



The 45 guests enjoyed the new airconditioned space



Long time member Barbara and past president Helen handled the raffle

International Women's Day

As part of the 100th year of the Country Women's Association (CWA), the International Women's Day morning tea at the CWA Hall in Memorial Dr on 8 March focused on the stories of women who have migrated to Australia from different cultures.

CWA President Janet Millington welcomed the capacity crowd to hear the presenters "share their challenges, learn how they may enrich our community and engage in a short discussion of how we may support them for the benefit of all".

Jang Etheridge migrated from Thailand in 2007 and spoke about the problems of not having fluent English. She said the CWA helped her feel part of the community, as did having the Thai Community Association which proactively hosts cultural events. Hilary Craig shared her experience as a "frequent migrant" to Canada, Asia and now Australia – and how even though

she spoke English, the "tracky pants, servos, cossies and lippie" left her bemused.

Shannon Chua arrived in Australia on a 457 visa from Malaysia and said the best thing here, compared to Malaysia, is the focus on family, and how "my neighbour, my mentor gave me support to help me integrate into society".

Judi Pattison reflected on the 1970s when her "husband was needed to get her a passport and bank account" and the importance of "consent and a respectful relationship".

The final presenter, CWA Divisional President Patsy Lee, reprised the pivotal role of the organisation in Qld. She told the story of the "extremely formidable Mrs Stern" who was a fierce advocate of women and the CWA. She characterised the CWA with its 230 members across 11 branches on the Sunshine Coast as "a necessary and vital ingredient of the coast".

Ruth Hickey



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