller numbers were retained in other states, including Queensland: in 1956, Lithuanians in Brisbane and its environs numbered 287, while very small numbers were living in rural areas and regional cities. They represented about three per cent of the post-war cohort. A small number of additional DPs migrated to Queensland from the United Kingdom. The small group in Brisbane included Stasys Sagatys, a former judge of the District Court in Lithuania. A number of the immigrants, including those who migrated as children, completed university degrees in engineering, science, medicine, dentistry and psychology in Queensland. Afterwards, some departed: a few went interstate but most went abroad for work and doctoral studies. Others completed trade qualifications. A number established successful businesses in tool making, sheet metal engineering and furniture making and as auto-mechanics. A number built their own homes. Queensland Lithuanians' numbers grew from the 1980s onwards, with an influx of Lithuanians and their descendants from interstate. A new Lithuanian community of active, first generation retirees was formed on the Gold Coast by Regina and Jurgis Smilgevicus. Younger generation singles and families were also attracted by

the climate and the carefree lifestyle, but also came for professional work and business opportunities, as marriage partners, or to be closer to retiree parents.

Seventy-one years after Queensland received its first immigrants from the occupied Baltic States in 1940, with the death of many of the first generation in the intervening years and little subsequent migration from Lithuania, the recent 2011 Australian census reveals 1,527 Queensland residents with Lithuanian ancestry, which represents 11 per cent of only 13,591 people with Lithuanian ancestry in Australia. Lithuanians have become an even smaller minority of 0.01 per cent - the census recording only 2,638 persons born in Lithuania and 1,901 Lithuanian language speakers at home. Of these, 252 Lithuanian-born and 139 Lithuanian language speakers reside in Queensland. While 10 per cent with Lithuanian ancestry are in North Queensland, the majority—about 89 per cent—live in the South-East, including recent immigrants from Lithuania to Queensland – since Lithuania gained its independence in 1991. Their numbers in Queensland as in the rest of Australia (548) are extremely small: only 17 persons during the first decade to 2000, increasing to 48 in the second period to 2011, with most arriving in the past five years.

Nonetheless, the recent Lithuanian immigrants in Queensland present interesting comparisons with the Lithuanians who migrated earlier – the little flush of very recent immigrants in particular. Firstly, there are almost twice as many females as males, unlike the post- World War II Lithuanians who had a high masculinity ratio due to the Australian Government's selection of single men to fill labour shortages: in Brisbane almost as many Lithuanian men were in marriages with non-Lithuanian women as in marriages with Lithuanians, while others remained single. On the other hand, although there are a few older Lithuanian women migrants who have married older, single, widowed or divorced Lithuanian men living in Queensland, most recent immigrants are younger Lithuanian men and women—singles, couples and families—as well as Lithuanian women in partnerships with men of other nationalities, including Australians who reflect Australia's multicultural diversity. Secondly, the post-war Lithuanians were a mix of the well-educated and those with incomplete schooling and training, their lives impoverished and completely disrupted by war for many years, their mobility and choices limited. Their continental European

qualifications were mostly un-recognised in Australia, hence the loss of an estimated 2,000 Lithuanians from Australia who migrated mainly to North America, or, alternatively, the agonising study and re-training which some who remained undertook, or the loss of fulfilment that others endured. Locally, for instance, Dr Jonas Palietis re-studied four years of a medical degree, in spite of Australian medical practitioner colleagues attesting to his high level of medical proficiency, while Dr Palietis was employed at the Migrant Hospital, Enoggera, as a medical orderly, but required to perform medical practitioner duties. On the other hand, current young Lithuanian migrants, both women and men, are highly educated, hold recognised qualifications (though a medical doctor has significant assessment hurdles to overcome) and have far wider opportunities. Many have studied, worked and travelled within the European Union and beyond in a mobile, globalised world and international milieu before migration to Queensland. Thirdly, they communicate very confidently in English, unlike most of the post-war Lithuanians who studied French and German rather than English in high school, knew German as the lingua franca in Europe, and had little exposure to the English language. Today's young Lithuanian migrants have studied English at school from a young age and at university: English is the new lingua franca in Europe and there is wide exposure to English with modern communication. Fourthly, although they are not political refugees fleeing war and oppression, they are partaking in Lithuanian people's recent freedom to experience different cultures as well as intellectual and economic opportunities and advancements in the world. Lithuania is a small country, and though it has made enormous progress, it is still recovering from the prolonged oppressed conditions it endured within the Soviet system.

