

Italians of Brisbane 2

FABIO BAGGIO

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*Events and Personalities
of the Italian Community
from 1945 to 1990*

Scalabrini Migration Center
Rintocchi - Brisbane
2009

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English translation by Leanne Sorbello and Stefano Girola

Scalabrini Migration Center
4, 13th Street, New Manila, Quezon City - Philippines

ISBN 978-971-8789-13-1
Printed in Australia

Front Cover
“Custom House”

Top illustration - 2004: courtesy of Rintocchi - Brisbane
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INTRODUCTION

It took almost four years to complete this project that started in 2002, thanks to the inspiration of Fr Mauro Conte, Scalabrinian missionary. The project, in fact, produced its first "fruit" in 2004, when the first volume of "Italians in Brisbane" was published. The second volume has undoubtedly required more time.

Right from the start, I had expressed to Fr Mauro a certain hesitation to extend the historical analysis to events that happened after World War II. While studying at the Gregorian University I had learnt that the account of events from which fifty years have not yet elapsed, belongs more to the "news reports" than to history. Many public and private archives share this vision and do not allow the examination of documents related to people that could reasonably be still alive. Fifty years usually marks the passage of two generations and can guarantee a minimum of objectivity to the historical analysis. When the protagonists of the events that are recounted are still alive, it is necessary to interview them in order to confirm or deny the data gathered from the documents. The problem is that often memories can change from person to person and sometimes these memories contradict each other. The historian finds himself in the very uncomfortable position of having to choose which memory is more important, running the risk of wronging one person or the other. However, after expressing all my hesitations, I have decided to accept the challenge, limiting myself to writing a chronology of the events that marked the life of the Italian community in Brisbane from 1945 to 1990.

At the methodological level, considering the different nature of the study, some changes have been necessary in comparison to the first volume. I have tried to compensate for the narrowness of the archival sources by accessing newspaper collections and periodical libraries and by interviewing key informants. The unpublished sources that have been consulted are essentially the documents held by the Archives of the Archdiocese of Brisbane and by the *Archivio di*

Casa Italia; some monographs "pro manuscripto" found in private collections; a couple of honours thesis that can be accessed only at University libraries. I also visited the archives of the Capuchin Fathers in Sydney where I obtained some testimonies and an interesting booklet, but I was not able to obtain the necessary authorisation to directly view some of the archived documents. Although there was the possibility, I decided not to consult the archive of the Brisbane section of the Dante Alighieri Society, so as not to impinge on the work of an esteemed Australian colleague: Don Dignan. Don in fact, already has for some years been working on a monograph of the story of the cited society, which it seems is close to publication. Regarding the archives of the other Italian associations established in the Queensland capital, according to their current managers, they are either non-existent or not accessible. One does not exclude the possibility that part of the archived material is kept in the private homes of members or past presidents; locating them, however, would have required a systematic investigation that was not possible within the scope of this work. Thanks to the exemplary accessibility of the Australian libraries, I was able to consult all the publications concerning Italian immigration to Australia in the post WWII period. I have analysed in particular depth the studies and monographs on the Italian presence in Queensland and Brisbane in the same period. A search aimed at the resources available on the web allowed the viewing of some documents in digital form. The majority of the news regarding the Brisbane Italian community were found in *La Fiamma* and in *Il Globo*. The two Italian newspapers, published respectively in Sydney and Melbourne, revealed a wealth of information. The four volumes of articles meticulously collected by Carmelo Caruso has enormously facilitated this research. Perusal of the original microfilms was conducted on various occasions in the State Library of New South Wales and in the State Library of Victoria. During my four short visits to Brisbane I had the opportunity to interview nine members of the Brisbane Italian community. Fr Mauro Conte assisted in the selection of these candidates for interview. Two other people were interviewed by tele-conference.

The format of this second volume differs somewhat from that used in the first volume. Considering the material gathered, I opted

for a thematic rearrangement of the chapters. The first chapter aims to briefly present the evolution of Italian immigration in Australia, in Queensland and in Brisbane after the Second World War. The second chapter is dedicated to the chronology of events that have in some way been of interest to the whole Italian community of the capital of Queensland. In the third chapter I have sought to summarise the events that have involved the protagonists of the numerous Italian associations founded in Brisbane from 1945 to 1990. The religious assistance given to the immigrants in the post-war period was the subject of the fourth chapter.

This volume also, like the preceding, presents its limitations. As indicated above, I don't claim that this chronicle is equal in value to an historical analysis. For this reason, I have sought to adhere to the chronological narration of the events, avoiding as much as possible hypothesis and subjective judgements. On some occasions, to fill some "gaps" in the chronology, I relied on the verisimilitude endorsed by the interviews gathered. The collation of documents and interviews often turned out to be difficult and fragmented, predominantly due to the enormous geographical distances. My usual residence in the Philippines and the distribution of the sources across different Australian cities has not permitted me to gather the data in the sequence which I had initially planned. This problem inevitably extended the time required for the work. The information reported by *La Fiamma* and *Il Globo*, albeit abundant, was not uniformly distributed across all of the period considered. The articles concerning the Brisbane Italian community, being linked to the presence or not in Brisbane of a diligent correspondent, are sometimes very abundant and detailed and at other times, absent. There are months and even whole years in which the Brisbane Italians seem to disappear from the pages of the two newspapers. Also, some years were not able to be viewed. There are other writings that could have been consulted to have a complete picture of the chronology and contents of the events that were the object of my study. The local newspapers in English, that I consulted only on rare occasions, could enrich the narration with interesting details. A more meticulous investigation (and without time restrictions), moreover, could lead to the discovery of important documents kept in some private house. Cross-checking interviews

with other protagonists could in the end enable a more objective vision of the events. In this volume, not all the Brisbane Italians and not all the events have been mentioned. At the risk of sounding obvious, it seems to me opportune to mention this and to ask excuse from those who could feel "excluded" from the story. The criteria for including material, even when they are valid, are always subjective. On the other hand, this allows me to pass the baton to those who want to accept the challenge of deepening and completing the work which has been commenced in this book. There remains much to write about the Brisbane Italians, but allow me to suggest to those interested to wait some years in order to allow for a more scientific exercise with an historical retrospective.

I would like to conclude by thanking those who have faithfully accompanied me on this enthusiastic journey through the lives of the Italians of Brisbane. Fr Mauro Conte and Fr Maurizio Pettenà. Their assistance was fundamental to the objectives of the research. I want to thank Don Dignan for his precious advice given on numerous occasions and the trust demonstrated in giving me the manuscript prior to publication. I want to thank Carmela Bozzi, who once again kindly carried out the work of editing the book. I then thank Carmelo Caruso, who has generously made available his precious collection of newspaper articles. Finally thanks to all the people who have agreed to be interviewed and the managers of all the associations for their availability and collaboration.

CHAPTER ONE

Italian Immigration after World War II

1. The war period

In the initial plan of this second volume on the Italians of Brisbane I had envisaged a whole chapter dedicated to the war period (1940-1945), the period in which was written the darkest page of the history of Italian immigration in Australia. The unjustified arrest and, still more, the iniquitous imprisonment of thousands of Italian immigrants considered “enemy aliens” represented a true and proper tragedy for the Italian community of Australia, in particular of Queensland. The recent publication of studies totally dedicated to this topic,¹ to which I refer the reader, has brought about the necessary retrenchment of my original intentions.

On 10 June 1940, Mussolini's Italy entered into the war as a German ally. The following day, the Australian police proceeded with the arrest of hundreds of Italian immigrants that were identified as “dangerous” from investigations conducted by the Commonwealth Investigation Bureau in the preceding months. According to the official documents, the arrested were adherents to pro-fascist organisations. Recent investigations, however, have found that in many cases these accusations were unreliable. Many names ended up on the “black list” on the basis of anonymous denouncements by

¹ See C. Elkner, I. Martinuzzi O'Brien, G. Rando and A. Cappello, *Enemy Aliens: The Internment of Italian Migrants in Australia*, Connor Court Publishing, Ballan 2005; K. Saunders and R. Daniels, *Alien Justice: Wartime Internment in Australia and North America*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia 2000; and K. Saunders and H. Taylor, “The Enemy Within? The Process of Internment of Enemy Aliens in Queensland 1939-45,” *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 34 (1988) 1, pp. 16–27.

Australian citizens, whose “good faith” was never verified by the relevant authorities. Towards the end of the year there were 2,107 Italian residents of Queensland in Australian internment camps. In 1941 the *Sunday Truth* newspaper began a denigrating campaign against the Italians in Queensland that strongly shaped public opinion. They were publicly accusing Italian immigrants of espionage, sabotage and collaboration in support of an imminent Japanese invasion in North Queensland. On 19 February 1942, Darwin was bombed and the distrust of Italians reached levels of true paranoia. The following days saw the commencement of mass arrests of all the Italian citizens resident in Queensland. The action extended also to many immigrants that were naturalized as British citizens.² Mons. James Duhig, Archbishop of Brisbane, was convinced that the true reasons for the ethnic “round up” were different from those which were declared:

“The fact is that for many years the number and success of the Italian colony in Queensland had provoked jealousy on the part of many and the flame has been fanned by the fact that they are Catholics. The entry of Italy into the war was regarded as an excellent opportunity for those people to vent all their spleen on the Italians. I have known excellent law-abiding Italians, naturalized British subjects and even with sons at the war, to be interned. In some cases jealousy, prejudice and anti-Catholic bias have succeeded in getting these Italians out of the way.”³

In December 1942, the number of Italians from Queensland interned in Australian prison camps rose to 2,250. The majority were adult males, employed predominantly in the flourishing agricultural industry to the north of the State. Their forced exodus obliged women

² See N. J. Byrne, “The Wartime Treatment of Italians in South Queensland,” in O. Bonutto, *A Migrant's Story*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia 1994, pp. 91-94.

³ J. Duhig, *Letter to P. F. Lyons, 30 January 1942*, AAB (Archives of the Archdiocese of Brisbane), Box Italians, Folder 1942.

and children to work the fields and plantations, with enormous sacrifices.

In the years of armed conflict, when considering all the States of Australia, the total number of Italians imprisoned was 4,727 out of an Italian immigrant population which in 1940 was estimated to total around 26,000 people.⁴ The internment camps for “enemy aliens” were situated far from the “dangerous” northern coasts. The largest were at Liverpool, Orange, Hay and Cowra, in New South Wales; at Tatura, in Victoria and at Loveday, in South Australia. The conditions in the camps were good and the treatment of the prisoners was in accordance with the Geneva Convention, as verified by various neutral observers.⁵ In the days following the Italian surrender on 3 September 1943, the official reasons for imprisonment fell over and the Australian authorities began to release the Italian detainees with different conditions, according to distinct categories:

“[...] Naturalized British Subjects of Italian Origin will be released. Those Naturalized British Subjects who own farming properties in North Queensland will be placed under a restriction that they reside in their farms. [...] Naturalized British Subjects who are not farms owners, will be released subject to a restriction that they accept work in the State where they formerly resided [...]. [...] they must periodically report particulars of their place of employment and abode Security Service. [...] Unnaturalized aliens of Italian origin will [...] be released. On their release they are, of course, automatically bound to serve in the Civil Aliens Corps [...]. [...] so far as it possible they shall be employed in the States where they resided before internment.”⁶

⁴ See I. Martinuzzi O’Brien, *Australia’s Italians 1788-1988*, Italian Historical Society and State Library of Victoria, Melbourne 1989, p. 61.

⁵ See G. Cresciani, *Migrants or mates = Emigranti o compari: Italian Life in Australia*, Knockmore, Sydney c1988, p. 201.

⁶ W. B. Simpson, *Letter to James Duhig, 29 October 1943*, AAB, Box Italians, Folder 1943.

The persistence of the Japanese threat in the Pacific did not facilitate the process of reintegrating the “enemy aliens.” Their return “home” was often marked by diffidence and discrimination on the part of the authorities and the Australian community in general. In September 1944 only 144 fascist activists remained in the internment camps.⁷

An additional 18,000 Italian soldiers arrived in Australia during the war years: they were prisoners of war from North Africa or India. They were detained in specially equipped camps, distinct from those reserved for civilians. A good six of these camps were in Queensland. Ironically some of these prisoners were sent to fill the gaps left by the *enemy aliens* on the plantation fields in the north. From June 1943 permission was given to some of them to work outside of the camps without military surveillance. In the following months the Italian soldiers were employed in 14,000 jobs that the Australian labourers were not able to cover. The relationship the prisoners had with the local community and the Italian immigrant families was very positive, such that some of the prisoners after being repatriated decided to emigrate to Australia.⁸

⁷ See G. Cresciani (1988), p. 201.

⁸ See I. Martinuzzi O’Brien (1989), p. 62; and G. Cresciani (1988) p. 202.

2. Italian immigration in Australia

In 1945 the first Australian minister for immigration was appointed, Arthur Augustus Calwell. The creation of a new department signalled the clear intention of the Federal government to populate the Australian territories as quickly as possible. The new minister was entrusted with the task of increasing the national population at the rate of 1% per annum. Arthur Calwell, with his famous motto “populate or perish”, soon proved adequate to the task. The initial idea was to obtain the desired number of immigrants directly from Great Britain, but in the space of a few months the minister realised that this was not feasible.⁹ The British response did not satisfy the need. Keen to find an alternative solution, in 1947 the Australian government reached an agreement with the International Refugee Organisation, according to which Australia undertook to offer a permanent settlement in its territory to the refugees of World War II. The acceptance of the refugees was however conditioned on their willingness to settle in the localities assigned to them by the Federal authorities, in a manner which did not represent a threat to Australian workers. In the following years thousands of refugees arrived, above all from Eastern Europe. In 1947 Australia opened the door also to other European migrants but there was still a clear preference for British immigrants as Minister Calwell publicly affirmed: “I hope that for every foreign migrant there are ten from the United Kingdom”. This expectation was not confirmed by subsequent events.

The Italian government, in the immediate post-war period, was busy with the reconstruction of a nation brought to its knees both economically and politically. Amongst the various problems, the government had to reckon with a high level of unemployment due to the excess of labourers associated with the return of thousands of soldiers. The most simple and immediate solution was already written in the pages of Italian history at the end of the 19th century. In 1949, Alcide De Gasperi, Prime minister of the newborn Italian Republic,

⁹ See I. Martinuzzi O’Brien (1989), p. 66; A. Boncompagni, “In Australia,” in P. Bevilacqua, A. De Clementi and E. Franzina (eds.), *Storia dell’emigrazione italiana*, vol. II. Arrivi, Rome 2002, p. 115; and G. Cresciani, *The Italians*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Sydney 1985, pp. 91-94.

exhorted fellow citizens to learn a foreign language and to migrate abroad. In truth, there was little need to encourage a mass migration that had already spontaneously begun. Australia, due to the fact that many were called by relatives who had already migrated and also to the positive experience of the prisoners of war, was one of the preferred destinations. Between 1947 and 1950, out of a total of more than a million expatriations only 25,000 were directed towards Oceania. It was a rather small number considering the enthusiasm towards migration evident in those years. On 19 July 1950, Luciano Magrini, journalist from *La Stampa* in Turin, wrote:

“While from everywhere there is negative news on the prospect of our migration, a promising horizon opens on the Australian continent that could offer a wide variety of employment conditions for our labourers, optimal for the climate and excellent from the social point of view. [...]It is urgent to reorganize and unify our very deficient emigration services and provide wisely and timely all services needed to support migrants and to inspire in Australia the greatest faith in our potential and capacities.”¹⁰

The 1947 Australian census indicated that 33,632 people born in Italy were resident; in 1954, again according to the census data, the number of Italians had already risen to 119,897. A bilateral accord signed by the two countries in March, 1951, significantly contributed to the increase in Italian immigration.¹¹ The Australian government had already signed a migration agreement with Holland in February of that year. In Italy's case, the bilateral pact included the implementation of a programme of assisted emigration/immigration, initially for five years, but with the possibility of future extensions.

¹⁰ “La Stampa. L’emigrazione in Australia,” *Bollettino quindicinale dell’emigrazione*, IV (1950) 15-16, p. 316.

¹¹ See G. Cresciani (1985), p. 95; I. Martinuzzi O’Brien (1989), p. 66; A. Boncompagni (2002), p. 115; J. Jupp, *Birthplaces of the Australian people: colonial & Commonwealth censuses, 1828-1991*, Centre for Immigration & Multicultural Studies, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra 1995, p. 57.

The two countries would conjointly finance the purchase of maritime tickets for Australia, asking the migrants a contribution of 10 pounds. In Italy and in other European countries they established emigration offices to recruit candidates to expatriate.

In many cases, the Australian reality was “embellished” to convince reluctant candidates. As an immediate effect, the Italian emigrants directed to Oceania increased from 13,500 in 1950 to 17,600 in 1951, to 26,800 in 1952. The numbers would have increased yet again in the following years if unfavourable conditions had not intervened. Many Italian immigrants, once arrived at their destination, were lodged at temporary camps at Bonegilla, Williamstown, Wacol, Greta and Villawood. They were essentially military quarters or prison camps readapted for temporary collective lodging. The work promised before departing was not available and the wait became unending, especially for those who had debts to pay in Italy. The economic recession had drastically reduced the offers of work and the distance of the camps from towns and cities made finding work even more difficult. In July 1952, 2,000 Italians, crowded in the Bonegilla camp, rebelled against the Australian authorities. The police intervened to quell the riots while 200 soldiers and four tanks were mobilized to patrol the zone. In the following days an Italian migrant at Bonegilla wrote disconsolately:

“It is a continuous Calvary. They leave us for months in a temporary camp, without money and lacking after some time the necessities to live with only five shillings a week as an unemployment benefit equivalent to 300 Italian liras [...] Within a few days there will be a thousand more new Italian unemployed for whom the government had found temporary work about two months ago after the mass protests of migrants. Here there isn't even a shadow of work.”¹²

In the following October in Sydney another 200 Italian migrants organised lively protest demonstrations. On this occasion the protesters targeted the Italian diplomatic centres in Australia, accused

¹² “Il Calvario degli emigrati in Australia,” *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione*, VI (1952) 22, p. 341.

of breaking the promises made by the Italian government when they were recruited. On 19 October *La Stampa* of Turin published the following news:

“The incident occurred in the surroundings of the general Italian Consulate in Sydney that is situated in an office a very short distance from the central station. A column of 200 Italian emigrants presented themselves in front of the entrance where some policemen were located to block their access. [...] Pieces of wood, iron bars, material from the pavement. All were taken as arms by the Italian workers caught up in a violent, collective conflict and the blood ran from one part to the other.”¹³

Faced with this show of dissent, at the end of 1952, the assisted immigration programme from Italy was suspended and in 1953 the number of Italian emigrants in Oceania declined to 12,865.¹⁴ According to the statistics collected by the Italian government between 1946 and 1954, 101,020 Italians emigrated to Australia while 5,899 returned to Italy with a total difference of 95,121 individuals.¹⁵

In March 1954 the Australian government decided to reopen the door to waves of assisted Italian migrants but some restrictions were imposed. Only relatives or fiancées of Italians who had already migrated thanks to the special programme, could take advantage of the bilateral accord. In December of the same year, the restrictions were removed and the programme was extended until January 1964. In 1955 there was the greatest wave of Italian migration towards Oceania, with 27,699 expatriations. In June 1961 new conditions were introduced: only dependents explicitly nominated by Italian migrants resident in Australia could take advantage of government assistance.

In the following July, the Bonegilla camp was the scene of another violent episode involving Italian immigrants. The economic recession had made it impossible for the newly arrived immigrants to

¹³ As above, p. 341.

¹⁴ See G. Cresciani (1988), pp. 244-247 and 253; and G. Cresciani (1985), p. 94.

¹⁵ See “L’emigrazione in Australia,” *Bollettino quindicinale dell’emigrazione*, IX (1955) 19, p. 277.

find work. The protests of the immigrants resulted in open conflict with the Australian police and this caused the temporary suspension of assisted passages. From February 1964, a new temporary regulation was introduced with a view to the establishment of a new accord in the coming years. This regulation allowed the two governments broad discretion regarding the implementation of the migration assistance programme. From 1951 to 1967 another 42,000 Italians entered Australia through the assisted immigration programme. Table I¹⁶ illustrates the arrivals divided into 12-month intervals:

TABLE I
Assisted Italian migrants from 1951 to 1967

Period	Assisted migrants	Period	Assisted migrants
1951-1952	5,384	1959-1960	3,006
1952-1953	4,586	1960-1961	3,013
1953-1954	811	1961-1962	1,255
1954-1955	3,319	1962-1963	227
1955-1956	9,285	1963-1964	195
1956-1957	4,805	1964-1965	158
1957-1958	2,781	1965-1966	281
1958-1959	3,014	1966-1967	300*
		Total	42,120

**Estimated arrivals*

From 1955 to 1961, including assisted and non-assisted migrants, an average of 19,500 Italians a year emigrated to Oceania. The Australian census of 1961 counted 228,296 individuals born in Italy

¹⁶ Department of Immigration, "Italian Assisted Migration Agreement," in G. Cresciani, (1988), p. 247.

that were residents of the Federal territory. In 1966 the number increased to 267,325.¹⁷

On 26 September 1967, on the occasion of the visit to Australia of the president of the Italian Republic, Giuseppe Saragat, a new *Migration and Settlement Agreement* was signed in Canberra. The new bilateral agreement no longer offered some financial assistance to the emigrants going to Australia, but guaranteed them important rights in the Australian territory. The migration process could be initiated from the nomination by Italian residents in Australia; it could also be initiated by direct bargaining from employers; a pertinent request presented to the Australian authorities; special migration programmes determined by the respective governments. On the basis of common ethical principles, the right to reunite families was recognized, when it was through the direct nomination of the immigrant resident in Australia. The concession of the visa was however conditioned by the fulfilment of Australian immigration criteria on the part of all nominees.¹⁸ Following the ratification of the new accord, Italian emigration to Australia increased by some hundreds of individuals in comparison to the previous year, but the benefits offered by the 1967 pact did not succeed in reversing the decline in migration that had already begun in 1963. Table II¹⁹ gives us a clear picture of the Italian emigration to Oceania from 1947 to 1976.

¹⁷ See J. Jupp (1995), p. 57.

¹⁸ See Australia and Italy, *Migration and Settlement Agreement. Signed at Canberra on 26 September 1967*, http://untreaty.un.org/unts/1_60000/24/1/00046001.pdf, accessed on 17 June 2008.

¹⁹ See “Appendice statistica (serie storiche 1876-1976),” in G. Rosoli, *Un secolo di emigrazione italiana. 1876-1976*, Rome 1978, pp. 345-349.

