

Telling tales Literacy Aotearoa Dunedin

Our lives are all made up of many stories and everyone has a tale to tell.

This fact was clearly demonstrated when students and tutors from Literacy Aotearoa, Dunedin gathered together in the Dunedin Public Library to celebrate Adult Learners' Week on September 8th.

"It is empowering and fun to share stories about your life," said Sandy McKay, who tutors the Family Stories writing group.

And that is exactly what more than 25 students did. In front of a crowd of more than 60, students and tutors all took to the lectern and shared stories.

The stories were sad, funny, inspirational and informative.

Students shared stories, anecdotes and poems that covered an impressive range of topics. One learner spoke of her battle with bi-polar disorder, another of how learning to play the piano had changed her life. A recent immigrant spoke of the difficulties involved in coming to a new country and another talked about how exploring the beaches, parks and forests had changed her experience of the place she now called home. One retiree shared a humorous yarn about his uncle Harry, while another read about coping with her mother's death. One after another the stories flowed . . . From childhood tales of 'digging to China' to what kind of food people eat in Iran.

It was a joyous mix. Long, short, funny, light-hearted, serious and sad. . . The stories were heartfelt and delivered with courage.

All the learners who spoke were attending a variety of courses including: Youth group, English Conversation Work Ready, Speaking Confidently, Family Stories, and Men's Communication.

"It's great to get together as a Poupou like this and it's really inspiring to have people share their stories," said Co-Manager, Margaret Bennett.

The afternoon concluded with some lunch and a spot of harp playing from 'Speaking Confidently' tutor, Dale Benson.

The Dunedin Poupou aim to put together a hard copy collection of their stories by the end of the year.