Some of the new Lithuanian migrants are in Queensland for specific skilled work, study and quality of life reasons. Kestutis Gircys, software engineer, and Andrejus Cernyševs, civil engineer, are working with Bentleys Systems International USA and MakMax Australia (Taiyo Membrane Corporation) respectively, while thirty-three years old physicist, Dr Almantas Pivrikas, has a Senior Research Fellow position in the Centre for Organic Photonics and Electronics at the University of Queensland. His previous position as an assistant professor for four years in Austria, in the Physical Chemistry Department and the Linz Institute for Organic Solar Cells (LIOS) at Johannes Kepler University

Linz, followed bachelor and master's degrees in the physics faculty of Vilnius University, Lithuania, and a PhD undertaken at Åbo Akademi University, Finland. Ernesta Paukšte is also working in the university sector, as a part-time lecturer and tutor in public health at Griffith University, while undertaking a PhD. These opportunities arose after she undertook student exchange semesters at Griffith University, as part of her master's degree in public health at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas. Initially, she also worked voluntarily in Brisbane for the National Heart Foundation and Cancer Council Queensland. She hopes to establish an academic career in public health. Ernesta and her immigrant partner, an economist from Uzbekistan, met in Queensland. She believes that 'for us the best thing is to live in an English speaking country as English is the language we both are confident with. Living in our home countries would complicate things, especially if we both want to have a career'; it would also 'complicate our relationship' and there were 'less opportunities'. Lithuanian Rita Radzvilaviciute Manning and Queensland Stephen Manning's personal and working lives have also flourished in their common language. They met in London and worked for five years as IT professionals for Betfair, the world's largest internet betting exchange. Rita beforehand studied information technology, obtaining a bachelor's degree at Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, and a master's degree at Vilnius University, and worked for six years in software testing in Lithuania. After their twin daughters were born in England, the couple decided to return to Stephen's home in Queensland, for a better quality of life for their children. Vaida Vaikute Nairn, on the other hand, has improved working standards for Queenslanders through equal employment opportunity work in human resources, within the international company QGC, A BG Group Business. Her Scottish husband's work as a civil engineer and executive manager with the company brought the couple to Queensland. They met in Tokyo, Japan, where Vaida was studying a master's degree in comparative cultures, having previously studied a bachelor's degree in Catholic theology in Kaunas, Lithuania. In Brisbane before gaining her employment Vaida initially studied human resources through the Australian Human Resources Institute, participated in Toastmasters to further improve her English, and voluntarily worked with disadvantaged women in the 'Jobs for Success' – 'Suited for Success' program to help them obtain employment. The couple has since moved to work in the Netherlands.

There are barriers, however, to securing professional employment. A personal connection with an organisation was helpful in Vaida's case. Some well-qualified Lithuanians are having a difficult time. Success through local recruitment agencies, which many organisations use, is very low: either zero or very few interviews resulting from numerous applications submitted. Local references and local experience are required, the migrants are repeatedly told. Prejudice against people from countries where English is not a first language, though they speak English competently, is a common perception: "A lot of people write you off when they hear you speaking English with an accent. They think you are not smart, but I can speak a number of languages", according to one. An added stress comes from unhelpful encounters with rental agencies. Securing suitable accommodation is essential for new migrants, as is feeling accepted. However agents require local references and prefer local documents such as Australian passports and licences rather than translations of foreign ones: "You could feel it from the tone: "What is that!" explained another.