TABLE II
Italian Emigration in Oceania: expatriations and repatriations

Year	Expatriations	Repatriations	Year	Expatriations	Repatriations
1947	50	1	1962	14,411	523
1948	2,047	313	1963	11,539	708
1949	10,939	199	1964	10,890	890
1950	13,516	271	1965	10,401	560
1951	17,634	467	1966	12,548	751
1952	26,802	1,135	1967	13,680	489
1953	12,865	1,940	1968	14,505	1,161
1954	16,962	1,623	1969	8,910	3,792
1955	27,699	1,820	1970	6,540	3,961
1956	25,640	2,437	1971	6,348	3,743
1957	17,007	2,773	1972	4,593	4,444
1958	12,384	3,420	1973	3,515	4,274
1959	14,160	2,588	1974	3,773	3,287
1960	19,629	1,313	1975	2,531	2,528
1961	16,379	671	1976	2,807	2,245
			Total	294,564	47,147

The effects of the diminution of Italian emigration to Australia were clearly evident in the 1970's. In the Australian census of 1971 there were 289,476 persons born in Italy and residents of the Federal territory. In 1976 the census data reported a dip in the Italian presence in Australia: there were 280,154 born in Italy. This tendency was confirmed by the 1981 census that counted 275,883 persons born in Italy.²⁰ Besides, already in 1973 and 1974 the flux of Italian emigrants towards Australia had reported a negative balance.

From 1947 to 1981 the Italian presence on Australian territory was almost decupled. In the decade of the 1970's it was estimated that in Australia, in addition to those born in Italy (first generation), there were another 220,000 "Italians" of the second generation. According

²⁰ See J. Jupp (1995), p. 57.

to such estimates, the total Italian migration contingent would have been around a half a million people.²¹ In the meantime, the Federal government had stopped worrying about rapidly populating the national territory: it now had to focus on how to manage the dynamics of the cohabitation of the heterogeneous elements who had been “imported” en masse into Australian society in the previous years. While the experts were intent on designing the new Australian social model that would then be defined “multicultural,” the Federal government was busy publicly recognising the contribution of the immigrants to the development of the local communities. On this basis, in January 1975, Australia signed an agreement of cultural collaboration with the Italian republic (“Agreement of Cultural Cooperation between Australia and Italy”). Even if the text always refers to reciprocal actions, it appears clear that the various initiatives were directed at Australia, which was deeply interested in knowing better the culture of its new citizens. The importance given to the preservation of the cultural identity even within the second generation is evident in the second article of the agreement:

“The two countries shall co-operate in establishing an exchange of teachers in order to facilitate, among other purposes, the integration of Italian children into the Australian community, while maintaining their cultural ties with their country of origin.”²²

Just after the agreement came into effect, two Italian cultural institutions were founded in Melbourne and Sydney. In 1976, The University of Sydney inaugurated the Frederick May Foundation for Italian Studies. In the following years, the Italian Historical Society and the Vaccari Foundation were founded in Melbourne. The Dante Alighieri Societies, already present in major Australian cities, were consolidated and reinvigorated in their important work of the diffusion of Italian culture.²³

²¹ See A. Boncompagni (2002), p. 116.

²² See “Agreement of Cultural Co-operation between Australia and Italy,” in G. Cresciani (1988), p. 274.

²³ See G. Cresciani (1988), p. 272.

The 1980's confirmed the progressive decline of the presence of first generation Italians in Australia. In addition to the drastic decline in arrivals and the repatriation of many, was the inevitable disappearance of the pioneers of the post-war period that were already advanced in age. The 1986 Australian census counted 262,878 people born in Italy and resident in Australia. From detailed estimates conducted by demographers in the same year they could identify about 243,400 second generation Italians and another 58,000 "Italians" of the third generation, for a total Italian population of around 564,000 individuals.²⁴ In 1988, according to statistical data presented by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 200,000 first and second generation Italians resided in the constituency of the Melbourne Consulate, 180,000 in the constituency of the Sydney Consulate and 90,000 in that of Adelaide.²⁵ From these figures it is clear that the concentration of the Italian presence was around the three large Australian cities. The census of 1991 revealed in the Federal territory a contingent of 254,780 persons born in Italy.²⁶

Regarding the regional origins of the emigrants that arrived in Australia after World War II, the figures are distinctly in favour of the southern Italian regions. If one considers the migratory wave that goes from 1959 to 1979, 56% of the Italian immigrants that came to Australia were of southern Italian origin, while 25% of them came from the Italian islands.²⁷ The regions most represented were, in order, Sicily and Calabria, followed by Venetia and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.²⁸ With regard to this last region, it should be noted that the political uncertainty and the economic crisis that characterised the zone of Trieste immediately following the war induced thousands of *Friulani* to emigrate, directed above all to Canada and Australia.²⁹ The percentages related to the regional provenience of Italian migrants in Australia estimated in the 1950's, 60's, 70's, substantially

²⁴ As above, p. 245.

²⁵ See A. Boncompagni (2002), p. 116.

²⁶ See J. Jupp (1995), p. 57.

²⁷ See A. Boncompagni (2002), pp. 116-117.

²⁸ See I. Martinuzzi O'Brien (1989), p. 66.

²⁹ See G. Cresciani (1988), p. 241.

mirror those related to Italian citizens resident abroad in 2006, as shown in Table III.³⁰

TABLE III
Regional provenience of Italians living abroad

Italian regions	Europe	Africa	Asia	America	Oceania	Total
Valle d'Aosta	2,877	98	30	490	49	3,544
Piedmont	66,241	4,975	1,660	67,544	2,894	143,314
Lombardy	145,531	5,943	4,449	77,937	4,698	238,558
Liguria	30,696	1,316	801	41,215	1,280	75,308
Trentino A. A.	39,221	615	312	10,828	651	51,627
Venetia	112,579	4,502	2,301	103,758	10,743	233,883
Friuli V. G.	70,950	3,451	940	42,485	5,657	123,483
Emilia R.	60,120	2,392	1,383	36,131	1,331	101,357
Tuscany	44,896	2,577	3,575	37,703	2,352	91,103
Marche	32,252	834	427	44,080	1,738	79,331
Umbria	18,807	536	264	5,524	412	25,543
Latium	65,805	3,198	2,059	46,392	5,062	122,516
Abruzzo	61,091	1,367	257	59,204	9,198	131,117
Campania	200,714	2,345	730	125,876	11,379	341,044
Molise	29,283	184	74	34,027	2,564	66,132
Basilicata	43,210	383	86	37,097	2,843	83,619
Apulia	219,462	1,896	467	51,143	4,208	277,176
Calabria	141,684	757	232	114,801	21,668	279,142
Sicily	402,506	3,075	762	127,712	20,436	554,491
Sardinia	76,842	596	236	5,147	1,142	83,963
Total	1,864,767	41,040	21,045	1,069,094	110,305	3,106,251

The higher percentages from Campania and Abruzzo seem to correspond more to the maintenance of Italian citizenship than to migratory flux from these regions. The migrants from Campania and Abruzzo, in fact, arrived in Australia in more recent times in respect to residents from other regions cited; therefore it is plausible to suggest that, considering the small amount of time residing abroad and the greater possibility of obtaining dual citizenship, the majority of them had kept their original nationality.

³⁰ See Fondazione Migrantes, *Rapporto italiani nel mondo 2006*, Centro Studi e Ricerche Idos, Rome 2006, p. 72.

Regarding the distribution of Italian immigrants in the Federal territory, the census data in the period considered reveal a strong preference for the State of Victoria, that was flourishing economically and with climatic conditions that better matched the expectations of the new arrivals. Then followed New South Wales that was also undergoing major economic expansion. The notable increase in the Italian presence in South Australia and Western Australia could without doubt be attributed to the programme of the Australian government to increase the demographics in these areas, effected through special immigration schemes in which many Italian immigrants took part. Table IV³¹ presents an overview of the distribution of people born in Italy and resident in the various Australian States according to Federal census data.

TABLE IV
Distribution of Italian born in the various Australian States

Year	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
1947	8,721	8,305	8,541	2,428	5,422	64	125	26	33,632
1954	29,940	42,429	16,795	11,833	17,295	975	302	328	119,897
1961	62,365	91,075	20,000	26,230	25,249	1,536	565	1,276	228,296
1966	72,875	111,219	20,272	30,848	28,141	1,448	646	1,876	267,325
1971	80,416	121,758	19,280	32,428	30,541	1,485	1,098	2,470	289,476
1976	78,396	116,712	18,875	31,943	29,317	1,423	790	2,697	280,154
1981	77,089	115,432	17,958	32,325	29,213	1,344	763	2,773	275,883
1986	73,185	109,204	17,410	29,616	27,747	1,262	752	2,716	261,892
1991	70,552	105,699	17,844	28,962	26,871	1,334	783	2,735	254,780

The integration of the new Italian immigrants into Australian society was not easy, especially in the first years after the war. The fact that Australia and Italy were on opposite sides of the conflict in World War II in many ways helped to maintain the discrimination that Italian immigrants had suffered during the war years. The economic recessions that repeatedly hit Australia during the 1950's and 60's

³¹ See J. Jupp (1995), p. 57.

revived the need for a scapegoat, resulting in many Australians blaming the new arrivals for the national malaise. The autochthonous animosity against the Italians was fuelled by a certain “envy” caused by the strong work ethic displayed by the immigrants from the *Bel Paese* and by the reasonable economic success that some of them managed to reach in a relatively short time.

Italian migrants who arrived in Australia before World War II do not seem to have played an important role in the process of integration. On the contrary, many had abandoned Italian citizenship and tended to integrate with the local community, to the point of avoiding any contact with the new arrivals. Of the 33,632 Italian born migrants that the census recorded in Australia in 1947, only 7,172 had kept their Italian citizenship. This means that almost 80% of the immigrants that had arrived before World War II had already opted for Australian naturalisation. According to the available census data, the change of citizenship by Italians principally occurred between 1933 and 1947. One could reasonably infer that Italian events linked to Fascism; to the African military campaign; and to the entrance into the war alongside Hitler had heavily influenced the choices of Italians.³²

Due in part to the reasons discussed above, Italian communities in Australia manifested in the first decade after the war a strong tendency towards isolationism and the creations of “ghettos”. To fight against a real or ‘perceived’ discrimination, Italian migrants created “identity islands” where they tended to reproduce the *paese* that they had left in Italy. Despite the economic, political and social incentives for a rapid assimilation, Italians chose to maintain their own cultural identity, their own language and cuisine and their own religious traditions. Thanks to a spontaneous concentration in specific urban areas, the small world of necessary social relations remained Italian. The butcher and the baker spoke Italian (or even a dialect), and so did many colleagues at work. On Sundays, migrants would meet at the Italian Holy Mass and then at the Italian club among *paesani*. If not for the few words exchanged with employers, there was never a real need to learn English and for the bureaucratic emergencies, the

³² See “Statistiche. Italiani in Australia,” *Bollettino quindicinale dell’emigrazione*, III (1949) 17, p. 320.

children could act as translators. Interaction with the autochthonous community was often reduced to the essential. The networks of family and *paesani*, Italian associations and the assistance associations were able to cater for the essential needs of the immigrants without recourse to the Australian government.

If the opportunities to interact with the Australian society were limited for men, in comparison the situation for women was even more problematic. Segregated at home, without any possibility of a social life apart from the daily visit to the shops, Italian migrants' wives remained at the margins of the integration process. Historian Gianfranco Cresciani has eloquent words about this phenomenon:

“Italian Women, in particular, were disadvantaged. They often bought from Italian stores and their contacts were confined to Italian-speaking shopkeepers and tradesmen. It was virtually impossible for them to learn English and this led to estrangement from their own children who often refused to speak Italian in a blatant, pathetic attempt to cast away their ‘Italianness’ and to distinguish themselves as Australians, to avoid being discriminated against at school.”³³

In the 1970's, confronted by the disappointing results of the assimilation efforts, Australia changed policy, creating the idea of a multicultural society to be built together with the diverse ethnic communities residing within the national territory. The Italians wanted to express their cultural identity in the new social space that was broader and more interested to know the cultural background of the immigrants. In the following years, also thanks to the support of the Italian government, initiatives to maintain and diffuse the Italian cultural patrimony multiplied in Australia, especially in the large cities.³⁴ The ethnic roots were still strong, demonstrated by census data recorded during this period on the Australian naturalisation of Italian immigrants. Between 1945 and 1981, 216,236 immigrants decided to take Australian citizenship, while 119,655 preferred to

³³ G. Cresciani (1988), p. 265.

³⁴ See. Paganoni Anthony, *Valiant Struggles and Benign Neglect*, CMS, New York 2003, p. 149.

keep their Italian one.³⁵ It should be mentioned that the Catholic Church played a significant role in the process of inserting the immigrants into Australian society, through its immigration offices, parishes and Italian chaplains. Beyond religious comfort, the Church made a great effort in assisting the new arrivals in finding work, accommodation and with many other primary needs.³⁶

³⁵ G. Cresciani (1988), p. 267.

³⁶ See I. Martinuzzi O'Brien (1989), p. 66; and "Community Networks and Institutions," in S. Castle, C. Alcorso, G. Rando and E. Vasta (eds.), *Australia's Italians*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards 1992, pp. 107-112.

3. Italian immigration in Queensland

In 1947, on the threshold of the new wave of migration, Queensland boasted 8,541 persons born in Italy and resident in its own territory. As demonstrated in Table IV, these Italians were 25% of the total population of first generation Italians in Australia (33,632), according to the census data of that year. In Queensland 75% of the Italian contingent were between 30 and 64 years of age while only 0.7% was less than 14 years. Obviously, this did not include the children of the migrants that were born in Australia. Women represented 37% of the total and the distribution of age groups varies slightly from that relative to men in favour of younger groups. From the 1947 census statistics it appears that the Italian population was ageing, was predominantly male and with a migration experience of more than 10 years. Table V³⁷ illustrates in detail the sex and age of the Italian contingent in Queensland in 1947.

TABLE V
*People born in Italy and resident in Queensland in 1947
divided by age and sex*

Age	Male	Female	Total
0-14	35 (0.6%)	27 (0.8%)	62 (0,7%)
15-29	769 (14.3%)	680 (21.6%)	1,449 (17,0%)
30-44	1,680 (31.2%)	1,180 (37.4%)	2,860 (33,5%)
45-64	2,543 (47.2%)	1,110 (35.2%)	3,653 (42,8%)
65 and more	275 (5.1%)	106 (3.4%)	381 (4,4%)
Not declared	84 (1.6%)	52 (1.6%)	136 (1,6%)
All the ages	5,386 (100%)	3,155 (100%)	8,541 (100%)

In the years immediately following, the immigration flux from the *Bel Paese* doubled the Italian presence in Queensland. The 1954 census counted 16,795 persons born in Italy in the State territory,

³⁷ See D. W. Borrie, *Italians and Germans in Australia*, The Australian National University, Melbourne 1954, p. 72.

which constituted 1.3% of the total State population. Table VI³⁸ illustrates the increasing presence of Italians in Queensland according to the census data of 1933, of 1947 and of 1954.

TABLE VI
*Persons born in Italy and resident in Queensland
according to the census of 1933, 1947 and 1954*

Year	% on the total population	Number	% growth
1933	0.9%	8,355	-
1947	0.8%	8,541	+2.2%
1954	1.3%	16,795	+96.6%

The numerical increase registered in 1954, however should be considered within the general Australian context. If one considers it from the point of view of the individual States, the Italian presence in Queensland was in fact drastically diminished in percentage; it did, in fact, represent only 14% of the total number of 119,897 Italians counted in Australia.³⁹ These figures reveal that Queensland was not one of the preferred destinations of Italians immigrants in the post war period. Notwithstanding this, the community of Italian born immigrants constituted the largest non anglophile group of foreigners, followed at a notable distance by the Germans that made up almost 0.5% of the total Queensland population.

According to the census data of 1954, 93% of those born in Italy declared their religion as Catholic. Concerning the distribution of the Italian population throughout the State, the 1954 census gave the percentage of those born in Italy out of the total population according to the different regions in Queensland. In the metropolitan area (Brisbane), Italians constituted 0.6% of the total; in other urban areas (meaning other cities in Queensland) they represented 0.8% of the

³⁸ See J. Zubrzycki, *Immigrants in Australia: statistical supplement*, Australian National University, Canberra 1960, p. 56.

³⁹ See J. Jupp (1995), p. 57.

total; in rural areas they constituted 2.9% of the total.⁴⁰ With more details, in 1953 the *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione*⁴¹ presented the following perspective:

“The Italian communities of Queensland (northern Australia) are distributed as follows: Brisbane and surrounding districts around 3,500; Stanthorpe, Inglewood and surrounds 1,600; Childers, Biloela, Bundaberg 500; North Queensland, South of Townsville 3,000; North of Townsville, 12,500; in various towns in the inland 400, for a total of around 21,500”.⁴²

The total number of Italians appears to be greater than the figures presented in the census data but the *Bollettino*'s calculations included estimates of second generation Italians. The concentration of Italian immigrants in some zones of Queensland has been underlined also by other studies. The case of Ingham is rather emblematic. In 1954, over a quarter of the town population had been born in Italy.⁴³ In Stanthorpe, before World War II, those born in Italy constituted 10% of the population. They were the immigrants that arrived in the first half of the 20th century and that, thanks to their agricultural skills, had contributed significantly to the economic development of the town. From 1947 to 1959 the Italian presence in Stanthorpe grew by 300% and came to represent 15% of the local population.⁴⁴ In 1961, those born in Italy and living in Queensland numbered 20,000 with an increase of 19%. This however constituted only 8.8% of the total population of Italians registered in Australia by the census. A record number of Italians was reached in 1966, when the census date

⁴⁰ See J. Zubrzycki (1960), p. 56.

⁴¹ Il *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione* was a magazine published by the “Società umanitaria,” a private philanthropic foundation based in Milan. From 1949 to 1961 the issues of the *Bollettino* covered the main events related to the migrations of Italians both within their own country and abroad.

⁴² “Statistiche. Italiani nel Queensland,” *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione*, VII (1953) 1, p. 26.

⁴³ See D. Dignan and J. Dickinson, “Italians,” in Maximilian Brändle (ed.), *Multicultural Queensland 2001*, The State of Queensland, Brisbane 2001, p. 213.

⁴⁴ See M. Brändle and S. Karas (eds.), *Multicultural Queensland*, ECC/QMWA, Brisbane 1988, pp. 120-121.

revealed that 20,272 people born in Italy resided in Queensland. On the other hand, it was noted that the Italian population only grew by 272 units in five years and represented only 7.5% of the Italian contingent in the Federal territory. In 1971, the Italian population of Queensland had already decreased by 4.9% in respect to the previous five years. This was a trend that was confirmed in the following years up until the population reached 17 844 Italian born residents of Queensland, as of the 1991 census.⁴⁵

Regarding the regional composition of Italian migrants in Queensland, one study on a representative sample of the Italian resident population in the State territory, conducted at the beginning of the 1950's, revealed that almost 50% of the immigrants were from Sicily; another 42% were born in Piedmont, Lombardy or Venetia. Table VII⁴⁶ illustrates in detail the distribution of Italian born residents (as selected by the researchers) according to their region of origin.

TABLE VII
Born in Italy and resident in Queensland (sample)
divided by region of origin

Region	Number	Percentage
Piedmont	81	(12.6%)
Lombardy	91	(14.2%)
Venetia	100	(15.6%)
Friuli Venezia Giulia	19	(3.0%)
Sicily	311	(48.5%)
Other regions	39	(6.1%)
Total	641	(100%)

In the following years, predominantly due to chain migration, the breakdown of immigrants coming from the various regions remained consistent. In one study conducted in 1957 by John Andrew Hempel,

⁴⁵ See J. Jupp (1995), p. 57.

⁴⁶ See W. D. Borrie (1954), p. 77.

it was noted that the district of Inglewood was characterised by a strong Italian presence. The study indicated that 49% of the Italian immigrants of this area came from northern Italy, particularly from the province of Treviso. Before World War II, the high number of *Trevisani* in Inglewood gave rise to a flourishing agricultural industry specialising in the cultivation of tobacco. This community had attracted the attention of many people from Treviso and its surrounds who had decided to emigrate to Australia after the Second World War. The same dynamic had brought many Trevisani to choose Stanthorpe as a migratory destination, significantly adding to the already existing number of people in the community dedicated to fruit and vegetable production. In Stanthorpe, half of the Italians came from northern Italy; followed by those coming from the Italian islands, in particular, Sicily.⁴⁷ The Sicilian immigrants, however, were definitely the most numerous in North Queensland, where the pioneers had prospered in the sugar cane industry. In the 1960's, immigration from the southern and island regions of Italy prevailed throughout Queensland, with similar features to those noticed in the rest of Australia, as illustrated above.

From the occupational perspective, in 1953, the *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione* demonstrated how the great majority of Italian immigrants in Queensland worked in agriculture (75%) only 10% were employed in the building industry while 5% were retail dealers. The tourist industry with a strong concentration of immigrants in the restaurant sector had absorbed another 4%. The rest of the Italian immigrants were involved in fishing (2%), handicraft, small mechanic businesses (2%); the mining industry (1%). Professionals, clerks and artists represented 1% of the total.⁴⁸ The 1954 census data, that counted 11 248 people born in Italy of working age, confirmed the Italian predilection for agriculture (56.2%), even if the manufacturing industry was also rather attractive to the new arrivals. Table VIII⁴⁹ presents a summary of the employment situation

⁴⁷ See J. A. Hempel, *Italians in Queensland: some aspects of post-war settlement of Italian immigrants*, Australian National University, Canberra 1959, p. 63.

⁴⁸ See *Statistiche. Italiani nel Queensland*, Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione, VII (1953) 1, p. 26.

⁴⁹ See J. Zubrzycki (1960), p. 74.

of the three national groups most represented in Queensland and of the autochthonous population at the time of the 1954 census.

TABLE VIII
*Persons born in Italy, Holland, Germany and Australia
divided according to some selected occupational sectors*

Occupational Sector	Born in Italy	Born in Holland	Born in Germany	Born in Australia
Primary production	57.6%	10.4%	14.5%	14.5%
Mining industry	0.8%	1.7%	2.9%	1.2%
Manufacturing industry	12.0%	22.2%	13.7%	12.8%
Building industry	8.7%	15.3%	9.0%	6.9%
Commerce	3.4%	8.3%	2.8%	8.0%
Tourism industry	2.6%	2.7%	1.7%	1.7%
Other sectors	4.0%	10.1%	6.2%	15.0%
Non active population	10.9%	29.3%	49.2%	39.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

The low percentage of non-working first generation Italians, positioned third after Hungary (6.7%) and Czechoslovakia (8.1%) should be noted. This further confirms that the composition of Italian migration in this period was, for the most part, men of full working age. Table IX⁵⁰ illustrates the percentage of the working population of first generation Italians out of the total working population in Queensland according to the occupational status when the census data were collected. For comparative purposes, I have also shown the percentages of those born in Holland, Germany and in Australia.

⁵⁰ As above, p. 105.

