



## Threads of Conservation

Social fabric • Fabric and place • Conserving fabric

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### **Marilyn Truscott**

Marilyn Truscott is a heritage practitioner, having studied archaeology, history, anthropology and materials conservation, and currently researching community roles in heritage management, particularly issues related to sustaining memory and intangible heritage in a globalised world. With heritage experience over 40 years, she has a longstanding experience in working with communities to identify their values for their heritage and maintain their connection with that heritage.

Marilyn has worked extensively throughout Australia and internationally in most continents. She is a past president of Australia ICOMOS, immediate past president of the ICOMOS International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage, president of the Canberra & District Historical Society, and is also on the ACT Place Names Committee, fostering the recognition of Australia's cultural, historical and environmental diversity in the place names of the national capital.

### **Newcomers: weaving their intangible heritage into the fabric of place**

#### **Paper Abstract**

This snapshot paper will highlight the issue of how new arrivals in Australia, and a new city, separated from environments from which their intangible heritage emerged, and where their memories are embedded, can connect with the fabric of their new environment. The brief presentation will highlight the nature of the separation of intangible from tangible and examine some examples of how different ethnic groups are bringing the two back together in a new space.

Today Australia is a multi-cultural society: a quarter of Australians were born overseas, and 45% have a parent from another country. Such 'ethnic' cultural diversity is embraced for its contribution to an enhanced gastronomic variety in this settler country, as well as cultural festivals with song, dance and music. However, for many their intangible values may remain disconnected from the new, possibly alien, urban surrounds. A further barrier to interweaving intangible and tangible heritage is that we all live—externally, an apparently similar life in this globalised world.

Nonetheless, there are examples of maintaining intangible values and memory by sustaining them in new spaces, with the voices of various communities emerging to speak for such new enriched social fabric. This snapshot paper highlights the core similarities providing potential models for heritage practice. The focus is on Canberra, which itself after 100 years, consists of new arrivals from throughout Australia and the world.