On the other hand, the new migrants are also experiencing kindness. They have 'met some really nice people', like 'how relaxed and friendly people are here', and appreciate the generosity in the broad community: 'It is like one big family in that I have not seen so many charities and not for profit organisations donating money and time. The people are hard-working and do what needs to be done. During the flood there were so many people who rolled up their sleeves.' They 'admire Australia's beautiful and unique nature', relish participating in outdoor activities year round, and like Queensland's 'daily dose of sunshine', although 'a hot Christmas was something really odd!' Rita Grigutiene, the current president of the Brisbane Lithuanian community's cultural association, who migrated in 2001, 'most remembers getting her Australian citizenship'.

New migrants and some from younger generations are taking on leadership roles in sustaining the Lithuanian communities – shrunken with the ageing and death of the first generation and the overall retreat of subsequent generations. At the Gold Coast, a second-generation retiree couple from interstate has stepped in, after Juozas and Joan Songaila's long leadership. In Brisbane, new migrants, a few dedicated locals—the original Brisbane migrants' children—and,

significantly, some younger generation 'migrants' from interstate are revitalising a community in its seventh decade. The small leadership pool for the Father Bacinskas Lithuanian Cultural Association Inc, provided predominantly by Gaila Bagdon and Algis Milvydas during the past fifteen years, has increased. Though attendance at many events is small, numbers swell for popular celebrations such as Mother's Day and Christmas, when former participants return, many with young children: people's ages span one hundred years and four generations. Young children of the 'new' first and the 'old' fourth generations mingle and play. Nonetheless, many cultural activities have waned. Brisbane's vibrant Zilvytis dance group ceased performing in 1998, the cherished Brisbane Lithuanian choir finally disbanded in 2006, and spontaneous singing by the first generation no longer fills Lithuanian House at Highgate Hill, after Sunday lunches and celebrations. However, 'Lapas', the community's newsletter introduced in 2001—Anna Augunas, editor—is in its 63rd edition, Lithuanian radio—Evaldas Sagatys, programmer—still broadcasts on Radio 4EB, and the Brisbane Baltija Sports Club is active, its range of inputs helping to sustain the community.

Lithuanians share Australian people's love of sport and their communities have fostered participation in sport since the migrants' first arrival post-World War II. Lithuanians are particularly passionate about basketball. Lithuania has performed extraordinarily well in international competition, and local Lithuanians try to emulate both Lithuanian and Australian stars. Brisbane's Baltija Lithuanian Sports Club has intermittently fielded boys', girls', and women's teams in the Brisbane Basketball Incorporated (BBI) Association since 1987, while its men's team has competed almost every year since 1988. Recent migrants have joined the men's team, and mainstream Queenslanders also play. Since 1986 Baltija players have participated in Sporto švente – the annual Australian Lithuanian Sports Festival. It is an enduring activity involving family generations, all enjoying Lithuanian culture, friendships, and the spirit and spectacle of sport, with the older generations managing and supporting the young who compete with great enthusiasm. While individuals have participated and won in tennis, golf, table tennis, billiards and swimming, Baltija's strongest representation has been in basketball.

Third generation Kazys Milvydas was awarded most valuable player in 2011, his sister, Kristute Milvydas was similarly rewarded in the women's competition in 2012, while fourteen year old, fourth generation Andrew Adomavicius – Adams was awarded best junior player. Baltija though small has grown in strength. It will host the 63rd Australian Lithuanian Sports Festival in 2013 at the Gold Coast, having successfully hosted the 55th festival in Brisbane for the first time, in 2005.