TABLE IX
*Persons born in Italy, Holland, Germany and Australia
 divided according to their occupational status*

Occupational status	Born in Italy	Born in the Netherlands	Born in Germany	Born in Australia	Total in numbers
Employers	3.2%	0.4%	0.4%	83.7%	36,992
Self-employed	3.5%	0.6%	0.5%	84.5%	59,069
Employees	2.1%	0.2%	0.4%	83.5%	311,872
Trainees	1.2%	0.5%	0.2%	94.1%	4,226
Total working pop.	2.4%	0.5%	0.5%	83.8%	411,859
Unemployed	2.4%	0.5%	0.6%	78.9%	7,451
Total	2.4%	0.5%	0.5%	83.7%	420,217

From cross-calculations it could be deduced that in 1954 over 11% of first generation Italians were employers, 20% self-employed, and 65% were under a boss. Only 2% of them were unemployed. This was an unemployment rate slightly lower than those registered by the autochthonous population, but significantly higher than the average immigrant population. The study by Hempel, carried out in December 1957, analysed the occupational status of a representative sample of the male Italian immigrants in Queensland after World War II. It reported that a 10.2% of the sample were employed in the agricultural sector as farmers. 6.6% worked as employees in this sector. 32.7% were employed cutting sugar cane, while another 33.5% indicated non-skilled work. The skilled workers constituted 8.9% of the sample, while those with lesser qualifications represented 5.5% of the sample. A total of 1.9% of immigrants interviewed were retail dealers, professionals or clerks. Only 0.5% were not in the workforce.⁵¹ In the following years, the Italians in Queensland demonstrated a preference to work autonomously; becoming plantation or estate owners, contributing to the industrial development in Queensland or moving gradually towards the services sector.

From the statistics obtained in the 1947 census, it would seem that the integration process of the Italians in Queensland was more

⁵¹ See J. A. Hempel (1959), p. 63.

evolved. In fact, as Table X⁵² clearly illustrates, the high rate of Australian naturalisation amongst Italians born in Italy was really registered in this State.

TABLE X
*Persons born in Italy and Italian citizens in Australia
in 1947 divided according to State of residence*

State	Born in Italy	Italian citizens
New South Wales	8,721	1,823 (21%)
Victoria	8,305	2,320 (28%)
Queensland	8,541	1,252 (15%)
South Australia	2,428	600 (25%)
Western Australia	5,422	1,098 (20%)
Other Territories	215	79 (37%)
Total	33,632	7,172 (21%)

This is, however, a fact that should be noted in the light of those historical events that, between the 1920's and 1930's, strongly influenced the choices of the Italian immigrants in Queensland. In some cases, acquiring Australian citizenship was seen as a means of escaping the repeated xenophobic attacks of which the Sicilian cane-cutters in the north were victims.⁵³ In other cases, the change of nationality came from a desire to show dissent, real or for convenience, towards the fascism of Mussolini. In other cases again, the principal reason was the fear of being seen as enemies in the probable event that Italy would enter the war alongside Hitler's Germany. Ultimately motivation of the immigrants was linked to the issue of right of ownership. It was only at the end of 1953 that the government permitted people of non-British nationality to legally own property. All of the Italians that had wanted to become proprietors

⁵² See "Statistiche. Italiani in Australia," *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione*, III (1949) 17, p. 320.

⁵³ See F. Baggio, *Gli italiani di Brisbane*, Scalabrini Migration Center, Quezon City 2004, pp. 38-41.

before that date had to embrace Australian citizenship.⁵⁴ In all cases listed above naturalisation could not be identified as a positive indicator of the integration process of the Italian immigrants. According to the 1971 census, where the data referred to the most recent Italian immigration, of the 19,280 first generation Italians registered in Queensland only 12,418 had acquired Australian citizenship, against 5,988 that had kept their Italian citizenship and 874 that had another nationality.⁵⁵ Actually, the manifestation of diffidence and discrimination towards the Italian immigrants did not cease with the end of World War II. It was only thanks to the migrants' humble and silent hard work, and to their determination that the autochthonous' prejudices were transformed into feelings of esteem for and recognition of the undeniable Italian contribution to the economic and social development of Queensland. Thanks also to the precious mediation of the second generation, in the 1960's the integration process of the Italian immigrants had successfully begun.⁵⁶ The multicultural ideal advocated in the 1970's offered political support to the bicultural and bilingual dynamics that had already characterised the Italian community in Queensland during the previous years. If on one side, the relationships in a social and working context were progressively adapted to the Australian model, on the other side family life remained profoundly linked to Italian traditions, beginning with the choice of language. The 1986 census, that had counted 17,410 first generation Italians in Queensland, also revealed that Italian was spoken in the family environment by 25,710 people. It was the most spoken language in the State after English.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ See "Informazioni e rilievi. La proprietà terriera nel Queensland," *Bollettino quindicinale dell'emigrazione*, VII (1953) 19, p. 292.

⁵⁵ See *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 30 June 1971*, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra 1972, Bulletin 7, Part 3, p. 43.

⁵⁶ See D. Dignan and J. Dickinson Jan (2001), p. 214.

⁵⁷ See M. Brändle and S. Karas (1988), p. 117.

4. Italian immigration in Brisbane

The development of the Brisbane city and of Queensland in general, slowed down suddenly with the onset of the Second World War. The reconstruction projects promoted by the Federal government favoured the southern capital cities. In the eyes of the first European immigrants after the Second World War, Brisbane was not a particularly attractive destination.⁵⁸ Notwithstanding this, the census data showed that from 1947 to 1954 the population of the metropolitan area of the capital of Queensland⁵⁹ increased by around 100,000 people, going from 402,030 to 502,320 inhabitants. The number of immigrants that arrived in Brisbane during this period was 31,265 marking a 31.17% increase within the total growth of the population.⁶⁰ In 1947, according to the census data, there were only 779 inhabitants of Brisbane born in Italy.⁶¹ The 1954 census registered over 3,000 first generation Italians in the metropolitan area of Brisbane, which constituted 0.6% of the total population of the capital and 17.8% of the Italian contingent in the State. Table XI⁶² illustrates the distribution by percentage of the Italian-born individuals living in Queensland.

⁵⁸ See H. Holthouse, *Illustrated History of Brisbane*, Reed, Brisbane 1982, p. 59.

⁵⁹ The term “population of the metropolitan area of Brisbane” is referred to the population of the statistic division of the Queensland capital (“Brisbane Statistic Division”).

⁶⁰ See J. Zubrzycki (1960), p. 49.

⁶¹ See D. Dignan and J. Dickinson (2001), p. 213.

⁶² See J. Zubrzycki (1960), p. 56.

TABLE XI
*Distribution in percentage of persons born in Italy
 on the Queensland Territory in 1954*

Percentage	% on the population of Queensland	% on the population born in Italy
Metropolitan area	0.6%	17.8%
Other urban areas	0.8%	21.7%
Rural areas	2.9%	60.7%
Migrant population	0.8%	0.8%
Total	1.3%	100%

According to the 1954 census data, the metropolitan suburbs in which the first generation Italians preferred to establish themselves were, in order: Inner city, Geebung, North City, Inala, Normanby, South of the River, South City, Graceville and North of the River.⁶³

It is pertinent to note that the increase in the number of Italians in the capital of Queensland was not exclusively the product of the new waves of migration from the *Bel Paese*. In the first years after the war many Italian families resident at the time in various parts of the State decided to move to Brisbane for economic reasons or to assure their children the best chance of study.⁶⁴ The 1961 census added some interesting comparative data. The city of Brisbane (City, North City and South City) boasted a total population of around 62,200 of which about 47,200 (76%) were born in Australia. Hence 24% of the inhabitants in the “heart” of the capital of Queensland were born overseas. The 1961 census data also revealed the nationality of those registered. In the Brisbane city area 1,261 residents identified their nationality as Italian (695 were males and 566 females).⁶⁵ In the

⁶³ As above, pp. 64-65.

⁶⁴ See M. Brändle and S. Karas (1988), p. 121.

⁶⁵ See *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 30 June*, vol. III, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra 1962, pp. 18-29.

1960's important minerals were discovered in Queensland; the economic activity that developed around the mines commenced a new phase of prosperity in the capital city.⁶⁶ In this period the Italian community of Brisbane consolidated and acquired greater economic wellbeing. The suburb of Fortitude Valley transformed into the 'commercial heart' of the Italian community which was very active and enterprising. In the meantime, the suburb of New Farm was transformed into the preferred residential area of the Italians.⁶⁷ The 1976 census indicated that out of a population of 957,745 metropolitan residents, 8,432 (0.9%) were first generation Italians. It was the highest population of Italians recorded in the history of the capital of Queensland. According to estimates elaborated by some scholars, the Italian contingent in 1976, including the second and third generation would have constituted 2% of the metropolitan population. In the following years the number of first generation Italians progressively decreased. The urban development of Brisbane and the greater social mobility of the immigrants brought a more diverse distribution of Italian families in the city. The centripetal attraction of Brisbane for the Italians was largely maintained in the 1970's and 1980's. The 1996 census revealed that 48% of first generation Italians resident in Queensland lived in the capital.⁶⁸

Regarding the region of origin of the Italian immigrants, in December 1957 the investigation of Hempel, which included a representative sample of the Italian community in Brisbane, determined that 34% of Italian males came from northern Italy, including Trieste and the territories that after the war came under the jurisdiction of Yugoslavia. Only 4% came from central Italy, while 25% were born in the southern regions; and 37% came from the Italian islands. The Sicilians constituted 35% of the total. The percentages for women were slightly different: 35% from the north, 3% from the centre; 26% from the south and 36% from Sicily. Graph

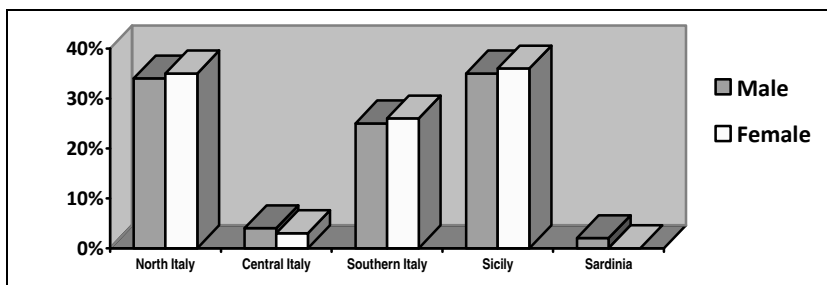
⁶⁶ See H. Holthouse (1982), pp. 59-60.

⁶⁷ See M. Brändle and S. Karas (1988), p. 121.

⁶⁸ See D. Dignan and J. Dickinson (2001), p. 215; and M. Brändle and S. Karas (1988), p. 121.

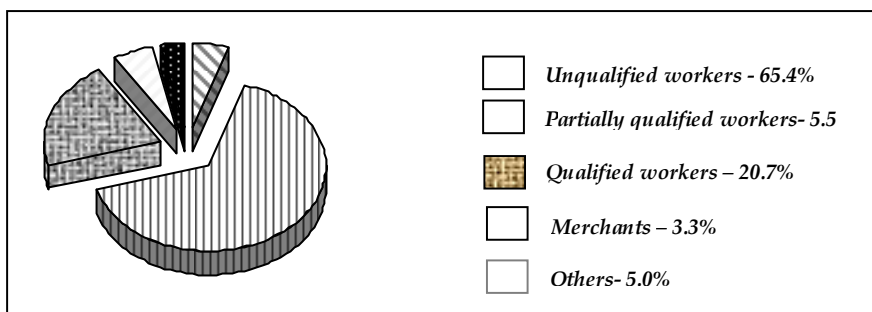
I⁶⁹ demonstrates the overall picture of the regions of origin of Italian immigrants in Brisbane also dividing the figures by gender.

GRAPH I
Regional place of origin of Italians in Brisbane in 1959



The same investigation traced a substantially complete picture of the employment situation of the Italian males in Brisbane in December 1957. They were for the most part unskilled labourers or semi-skilled labourers. One fifth of the Italians interviewed reported to be skilled workers, with a strong concentration in the building industry. Those in a commercial occupation made up 3.3%, while only 0.8% were not in the workforce (see Graph II⁷⁰).

GRAPH II
Occupational percentages of male Italians in Brisbane in 1957



⁶⁹ See J. A. Hempel (1959), p. 63.

⁷⁰ As above, p. 150.

The lure of the building sector for the Italian immigrants was maintained over the following years. The indubitable professional capacities and the spirit of enterprise convinced many to set up their own businesses. Some were able to conquer the building market in the boom of the 1970's and 80's. The large companies of Tony De Luca, Delio Iezzi and Cesare Pradella left their mark on many parts of modern Brisbane. Italians also excelled in the food industry, where the Nanda Macaroni company, founded by Francesco De Pasquale, Enrico Cartasegna, Mario Carbone, Antonio Franchin and Luigi Repetto, reached the international market. The acclaim of Igino Serafini's chains production factory marked the Italian success in the metal and mechanical industry. Brisbane Italians were also able to create inroads in the field of civil engineering; the local branch of the company Transfield established in Sydney in 1956 by Franco Belgiorno-Nettis and Carlo Salteri, and under the direction in Queensland of Giovanni Panizza, carried out important work across the State. Their inarguable good taste and culinary skills threw the doors of the gastronomic sector wide open to the immigrants. Restaurants, cafés and bars reflecting the flavour and style of Italy quickly multiplied in Brisbane. Amongst the pioneers in this industry, it is important to mention Gino Merlo, owner of Milano Restaurant, which for the duration of its operation was the compulsory destination for Brisbane lovers of good food.⁷¹

Regarding the integration process of Italian immigrants' into the Brisbane social fabric, in the years following the Second World War there was generally the same dynamic that took root in the rest of Queensland. From the 1950's, the re-establishment of the Italian diplomatic representation and the success of the initiatives proposed by the Capuchin fathers, assisted by the Canossian nuns and supported by the local Catholic Church, contributed to the reinforcement of the national identity of the Italian community rendering it more capable of establishing a dialogue with the autochthonous elements. By conquering Brisbane's economic and professional sectors, the second generations gave impetus to the integration process in the 1970's and 80's. Also in the case of

⁷¹ See M. Brändle and S. Karas (1988), pp. 121-122, and D. Dignan and J. Dickinson (2001), p. 215.

Brisbane, the immigrant women often remained at the margins of this process. According to the 1981 census data 3% of the women born in Italy and residing in Brisbane never went to school; 35% of them had not finished primary school and 78% had not completed their studies after 16 years of age. All had considerable difficulty using English.⁷²

A study by Australian sociologist, Ellie Vasta, conducted at the end of the 1980's on a sample of 56 female Italian immigrants to Brisbane between 1949 and 1956 provides other interesting data. The economic constraints of the early times and the city environment, more liberated from masculine prejudices, supported the insertion of Italian immigrant women (above all those originating from northern Italy) into the workplace. More often than not, it was factory work, hard and humiliating, and often "cash in hand". The experience of work was often marked by exploitation and discrimination, above all by Australian women. In many cases, working in the factory did not relieve the Italian women from the responsibility of home duties. The necessary bilingualism in families constituted a problem in the majority of cases. Identification with the Italian community in Brisbane was often perceived by many female immigrants as a defence against discrimination.⁷³

⁷² See D. Dignan and J. Dickinson (2001), p. 216.

⁷³ See E. Vasta, *Australia's Post-War Immigration: Power, Identity and Resistance* [unpublished PhD thesis], University of Queensland, Brisbane 1990.

CHAPTER TWO

The Life of the Italian Community

1. The events and the personalities

Between the First and Second World War, the life of the small Italian community in Brisbane was characterised by a close-knit network of interrelationships generated at times from the enterprise of some members and at other times from external historical circumstances. The tragic events of the Second World War forced Italian families into isolation or drove them to mix as much as possible with the local community. The negative consequences this had on community life was still evident even after the end of the war. It seemed that the desire to get together with compatriots had suddenly vanished and that all preferred an existence characterised by ethnic anonymity. The closure of the Italian diplomatic representation in Brisbane from 1940 to 1951 did not help the cause. It had really represented a constant point of reference for the aggregative expressions of the Italian community in the interwar period. The situation changed radically thanks to the exponential increase in the Italian presence in Brisbane in the post-war period.

From 1946 on, boatloads of immigrants began to berth at the port of Brisbane. The attraction of the new continent and the emigration assistance programs had convinced thousands of people to abandon a Europe that had been brought to its knees by the recent fratricidal war. Numerous Italians began to populate the streets of Brisbane with the colours and flavours of the *Bel Paese*. The profound linguistic and cultural differences between the Italian immigrants and the autochthonous element brought about the creation of new 'ethnic spaces', pure and true 'lifesavers' of the personal and national identity of the immigrants. 'Italian events' multiplied in Brisbane with

growing public participation each year. The opportunities to get together were various in nature: religious, cultural, sporting, recreational and fund-raising for charity. They were all, however, focused on reproducing on Australian soil the ambience of the towns and cities that the immigrants had left behind.

Many events were promoted by the different Italian organisations that grew in number from the 1950's on. Others were organised by enterprising priests, members of religious orders and nuns that tended to the spiritual needs of the Italian community between 1946 and 1990. In this chapter, I will consider only the main events that involved the whole Italian community.

From 1945 to 1959: the Italian community reorganises

The sources consulted are somewhat sparse in notices regarding the first years following the Second World War, but this omission could simply indicate that there was not much to tell. The first communal initiatives were realised thanks to individuals or groups of people, gathering spontaneously around common interests. On 25 July 1947, an 'Italian dance' was organised at the Leader Hall in Brisbane: all Italians were invited.¹ On 7 December of the same year the Italian community was invited to a picnic on the Mandelay River. The event was enlivened by music of a not otherwise specified 'Italian' band.² For all of 1948 and half of 1949 the news reported in the sources regarded mostly religious events: baptisms, communions, weddings and other special celebrations.

It is necessary to note that in August 1948, the Nanda Macaroni factory was established. This was the original idea of Francesco De Pasquale, an immigrant from Ragusa, who in 1947 bought and brought the first pasta machine to Australia. It had the capacity to make 300 kilos of pasta per hour. To crown his dream, Mr De Pasquale asked Enrico Cartasegna, Mario Carbone, Antonio Franchin and Luigi Repetto to become partners in the new company. The decision to base the company in Brisbane was due to the copious production of wheat flour in some areas of Queensland. The initiative had immediate success and the sale of pasta, initially limited to local consumption, extended rapidly to New South Wales and Victoria.³

In July 1949 the first representative of the Italian Republic to Australia, Minister Giulio Del Balzo, decided to visit Lismore and Brisbane. On the afternoon of Sunday 24 July, the minister was warmly welcomed by the Italian community in the capital of Queensland. The event was organised by a special committee presided over by Domenico G. Roveta. He was entrusted with the welcome speech and this was followed by augural messages by Dr Francesco Castellano and by Dr Angelo B. Vattuone. On 25 and 26 July,

¹ See "Ballo Italiano," *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1947, p. 6.

² See "Picnic sul fiume Mandelay," *La Fiamma*, 15 November 1947, p. 6.

³ The author has gathered this information from Mr Raffaele De Pasquale, interviewed on 8 May 2007.

Minister Del Balzo met with; the Governor of Queensland, Sir John Laverack; the premier, Edward Micheal Hanlon; the Mayor of Brisbane, John Beals Chandier and the Archbishop of Brisbane, Mons. James Duhig. The wife of the Italian minister, Lady Marisa Del Balzo, accompanied the minister to all meetings. On the evening of 26 July, Mons. Duhig gave a reception in honour of the Italian diplomat at his residence.⁴

Music and beautiful singing have always been a feature of Italian communities abroad, wherever they are in the world. Also Brisbane in the 1950's did not lack migrants that were musically talented e.g. *maestri*, Vido Lippi, baritone, and Osvaldo Maffei, piano accordionist. On many occasions, their music uplifted the hearts of their compatriots. On 7 June 1950, the two musicians decided to give a concert at the City Hall in Brisbane with the aim of raising funds for the construction of the *Casa San Francesco* [St Francis House], a project of the Capuchin Fathers (dealt with extensively in the fourth chapter). Students of the schools run by the two *maestri*, also, participated in the concert. The large audience, mostly Italian, rewarded this generous initiative of Lippi and Maffei, who decided to repeat the show in the Ipswich Town Hall on 19 July that year. This concert was also very popular.⁵

A good portion of the Brisbane Italian community usually celebrated important occasions together; e.g. the departure for Italy of accountant Domenico Roveta was celebrated by a buffet lunch at the Carlton Hotel on 28 June.⁶

From 1951 on, with the reopening of the Italian diplomatic representation in Brisbane, community events progressively multiplied. The vice consul for the state of Queensland, Dr Felice Benuzzi, arrived in Brisbane on Sunday 3 June 1951. Accompanied by his wife, the diplomat was welcomed by: the archbishop of Brisbane, Mons Duhig; some Capuchin fathers; Dr Francesco

⁴ See "Il ministro d'Italia a Lismore e Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 19 August 1949, p. 1 and 4.

⁵ See "Riuscito Concerto Vocale e Strumentale al City Hall – Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 July 1950, p. 2; and "Concerto Tenuto a Ipswich a pro della Casa degli Italiani," *La Fiamma*, 4 August 1950, p. 2.

⁶ See "Addio per il signor G. Roveta," *La Fiamma*, 4 August 1950, p. 2.

Castellano and his consort; the Roveta couple; Mrs Battaglia; the lawyer Giuseppe Rinaudo and Fr Atanasio Gonelli. Dr Castellano, Mons. Dughig, Dr Giuseppe Rinaudo and Fr Anastasio Gonelli gave speeches on this occasion.⁷

The Brisbane Italian community reunited again on 22 August 1951 to applaud the young pianist, Romola Costantino of Sydney in a concert at the Albert Hall.⁸ In the following November, Cesare Baucia, noted merchant and correspondent of *La Fiamma* in Brisbane was nominated Justice of the Peace. This responsibility rewarded a life of service to the local community and in particular the Italian community. In his office, situated in the building on the corner of Edward and Queen Street, Mr Baucia, in his role of authorised agent for immigration, usually helped his compatriots to process various different applications. To enable the immigrants to more easily access his work as Justice of the Peace, Cesare Baucia decided to extend his hours of availability into the evening, opening the doors of his home in New Farm.⁹

In these years the Italian community restarted the great pre-war tradition of community trips to Bishop Island. On Sunday 3 February 1952, a good three ferry-loads of young and not so young immigrants crossed the Brisbane River to reach this island famous for Italian picnics. Mr Eddie Pinter, recent arrival from Italy, turned out to be a singer of great talent. He alone livened up the Italian celebrations with classical and pop music to suit all tastes. Mr R. Gaspanello accompanied him on the pianoforte. The afternoon was occupied with swimming races, diving competitions and soccer matches.¹⁰

The 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's birth was celebrated in Brisbane on 27 August 1952. The ceremony was held at the Royal Society of St. George and was honoured by the participation of: Sir Raphael Cilento; vice consul Benuzzi; archbishop Duhig and other

⁷ See "Festose Accoglienze al Vice Console Benuzzi," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1951, p. 2.

⁸ See "Concerto di Romola Costantino a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 27 August 1951, p. 2. Romola Costantino was born in Sydney in 1930; excellent pianist, after a long career as concert player and music critic, she died in Adelaide in 1988.

⁹ See "C. Baucia, giudice di pace," *La Fiamma*, 23 November 1951, p. 2.

¹⁰ See "Da Brisbane. Le allegre domeniche," *La Fiamma*, 15 February 1952, p. 2.

notable representatives of the Australian and Italian community. On 24 September of that year, the *Lauro Fleet* organised a ball on the motor-ship “Sydney” for all Italians to raise funds for the new hospital built by the Canossian nuns.¹¹

In November 1952, the Italian community was moved by the tragic incident that took the life of Giacinto Zanesco, a 21 year old immigrant from Asolo (Treviso). He was hit by a train and buried at the Catholic cemetery at Nudgee. The vice consul Benuzzi was personally interested in the case and the generous Italian community held two special collections to support the family of the deceased man back in Italy and to put a marble headstone on his grave.

