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HALCYON TIMES: Helen Kentos chats with Toni Risson before a large audience at the Greek Cafes function at the Ipswich Art Gallery on Tuesday.

Photo: Rob Williams SE1207WJ

Greek cafes era recalled

AN IPSWICH book brought more than 100 people together on Tuesday for a trip down memory lane.

Author Toni Risson hosted a gathering at the Ipswich Art Gallery to pay tribute to those who had been involved with *Aphrodite and the Mixed Grill*, a history of Greek cafes in Ipswich.

"We had some people in their late 80s, and a lot of 70-year-olds," Ms Risson said.

"From where I was standing

on the stage, I could see some quite young people as well."

Guest speakers included Andrew Tanos, Manuel Kallinicos and Helen Kentos.

Mr Tanos told of growing up at the Sydney Cafe in the heart of Ipswich, while Mr Kallinicos talked about the relationships between Greeks and Anglo-Australians.

The audience was captivated by the tales of Mrs Kentos, 80, who ran the milk bar next to the Wintergarden

Theatre with her husband John in the 1950s.

"It (the book) has brought back my youth and how times have changed," Mrs Kentos said.

"Toni went to so much trouble.

"I think everybody in Ipswich should be so proud."

Aphrodite and the Mixed Grill accompanies the exhibition, Greek Cafes in Ipswich, which is showing at the Ipswich Art Gallery.