While migration to Queensland has been small, vibrant interchange between Lithuania and Queensland has occurred since independence. Queensland-Lithuanians have travelled to Lithuania: many to re-connect with relatives, a few to live in retirement, some to work and establish businesses, and most to visit – some many times, often drawn to famed song and dance festivals, or historical celebrations and commemorations. The younger generations have represented Australian-Lithuanians in basketball and other sports at Lithuania's World Games held every four years. On the other hand, the Brisbane and Gold Coast communities have welcomed many visitors from Lithuania – clergy, artists, musicians, politicians, academics, writers, relatives, friends and athletes. Among the latter were about 130 who were hosted for the World Masters Games in Brisbane in 1994, while Petras Silkinas, winner of the world 1,000-mile ultra-marathon championship at Nanango in 2000, was also supported. Teams from the famous Basketball Academy of Šarunas Marciulionis, Lithuania, have been hosted, including the U17 schoolboy basketball team (European vice champions in 2003) in 2004. Mainstream Queensland teams benefitted from this visit, matches being played with: Queensland AIS U18s; U16 Queensland and U18 Gold Coast Representative teams, and John Paul College and Palm Beach Currumbin High School teams.

Lithuanian sporting life lives on, and Lithuanian House remains the hub for gatherings: for meeting friends and visitors, speaking the language, enjoying Lithuanian cuisine, and celebrating traditional feast days and national days at monthly gatherings. However, the dancing, choral and spontaneous singing, poetry recitals, theatre, scouts, art and craft, Lithuanian language teaching and spiritual practices at St Mary's church in South Brisbane, which characterised the highly organised and involved rich cultural life of post-war Lithuanians living in exile, have faded. New migrants enjoy close communication with people and happenings in Lithuania through modern communication and return

frequently for visits. How Lithuanian cultural traditions are expressed by the new migrants and evolve in the 21st century is still emerging. It is likely that migrant numbers in Queensland will continue to be small. Lithuania is a small country and Australia is far away. However it is also likely that a passion for Lithuania continues to burn brightly in a sufficient number of people with Lithuanian heritage in Queensland, to enable a Lithuanian community to support its people and enjoy cultural practices in the future.

References

Puodžiunaite Wicks, Eve is a PhD candidate in the School of Humanities, Griffith University. Her research with Lithuanians in Queensland includes a fully referenced book, titled, 'Sauleje ir šeselyje: pamastymai apie lietuviu imigrantu gyvenima' – 'In Sunshine and Shadow: Reflections on Lithuanian Immigrant Life', due for release in late 2013.

AUTHOR PROFILE

PUODŽIUNAITE Wicks, Eve was born in Brisbane in 1944, the daughter of Francis and Klara Puodžiunas, SS Haitan evacuees from Lithuania. Her first career was in the field of medical science, as a laboratory scientist and tertiary lecturer. After a period rearing three children she undertook a post-graduate diploma in education, taught high-school science briefly, before completing a Masters degree in education at the University of Queensland. She was a university student counsellor for many years, with particular interests in student advocacy, migrant issues, and implementing large-scale career development programs. In recent years she has undertaken study and research integrating history and visual art (photography), her MAVA degree project culminating in the exhibition *Refuge Under a Southern Cross – The Lithuanian Migrant Experience in Queensland* at the Queensland Museum, South Bank, 2005. Her current PhD research with Queensland Lithuanians includes the book *Sauleje ir šeselyje: pamastymai apie lietuviu imigrantu gyvenima - In Sunshine and Shadow: Reflections on Lithuanian Immigrant Life*. She has directed the Lithuanian community choir, been piano accompanist for community celebrations, and held secretarial positions for the Brisbane Lithuanian Association's committee.

Luxembourgiens

Luxembourg is a small sovereign nation landlocked by Belgium, France and Germany. It is called Groussherzogtum Lëtzebuerg in Luxembourgish and Grand-Duché de Luxembourg in French and had in 2013 an estimated population of 538 000 people. It is the world's last remaining hereditary Grand Duchy, with a history longer than a millennium though it received its current size in 1815. Luxembourg has an advanced economy with a strong banking and insurance sector. For every three Luxembourgiens in the workforce there are two non-Luxembourgiens, usually European Union (EU) passport holders many of whom are daily commuters. In Europe, Luxembourgiens have the highest gross domestic product (GDP) per person. It has its own army of 900, which alongside Australia participated with a contingent of 50 in the Korean conflict. Luxembourgiens—in English they are also called Luxembourgers—are trilingual and many of them also know English and/or an ethnic language as over 40 per cent of the population have migrant backgrounds, the largest community being the Portuguese.