In December of the same year, Brisbane hosted the finals of the Davis Cup. There were five matches played from 11 to 13 December. The Italian squad got third place beating the Indians 3 rubbers to 2. Those who masterminded the Italian victory were Fausto Gardini, Marcello Del Bello, Gianni Cucelli and Rolando Del Bello. Even though tennis was not a popular sport in Italy during the 1950's, there were many Italian migrants at the Milton stadium to support their countrymen.¹²

The year 1953 began in an unexpected manner for the Italian community of Brisbane. On Thursday 8 January, at 11:30 am, a group of Italian immigrants were part of a protest demonstration held at the vice consul's office in Queen Street. The first news of this appeared in the local newspapers complaining about the irruption and the violence towards the vice consul and his wife. An eyewitness, however, clarified that it was a peaceful process and the only violence was that used by the Australian police intervening to quell the protest. The real reason for the discontent was the desperation of many ‘assisted’ Italian immigrants that had not found work in Brisbane despite having been assured they would by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs prior to their departure. The vice consul had tried to contain the disappointment of the unhappy men by providing them with food vouchers until the day they found work. On 8 January, however, there was nobody at the consulate that was authorised to satisfy the requests

¹¹ See “Leonardo commemorato a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 5 September 1952, p. 2.

¹² See “Ore di passione allo stadio di Milton,” *La Fiamma*, 19 December 1952, p. 1 and 3.

of thirty of the unemployed immigrants, leading them to protest.¹³ In the meantime, Brisbane society slowly adapted to the large numbers of new arrivals.

There was also the case of Mr Irom's bookshop in central Brisbane, that was transformed from a bookshop into an international newsagency to satisfy the linguistic requests of the new arrivals. Many Italians frequented the bookshop and bought newspapers in Italian.¹⁴

In May 1953, the lyrical singer and actor Gino Mattera, came to Brisbane during an Australian tour. *Maestro* Mattera decided to give a series of concerts at the City Hall to which the Italian community went in numbers.¹⁵ The vice consul Benuzzi decided to host the anniversary of the Italian Republic at the *Casa San Francesco* in the afternoon of 31 May. The celebrations, open to the whole Italian community, began with some patriotic songs by the *Casa's* choir, under the direction of Noela Morgenstern. This performance was followed by a short concert on piano by Elly Pasinetti and some solos by Carmelo Caruso and Eddie Pinter. To conclude, after the speeches to mark the occasion, the choir intoned the national anthem.¹⁶

In July, the minister Silvio Daneo, Italian ambassador to Australia visited the community in Queensland. In Brisbane, he was honourably received by the Italian community and by local authorities. During a lunch offered in his honour by the State Cabinet, the acting premier of Queensland, Jack E. Duggan, underlined the inestimable contribution of the Italian migrants to the development of agriculture, industry and culture in the State.¹⁷

On 17 November 1953, the new offices of the vice consul were inaugurated in the building of the Australia and New Zealand Bank, on the corner of Queen and Wharf Street. Religious and civil

¹³ See "I cavalieri dell'Apocalisse," *La Fiamma*, 16 January 1953, p. 1; and "Severe proteste di emigranti al nostro commento sui fatti di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 30 January 1953, p. 2.

¹⁴ See "Una libreria internazionale," *La Fiamma*, 24 April 1953, p. 2.

¹⁵ See "Da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 29 May 1953, p. 2.

¹⁶ See "Celebrazione della festa nazionale," *La Fiamma*, 12 June 1953, p. 2.

¹⁷ See "Il Queensland ha un grande debito verso gli Italiani," *La Fiamma*, 24 July 1953, p. 1.

authorities, together with some notables from the Italian community attended the event.¹⁸

In 1954, many community activities were organised by the *Casa San Francesco* committee. On 8 May, Igino Costa died in Brisbane. He was one of the pioneers and benefactors of the Italian community. Associate founder of the *Dante Alighieri Society* and committed supporter of the Italian community before World War II, he had known the hardness of the internment camps during the conflict. Always attentive to the needs of his compatriots and of the local church, he was held in high regard by the Brisbane Italians that crammed the cathedral for his funeral. Mons Duhig wanted to show his personal recognition of the deceased and his family, personally presiding over Mr Costa's funeral mass.¹⁹

The celebration of the anniversary of the Italian Republic, by now a tradition, was held on the afternoon of 30 May at the *Casa San Francesco*. The national anthem, conducted by the orchestra of *maestro* Pellegrino, kicked off the festivities. This was followed by a recital of Italian music and songs. The vice consul Benuzzi, after his official speech, gave the *Casa San Francesco* and Mr Osvaldo Bonutto a certificate in name of the *Triennale del Lavoro Italiano nel Mondo* for their participation in the first show of the same triennial held in Naples. Dr Benuzzi also conferred the "Stella della solidarieta'" [Star of solidarity] on the Swiss agent consul, Henry Shaub, who did his very best for the Italian immigrants during the interwar period. The event closed with refreshments.²⁰

The consul general of Italy, Dr Ferruccio Steffenelli, made an official visit to Brisbane, accompanied by his wife on 20 July 1954. Vice consul Benuzzi welcomed the couple at the station. On 22 July, a reception was held in Dr Steffenelli's honour at the *Casa San Francesco*. The event began with the inauguration by the consul of the saloon bar of the *Casa*. In the upper dining room, crowded with Italians, the *Casa's* choir sang the national anthem. Immediately after, a young member of *Azione Cattolica* [Catholic Action] offered a

¹⁸ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 4 December 1953, p. 3.

¹⁹ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 28 May 1954, p. 2.

²⁰ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 May 1954, p. 2; and "La Festa della Repubblica a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 June 1954, p. 12.

floral homage to Mrs Stefenelli. Dr Castellano opened the official speeches, followed by consul Stefenelli, who concluded the panegyric by awarding the “*Croce di Guerra*” [War Cross] to Filippo Ranieri, an Italian immigrant who was distinguished for heroic action during the Second World War. After the official presentation to athletes and outstanding persons in the Italian community, Carmelo Caruso, Mary Matheson and Sandro Merlini provided a musical performance of high quality.²¹

On 15 August 1954, the ship “Surriento” of Lloyd Triestino arrived at the port of Brisbane. Among the many Italian migrants, sixteen decided to stay in Queensland.²² *Maestro* Alceo Galliera, noted orchestral director, gave a recital in Brisbane in September 1954 as part of his Australian tour. *Maestro* Galliera had previously directed the Queensland symphonic orchestra, but the concerts at the Brisbane city hall on 17 and 18 September were a real triumph.²³

On 27 October 1954, the Italian community warmly farewelled vice consul Benuzzi. After another three years of service to the Italian immigrants in Queensland, Dr Felice Benuzzi was recalled to Italy to officially receive his new position as head of the Italian embassy in Pakistan. The send-off was held at the *Casa San Francesco*, the upper room of which was crammed with Italians. Dr Castellano’s speech was followed by a moving speech from the vice consul. On this special occasion, the departing diplomat Benuzzi awarded the certificate and insignia of the *Commendatore dell’Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana* [Order of Merit of the Italian Republic] to mons. Duhig; this high honour was awarded for his assistance to the Italian immigrants.²⁴

After Benuzzi’s departure, Dr G. Gatto assumed the role of Vice consul to Queensland. Dr Gatto was responsible for establishing in Brisbane a committee in support of the people of Salerno (*Comitato*

²¹ See “La visita del Console Generale nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 6 August 1954, p. 9; and “Momenti della visita del Console,” *La Fiamma*, 13 August 1954, p. 9.

²² See “È arrivata la Surriento,” *La Fiamma*, 27 August 1954, p. 9; and “Sono arrivati col Surriento,” *La Fiamma*, 3 September 1954, p. 9.

²³ See “Da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 24 September 1954, p. 9; and “Sette giorni a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 1 October 1954, p. 9.

²⁴ See “L’addio al Vice Console Dott. Benuzzi,” *La Fiamma*, 12 November 1954, p. 9.

Pro-Sinistrati Salerno) following the damaging flood that hit the Amalfi Coast in Italy on 25 and 26 October 1954. The committee was organised to raise funds to help the families of the flood victims and the many homeless.²⁵

Along with immigrants, Italian cinema arrived in Brisbane in 1955. In August, two cinemas in Queensland played “Sensualità,” by Clemente Fracassi, “Vulcano,” by William Dieterle, “Le infedeli,” by Mario Monicelli and Steno, and “Carmela,” by Flavio Calzavara. The Italian audience was so enthusiastic that often the shows were sold out.²⁶

Under the patronage of the Dante Alighieri Society, Romola Costantino returned to Brisbane for a concert at the Albert Hall before leaving again for Italy.²⁷ In the following November, the Italian government, through the local diplomatic representation, organised the *Mostra del libro dell'arte italiana* [Exhibition of books of Italian art] at the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane. Sir Raphael Cilento was called to preside over the inaugural ceremony. The exhibition was very successful in the capital of Queensland. The sources consulted do not report any community news for 1956.

The start of 1957 saw another very significant cultural event, very welcomed by the Italian community. In January, the *Mostra italiana d'arte del XX secolo* [Exhibition of 20th century Italian art] was held in Brisbane. Despite the scepticism surrounding it during the preparation period, it was a great success. The paintings returned to South Africa at the end of January for another exhibition.²⁸

In the same months, *La Fiamma* reported an announcement regarding a radio program in Italian that would be transmitted every Thursday evening at 8:30 on radio 4UQ. The program included music, a short news broadcast and an Italian tourist guide. The presenter was Mr Basilotta, who had gained experience in broadcasting while in

²⁵ See “Costituzione Comitato Pro-Sinistrati Salerno,” *La Fiamma*, 26 November 1954, p. 9.

²⁶ See “La voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 5 August 1955, p. 9.

²⁷ See “La Voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 7 October 1955, p. 9.

²⁸ See “Sette giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 11 January 1957, p. 13; and “Sette giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 25 January 1957, p. 8.

South America.²⁹ A second radio program was born on 11 February 1957. It was presented by Carmelo Caruso, *L'ora Italiana* [The Italian Hour] that went on air every Monday from 9:30 pm to 10:30 pm on station 4KQ. The program was sponsored by *La Fiamma* and the following companies: Nanda Macaroni; Redmond Motors; the National Bank of Australia and the Sartoria Moderna Caruso.

The 'Italian hour' gained immediate success with the Italian immigrants of Brisbane and Queensland. Italians also followed with interest Basilotta's program that thanks to the number of listeners, in March 1957, changed day, hour and station: Sunday, 1:30 pm on 4BH. Caruso's program immediately responded and moved to Sunday at 9:15 am on its usual station.³⁰

On 25 March 1957, the Italian boxer Primo Carnera, who after retiring from boxing had dedicated himself to all-in wrestling, fought the Great King Kong at the Milton Tennis Court in Brisbane.³¹

To the profound sadness of the Brisbane Italian community, on 23 April at 83 years of age, Alessandro Sorgato, died. Originating from Padua, this musician who had been living in the suburb of Ashgrove had once played for the imperial Russian orchestra. After the revolution he had travelled the world until he arrived in Sydney, where he joined the New South Wales Symphonic Orchestra. At the end of his brilliant career, he had decided to retire in Brisbane.³²

In April 1957, the Italian wrestler Ilio Di Paolo challenged Yugoslavian Lucky Simonovich in Brisbane. Encouraged by many fans, Italian and Australian, Di Paolo won the contest.³³

On Thursday 16 May 1957, Lucio Sebastiani, Italian consul general to Australia, arrived at the Brisbane Central Station at 1:00 pm for an official visit to Queensland. After two days of meeting with local civil and religious authorities, on Saturday 18 May, the consul participated in a celebration with the whole Italian community

²⁹ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 January 1957, p. 8.

³⁰ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 February 1957, p. 8; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 29 March 1957, p. 10; and "Non andrà più in onda il programma radio in italiano," *La Fiamma*, 10 February 1977, p. 12.

³¹ See Marletta Cesare, "Come eravamo ...," *Presenza* (1994) 1, p. 13.

³² See "Figure che scompaiono," *La Fiamma*, 10 May 1957, p. 8.

³³ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 26 April 1957, p. 8.

organised at the *Casa San Francesco*. After the speeches that celebrated the occasion, there was a musical ensemble skilfully organised by the Canossian nuns.³⁴

Towards the end of May 1957, Luciano Tajoli, together with other notable Italian artists; Dana Chia, Franco Sportelli, Alda Sileni and Luciano Meraviglia, paid a visit to the Italian community in Brisbane.³⁵

On Sunday 2 June the Italian community gathered again at the *Casa San Francesco* to celebrate the anniversary of the Italian Republic. The vice consul, Massimo Castaldo was the organiser of the patriotic event. The Canossian nuns and the girls from the Catholic Action group provided pleasant musical entertainment and Carmelo Caruso was invited to host the show. After the vice consul's speech, cocktails were offered to more than 200 attendees.³⁶

In July 1957, Cesare Baucia, one of the pioneers of the Italian community in Brisbane, died at the age of 65 years. Originating from Alessandria, he left his position as station-master in Italy to emigrate to Australia. Together with C. Albanese, Mr Baucia had given life to *L'Italiano* a newspaper published in Brisbane during the interwar period. From 1946, Cesare Baucia had retired from public life due to the cardiac problems from which he had suffered in his later years.³⁷

In the following September, the Italian ambassador to Australia, Dr Silvio Daneo, paid a surprise visit to Brisbane staying only 24 hours. The vice consul Castaldo was able to organise a lunch for the ambassador in his private residence. Some religious authorities and notables of the Italian community were invited.³⁸

In October 1957, the Australian tour of the Italian tenor, Luigi Infantino came to the capital of Queensland. His concert was a great success, due above all to the participation of the Italian community.³⁹

On 19 January 1958, at the *Casa San Francesco*, a big group of Italians gathered to thank and farewell the vice consul, Massimo

³⁴ As above and "In arrivo il Console a Brisbane," 10 May 1957, p. 8.

³⁵ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 14 June 1957, p. 10.

³⁶ As above.

³⁷ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 2 August 1957, p. 12.

³⁸ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 27 September 1957, p. 12.

³⁹ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1957, p. 11.

Castaldo, who was transferred to a new diplomatic post. The farewell speeches by Dr Castellano, Fr Samuele Rodomonti and Italian chaplains were echoed by the moving words of the diplomat. The Italian community presented him with a barometer that was encased in Queensland timber with an inscription in silver.⁴⁰

The sources consulted report the introduction of a second radio program presented by Carmelo Caruso, on the same station, 4KQ; it was *Melodie Italiane* [Italian Melodies], a program dedicated to Italian music, with comments and interviews by the presenter, on the airwaves every Friday from 8:15 pm to 9:30 pm.⁴¹

On 6 June 1958, the centenary of the foundation of the state of Queensland was commemorated and the Italian community of Brisbane wanted to contribute to the Jubilee Celebrations. On the initiative of the vice consul regent, Dr Loris Balestrieri, a committee was organised in April 1958 and was presided over by Dr Castellano.

The committee members included: Felice Brusasco, Michele Calvisi, Carmelo Caruso, Pietro Demartini, Vincenzo Di Marco, Francesco Masinello, Umberto Poppi, Cesare Pradella, Antonio Ridolfi, Giuseppe Sesta, Floriano Sferco, Fausto Vallati e Pietro Zanatta. The committee decided to donate an Italian work of art to the State art gallery as a tangible sign of gratitude to Queensland by the Italian migrant community. The necessary funds would be raised through voluntary subscriptions that were open to everyone in the community.⁴²

The traditional reception organised by the vice consulate for the anniversary of the Italian Republic was celebrated in 1958 on the afternoon of 1 June at the *Casa San Francesco*. After the speeches the public were treated to a theatrical performance organised by the Canossian nuns followed by some choral songs performed by *Gioventù Cattolica*. Then there was music and dancing until late in

⁴⁰ See “7 giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 31 January 1958, p. 13.

⁴¹ See “Sette giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 16 April 1958, p. 12, “Sette giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 20 June 1958, p. 18; and “Nuovo programma radiofonico,” *La Fiamma*, 5 March 1963, p. 16.

⁴² See “Sette giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 25 April 1958, p. 12.

the evening. The celebration was a huge success with the participation of more than 300 immigrants.⁴³

Claudio Villa's Australian tour brought the famous singer to Brisbane in the middle of June 1958. Accompanying him were singers Mara del Rio and Wanda Romanelli and *maestro* Ovidio Sarra, exceptional pianist. The concert organised at the City Hall, thanks to the patronage of Johnny Gattuso, was much appreciated by a public reduced in number by bad weather. Over one thousand people attended the recital by the famous singer, but many more were expected. This fact also led to the cancellation of Renato Carosone's and Mario Lanza's scheduled tour stops in Brisbane in that same year.⁴⁴ In July, however, the singer, Alda Sereni, did arrive and performed at the Rialto Theatre in West End for the Italian and Australian public. The kind artist offered a free concert to the students at the Church of England Grammar School in Brisbane.⁴⁵

In August 1958, the Nanda Macaroni company, celebrated ten years of operation. The workers, without the knowledge of the proprietors, organised some pleasant entertainment on Saturday 2 August. In 1958, Nanda Macaroni produced 80 tonnes of pasta per week that were distributed in Australia, Asia and Italy.⁴⁶

Two years after his successful concert in 1957, Luciano Tajoli, decided to return to Brisbane for another concert. On 19 October 1959, over 3,000 people, almost all Italians, packed Festival Hall in Brisbane to listen to the famous singer. The show was enhanced by the excellent musical interpretation by Maria Cervati and Elio Moro, an Italian tenor living in New South Wales. The skill of the *maestro* added the final touches to a successful musical evening. After having presented other shows in North Queensland, the acclaimed quartet of

⁴³ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 May 1958, p. 12; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 30 May 1958, p. 12; and "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 12 June 1958, p. 18.

⁴⁴ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 20 June 1958, p. 18.

⁴⁵ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 1 August 1958, p. 12.

⁴⁶ See "Dal Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1958, p. 19.

artists returned to Festival Hall in Brisbane on 23 November for two more shows: both were sold out.⁴⁷

On 19 November 1959, the Italian community gave Queensland its 'birthday present' for the centenary year. Represented by the Italian ambassador, Dr Eugenio Prato, the Italian community donated 400 precious volumes of Italian literature, including both classic and contemporary works, to the University of Queensland. The ceremony was held at the Brisbane City Hall in the presence of Italian and Australian authorities.⁴⁸

In December, Domenico Modugno arrived in Brisbane and was able to pack Festival Hall with a concert that was much appreciated by the public. The show on 9 December began with the comic imitator, Riccardo Vitali. It was then up to Norma Benguell, attractive Brazilian singer, to warm the hearts of those present with Spanish, Brazilian and French songs. When Modugno entered the stage, he was welcomed triumphantly by an audience essentially Italian, that was moved by the tunes of *Volare*, *Lazzarella* and *Piove*. Maestro Enrico Polito skilfully directed the orchestra.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ See "Spettatori record per Tajoli a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 November 1959, p. 15; "It Was Real Italian Fun," *The Courier Mail*, 20 November 1959, p. 10; and "They Just Loved Italian Songs," *The Courier Mail*, 24 November 1959, p. 22.

⁴⁸ See "Italians' Goodwill Gifts to Q'land," *North Australian Monthly*, April 1960, p. 9.

⁴⁹ See "Italian to Sing Here," *Telegraph*, 1 December 1959, p. 2; and "Trionfale debutto di Modugno a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 16 December 1959, p. 25.

3. The 1960's: the Italian community affirms itself

In the 1960's the Brisbane Italian community developed its true identity and occupied new spaces in Brisbane's social life. The number of events aimed at promoting Italian culture, the music of the *Bel Paese* and the 'made in Italy' logo multiplied. The Italian diplomatic representation played an integral role in this process.

In May 1960, the noted Italian archeologist, Pellegrino Sestieri visited Brisbane. Professor Sestieri, internationally renowned academic, was in Australia for a series of lectures promoted by the Humanity Research Council. He gave three lectures to university students on the archeological excavations at Veglia, Cylon and Paestum, gaining wide public acclaim. During his stay in Brisbane, the esteemed professor was the guest of Dr Castellano.⁵⁰

On 10 August, Prouds Jewellers in Brisbane inaugurated a show of precious pieces made in Italy. The Italian embassy in Canberra was represented by Counsellor Ferrara, whose speech underlined the artistic and sentimental value of the exhibition items.⁵¹

On the same day, the vice consul general of Italy, Dr Giulio Carnevali, was on an official visit to Brisbane. The regent of the vice consulate, Mr Balestrieri, with a group of compatriots, received the diplomat at the airport. On the morning of 11 August, the consul met with some civil Australian authorities; in the afternoon he visited the convent of the Canossian nuns and had a meeting with archbishop Duhig. That evening, in an elegant corner of the *Surriento* restaurant, Dr Carnevali dined with some representatives of the Italian community. Friday 12 August was dedicated to a meeting with other Australian authorities and a visit to the Nanda Macaroni factory, where the consul pleasantly interacted with the workers who were, for the most part, Italian. That evening, the Italian community organised a reception at the *Casa San Francesco* that on this occasion was packed with compatriots. On Saturday 13 August, Dr Carnevali together with

⁵⁰ See "L'archeologo Sestieri a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 10 May 1960, p. 21; and "Pubblico entusiasta delle conferenze di Sestieri," *La Fiamma*, 17 May 1960, p. 21.

⁵¹ See "Mostra dell'artigianato italiano aperta nei locali della 'Prouds'," *La Fiamma*, 23 August 1960, p. 15.

Dr Castellano, visited some local tourist attractions on the Gold Coast.⁵²

In 1960, Antonietta Franchin, a Brisbane girl of Italian origin, was an entrant in the Miss Australia contest. The Italian community demonstrated its support to the young woman by attending a barbecue held by Miss Franchin at her home on 10 September 1960. The money raised went to aid Australian babies affected by poliomyelitis.⁵³

In the following October, the Roman company *Brioni* organised a parade of Italian male fashion, to which attended more than 1,000 people. The event was organised by Mr Angelo Vittucci, local representative of the company.⁵⁴

In 1961, the Brisbane correspondent of *La Fiamma* initiated a beauty contest entitled Miss Fiamma-Brisbane. The photos of the 19 entrants, together with a short personal profile under each photo, were published in the Italian newspaper with a number assigned to each so that the public could vote for the winner. The young Miss Fiamma-Brisbane aspirants were: Olga Torre, Renata Menis, Silvana Lestani, Carmen Pittini, Guglielmina Jacuzzi, Diana Menis, Maria Calvisi, Rosetta Gugemberger, Lina Morri, Graziella Ridolfi, Tina Del Monte, Genoveffa Mulatta, Maria Bottaz, Bruna Varglieri, Fiorenza Springolo, Gemma Zanini, Yvonne Ghirardelli, Sarina Cordaro e Gianna Danelon. The finals, with the awarding of the title, were held on Saturday 9 September 1961.⁵⁵

On the occasion of the first centenary of the Unity of Italy, Saturday 3 June, Dr Balestrieri organised a function at the consulate which was attended by over 200 people.⁵⁶ In June 1961, the tenor Luigi Infantino returned to Australia for a new tour. On 28 June and 4 July he played at the Brisbane City Hall. Accompanying him on piano

⁵² See "Tre intense giornate a Brisbane del Console Generale Carnevali," *La Fiamma*, 23 August 1960, p. 15.

