

Name of Library	Rockhampton Regional Libraries	
Address	230 Bolsover Street, Rockhampton	
Phone	(07) 4936 8295	
Contact person	Ann-Maree Dyer	
Email	cheryl.haughton@rrc.qld.gov.au	

Title of project/innovation/initiative	Timeless Teacups/ Tea Lives/ Living Baking
Date initiated	June 2011
Date completed	August 2011

The issue/challenge

The State Library of Queensland's *Tea and me* project provided a springboard for various outreach activities at the Rockhampton Regional Libraries, with opportunities to develop local content for the Library's special collections, and community capacity building.

The various 'tea' events successfully engaged an intergenerational audience and connected to other community programming offered by the Rockhampton Regional Council such as the annual Rockhampton Agricultural Show, and Multicultural Morning Tea events.

Project details

Elegant teacups, memories of bush 'smokos' and delicious morning tea recipes formed the basis of a very successful 'Tea' triage of events linking to the State Library of Queensland's *Tea and Me* social history project.

A *Timeless Teacups* event kicked off activities in the region in June, with over fifty people gathering in the courtyard of the Rockhampton Regional Library on 3 June with their own favourite teacup and saucer in hand, to hear about the history and culture of tea from several different speakers. The cultivation, social history, facts and trivia about tea were shared with the audience, with a connection to the large local Bangladeshi community proving particularly popular. Pots of chai were brewed and served, with delicate cucumber sandwiches; robust scones, jam and cream; and other delicacies on offer.

A beautiful range of teacups, and tea paraphernalia were displayed in the foyer of the Library effectively capturing interest and promoting the event. Silverware, crockery,

heirloom linen and billycans were borrowed from staff, clients and local antique businesses further generating interest. Links to the multicultural community further enhanced programming with important networking potential developed.

The *Timeless Teacups* event was also rolled out to the Yeppoon Library with a smaller number of participants attending a more intimate event. A similar format was offered with a delicious morning tea served, with personal reminiscences of tea memories stimulating stories of local interest.

The *Lively Baking* event was held in mid June, after the local show, and tapped into the high level of interest in food appreciation due to popular culinary television programs.

Essentially a union between experienced amateur cooks, and those starting out on their cooking journey, the event offered tips, strategies and secrets behind successful baking entrants' offerings from the Shows in the region. Intricate and beautifully decorated marzipan cakes were displayed and scrutinised with local experts, contrasting with the deceptively simple art of the iconic 'Aussie' damper shared by a bush cook from Mount Morgan. Links to the Country Women's Association (CWA) proved ideal in identifying judges and tapping into the rich culinary tradition of this community association. Winning entries in various baking categories from the Rockhampton Show formed an effective visual backdrop for promotion of the event.

Cooking tips were discussed between generations over slices of damper and golden syrup and a morning 'cuppa'. The tagging of the event further reinforced the 'Living' packaging of outreach activities at Rockhampton Regional Libraries.

The final *Tea Lives @ the Library* held on 18 August drew together the various tea initiatives, and developed content for the Library's special collections. Library patrons were asked to bring along a piece of tea memorabilia and share a story over morning tea, with each participant's reminiscences recorded on a digital voice recorder. The use of technology and the format of the morning were unobtrusive, generating local stories of important social interest. The event attracted a smaller number of participants which proved ideal in appreciating, recording and acknowledging individual's stories.

The content has been successfully archived into the Rockhampton Regional Library's significant special collections, and uploaded to the State Library of Queensland's *Tea and Me* project.

The various 'Tea' events offered effective outreach potential in developing community capacity as well as promoting the rich variety of library resources to support such projects. Future 'tea' events are being planned throughout the region's libraries in coming months.