Luxembourgiens love travel to other countries as the physical space of their country is limited. Australia attracts them because the vast fifth continent still offers adventure and barely explored regions. The populated coastal areas of Queensland have a desirable sub-tropical and even a tropical climate and wonderful beaches. In our time Luxembourgiens rarely set out with a view to becoming long term or even lifelong settlers in Australia. Such decisions are taken after having fallen in love with Queensland and Australia. There is little unemployment in Luxembourg and few of the few Luxembourgiens who have come to Australia in recent years were looking for specific career opportunities.

The Luxembourgiens in Queensland tend to be individuals maintaining comparatively little contact with other former fellow citizens. They live as individuals or small family units along the coast, from the Gold Coast to Cairns and are comfortable with their immersion in Australian life. Whenever they meet people from their home country they speak with each other in Luxembourgish. “We don't often get a chance to use our mother tongue because in the presence of Australians we use English.” Amazingly, a few Australian partners of Luxembourgiens living in Queensland and Australia have learned to speak Luxembourgish. If you want to get naturalised in

Luxembourg you need to have some fluency in what is now considered the national and an official language of Luxembourg, the other official languages being French and German. French serves as administrative language, and the City of Luxembourg has a Francophone visual appearance. German is the first language taught in primary school and it is used extensively by the print media and by the Catholic Church. “Our national anthem is meaningful to us as it is sung in Luxembourgish.”

Luxembourg's national multilingualism is unique in Europe. Luxair announcements are made in four languages and Luxembourgish comes first. Luxembourgiens in Australia and elsewhere have little difficulties in learning and upgrading their English as they have multilingual backgrounds. They often deplore the fact that even educated Australians tend to be ignorant about their small country of origin considering that several Luxembourg-born politicians have contributed greatly towards the evolution of the EU. Luxembourg City is one of the three EU capitals, together with Brussels and Strasbourg. Luxembourg-born Robert Schuman, a man of several cultures was twice prime minister of France and he became the founding father of the EEC or the European Economic Community, the forerunner of the EU. His mother tongue was Luxembourgish. More recently, J.-C. Juncker, a long serving prime minister of Luxembourg and twice president of the European Council became the driving force behind the euro currency.

In 1944 the BENELUX customs agreement was signed which led to a geographic, economic and cultural grouping of three countries supplying a blueprint for the future ECC and EU. The rapprochement of the three BENELUX countries did not translate into specific links developing between the Luxembourgiens in Australia and fellow migrants from Luxembourg's French or German-speaking neighbour countries. First generation Luxembourgiens in Queensland and Australia rarely join French or German-speaking associations. “We easily adopt the Australian ways and become naturalised but our cuisine was deeply influenced by France and Germany. Our national dish ‘Bouneschlupp’ (green bean soup with potatoes, bacon, and onions) is occasionally prepared by the Luxembourgiens in Queensland and Australian friends also enjoy it.” Over the last two decades Luxembourgish as a written language has gained

international acceptance and when the Luxembourgiens in Australia communicate with each other or with people in their former homeland emails are now frequently written in Luxembourgish.

Attending the annual Luxembourg National Day celebrations in Sydney which is held under the auspices of the Honorary Consulate General represents the only regular Luxembourgian social function accessible to some of the Queenslanders of Luxembourg origins. In 2013 a Christmas function was held in Sydney.

AUTHOR PROFILES

The above article is derived from information received via three Luxembourg-born former migrants who are living in three different locations in Southeast Queensland.