⁵³ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 27 August 1960, p. 15.

⁵⁴ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1960, p. 16.

⁵⁵ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 20 June 1961, p. 19, "Sfilano le belle di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 24 June 1961, p. 19, "Sfilano le belle di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 27 June 1961, p. 17; and "Miss Fiamma – Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 23 August 1961, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁶ See "Celebrato in città il Centenario dell'Unità," *Il Corriere d'Australia*, 13 June 1961.

was *maestro* Angelo Campora.⁵⁷ On 3 July 1961, the ‘Italian Festival’ was held at the Festival Hall in Brisbane with the participation of Giorgio Consolini, Tonina Torrielli and Rosetta Fucci, whose excellent voices were accompanied by the piano of *maestro* Mario Maschio. On the same evening, comedian Romano Villi entertained the large public in the dining area with his gags.⁵⁸

On Saturday 4 November 1961, the tenor Mino Vinci, nephew and pupil of Beniamino Gigli, gave a concert at the Festival Hall in Brisbane. On this occasion, the artist shared the stage with soprano Clara Sartori.

On the same evening, Franca Rossetti and Vittorio Sacca performed. They were two ex-immigrants with good vocal skills that had become successful pop singers after returning to Italy. *Maestro* Giuseppe Cacio took care of the musical accompaniment.⁵⁹ In the second half of 1961, Dr Balestrieri handed over the reigns of the Italian consulate in Queensland to Dr Francesco Olivieri.⁶⁰

On 14 April 1962, in recognition of his innumerable services to the Italian community in Brisbane, Dr Francesco Castellano was endowed with the titles of *Cavaliere Ufficiale dell’Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana*. The ceremony, presided over by Dr Olivieri, was held at the Italian consulate.⁶¹

On his third Australian tour, Luciano Tajoli, performed at the Festival Hall in Brisbane on 8 December 1962, with the usual large attendance. On the same evening, the tenor Nunzio Gallo, winner of the *Canzonissima* song contest in that year with his song “Sixteen Years” displayed his talent for interpreting various popular songs.

In February 1963, Carmelo Caruso launched a third radio program in Italian entitled *Italia Canta* [Italy Sings], on air each Wednesday from 19:45 to 20:30 on 4KQ. The new program aimed to promote Italian culture and its music through interviews with

⁵⁷ See “Qui il Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 17 June 1961, p. 19.

⁵⁸ See “They’ll Bring along Italian Songs,” *The Courier Mail*, 21 June 1961, p. 16.

⁵⁹ See “Top Singer from Italy,” *The Courier Mail*, 26 October 1961, p. 11; and “Return to Sing Here,” *The Courier Mail*, 1 November 1961, p. 11.

⁶⁰ See “Messaggio del dott. Olivieri agli italiani di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 26-30 December 1961, p. 27.

⁶¹ See “Honour for Their Good Doctor,” *The Courier Mail*, 14 April 1962, p. 12.

illustrious personalities in the Italian community and visitors from the mother country.⁶² In 1963, *maestro* Cesare Valebrega, arrived in Australia. A noted pianist and musicologist, he was involved in a series of lectures promoted by the Italian Ministry of Culture and by the United Nations. The *maestro*'s program included four days of lessons in Brisbane in April of that year. The famous pianist also held a concert at the Brisbane conservatorium of music. His skill was appreciated by both the Italian and Australian public who attended.⁶³

In the same month, The Italian ambassador to Australia, Dr Renato Della Chiesa D'Isasca, made his first official visit to Queensland. The diplomat arrived at the Brisbane airport on April 19, a Friday morning. After a day dedicated to meetings with Australian civil and religious authorities, the minister held a meeting with the Italian community in Brisbane at the *Casa San Francesco*, on Saturday 20 April, in the evening. Strangely, only 60 people attended the appointment. Dr Castellano and Fr Luciano from Prignano were in charge of the welcome speeches.⁶⁴

In May that year, the Italian consulate in Queensland, promoted an interesting initiative. A scholarship consisting of a trip to Italy was to be presented to the best student (male or female) in an Italian course run by the same diplomatic representation for 1963.⁶⁵

On 9 October 1963, there was a landslide on Mount Toc, starting in the artificial basin created by the digs at Vajont and this caused a wave that tumbled over the digs and shattered the town of Longarone (Belluno). There were over 2,000 victims. Carmelo Caruso, through his radio programs, initiated an appeal to raise funds to support the families of the victims and those left homeless. The generosity of the Brisbane Italian community and indeed of all of Queensland was once

⁶² See "Nuovo programma radiofonico," *La Fiamma*, 5 March 1963, p. 16.

⁶³ See "Visita dell'ambasciatore a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 April 1963, p. 25; and "Music Expert," *Telegraph*, 9 April 1963, p. 13.

⁶⁴ See "Visita dell'ambasciatore a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 April 1963, p. 25; and "Tropo pochi alla 'S. Francesco' per la visita dell'Ambasciatore," *La Fiamma*, 27 April 1963, p. 22.

⁶⁵ See "Viaggio in Italia al migliore in Italiano," *La Fiamma*, 7 May 1963, p. 17.

again outstanding and on 24 November 1963, Mr Caruso was able to give the Italian consulate 1,050 pounds in funds raised.⁶⁶

In March 1964, Dr Francesco Olivieri awarded Felice Brusasco the *Stella della solidarietà italiana* [Italian Star of Solidarity] in recognition for his hard work in the Italian community of Brisbane.⁶⁷

In the following months, the honourable Gioacchino Lauro, administrator of the *Flotta Lauro* [Lauro Fleet], visited Queensland. On this occasion the Italian owner of the fleet announced that two new ships would have replaced the *Roma* and the *Sydney* on the Italo-Australian route.⁶⁸

On 17 September 1964, Festival Hall was dressed up for the exceptional concert of two famous Italian pop singers: Mina and Peppino of Capri. In addition to these two artists, who were at the peak of their success, the “Rockers” and the singer Giovanni Giglio also performed. Two thousand people, mostly Italian, crowded the large auditorium and applauded the interpretations by the Italian artists.⁶⁹

On 7 December the written exam for the students that participated in the second Italian contest run by the consulate was held. A trip to Italy, the sole prize of the competition, would be awarded the day after the oral exam scheduled for 12 and 15 December.⁷⁰

The sources consulted report only a few news articles regarding community events in 1965. In June 1965, the new consul, Dr Mario Rotelli, organised, together with the *Fogolar Furlan*, a dance held at the Buffalo Hall in the Valley to celebrate the 19th anniversary of the Italian Republic.⁷¹ In December of the same year, a soccer match was held between teams from Abruzzi and Sicily, a sporting event that the

⁶⁶ See “Vajont Relief Appeal,” *Telegraph*, 21 October 1963, p. 23; “£1050 For Dam Break Victims,” *The Courier Mail*, 25 November 1963, p. 12; and “Successo dell’appello pro-Longarone,” *La Fiamma*, 26 November 1963, p. 26.

⁶⁷ See “La ‘Stella’ a Brusasco,” *La Fiamma*, 17 March 1964, p. 16.

⁶⁸ See “L’On Lauro a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 7 April 1964, p. 17.

⁶⁹ See “Ballo A.N.F.E. per ‘Miss Australia’,” *La Fiamma*, 1 September 1964, p. 17; and “No Screams From 2000 Italians,” *The Courier Mail*, 18 September 1964, p. 6.

⁷⁰ See “Il 7 December la prova scritta,” *La Fiamma*, 24 November 1964, p. 21.

⁷¹ See “Rievocazioni storiche al ballo nazionale,” *La Fiamma*, 8 June 1965, p. 16.

sources define as traditional. The first prize in this competition was ten gallons of beer, won by the Sicilians that triumphed 5 to 1.⁷²

The year 1966 was full of events for the Italian community in Brisbane. On Thursday 17 March, Franco Brozzesi gave a concert in Brisbane. Peter Ciani and the opera singer De Sisti performed with him. The musical accompaniment was by *maestro* Yousef Khasho. The concert was repeated the following Saturday. Despite the small audience, professional critics were very benevolent.⁷³ In the following months, Alfredo Campoli gave a series of concerts at the City Hall in Brisbane. Exceptional violinist, *maestro* Campoli achieved the acclaim of both the audience and the critics.⁷⁴ In May 1966, Dr M. Moscatelli, Director of the *Lloyd Triestino*, during an official visit to the capital of Queensland, officially announced that soon its company would include Brisbane amongst the Australian ports reached by its ships arriving from Italy.⁷⁵

In the same months Prince Raimondo Orsini was unable to keep his short visit to Brisbane a secret. Traveling incognito, he was the guest of some friends and then went on to Mount Isa and Darwin.⁷⁶ For the 20th anniversary of the Italian Republic, consul Rotelli organised a reception on 2 June for the diplomatic corps and some members of the Italian community. On Saturday 4 June, all of the Italian community was invited to celebrate at the Buffalo Hall in the Valley.⁷⁷

During an Australian tour, the soccer team *A. S. Roma* made a stop in Brisbane on Saturday 11 June 1966. They played a match with a team representing Queensland. That evening the whole Italian community was invited to a dance held at the Buffalo Hall to honour the illustrious guests.⁷⁸

On the evening of 21 June of that year, at the consulate, there was a meeting of the committee appointed to organise festivities for the

⁷² See "Il 18 December Miss Flotta Lauro," *La Fiamma*, 1965, 14 December, p. 16.

⁷³ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 29 March 1966, p. 16.

⁷⁴ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 12 April 1966, p. 16.

⁷⁵ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 10 May 1966, p. 16.

⁷⁶ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 24 May 1966, p. 16.

⁷⁷ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 31 May 1966, p. 16.

⁷⁸ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 7 June 1966, p. 16.

visit of Giuseppe Saragat, president of the Italian Republic, scheduled for September 1967. The committee was composed of 25 members, all esteemed members of the local Italian community. Dr Francesco Castellano was elected president of the committee. It was decided to hold a grand event with all of the Italian community at the City Hall.⁷⁹ President Saragat remained in Australia from 25 September to 1 October 1967, but was not able to include Brisbane in his busy program.

On 21 July, the Queensland Art Gallery hosted an exhibition by Italian sculptor, Emilio Greco.⁸⁰

On 27 August 1966, the Nanda Macaroni company organised a ball open to the whole Italian community at the Orana Hall in Clayfield. The principal attraction of the evening was a spaghetti-eating competition and the judging of Miss Nanda. During the event the famous pasta factory offered its products free of charge.⁸¹

The terrible floods in Italy from 3 to 5 November of that year were not lost on the Italian community in Brisbane. Within a few days of the tragedy, a committee was organised to help the flood victims and their families. Sir Raphael Cilento accepted the role of patron; Dr Castellano was elected president of the committee and Giorgio Marcuzzi, director of Alitalia in Queensland was elected secretary.

On 4 December the first fundraising event was held: a cocktail party at the Coronation Drive Motel. The Nanda Macaroni company responded immediately by donating two tonnes of pasta for the flood victims. At the suggestion of Carmelo Caruso, on 6 December, the Astor cinema in New Farm showed some documentaries on the disaster with the aim of drawing empathy from the Italian migrant community. The Brisbane Italian associations did their best in the fund-raising activities. The appeal officially closed on 31 December; towards the end of January 1967, the committee gave the Italian consul, Dr Mario Rotelli, 3,335 Australian dollars, which he immediately sent to the Prime Minister's Office in Rome.⁸²

⁷⁹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 5 July 1966, p. 16.

⁸⁰ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 2 August 1966, p. 16.

⁸¹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 August 1966, p. 16.

⁸² See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1966, p. 16, "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 29 November 1966, p. 20, "I fatti del Queensland," *La*

News reported by the sources for 1967 mainly regard religious initiatives or events organised by the Italian associations that will be extensively dealt with in the next chapters. It is however pertinent to mention the official visit of the Italian ambassador, Dr Mario Majoli, who arrived in Brisbane on 7 April 1967. On this occasion the diplomat wanted to meet the local Italian community: the *Corale Verdi* [Verdi Choir] musically animated the event.⁸³

At the beginning of 1968, the new consul, Dr Federigo Valli arrived in Brisbane. Convinced of the enticing economic potential of Queensland, the diplomat intended to foster Italian immigration in this flourishing Australian state.⁸⁴ In order to realise his project, Dr Valli, began immediately to make contacts with Italian entrepreneurs in Brisbane. In March 1968, the consul visited the Brisbane Steel Company & Co., a company specialising in iron and steel construction owned by Mrs S. Martini and P. Lo Presti. The factory at the time employed 25 skilled workers, all Italian.⁸⁵

In April 1968, radio station 4K2 began transmitting on air a new Italian music program sponsored by Alitalia. “Il quarto d’ora Freccia Alata” was a program of about 15 minutes conducted by Mr Mantovani each Sunday from 7:15 to 7:30. Thanks to the power of the transmitter, the new program was able to reach Italians in Cairns.⁸⁶

In June 1968, the first secretary of the Italian embassy in Canberra, Dr Antonio Napolitano, made a visit to the Queensland Italian committee to outline the salient points of the new immigration agreement stipulated by Italy and Australia in September 1967. On 17 June, Dr Napolitano gave a conference at the Italian consulate in Brisbane. The minister explained in detail to the many people attending, the advantages of the new agreement. The following day, the Italian diplomat visited the Nanda Macaroni factory and

Fiamma, 6 December 1966, p. 17, “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 27 December 1966, p. 21; and “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 31 January 1967, p. 17.

⁸³ See Marletta Cesare, “Come eravamo ...,” *Presenza* (1994) 1, p. 15.

⁸⁴ See “In aumento a Brisbane la popolazione italiana,” *Il Globo*, 13 February 1968, p. 14.

⁸⁵ See “Il dott. Valli a Coopers Plains,” *Il Globo*, 19 March 1968, p. 14.

⁸⁶ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 16 April 1968, p. 14.

participated in refreshments offered in his honour by the Pradella couple.⁸⁷

In August, the virtuoso Italian pianist Angelo Babini gave a concert in Brisbane.⁸⁸ Consul Valli liked to share any free time he had with the Italian community; on 18 August he went incognito to the *Tavernetta* in Aspley, but was recognised immediately and was warmly welcomed by his compatriots who were spending a pleasant Italian Sunday together.⁸⁹

In the same months, Maria Pia Conte, prominent Italian actress, was invited to Australia to promote the products of a local fashion company. The actress spent a couple of days in Brisbane and participated in a cocktail party at the Coronation Drive Motel, organised in her honour by the Italian consulate.⁹⁰ In November 1968, Consul Valli awarded the cross of *Cavaliere al merito della Repubblica Italiana* to Giovanni Panizza, director general of the local division of Transfield.⁹¹

In the same months Peppino di Capri, accompanied by Knockers, performed at the Festival Hall in Brisbane. The young singer Laura Orsenico presented a repertoire of songs in English.⁹²

At the beginning of August 1969, the Italian consulate organised the showing of a series of movies dedicated to the innovative Italian road system. The series, entitled “Italy on the Way,” received public acclaim from both Italians and Australians.⁹³

⁸⁷ See “Il dott. Napolitano in vista nel Queensland,” *Il Globo*, 25 June 1968, p. 16.

⁸⁸ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 13 August 1968, p. 15.

⁸⁹ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 27 August 1968, p. 15.

⁹⁰ As above.

⁹¹ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 12 November 1968, p. 15.

⁹² As above.

⁹³ See “Successo a Brisbane di ‘Italia in cammino’,” *Il Globo*, 12 August 1969, p. 16.

4. The 1970's: the Italian community consolidates

The 1970's were marked by the continued numerical growth of the Italian community in Brisbane and by the progressive consolidation of social relations and associative structures. In the sources consulted, however, there are few notices of community events in the first years of the decade.

In July 1970, Dr Mario Cappetta, the Italian government advisor for emigration, came to Brisbane for an official visit. One of the objectives of the visit was an inspection of the immigration camp at Wacol, south west of Brisbane, to determine the quality of the assistance offered by the Australian authorities to the new arrivals. On 20 July, advisor Cappetta met with compatriots at the Italo-Australian Centre.⁹⁴

On 23 December 1973, the Italian consulate organised a Christmas party at the Italo-Australian Centre for all the Italian children in Brisbane with the distribution of free presents. The public response was better than expected and 100 young people went home empty-handed. The consul decided to hold another party on 6 January just after Christmas, on the day of the *Befana*, to satisfy all the little ones disappointed at the first party.⁹⁵

In February 1974, the Italian school for the children of immigrants, organised annually by the Italian consulate, appeared to be very well organised. The lessons were held on Saturday in a classroom in an Australian school frequented by the little compatriots or one that was close to their residence. A new class was formed when the number of 20 enrolments was reached.⁹⁶

On Friday 31 May 1974, the Italian consul, Luigi Fulvi organised a refreshment for the 28th anniversary of the Italian Republic at the Italo-Australian Centre. Participants included esteemed members of the Italian community, some religious and civil authorities.⁹⁷ On Saturday 8 June, the Italian ambassador, Paolo Canali, came to Brisbane. A grand celebration for all of the compatriots was organised

⁹⁴ See "Notiziario del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 28 July 1970, p. 15.

⁹⁵ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 15 January 1974, p. 24.

⁹⁶ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 15 January 1974, p. 24.

⁹⁷ See "Attività Associazioni Italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 10 June 1974, p. 14.

at the City Hall, with the collaboration of all of the Italian associations.⁹⁸

On 10 June that year, the “Italian Theatre Company” of Brisbane debuted at the Arts Theatre. The company was formed in the previous months thanks to the initiative of some Italian immigrants, all amateur actors. Under the direction of Luigi Forzin, the company set up and presented with success *Il Ventaglio di Goldoni* in English. The show was repeated again in the next days.⁹⁹

On 13 October, Claudio Villa returned to Brisbane. This concert was held at the Imperia theatre in Lutwyche and was booked out until the end of September. The *Trio Villa* accompanied the Italian “King of the Song”. The public applauded the good performance of the singer but were disappointed by the small number of songs performed and the frequent interruption of songs with chatting and jokes.¹⁰⁰

On 4 November 1974, the day of Armed Forces was celebrated at the Italian consulate. The consul, Luigi Fulvi, officially awarded the *Croce di Vittorio Veneto* to cavalieri L. Cavaliero, D. Giordano, G. Magnetti, M. Pennisi and G. Zanchetta.¹⁰¹

On 8 November, the Brisbane division of Italia Gallery-International Art House directed by Fabio Francini, was inaugurated. The gallery opened its doors with an exhibition of contemporary Italian painters. The inaugural evening was honoured by the unexpected appearance of Walter Chiari, who was on holiday in Brisbane.¹⁰²

On 7 December 1974, a ceremony to officially close the Italian courses was held at the Italian consulate. The teacher Cesare Marletta, co-coordinator of the courses, diligently organised the event, during which the Italian consul, Luigi Fulvi awarded some prizes to worthy students.

⁹⁸ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 27 May 1974, p. 12.

⁹⁹ See “Attività Associazioni Italiane di Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 10 June 1974, p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 26 August 1974, p. 12; “Claudio Villa a Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 30 September 1974, p. 11; and “Deludente lo spettacolo di Claudio Villa,” *Il Globo*, 21 October 1974, p. 13.

¹⁰¹ See “Giornata delle Forze Armate,” *Il Globo*, 18 November 1974, p. 15.

¹⁰² See “Con una collettiva di pittori italiani inaugurata oggi a Brisbane la galleria d’arte ‘Italia’,” *Il Globo*, 18 November 1974, p. 15.

During 1974, there were 14 Italian courses in Brisbane with a total of 250 students. Moreover, thanks to the promotional work of the consulate, the Italian language was inserted as a foreign language taught in different Australian schools.¹⁰³ In the following days, consul Fulvi and the co-coordinator Mr Marletta, personally visited some Catholic schools in New Farm and Fortitude Valley that had introduced Italian as a second language.¹⁰⁴

In February 1975, the musician Joe Castellana organised the “New Voices” competition in Brisbane.¹⁰⁵

In March of that year, Gina Lollobrigida came to Brisbane. Her Australian tour was organised by the Apex Club to raise funds for the struggle against multiple sclerosis. A sumptuous reception was held in her honour at the Top of the State Restaurant in Brisbane.¹⁰⁶

The year 1976 was particularly full of events for the Italian community. At the end of April, the Australian tour of the comic Ciccio Pasticcio (real name Andrea Maugeri) made a stop in Brisbane. It was not the first time that the Italian comedian performed in the capital of Queensland. The show achieved notable success. Accompanying Ciccio Pasticcio on tour was his wife Rosina (Liliana Corradi), Giuseppe Santonocito’s band, the singer Aldo Landi (Giuseppe Avolesse), Liviana (Rosaria Martorana) and the accordionist Salvatore Maglia.¹⁰⁷

In the following May, the Italian community in Brisbane was deeply moved by the disaster caused by the earthquake in Friuli. The whole community reached out to the immigrants from Friuli that were residing in Queensland. The consulate and all the Italian associations organised a busy schedule of events to raise funds to help the disaster victims.

Towards the end of May, the new Italian consul arrived in Queensland, Dr Antonio Felice Maggia. The diplomat immediately

¹⁰³ See “Al ‘Centro’ di Brisbane cerimonia di chiusura dei corsi d’italiano,” *Il Globo*, 16 December 1974, p. 22.

¹⁰⁴ See “Visita del Console Luigi Fulvi alle scuole cattoliche di New Farm e Fortitude Valley,” *Il Globo*, 16 December 1974, p. 22.

¹⁰⁵ See “Concorso voci nuove a Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 18 November 1974, p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ See “Cena Cabaret a Brisbane in onore di Gina Lollobrigida,” *Il Globo*, 19 March 1975, p. 29.

¹⁰⁷ See “Ciccio Pasticcio,” *La Fiamma*, 6 May 1976, p. 27.

distinguished himself in his efforts to raise funds for the Friuli earthquake victims.¹⁰⁸

On 26 May, Massimo Ranieri gave a concert at the Festival Hall in Brisbane. Singer Fiammetta also performed with him. The show was a success, even if it was not sold out, probably because of the high price of the tickets.¹⁰⁹

On Sunday June 6, at the Italo-Australian Centre, Dr Maggia organised the celebration for the 35th anniversary of the Italian Republic. For the first time, all the Italian community and the various associations collaborated and participated in the event in numbers.¹¹⁰

In July 1976, the Italian consul visited the Griffith University in Brisbane and donated books and discs on Italian literature and art to the value of \$500 to the university library. This was the contribution of the Italian government to the creation of a lectureship in Italian language at this university. In the same days, Professor Gaetano Rando was assigned by Griffith University to teach Italian.¹¹¹ On 11 September, at the Milano restaurant, Miss Sarina Russo, candidate for Miss Australia, organised a breakfast to raise funds for the Spastic Welfare League of Australia.¹¹²

On Saturday 23 October 1976, the “International Red Cross Fair” was held in the grounds of the Governor of Queensland’s house. The Italian community set about organising a stand with typical national products. The organisers were Loris Balestrieri, Alfio Barbi, Igor Mircovich and Vera Frola. The initiative achieved great success.¹¹³

On Monday 25 October at the Mayne Hall of the University of Queensland, the Italian string orchestra, *I Musicisti* gave a concert of

¹⁰⁸ See “Viva emozione a Brisbane per la sciagura del Friuli,” *La Fiamma*, 13 May 1976, p. 31; “Tutti uniti per aiutare,” *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 31; and “Nuovo Console d’Italia per il Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 27 May 1976, p. 29.

¹⁰⁹ See “Brevi da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 27 May 1976, p. 29; and “Massimo Ranieri,” *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31.

¹¹⁰ See “Festa nazionale,” *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31, “Celebrato il 2 giugno dal Console di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 10 June 1976, p. 32.

¹¹¹ See “Dono del governo italiano,” *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1976, p. 32; and “Il Dr Rando insegnerà italiano alla Griffith University,” *La Fiamma*, 22 July 1976, p. 31.

¹¹² See “Aiuta gli spastici,” *La Fiamma*, 2 September 1976, p. 31.

¹¹³ See “Fiera Internazionale della Croce Rossa,” *La Fiamma*, 26 August 1976, p. 31; and “Successo dei prodotti italiani alla Fiera della Croce Rossa Internazionale a Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 8 November 1976, p. 29.

classical music. The musical virtuosos performed some compositions by Vivaldi. The concert was sponsored by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and by the Brisbane City Council.¹¹⁴

On 6 November, on the occasion of the celebration of Armed Forces, consul Maggia presented Dr Giuseppe Rinaudo with the “Medal of the Order of Solidarity of the Italian Republic” and in addition the title of *Cavaliere della Repubblica Italiana* for his services to other Italian immigrants in Queensland.¹¹⁵

On 2 December of that year, the honourable Franco Foschi, the Italian government’s undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, came to Brisbane to meet the local Italian community. The meeting, organised by the Italian consulate, occurred at the Italo-Australian Centre. The visit of the honourable Foschi was much appreciated by the Italian associations of Brisbane and by the fellow-countrymen that were able to get ‘first hand’ important information in the meeting with the representative from the mother country.¹¹⁶

On Saturday 4 December, still at the Italo-Australian Centre, consul Maggia presided over the closure of the Italian language courses. During 1976 there were 56 Italian language classes with around 1400 students. The courses for young people and adults were offered on Saturday, while the lessons for children were always taught at the various primary schools in the city.¹¹⁷

The end of 1976 was saddened by the passing of Dr Francesco Castellano. On 14 December in the cathedral, crowded with mourners, Fr Claudio Moscatelli celebrated the funeral mass of the esteemed doctor. The funeral was attended by many notable civil authorities of the city and of the state of Queensland. Gathered around the Italian consul, Dr Maggia, were all of the Italian societies of Brisbane and a crowd of fellow-countrymen accompanied the cortege from the

¹¹⁴ See “‘I musici’ a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 15 October 1976, p. 31.

¹¹⁵ See “Onorificenza all’avv. Rinaudo,” *La Fiamma*, 11 November 1976, p. 33.

¹¹⁶ See “L’on Foschi a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 25 November 1976, p. 32; “Benvenuto al Dr F. Foschi,” *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1976, p. 32; and “Un distintivo per l’on Foschi,” *La Fiamma*, 9 December 1976, pp. 32-33.

¹¹⁷ See “Sabato al centro saggio alunni dei corsi d’italiano,” *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1976, p. 32.

cathedral to Nudgee cemetery where the good soul of the doctor was buried.¹¹⁸

At the beginning of 1977 the new scholastic co-coordinator for Italian courses promoted by the Italian consulate arrived in Brisbane. Professor Leonardo Panella, from Milan, came with 15 years experience in the teaching of the Italian language at home in Italy and abroad. Professor Panella organised a series of daily courses for the local Italian teachers, who responded enthusiastically to the invitation.¹¹⁹ To confirm the increasing interest of the homeland towards this community that was still growing, in the following months the Italian diplomatic representation in Brisbane received another staff member. Mr Tullio Zuliani, immigration expert, was appointed as social chancellor.¹²⁰

On 15 February 1977, Iva Zanicchi gave a concert at the Festival Hall. The show, made up of new and old hits, was enriched by the comic talent of Claudio San Giusto.¹²¹

On that same day Carmelo Caruso's Italian program went on air on 4KQ for the last time. In the preceding years, due to its high ratings, the Italian Hour went from a 60 minute program to three 1 hour timeslots across three different days: Italian Serenade (Sunday evening), Italian Melodies (Tuesday evening) and Italy Sings (Friday evening). The official reason for the closure, given by the director of 4KQ, was the lack of audience. This ascertainment was strongly refuted by the presenter who appealed to the very positive results of a survey conducted among listeners.¹²²

In the following months of that year, consul Maggia invited all of the Italian associations to program specific activities for the youth of

¹¹⁸ See "L'estremo omaggio della comunità italiana al Dr Castellano," *La Fiamma*, 16 December 1976, p. 31.

¹¹⁹ See "A Brisbane il nuovo coordinatore scolastico," *La Fiamma*, 13 January 1977, p. 22; and "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 14 April 1977, p. 16.

¹²⁰ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 February 1977, p. 22.

¹²¹ See "Iva Zanicchi a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 3 February 1977, p. 23.

¹²² See "Non andrà più in onda il programma radio in italiano," *La Fiamma*, 10 February 1977, p. 12; and "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 February 1977, p. 11.

the second generation that generally remained at the margin of the Italian social life in Brisbane.¹²³

In April 1977, Dr Giuseppe Rinaudo received the title of public notary from the archbishop of Canterbury. He was the first Italian in Queensland to be given this title.¹²⁴

In May 1977, in a meeting at his emporium, Carmelo Caruso promoted the establishment of the *Brisbane Public Radio Society*, a radio station to service the diverse ethnic communities of Brisbane with programs in different languages. Representatives from ten ethnic groups were invited to the meeting. Caruso was elected president of the steering committee. It was decided to ask the ethnic community a voluntary subscription of 10 dollars for each member. They chose to be a non-profit organisation.¹²⁵

On Saturday 4 June, on the occasion of the Celebration of the Italian Republic organised at the Italo-Australian Centre, consul Maggia conferred the title of *Cavaliere di Vittorio Veneto* to five compatriots resident in Queensland; two of these, John Parrella and Marino Regano, were members of the Italian community of Brisbane.¹²⁶

In the same month, the Italian national basketball team came to Brisbane for an international match. The match was won by the Italian athletes, but the event passed unobserved by the local Italian community, that did not organise a welcome or farewell party for their compatriot basket-ball players.¹²⁷

Also in June 1977, Carmelo Caruso handed in his resignation as President of the Brisbane Public Radio Society citing as the reason the lack of support from the Italian community.¹²⁸

On 20 June, the provisory committee of the Italian Teachers Association was formed. In its first meeting Gaetano Rando, Italian teacher at the Griffith University was elected president. The

¹²³ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 10 March 1977, p. 20.

¹²⁴ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 21 April 1977, p. 11.

¹²⁵ See "Costruita la 'Brisbane Public Radio'," *Il Globo*, 9 May 1977, p. 29; and "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 12 May 1977, p. 18.

¹²⁶ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 2 June 1977, p. 13.

¹²⁷ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 June 1977, p. 13.

¹²⁸ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 June 1977, p. 13.

association proposed to promote the teaching of Italian and to ensure a space for Italian language in the recently established ethnic radio.¹²⁹

On Saturday 25 June 1977, Panella, didactic director, organised a ball for all of the Italian students and their families at the Sorrento Lounge in Deagon. There were 100 children and their families in attendance. The entertainment by singer Mimma Furlan and a Neapolitan tarantella ballet by Mrs Carmine Jacovella was received well by all present. The ball had the double aim of increasing the awareness within the Italian community of the importance of preserving the mother tongue amongst the new generation and raised funds for the Italian language courses.¹³⁰

In July 1977, Mr Alfio Barbi and Dr Giuseppe Rinaudo organised a meeting at the Italo-Australian Centre with some managers of the Italian associations of Brisbane. The goal was to found a local seat of the Italian Festival Society already active in other Australian states. Once formed, the convenors decided to participate in the Italian Festival that would occur in Adelaide during 1978 and to organise a similar event in Brisbane in the following year.¹³¹

On 27 September 1977, the Australian prime minister, Malcom Fraser, invited some members of the Brisbane Italian community to a working breakfast at the Lennon's Hotel. On this occasion the minister clarified with regret that the Australian government was not open to reuniting Italian families due to the worrying economic situation.¹³²

In October some friends of Dr Castellano, supported by some Italian associations, decided to introduce a scholarship in his honour. They began to accept very generous voluntary subscriptions from even the first days. On 11 November 1977, a cabaret was organised

¹²⁹ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 30 June 1977, p. 13.

¹³⁰ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 June 1977, p. 13; "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 June 1977, p. 13; and "Serata scuola d'italiano," *La Fiamma*, 14 July 1977, p. 13.

¹³¹ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 July 1977, p. 13.

¹³² See "Incontro del Primo Ministro Fraser con la comunità italiana di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 3 October 1977, p. 27.

toward this same aim. At the end of the month, however, the initiative was suspended.¹³³

In November 1977, the Italian language courses finished and on 26 November, the traditional ceremony to mark the official closure was held at the Italo-Australian Centre with the participation of both students and teachers; the best students were given awards.¹³⁴

On 30 December, the experimental broadcast of the *Ethnic Broadcasting Association* or 4EB commenced. Risen from the ashes of the Brisbane Public Radio Society, the new radio station was officially founded on 17 November in a meeting of representatives from different ethnic communities. The programs were in Italian, in other European languages and in some non European languages.¹³⁵

In January 1978, the Italian consulate decided to change its strategy regarding Italian teaching in public and private Brisbane schools. In the new year, only two schools in the Queensland capital would be subsidised; St Patrick's school in the Valley for the northern sector of Brisbane and St James school for the southern sector. The concentration of subsidised language courses was aimed at ensuring a better structure of linguistic teaching according to the different phases of learning.¹³⁶

On 22 February 1978, the new School Committee was elected for Brisbane. Mr Marino Regano was elected president.¹³⁷ On 25 February 1978, Tony Dallara came to Brisbane for a concert organised at the Italo-Australian Centre. The show of the noted interpreter of Italian popular music achieved great success.¹³⁸

¹³³ See "Borsa di studio Dr F. Castellano," *La Fiamma*, 12 October 1977, p. 14; "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 14 November 1977, p. 13; and "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 December 1977, p. 13.

¹³⁴ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 14 November 1977, p. 13; and "Brisbane: i migliori della classe," 15 December 1977, p. 15.

¹³⁵ See "Brisbane: Trasmissioni sperimentali Radio Etnica," *La Fiamma*, 9 January 1978, p. 18.

¹³⁶ See "A Brisbane quest'anno solo due scuole per i corsi d'Italiano," *La Fiamma*, 26 January 1978, p. 25.

¹³⁷ See "Eletti i membri del comitato scolastico," *La Fiamma*, 15 March 1978, p. 24.

¹³⁸ See "Dall'ara," *La Fiamma*, 2 February 1978, p. 21; and "Tony Dallara a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 2 March 1978, p. 16.

During the month of February that year, 4EB consolidated, thanks to the involvement of a good 22 ethnic communities. The steering committee began the application to register the association as a society with the Australian Broadcasting Bureau. In order to subsidise the programs the committee decided to ask the different communities to dedicate some of their traditional activities to raising funds for the ethnic radio of Brisbane.¹³⁹

On 31 March at the Italo-Australian Centre, in the presence of consul Maggia, the *Comitato Scolastico* [Italian School committee] organised a conference on methods of teaching the Italian language, run by Robert E. Kaplan, esteemed American linguist.¹⁴⁰ In the following April a group of Italian students, guided by Dr Giovanni Calderale, came to Brisbane for an intercultural exchange promoted by the Rotary Club International. From the program published on *La Fiamma* it did not seem that the group had much contact with the local Italian community.¹⁴¹

In the same month the promotional committee of 4EB started a petition to justify the request to the Australian authorities for an ethnic radio. The Italian representatives of the committee made an appeal to all of the Italian families to sign the petition. In the meantime, the committee sought to accelerate the liberalization of radio 4EB.¹⁴²

On 5 July a cocktail party was organised at the Italo-Australian Centre to farewell consul Maggia, who was recalled to Rome to assume a new position at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The representatives of the various Brisbane Italian associations and many compatriots attended to express their sincere gratitude to the Italian diplomat.¹⁴³

On Saturday 22 July 1978, at the Italo-Australian Centre, an evening to honour Carmelo Caruso, who received the “Croce di

¹³⁹ See “Verrà costituita al più presto la società,” *La Fiamma*, 2 February 1978, p. 21; and “Ethnic Broadcasting Association Committee,” *La Fiamma*, 2 March 1978, p. 16.

¹⁴⁰ See “Cronache locali,” *La Fiamma*, 3 April 1978, p. 24.

¹⁴¹ See “Gruppo di studiosi italiani a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 17 April 1978, p. 30.

¹⁴² See “Brisbane: continua la raccolta di firme per la Radio etnica,” *La Fiamma*, 10 April 1978, p. 28; and “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 1 June 1978, p. 23.

¹⁴³ See “Cronache locali,” *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1978, p. 29.

Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Solidarietà” was held to recognise his numerous services to the Brisbane Italian community.¹⁴⁴

In May 1979, after endless months of trying, 4EB was officially approved by the Australian authorities. The president of the steering committee in 1979 was Professor Gaetano Rando, who strived to obtain permission to transmit experimental programmes from December 1977.¹⁴⁵ At the end of August 1979 Senator Michele Celidonio arrived in Brisbane, a stopover on his official visit to Australia. During the Italian parliamentarian's stay in the city the Queensland Chamber of Commerce organised a working breakfast at the Ridge Motel. The Senator had personally assisted the first wave of migration to Australia from Abruzzi and Molise in the post-war period.¹⁴⁶

On 30 September 1979 at the Ahepa Hall in West End, the annual assembly of 4EB was held in the presence of 250 members. The President, Rando, presented the annual report in which he underlined his complete satisfaction with the results obtained: the addition of 700 new members, the acquisition of modern equipment and state approval obtained in the previous May. Gaetano Rando was unanimously re-elected for another term.¹⁴⁷

During the 1970's, the Queensland Italian consulate began to subsidise travel to Italy for those compatriots with proven financial difficulties. In October 1979, for the first time, the names of the benefactors of this practice were published on *La Fiamma*. The tickets were awarded during an official ceremony by Giuseppe Rinaudo, President of the *Comitato Assistenza Italiani* at the consulate.¹⁴⁸

On Saturday 24 November, at the Italo-Australian Centre a presentation was held by the Italian students to celebrate the end of the school year. The consul, Dr Mario Sganga, gave awards to the top students. The event was co-coordinated by didactic director, Professor

¹⁴⁴ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 27 July 1978, p. 30; and “Una serata al “Centro” con “l'amico Caruso”,” *Il Globo*, 31 July 1978, p. 29.

¹⁴⁵ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1979, p. 28.

¹⁴⁶ See “Australia meravigliosa ed ospitale,” *La Fiamma*, 6 September 1979, p. 30.

¹⁴⁷ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1979, p. 28.

¹⁴⁸ As above.

Adriana Jacobelli and by Marino Regano, President of the *Comitato Scolastico*.¹⁴⁹

On 1 December 1979, 4EB was officially inaugurated; thanks to the new antennae, installed at the end of October, the transmission could regularly go on air for the enjoyment of the various ethnic communities involved.

In the session reserved for the Italian language there was also a direct radio transmission of “Tutto il calcio minuto per minuto” [All the soccer minute by minute] from Italy.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ See “Cronache locali,” *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1979, p. 26; and “Brevi da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 29 November, p. 26.

¹⁵⁰ See “Brevi da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 1 November 1979, p. 26; “Cronache locali,” *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1979, p. 26; and “La Radio Etnica 4EB è una realtà,” *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1979, p. 29.

5. The 1980's: the Italian community looks in the mirror

The 1980's smiled on a now mature Italian community, kept occupied with maintaining its true national identity also within the second generation and promoting its culture within an Australian society that was increasingly multicultural. With regard to community events in the first years of this decade, the information reported in the sources consulted was scarce and fragmented. In January 1980, the sudden departure of Gaetano Rando, transferred to New South Wales for work, left 4EB 'orphaned'. The steering committee set new elections for 31 January. On 30 January, the Italian section of the ethnic radio met to elect the new committee which was composed of: Fr Camillo Grisendi, general co-ordinator, Franco Forni, vice coordinator, Fabia Forni, Flora Sciarretta and Paola Ronci, both responsible for women's programs, Joe Castellana, responsible for local artists, Enea Sciarretta, in charge of the sporting program and Giuseppe Virzi, finance co-ordinator. Then the Italian section of the ethnic radio described the programs in detail. The Italian palimpsest included programs all day, at various hours, for adults and children.¹⁵¹

At the beginning of the 1980's, thanks to the praiseworthy initiative of the Italian consulate, the numerous Italian clubs of Brisbane committed themselves to co-ordinating their activities in such a way that they did not overlap with the other clubs and eventually compete with them. On 7 February at the Italo-Australian Centre there was a meeting with all of the representatives of the Italian associations. Under the direction of Rinaudo, a common calendar was drawn up that included all of the organised events of each association. It was also decided that all the associations would collaborate to organise the celebration of the Italian Republic and of another event during the month of August.¹⁵²

On Saturday 22 March 1980, at the Colussus Hall in West End, radio 4EB organised an evening of dance to which the Italian

¹⁵¹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 24 January 1980, p. 22; "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 February 1980, p. 22; and "4EB Radio Etnica," *La Fiamma*, 14 February 1980, p. 42.

¹⁵² See "Presentato il calendario delle manifestazioni di quest'anno," *La Fiamma*, 14 February 1980, p. 42.

community was invited.¹⁵³ In July 1980, the Italian ambassador to Australia, Dr Sergio Angeletti, visited Brisbane together with his wife. The couple attended a reception held in their honour at the Ridge Motel. On this occasion the ambassador was able to meet representatives of the Italian community.¹⁵⁴

After the success achieved in 1976, in 1981 Italian comedian Ciccio Pasticcio returned to Australia for a new tour that saw performances in twenty cities. On 22 May the artist, accompanied by his wife Rosina and some singers, Aldo Landi, Peter Ciani and Alina, performed at the City Hall in Brisbane. The tour was organised by Carmelo Caruso.¹⁵⁵ On Saturday 28 May with great success, a ball was organised by the Italian committee of radio 4EB. This was co-ordinated by Sam Tornatore. On this occasion the award for the best presenter of the year went to Fabia Forni, host of the *Domenica Insieme* [Sunday Together] program.

In 1982 the ethnic radio broadcasted programs for 39 different ethnic groups. The programs in Italian were hosted by Fabia Forni, Sunday, Gabriele Brancozzi and Franco Paragnani, Monday, Massimo Muzi, Tuesday, Nando Strano and M. Antonietta Caruso, Wednesday, Carmelo and Adriano Caruso, Thursday, Giuseppe Virzi, Friday, and Fiorenza Jones, Nella Alba and Sister Piera Tosoni, Saturday.¹⁵⁶ On 2 June 1982, on the occasion of the Feast of the Italian Republic, the acting consul, Giovanni Marchelli, organised a sumptuous reception at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket. Some Australian authorities and members of the Italian community were present. On Sunday 6 June, the community celebrations for the Feast of the Italian Republic took place, again at the Italo-Australian Centre. Over 1000 compatriots crammed the upper room of the centre.¹⁵⁷ On 26 June, at the Newmarket centre the election of the new steering committee for the Italian section of radio 4EB was held. Maria Antonietta Caruso

¹⁵³ See "Notiziario di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 February 1980, p. 42.

¹⁵⁴ See "Cordiale incontro dell'ambasciatore con i connazionali di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 12 July 1980, p. 28.

¹⁵⁵ See "Ciccio Pasticcio Show," *Il Globo*, 20 April 1981, p. 28.

¹⁵⁶ See "Un successone il «Gran Ballo della Radio» al Centro Italo-Australiano di Newmarket," *Il Globo*, 6 June 1982, p. 23.

¹⁵⁷ See "Grandi festeggiamenti per il 36.mo anniversario della Repubblica," *Il Globo*, 14 June 1982, p. 23.

was elected general co-ordinator. The other committee members included Carmelo Caruso, M. Bandiera, G. Brancozzi, Carlo Crocetti, Fabia Forni, Franco Mantino, Luigi Monforte, Sam Tornatore, Giuseppe Virzi and Salvatore Virzi. All the workers gave their services voluntarily. Out of the 10,000 Italians in Brisbane at that time only about a hundred were registered as members of the radio. The new committee proposed to begin a campaign to increase subscriptions.¹⁵⁸

In this year the Italian consulate in Queensland continued to support the Italian language courses for adults and children. In May 1984, in line with a strong tradition, the Didactic office of the consulate organised a series of daily courses for personnel dedicated to the teaching of Italian language and for other organisers of cultural initiatives at the Italo-Australian Centre.¹⁵⁹

On 2 June 1985, the celebrations for the 39th anniversary of the Italian Republic began in the cathedral of Brisbane with a solemn Holy Mass. After the religious function, all the worshippers went to the Italo-Australian Centre for the ritual of placing the wreaths and flowers in front of the monument to the fallen soldiers that was inaugurated in September 1984. Over 200 compatriots participated in the celebrations, amongst which were representatives from all of the Italian associations in Brisbane.¹⁶⁰ Upon the invitation of Carmelo Caruso, president of the Italian School Committee, from 23 to 25 August, Dr Sergio Angeletti visited Brisbane for the second time. On 23 August the ambassador participated in a gala dinner at the Roman Room of the Ridge Motel, where he met various Australian authorities and some representatives of the Italian community. On 24 August the Italian diplomat visited the hospital run by the Canossian nuns and assisted in a presentation in Italian prepared by students and teachers of the Italian courses at the Griffith University. In the evening, Dr Angeletti was guest of honour at a grand ball organised

¹⁵⁸ See "Elezioni del nuovo comitato italiano della Radio 4EB," *Il Globo*, 4 July 1982, p. 23.

¹⁵⁹ See "Seminario d'aggiornamento per insegnanti di italiano," *Il Globo*, 16 April 1984, p. 23.

¹⁶⁰ See "Festeggiato a Brisbane l'anniversario della Repubblica," *La Fiamma*, 6 June 1985, p. 30.

by the Italian School Committee at the Valley Rugby Club with over 400 Italians attending. On Sunday 25 August, the ambassador attended a mass in Italian at the Church of St Thomas Moore. The *Polifonica L. Perosi* enlivened the liturgical songs.¹⁶¹ On 3 December 1985, the Italian School Committee of Brisbane organised a meeting with the Italian teachers with the aim of evaluating the results of the last scholastic year. Attending the meeting was the Italian consul, Daniele Perico, the didactic director Jacobelli and Professor Max Brandle of the University of Queensland.¹⁶²

At the beginning of 1986 the Italian courses began to be held regularly. The enrolment in the state of Queensland was progressively increasing during these last years with over 7,000 students in 1986, divided into 270 courses.¹⁶³ From 1 to 5 April the Italian School Committee of Brisbane organised a seminar on Italian language and culture. Professor Silvana Perini and Professor Salvatore Intelisano were invited and presented excellent lectures.¹⁶⁴ The celebrations for the anniversary of the Italian Republic began on 31 May with a grand evening of dance organised at the City Hall by the Italian School Committee.

On Sunday 1 June, a Holy Mass was celebrated in the cathedral of Brisbane. The liturgy was enriched by the splendid voices of the *Coro Verdi* and of the *Polifonica L. Perosi*. consul Perico invited some of the community to a concert held at the New Farm Park.¹⁶⁵ In the sources consulted the notices regarding the following years correlate to the Italian associations and religious events which are the subjects of the next chapters.

¹⁶¹ See "Prossima visita dell'ambasciatore d'Italia a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 22 July 1985, p. 22; and "La visita dell'ambasciatore Angeletti," *Il Globo*, 2 September 1985, p. 22.

¹⁶² See "Comitato Scolastico Italiano," *La Fiamma*, 12 December 1985, p. 35.

¹⁶³ See "Comitato scolastico italiano di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 24 February 1986, p. 30.

¹⁶⁴ See "Seminario di lingua e cultura italiana," *Il Globo*, 17 March 1986, p. 24; and "Seminario di aggiornamento a Brisbane del comitato Scolastico Italiano," *Il Globo*, 14 April 1986, p. 23.

¹⁶⁵ See "Festa nazionale italiana," *La Fiamma*, 8 May 1986, p. 30.

CHAPTER THREE

Italian Associations

1. Italian associations in Brisbane

The strong trend of the Brisbane Italian community to aggregate, observed during the interwar period, was more widely consolidated after the Second World War. The organisation of Italian associations, some official and others less so, began in the 1950's. This was when the number of Italians in the Brisbane community significantly increased and the enthusiasm of the new arrivals overcame the latent feelings of "ethnic inferiority" derived from memories of the detention camps. In most cases the preservation of their own cultural, linguistic and religious identity, both national and regional, appeared clearly to be the centripetal force. Also in the case of sporting associations and relief organizations, the national element was always emphasised.

The variety of associative forms constituted at the same time both the richness and the weakness of the Brisbane Italian community. In the abundant opportunity for occasions to meet and socialize, the ghosts of disunity and competition are always present. There were however examples of exemplary collaboration, particularly on occasions of national celebrations, religious festivals or campaigns of solidarity to support the motherland.

2. The *Società Dante Alighieri* [Dante Alighieri Society]

The Brisbane committee of the national Dante Alighieri Society was founded in 1936 and the first years of its history have already been presented in my first volume, "The Italians of Brisbane," to which I refer the reader for more detailed information.¹ Due to the sensitive political situation developing in Australia, and more particularly in Queensland, in the days immediately following the onset of World War II, on 6 September 1939, the committee president, Raphael Cilento, decided to temporarily suspend the activities of the society.²

The first vice consul of the Italian Republic in Brisbane, Dr Felice Benuzzi, was the true artifice of the rebirth of the Dante Alighieri in 1952. Towards the middle of the year, the enterprising diplomat organised a meeting with some esteemed exponents of the Italian community in Brisbane, amongst whom was the same Dr Cilento, with the aim of restoring the local committee of the society. The committee was officially reconstituted on 10 September 1952, and Raphael Cilento was immediately made the president. The first two members were Dr B. Rappaport and Dr Steven Kinston. Two days later, Francesco Castellano and his wife and Robert McDonnell also became members. On 19 September, Mrs Vesta Messervy made a commitment to the society and on 24th September Dr P. Zavattaro also joined. Dr Castellano was nominated vice president and they decided on the *Casa San Francesco* as their base. The activities of the first years of the Dante, in the post war period, essentially consisted of cultural events organised by Dr Castellano, generally on a monthly basis, and the Italian courses for Australian students run by Mr McDonnell.³

More precise news was reported in 1953. On the evening of 11 March, at the *Casa San Francesco*, Dr Castellano gave a conference

¹ See F. Baggio, *Gli Italiani di Brisbane*, Scalabrini Migration Center, Quezon City 2005, pp. 171-175. Again with regard to the Dante Alighieri Society in Brisbane: Australian historian Don Dignan, is currently writing a detailed historical monograph entitled *Brisbane's Dante Alighieri Society- 1952-2002*, whose manuscript was kindly lent to me by the author prior to publication.

² See D. Dignan, *Brisbane's Dante Alighieri Society. 1952-2002*, unpublished manuscript (2008), p. 4.

³ As above, pp. 4-9.

for all of the members of the Dante Alighieri Society on Italian music from the 1600's to the 1700's. A concert of songs specifically chosen by the speaker closed the delightful cultural evening, marked by the participation of a large number of Italian and Australian members.⁴ The sources consulted certified that, more or less once a month, the society organised a benefit ball at the *Casa San Francesco*. The profits were entirely devoted to the acquisition of books and materials for the diffusion of the Italian culture.⁵ In August 1953, Dr Cilento handed over the reigns of the society to Dr Castellano, who officially assumed the presidency from the beginning of 1954. In the meantime, the Italian school gained numerous students from amongst the Australian community. This was due to the advertisements in the local daily newspapers.⁶ In 1954 Italian lessons were regularly held at the *Casa San Francesco* on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The students were divided into three courses according to their skill level. During the Dante meeting of 14 September 1954, the students at the Italian school, directed by the indefatigable Robert McDonnell, presented a skit that was greatly appreciated by the members present.⁷ During the November monthly meeting, dedicated to Italian Renaissance art, Dr Cilento announced the imminent departure for Italy of Vice Consul Benuzzi, advocator of the rebirth of the society.⁸ At the last Dante Alighieri meeting for 1954, the first students of the biennial Italian courses organised by the society graduated. It was under the guidance of Robert McDonnell, that they recited the poem *Sabato del Villaggio* [Saturday in the Village] by Giacomo Leopardi. There was a large audience of about 70 people, which included members and supporters. On this occasion, the management committee decided to introduce the English language into some of the monthly meetings for the following year and to choose only themes of a higher academic level.⁹

⁴ See "Dotta Conferenza del Dr Castellano sulla musica del "600-700," *La Fiamma*, 27 March 1957, p. 2.

⁵ See "Ballo della Dante," *La Fiamma*, 3 April 1953, p. 2.

⁶ See D. Dignan (2008), pp. 8 and 10.

⁷ See "Sette Giorni a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 October 1954, p. 9.

⁸ See "Sette Giorni a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 2 November 1954, p. 9.

⁹ See "Adunanza finale della Dante Alighieri," *La Fiamma*, 26 November 1954, p. 9.

The sources consulted did not report news from the two year period 1955-56. In April 1957, the monthly meeting of the Dante hosted a lecture by Professor Mahoney, French teacher at the University of Queensland. Eventually, Robert McDonnell became an Italian teacher at the same university. At the beginning of the school year in 1957, 80 students were enrolled in his course and the teachers at the Dante had to divide them into two classes.¹⁰ Around 50 members attended the monthly meeting in May 1957, during which there were four documentaries on Italian art and customs.¹¹ During the meeting on 10 August, President Castellano held an erudite lecture on Neapolitan songs. Pizza was served as the usual refreshment at the end of the meetings. On this occasion, Miss U. Cervetto, ex-secretary of the society was given a token of recognition after her resignation from her duties as a result of her imminent marriage and transfer to Melbourne. Mrs Barbara Sheen took Mrs Cervetto's place.¹² The numbers of attendees at meetings, members and sympathisers continued to increase. On 8 October the usual monthly meeting of the Dante was held at the *Casa San Francesco*. Following a lecture on Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*, given by Mr Masinello, Miss S. Lahey presented a brief report on her recent stay in Italy and Europe, showing some interesting colour photographs.¹³ The meeting on 12 November marked the conclusion of the activities for 1957. On this occasion the diplomas of the Italian courses were awarded to nine Australian students. A pianoforte concert and delicious refreshments enhanced the evening.¹⁴ The meetings of the society continued regularly in 1958. During the meeting on 8 April, Dr Castellano commemorated the centenary of the birth of Giacomo Puccini, displaying his vast knowledge of music and his very valuable collection of musical records. More than one hundred people met at the *Casa San Francesco* to listen to the president of the *Dante*.¹⁵ On

¹⁰ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 19 April 1957, p. 10.

¹¹ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 24 May 1957, p. 9.

¹² See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 9 August 1957, p. 10.

¹³ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1957, p. 11; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1957, p.11.

¹⁴ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1957, p. 13.

¹⁵ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 April 1958, p. 12.

13 May, the committee invited Mr Floriano Sferco, correspondent for the newspaper *La Fiamma*, to present a conference on the theme “This is our Italy.”¹⁶ In August 1959, the students of the Italian language school of the Dante enlivened the monthly meeting with a show that included music, singing and theatre, according to an Italian tradition. At the end, the enterprising students gave their Italian teacher, Carla Rudd, a gift of flowers.¹⁷

Despite articles on the Dante Alighieri Society being somewhat fragmented, the 1960's appeared to be a period full of activity and successes for the association. The monthly committee meeting on 9 August 1960, held at the *Casa San Francesco*, was reserved to that which seemed to have become a tradition: the performance of the students from the Italian school. The most erudite part of the meeting was entrusted to Dr Steven Kinston, who gave a lecture on Italo-Australian relations. Excellently organised down to the smallest detail, under the direction of teacher Carla Rudd, the event was well attended. The audience, applauded tirelessly at all of the students' performances, from theatre to poetry, from opera singing to satirical skits.¹⁸

On Tuesday 20 September, Professor Carlo Maxia, renowned Italian anthropologist, that was in Australia for a series of lectures hosted by the various committees of the Dante, gave a lecture on “Sardinia in the history of the Mediterranean civilization.” The lecture was held at the *Casa San Francesco*. The large and attentive audience of the Dante applauded the erudite and fascinating exposition of the illustrious speaker, who returned to Italy the day after on the ship *Roma*.¹⁹

At the end of 1960, Carla Rudd decided to return to Italy and Robert McDonnell once again took the role of coordinator of the Italian courses.²⁰ The membership of the Dante was not growing in proportion to the increasing number of people who participated in the

¹⁶ “Sette Giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 9 May 1958, p. 12.

¹⁷ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 26 August 1959, p. 15.

¹⁸ See “Conferenza, teatro, canto,” *La Fiamma*, 23 August 1960, p. 15.

¹⁹ See “Conferenza alla Dante,” *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1960, p. 23; “Qui il Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1960, p. 16.

²⁰ See D. Dignan (2008), p. 16.

gatherings of the Society. In 1961, the Brisbane section of the Dante Alighieri Society officially counted only 45 members, 13 of which were students.²¹ In 1963, Professor McDonnell began to reform the Italian courses, that progressively led to structuring the courses into three distinct levels (beginners, intermediate, and advanced), the appointment of four regular teachers and the categorisation and distribution of timetables offering courses according to client needs (students, housewives, children).²² On 11 May 1965, in the presence of the Italian consul of Queensland, Dr Mario Rotelli, at the *Casa San Francesco*, the Dante commemorated the centenary of the birth of John Sibelius, famous Finnish composer. The erudite words of the poet and music critic, Ernest Briggs, were echoed by the notes of the “Concert in D minor” of the music virtuoso.²³ On the 18th of the following June the Italian students livened up the monthly Dante gathering with a cultural performance competently directed by Robert McDonnell. As was usual for these occasions there was great public support.²⁴ In the following months the Dante organised a series of cultural activities in collaboration with the University of Queensland. To conclude 1965, the Dante committee held a ball and a Christmas party at the *Casa San Francesco*.²⁵

At the beginning of 1966, the management committee of the Dante decided not to renew the rental lease with the *Casa San Francesco* and had to look for a new base. The society, that at that time counted 83 members of which 43 were students, transferred its base and library to Centaur House, 337 Queen Street, a few blocks away from the previous location.²⁶ On 18 February, at the Rayan House in Elizabeth Street, the Dante held a general assembly to elect the new committee. Dr Castellano was re-elected president, alongside two vice-presidents: Dr Rapport and the lawyer, Mr Crawford. The calendar of monthly meetings was fixed for every second Tuesday of the month at the new base that included a committee room and a

²¹ As above, p. 13.

²² As above, pp. 16-17.

²³ See “Commemorato Sibelius alla Dante,” *La Fiamma*, 21 May 1965, p. 16.

²⁴ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 22 June 1965, p. 16.

²⁵ See “Ballo e Christmas Party alla Dante,” *La Fiamma*, 16 November 1965, p. 16.

²⁶ See D. Dignan (2008), p. 17.

library on the first floor of Centaur House.²⁷ The Italian courses for children commenced in the new rooms of the Dante in March. These lessons were held on Saturday mornings.²⁸ On Tuesday 19 April, Dr Castellano opened a series of monthly cultural functions with a lecture on Giotto on the occasion of the seventh centenary of the artist's birth. At the national level, Alitalia supported the Dante Society in the organisation of an essay competition on poet Dante Alighieri. The Brisbane branch of the Dante Alighieri society was also involved in this competition.²⁹ On 14th June 1966, Dr Castellano, gave another lecture at the Dante. He gave a presentation on the art of Masaccio and this was accompanied by a slide show.³⁰ On 1 October the society decided to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Italian composer and pianist Feruccio Busoni at the auditorium of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. The presenter for the occasion was Ernest Briggs.³¹ In the same month, at the Rayan House, the society organised a lecture on Emilian art by Fiore Rinaldi, treasurer of the Dante and lecturer in philosophy at the University of Queensland.³² After that, in November, the society marked the closure of activities for the summer holidays by hosting the usual pre-Christmas celebrations at the Carrington Lounge in Fortitude Valley.³³

At the beginning of 1967, thanks to the mediation of Fiore Rinaldi, the Dante was able to obtain, free of charge, the use of a spacious room at the University of Queensland for their monthly meetings. In May of the same year, the management committee decided to rent more spacious rooms at the Retailer House, 329 Adelaide Street, still in the same zone. The transfer benefited the library that was finally organised and properly set up. During the same year, thanks to the insistence of Fiore Rinaldi, the publication of a small bulletin, entitled Dante News began. The multitude of

²⁷ See "Nuovo comitato Dante," *La Fiamma*, 1 February 1966, p. 16; "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 February 1966, p. 16.

²⁸ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 March 1966, p. 16.

²⁹ See "Commemorato alla Dante il settimo centenario della nascita di Giotto," *La Fiamma*, 26 April 1966, p. 16.

³⁰ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 June 1966, p. 16.

³¹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1966, p. 16.

³² See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 October 1966, p. 16.

³³ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1966, p. 16.

activities and the hard work of the management committee saw the Dante grow throughout the course of 1967: from 40 actual members (non-student), counted at the end of 1966, within a few months there were 170 actual members and 16 associate members.³⁴ Soon it was 1968 and the activities of the society commenced early in January, with a summer course in Italian, organised at the University of Queensland. The seven day intensive course saw the participation of 89 assiduous students and the rotation of local teachers.³⁵ On 20 February, at the same university, the annual assembly of the Dante was held with the election of a new committee. Dr Castellano left the presidency after having guided the Brisbane section of the Dante for 14 years. In recognition of his commendable work, Dr Castellano was elected as an advisor to the society for life. The newly elected president was Albert G.E. Spiers, Professor in Russian, at the University of Queensland. The nomination of a non-Italian president sent murmurs through the Italian community, amplified by the newspaper *Il Globo*. The management committee, together with Dr Castellano, however, defended the Dante's choice. On 9 February, the Italian lessons held at the social centre of the Dante in Adelaide Street commenced. The school operated over two sessions: afternoon and evening.³⁶ There were large numbers of enrolments amongst adults and children. The lessons to the children of Italian immigrants were subsidised by the consulate. At the same time an agreement was being sought with the University of Queensland to establish a chair in Italian. Despite the enthusiasm, above all from within the Italian community, the project was not successful.³⁷

The cycle of monthly meetings began on 19th March, with a lesson by Consul Federico Valli on Italian post-war cinema. Segments of the most famous films of the period were shown. The event took place at the large lecture room that was made available by the

³⁴ See D. Dignan (2008), pp. 17, 19.

³⁵ See "Corso di italiano dal 3 al 10 Gennaio," *Il Globo*, 8 October 1968, p. 16.

³⁶ See "Assemblea della Dante il 20 Febbraio a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 6 February 1968, p. 15; see also "Dante Alighieri," *Il Globo*, 27 February 1968, p. 15; D. Dignan (2008), p. 21, 24.

³⁷ See "Favorevole momento a Brisbane per l'Italia e la sua lingua," *Il Globo*, 27 February 1968, p. 15; D. Dignan (2008), p. 20.

University of Queensland for the duration of 1968, room G17 in the Social Sciences building.³⁸

The activities organised on 28 April 1968 by the Dante, at the home of the Iezzi couple, was a change from the usual schedule. There was the *Festa della porchetta* [Feast of the porchetta], a rustic and joyful evening to build rapport between the Italian and Australian members of the Italian societies. Il *Coro Giuseppe Verdi* [The Giuseppe Verdi choir] was invited to enliven the banquet.³⁹ The meeting on 18 June was dedicated to the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the death of Gioacchino Rossini. Dr Val Vallis was asked to prepare a lecture, which was followed by some famous pieces by the Italian composer.⁴⁰ The society organised a week dedicated to Italian cinema from 4 to 10 August, which included lectures and films. The event was held at the University of Queensland cinema and was coordinated by geologist, Vincenzo Palmieri, vice president of the Dante.⁴¹ At the monthly meeting on 10 November, the society welcomed an erudite lecture in Italian on Russian writers by Professor Albert G. Spiers, lecturer at the University of Queensland.⁴² There were 120 students enrolled in the second round of summer courses in Italian held at the same university. The second course lasted seven days, from 3 to 10 January 1969 and teachers from the southern Australian states were invited.⁴³

Albert G. Spiers left the presidency of the society in 1970 having decided to return to England. The new president elect was John Gransden, who, with annual mandates, remained in charge until the end of 1975. Mr Gransden was immediately preoccupied with the transfer of the Dante from the first to the third floor of Retailer House. In 1971 the central division of the Dante Alighieri Society awarded a diploma of merit to the Brisbane branch of the society, sent with a gold medal for president Gransden and a silver one for the secretary,

³⁸ See "Dante Alighieri," *Il Globo*, 19 March 1968, p. 14.

³⁹ See "Festa della porchetta della Dante di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 23 April 1968, p. 15.

⁴⁰ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 11 June 1968, p. 16; cf. "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 13 June 1968, p. 15.

⁴¹ See "Festival del cinema italiano a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 2 July 1968, p. 15.

⁴² See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 19 November 1968, p. 18.

⁴³ See "Corso di italiano dal 3 al 10 Gennaio," *Il Globo*, 8 October 1968, p. 16; "Corsi accelerati alla Dante Alighieri," *Il Globo*, 7 January 1969, p. 11.

Peggy Cameron. In December 1972, the society's base was moved to the first floor of the National Bank Chamber building in Eagle Street, again in the same area.⁴⁴ On 7 March 1973, the Dante organised an Italian evening at Carmelo Caruso's emporium with the participation of Italian and Australian personalities. The Borgo Company in Brisbane offered a degustation of various types of salami to all the guests. The proceeds went to the cultural and social activities of the society.⁴⁵ On 12 May 1974, the Dante committee held an "Italian Music Evening" at the home of Mrs Clare Graham in Newmarket. The monthly meeting on 14 May, held at the Italo-Australian Centre was dedicated to a lecture on paintings of Pompei, with a slide projection by Professor Don Barren, lecturer at the University of Queensland.⁴⁶ On Tuesday 11 June, the Dante organised a lecture on Baroque art in Venice by Mr John Gilfedder, at the Italo-Australian Centre. On the 20th of the following June, members and friends of the society gathered for a social dinner at the Elizabethan Feasting Hall in Petrie Terrace.⁴⁷ The third annual poetry recital competition, held by the Dante on Saturday 6 July 1974 at the University of Queensland, was a notable success. There were over 100 students competing, selected amongst all the Italian pupils in Brisbane. The competition was divided into eight sections differentiated by age, knowledge of the language and place of origin.⁴⁸ Every Sunday in September and October 1974, the Dante organised a festival of Italian opera films at the Rialto Theatre in West End.⁴⁹ In the monthly meeting on 8 October, the society celebrated the 100th anniversary of the birth of Guglielmo Marconi; the lecture was conducted by Dr Castellano at the Italo-Australian Centre.⁵⁰ The Dante concluded 1974 on a very positive note with 285 members and 200 students enrolled in the Italian courses.⁵¹

⁴⁴ See D. Dignan (2008), pp. 24-26.

⁴⁵ See "Dante Alighieri," *La Fiamma*, 1 March 1973, p. 20.

⁴⁶ See "Attività della Dante Alighieri," *Il Globo*, 6 May 1974, p. 16.

⁴⁷ See "Attività Associazione italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 10 June 1974, p. 14.

⁴⁸ See "Successo della gara di dizione di poesie italiane," *Il Globo*, 15 July 1974, p. 12.

⁴⁹ See "Festival del Film dell'Opera Italiana" *Il Globo*, 26 September 1974, p. 13.

⁵⁰ See "Dante Alighieri," *Il Globo*, 7 October 1974, p. 15.

⁵¹ See D. Dignan (2008), p. 36.

In 1975 John Gransden left the presidency of the Dante to Professor Robert D. Milns. Under his direction, more of the lecture programme of the Dante was dedicated to music; the erudite lecturers were: Francesco Castellano, John Gransden, Professor Val Pressly, A. J. Creedy and the Italian consul, Luigi Fulvi. The year closed with a surplus, due also to a grant obtained from the Department of Cultural Activities in Brisbane.⁵² From 1976 the monthly meetings of the Dante were held at the Italo-Australian Centre. In May 1976 the society organised its usual annual dinner for members and friends at the University of Queensland Club, but unfortunately the event had to be cancelled due to insufficient numbers.⁵³

On Thursday 10 June, the Dante wanted to contribute to the campaign of solidarity for the earthquake victims in Friuli by organising a gala evening. The event, due to organisational difficulties, unfortunately was not well supported.⁵⁴ The society hosted an Italian Week at the Queensland Art Gallery, from 16 to 30 June, with the presentation of lectures, documentaries and a degustation of typical Italian food presented by Luciano Merlo, manager of Merlo's Restaurant in New Farm.⁵⁵ On Saturday 17 July the fifth annual poetry recital competition for Italian students was held. The coordination of the event was entrusted to Miss Noree Childers, director of the Italian courses for adults. They decided in 1976 to award prizes in each category to an Italian and non-Italian participant, to ensure greater equity in the competition. The competition was held in Room G17 at the University of Queensland.⁵⁶ On Tuesday 17 August 1976 the German Club Choir and the Giuseppe Verdi Choir challenged each other with music and beautiful singing in an event that the Dante organised on an annual basis.⁵⁷

The final years of the 1970's were again filled with social and cultural activities. On 17 May 1977, in the new hall of the Italo-

⁵² As above, p. 39.

⁵³ See "Dante," *La Fiamma*, 6 May 1976, p. 27; D. Dignan (2008), p. 40.

⁵⁴ See "Voci di dissenso," *La Fiamma*, 24 June 1976, p. 30.

⁵⁵ See "Settimana italiana," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31; "Settimana italiana," *La Fiamma*, 24 June 1976, p. 31.

⁵⁶ See "Torneo di recitazione," *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1976, p. 33.

⁵⁷ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 12 August 1976, p. 31.

Australian Centre, the Dante Alighieri organised a lecture on archaeology in Italy. The speaker for the occasion was Dr Felice Maggia, Italian consul in Brisbane.⁵⁸ On Saturday 2 July the usual poetry recital competition amongst the students in the Brisbane Italian schools was held: more than 150 children and 7 adults participated in the event.⁵⁹ The function on Tuesday 19 July, at the Italo-Australian Centre, was entrusted to Dr John Oper, Professor at the Griffith University, who gave a conference on the Renaissance in Florence.⁶⁰ In February 1978, the annual general meeting of the Dante took place with the election of the advisory director. Robert Milns handed over the reigns of the society to Max Brandle, Director of the Institute of Modern Languages at the University of Queensland. The role of vice president was entrusted to Gaetano Rando, Italian language teacher at Griffith University.⁶¹ The new president held a lecture on ancient Italy in the gathering of 18 April that was held at the Italo-Australian Centre.⁶² In the same centre, on 27 June the Dante organised a review of popular and classical music with the participation of the Verdi Choir, of the “German Liedertafel” choir and of the polish choir. On 18 July, under the aegis of the society and as usual at the Italo-Australian Centre, Professor Gilfedder presented a programme of Italian music from the 20th century.⁶³ On 29 July 1978 the preliminary phase of the eighth annual poetry recital competition reserved for the Italian school students was held at the University of Queensland. During these years, this competition was considered the most important competition of its kind in Queensland. So much so that it was necessary to host an elimination round before the finals that in 1978 were held at the Italo-Australian Centre on 15 August.⁶⁴

The sources consulted did not report much news regarding the period from 1979 until 1990. In March 1980, as every year, they opened the enrolments for the Italian courses which were divided into

⁵⁸ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 12 May 1977, p. 18.

⁵⁹ See “Brevi da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 7 July 1977, p. 13.

⁶⁰ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 21 July 1977, p. 14.

⁶¹ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 27 February 1978, p. 26.

⁶² See “Notiziario dell’Italo-Australian Club,” *La Fiamma*, 17 April 1978, p. 30.

⁶³ See “Cronache locali,” *La Fiamma*, 22 June 1978, p. 28.

⁶⁴ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 20 July 1978, p. 30.

three levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced. To build greater rapport between teachers and students, the director of the courses, Dr Carlo Zincone, decided to hold a meeting on 21 March at the Dante centre in Eagle Street.⁶⁵ The Italian courses were repropose in the following years according to the same structure, even if there were small changes. Still under the direction of Carlo Zincone, in 1984, the courses went from three semesters to two semesters. On March 6 1984, the annual opening ceremony of the Dante courses was held.⁶⁶ On Sunday 29 August, the society organised a recreation afternoon with a bocce competition and polenta at the *Tavernetta* in Aspley. On 8 and 9 September, the Dante hosted a stall at the Spring Hill Fair, the largest exhibition in Brisbane.⁶⁷ In these years the presidency of the society rotated amongst Professor J. Tyrer, Dr Don Dignan and Professor Enzo Bellingoi.⁶⁸ The annual general meetings were moved to the end of the social year. The last news articles found for the period considered refer to 8 November 1988, the date of the annual general meeting held at the ANFE House Hall, when Enzo Bellingoi was re-elected as the president.⁶⁹ In the following years, the Brisbane Dante Alighieri Society continued to 'churn out' social and cultural activities in line with their aims. Still today they propagate the values of Italian art and culture, as much within the Italian community as within the general community in Brisbane.

⁶⁵ See "Notiziario di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 February 1980, p. 42.

⁶⁶ See "L'angolo del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 27 February 1984, p. 23.

⁶⁷ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

⁶⁸ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli, O.F.M. Cap.*. Brisbane 1 October 1994, unpublished manuscript, p. 18.

⁶⁹ See "Eletto il comitato della Dante," *La Fiamma*, 17 November 1988, p. 35.

3. The Azzurri [Blues]

The idea of establishing an ‘Italian’ soccer team in Brisbane could be attributed to a small group of young immigrant workers from the Pasotti firm that met regularly at the *Casa San Francesco* at the beginning of the 1950’s:

“The first meeting remembered by members that are still living was at the Casa San Francesco, in Elizabeth Street. Those present were Fr Bonifacio, Alessandro Rossi, Giovanni Turrini, Nello Schiavo and Dr Francesco Castellano, that were joined by the vice consul, Loris Balestrieri and Giuseppe Rinaudo as Secretary.”⁷⁰

Thanks to the help of Fr Bonifacio Zurli, the first “eleven” began to train at the Kedron Park field. They had to name the new team and they chose *Azzurri*, with the clear intention of evoking the distant mother country.⁷¹ The *Azzurri* Club began to officially exist in April 1952. The base was an old wooden shed at Kedron Park that functioned as a change room, storage and meeting room. The first president was Giovanni Turrini, assisted by worthy collaborators such as Alessandro Rossi, Antonio Venturini, Gino Arli, Giusti Perlizzari and Cristofaro Testa. Dr Castellano was the first patron.⁷² In the same year, the *Azzurri* enrolled in the fourth division of the Brisbane city competition and won 15 matches out of 17, whilst drawing 2. The valiant pioneers scored 87 goals and conceded only 24. After such a successful season, they were deservedly promoted to the third division, where the Brisbane Italian team contested the 1953 championship.⁷³

⁷⁰ “Il calcio in Queensland dal 1883 ai giorni nostri,” *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 23.

⁷¹ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d’Assisi Patrono d’Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), p. 22.

⁷² See Brisbane City Soccer Club, *Azzurri 1952-2002. 50th Anniversary of Brisbane City*, unpublished manuscript (2002); “Cronaca di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 10 April 1953, p. 2.

⁷³ See “Cronaca di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma* del 10 April 1953, p. 2.

Obtaining victory after victory the year after the *Azzurri* obtained a promotion to the second division.⁷⁴ To compete with their new adversaries, they needed to be more competitive. The team needed new players and for this they had to find the necessary funds. Hence they decided to organise a series of fund-raising events to replenish the club's tills: balls, shows, trips, picnics, raffles and competitions to elect the "Queen of the *Azzurri*."⁷⁵ Thanks to the invaluable efforts of the various management committees of the following years, the team was always able to finish the championship avoiding the spectre of relegation to the lower division. Other than those already cited, such as Turrini and Rossi, in the 1960's and 1970's the following assumed the role of president of the squad: Floriano Sferco, Johnny Ferlito, Felice Brusasco, Ernie Brusasco, George Cali, Giuseppe Della Bianca, Carmelo Caruso, Guido Canale, Con Sciacca, Gino Arquilla and Vince Calice.⁷⁶

At the beginning of 1957 a second team was formed, although not officially registered, and they would eventually play friendly matches.⁷⁷ Despite persistent economic constraints, the newly elected committee of the *Azzurri* decided to insure all of the players: 12 pounds sterling for injury and 1,000 pounds sterling in case of death.⁷⁸ They could not, however, permit any luxuries: the pre-championship training had to be held each Sunday at 2 pm and not in the evening

⁷⁴ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 27 January 1954, p. 2.

⁷⁵ See "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 7 October 1955, p. 9; see also "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 October 1955, p. 9; "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 November 1955, p. 9; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 11 January 1957, p. 13; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 January 1957, p. 8; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 1 February 1957, p. 7.

⁷⁶ See "Serata per gli Azzurri," *La Fiamma*, 30 July 1954, p. 3; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 11 January 1957, p. 13; see also "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 February 1957, p. 8; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1957, p. 13; "Dal Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 29 October 1958, p. 17; "Il calcio in Queensland dal 1883 ai giorni nostri," *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 23; C. Caruso, *Storia ed origini della squadra di calcio Azzurri di Brisbane, dal 1952 al 1971*, unpublished manuscript (1991), p. 6.

⁷⁷ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 February 1957, p. 8.

⁷⁸ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6.

because there were insufficient funds to pay for the field to be lit.⁷⁹ Thanks to a frugal management 1958 closed with a small surplus in the budget.⁸⁰

At the beginning of 1959, thanks to the precious mediation work of Felice Brusasco, the Brisbane City Council gave the *Azzurri* a piece of land at Spencer Park to construct a new soccer field, the association centre and other sporting facilities. The offer, a perpetual lease which included some contribution for the construction of the buildings, was tempting, but they needed significant funds to finance the works. With great courage, the offer was accepted.⁸¹ In February of the same year, the new management committee decided to form a junior team.⁸² In May 1959, the work at Spencer Park began. This involved the voluntary participation of many Italian immigrants who were already fond of the team.⁸³ The players rewarded the generosity of the Italian community by winning the championship and being promoted to the first division.⁸⁴

The Italian team did not disgrace themselves in this division but instead, from the first year, positioned themselves amongst the best four city teams.⁸⁵ The following years were marked by excellent play, but the repeated transformation of the squad did not ensure financial stability.

In 1963, they completed the extensive works to the playing field, and “*that muddy area on the bank of the Enoggera Creek began to take the shape of a sporting field.*”⁸⁶

Only then was it possible to use the new sporting facilities at Spencer Park. In 1966, the new sporting field was requisitioned because of a missed repayment on the loan for the construction of the facilities. It was only thanks to the personal intervention of Loris

⁷⁹ See “Sette Giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 15 February 1957, p. 8.

⁸⁰ See “Attività degli Azzurri,” *La Fiamma*, 5 July 1957, p. 8.

⁸¹ See “Il calcio in Queensland dal 1883 ai giorni nostri,” *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 23; “Sette Giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 6 February 1959, p. 15.

⁸² As above.

⁸³ See “Sette giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 13 May 1959, p. 15.

⁸⁴ See “Brisbane sportiva al “Cenone”,” *La Fiamma*, 30 September 1959, p. 15.

⁸⁵ See Brisbane City Soccer Club (2002).

⁸⁶ “Il calcio in Queensland dal 1883 ai giorni nostri,” *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 23.

Balestrieri, who had already helped the team on various occasions, that the playing field was restored to the *Azzurri*.⁸⁷ It wasn't however a fortunate year for the club that at the end of the tournament was relegated to the second division.⁸⁸

The new management committee, under the guidance of Carmelo Caruso, found itself with notable financial difficulties to resolve (over \$5,500 in debt). A program of redevelopment was designed which concentrated on a massive subscription campaign and a notable cut in management expenses. Alberto Marani, ex-player of the *Salernitana* agreed to train the squad for free. Also the masseuse, Armando Franchini, agreed to offer his service without charge.⁸⁹ At the end of 1967 the team came back to the first division.⁹⁰ On 17 March 1968, other sporting facilities at Spencer Park were open to the public:

“In the presence of the Italian Consul Dr Valli and 2,000 people, the Mayor of Brisbane at that time, Clem Jones, officially inaugurated what would then become one of the most modern stadiums in Australia.”⁹¹

The 1968 championship was marked by the sad death of a young soccer player, Joseph Maier. On 9 June, during the Poland-*Azzurri* match, the player had a heart attack and died instantly. He was a young immigrant that had only just arrived in Australia. Little was known of his private life. He worked at the *Pizzeria Napoli* in Brisbane.⁹² Despite the human and financial mishaps, the *Azzurri* earned their promotion to the first division on the field and the tills were replenished.⁹³

⁸⁷ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1966, p. 16.

⁸⁸ See Brisbane City Soccer Club (2002).

⁸⁹ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 20 December 1966, p. 16; “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 27 December 1966, p. 16; see also “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 10 January 1967, p. 16; “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 24 January 1967, p. 16.

⁹⁰ See C. Caruso (1991), p. 3.

⁹¹ “Il calcio in Queensland dal 1883 ai giorni nostri,” *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 23.

⁹² See “Profonda impressione per la morte di Maier,” *Il Globo*, 13 June 1968, p. 15.

⁹³ See “Positiva annata del sodalizio azzurro,” *Il Globo*, 15 October 1968, p. 17.

It was Guido Canale who led the club during the new championship. The *Azzurri* family in the meantime had grown: some junior squads were formed, a breeding ground of local soccer talent. In 1969, six young teams were officially registered.⁹⁴ In the following months, the club continued to grow and in 1970 it won the first division championship. In 1971 they were once again the city champions and were able to win the Grand Final and the Queensland Cup. They held the top position and won the Grand Final for the following consecutive years: 1973, 1974, 1975 and 1976. In the latter years they also won the Queensland Cup again. During these golden years, the management of the *Azzurri* was able to considerably improve the sporting facilities: the playing field was levelled and some fields were prepared for the young teams. In 1974, under the presidency of Gino Arquilla, they began to construct a new clubhouse.⁹⁵ In 1976 it was Vince Calice's turn to be president. He successfully sold some term deposit bonds of the *Azzurri*.⁹⁶ In November of that year, the new clubhouse at Spencer Park was inaugurated and the official name was changed to Brisbane City Soccer Club Ltd..⁹⁷

With the intention of bringing a higher standard of soccer across state boundaries, in 1977 the Phillip's Soccer League was established. This was a unique championship where the best teams in the Australian states competed. The first competition was won by Brisbane City in a memorable final against Club Marconi from Sydney. There was no better way for the Italian team to celebrate their 25th anniversary even if they had plenty of other opportunities to celebrate.⁹⁸ That same year, Carmelo Fiumara, director of *Alitalia* in Brisbane was nominated club patron in place of the sadly missed Dr Castellano.⁹⁹ The following year the grand feat was repeated, this time

⁹⁴ See Brisbane City Soccer Club (2002); "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 14 October 1969, p. 18.

⁹⁵ See Brisbane City Soccer Club (2002); "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 4 November 1974, p. 15.

⁹⁶ See "Azzurri," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31; "Gli Azzurri sempre più in alto," *La Fiamma*, 8 July 1976, p. 31.

⁹⁷ See "Società Sportiva Azzurri," *La Fiamma*, 25 November 1976, p. 32.

⁹⁸ See "Brisbane City Soccer Club," *La Fiamma*, 10 November 1977, p. 25.

⁹⁹ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 21 April 1977, p. 11.

at the expense of Adelaide City, the team from Adelaide. Brisbane City also reached the final in 1979, but lost against Sydney City.¹⁰⁰ The 1980's were not crowned with great successes. The Brisbane City Soccer Club continued to compete in the Phillip's League until 1986. The sporting facilities were finally improved and in 1981 the Gino Merlo Stand was inaugurated.¹⁰¹ The following year they celebrated the club's 30th anniversary: in the *Azzurri* stadium, an audience of 6,000 people applauded the speeches for the occasion that were delivered by the president Gino Merlo.¹⁰² In 1987, Brisbane City decided to return to playing the state tournament in Queensland. The following year it won the championship and in 1990 was awarded again the Grand Final trophy.¹⁰³

The Brisbane City Football Club Limited (this is how it is called today) celebrated its 55th anniversary in 2007, competing in the Brisbane Premier League.

¹⁰⁰ See Brisbane City Soccer Club (2002).

¹⁰¹ As above.

¹⁰² See "Il calcio in Queensland dal 1883 ai giorni nostri," *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 23.

¹⁰³ See Brisbane City Soccer Club (2002).

4. The *Fogolar Furlan* [Friulian Hearth]

The shared desire to keep alive the culture, traditions and language of their land of birth prompted a group of Friulians residing in Venice to create the first *Fogolar Furlan* in 1914. This successful initiative was immediately replicated in other parts of Italy and in Europe. On 6 November 1927, the society was established in Argentina, with the foundation of the *Società Friulana di Buenos Aires* [Friulani Society of Buenos Aires], otherwise known as the *Nonna dei fogolar furlans pal Mont* [The Grandmother of the Friulian Hearths around the world]. After the Second World War, following the significant increase in emigration from Friuli, the *l'Ente Friuli nel Mondo* [Friuli in the World Association] was established in Udine in 1953 with the aim of guaranteeing a constant connection between the Friuli region and the *Fogolars* spread across the world.¹⁰⁴ The first *Fogolar Furlan* in Australia was established in Brisbane on 16 May 1956. This initiative could be attributed to Guerrino Giavon, a Friulian migrant that came to Australia in 1952. It was, however, Fr Marino Benedetto, chaplain aboard the boat *Toscana* by Lloyd Triestino, on which Giavon had travelled to Brisbane, who suggested that Giavon establish a society in Brisbane. Numerous enthusiastic Friulians in Brisbane joined the *Fogolar* immediately and the number of members quickly rose to five hundred. The first management committee was composed of : Osvaldo Bonutto (president), Guerrino Giavon, (vice president), Anna Rossi, (secretary), Sergio Bertoni, Silvio Campanotti, Bruno Feruglio, Carlo Jacuzzi and Guido Lestani (committee members). The first official seat of the association was the *Casa San Francesco*.¹⁰⁵ The committee commenced the social and cultural activities of the *Fogolar Furlan* in Brisbane, while at the

¹⁰⁴ See *Fogolârs: interacción con la Región F.V.G y el Ente Friuli nel Mondo*, <http://www.550m.com/usuarios/friuli/biblioteca/info/fogolars.htm>, consulted 8 May 2008; see also J.Brisinello, *Storia del Fogolâr*, <http://www.fogolarbologna.it/Storia-Fogolar.php> consulted 8 May 2008; *Cos'è l'Ente Friuli nel Mondo*, <http://www.friulinelmondo.com/cos-l-ente-friuli-nel-mondo.dc-1810.html>, consulted 8 May 2008.

¹⁰⁵ See *Fogolar Furlan Inc, Brisbane. 40° Anniversario 1956-1996*, Fogolar Furlan Inc., Brisbane 1996, *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), p. 27; "Anniversario d'argento per il Fogolar Furlan," *Il Globo*, 18 May 1981, p. 23.

same time, working on the statute of the association. The management committee met regularly. In the committee meeting on 23 December, the budget was approved for the Christmas ball. A general assembly of all the Friulians in Brisbane and its surroundings were summoned to the *Casa San Francesco* on 20 January 1957 at 2 pm for the presentation and approval of the statute.¹⁰⁶

On 22 February 1957, to celebrate *Carnevale* [Carnival], the *Fogolar Furlan* organised a grand ball in the dining room of the *Casa San Francesco*.¹⁰⁷ On the 30th of the following March, another ball was held in the same dining room.¹⁰⁸ On Saturday 6 April yet another ball was held by *Fogolar Furlan* with the attendance of around 200 people, amongst whom was the vice consul, Dr Castaldo. The evening was enlivened by good Italian music and by the voice of the soloist, Vilma Giavon.¹⁰⁹

On Easter Monday 22 April, the Friulian society of Brisbane organised a picnic at Cash's Crossing, north of Brisbane. The day began with games, competitions and other recreational activities, followed by the presentation of a comedy in Friulian dialect by Bepo Squete and entitled "Marriage in the Country." This was recited by the members of the association. The dancing, which followed a lunch based on egg and ham, was accompanied by a small local orchestra.¹¹⁰ On 27 July of that year, *Fogolar Furlan* organised a successful dance evening with an Italian folkloric theme in the main hall of the movement known as the Catholic Daughters of Australia (CDA) in Elizabeth Street. Music, dance and traditional costumes from the different regions of the Italian peninsula, from the Alps to Sicily, were presented on stage in a competition of beauty and skill in front of an exceptional panel of judges, which included Italian and Australian personalities. Over 400 people attended the event. Amongst the ten regional costumes represented, the judges chose the one worn by Angela Coco, representing Sicily, while Nelly Paturso, also with a Sicilian costume, was given second place. Antonietta Franchin,

¹⁰⁶ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 11 January 1957, p. 13.

¹⁰⁷ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 February 1957, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ See "Ballo del Fogolar Furlan," *La Fiamma*, 12 April 1957, p. 10.

¹¹⁰ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 19 April 1957, p. 10.

representing Veneto, came third. The vice consul, Dr Castaldo, publicly congratulated the management committee of the society, particularly noting the contribution of the new president of *Fogolar Furlan*, Carlo Iacuzzi and his vice president, Guerrino Giavon.¹¹¹ The social activities of the association continued on a regular basis until 23 December that year, when Fr Marino Benedetto arrived in Brisbane with a special disc. This disc in fact recorded various messages from some of the families of the Friulian immigrants in Brisbane. This praiseworthy initiative was promoted by the *Ente Friuli nel Mondo*. On 28 December, the *Fogolar Furlan* organised an evening to listen to the disc at the conference room of the CDA. Those who received messages were personally invited and lists of the invitees were published in *Il Globo*.¹¹²

In the following years, the association held these traditional events and added other new events. On 1 March 1958, the *Fogolar Furlan* held a masked ball to celebrate *Carnevale*. Prizes were awarded for the best masks.¹¹³ At the celebration of the Feast of the Republic organised by the vice consul of Brisbane on 1 June at the *Casa San Francesco*, Guerrino Giavon and other members of the Friulian society were given the responsibility of decorating the grand dining room where the dancing was held at the end of the evening. Over 300 people attended the event.¹¹⁴ On 26 July, the *Fogolar Furlan* held a successful ball for the Italian community and on 23 August a dance evening entitled *Veglionissimo Azzurro* [Italian Party] was organized at the hall of the CDA. The principal aim of these latest events was to maintain the link of friendship and solidarity amongst all of the Italian families.¹¹⁵ On 24 February 1959, in the usual conference room, the general assembly of the *Fogolar Furlan* was held with the election of the new management committee.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ See "Gran ballo and gara di costumi," *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1957, p. 10; "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 9 August 1957, p. 10.

¹¹² See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 26 December 1957, p. 33.

¹¹³ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 14 March 1958, p. 13.

¹¹⁴ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 May 1958, p. 12.

¹¹⁵ See "Dal Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1958, p. 19.

¹¹⁶ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 6 February 1959, p. 15.

Throughout the 1960's, the news items on the *Fogolar Furlan* found in the sources were scarce and fragmented. On Saturday 24 September 1960, the Friulian society organised a ball with refreshments and a raffle at the CDA. Preceding this, the *Fogolar Furlan* had organised with success a *Festa dei Fiori* [Festival of Flowers].¹¹⁷ The sources do not reveal further information on this festival. On 3 April 1961, Easter Monday, the Friulian society held a picnic in the country that involved over 2,600 people, a success without precedence. The Italian chaplain, Fr Zeffirino da Sabbione also attended. The day passed pleasurably with games, recreational activities, music and dances.¹¹⁸ On Saturday 1 July 1951, the *Fogolar Furlan* organised an evening dedicated to mothers at the hall of the CDA; on this occasion prizes were awarded to the three oldest mothers and to the youngest mother.¹¹⁹ On 24 August 1962, the Friulian association, with the patronage of the Nanda Macaroni company, held an evening dedicated to good food and enjoyment at the Capilana Hall in Brisbane. In the context of this event Miss Nanda Pasta was elected and Miss Genoveffa Molletta was crowned with the title.¹²⁰ In June 1965, as had occurred on previous occasions, *Fogolar Furlan* collaborated with the Italian consul of Brisbane in the organisation of the 19th anniversary of the Italian Republic and the 50th anniversary of Italy's entrance into World War I (24 May 1915). The celebrations were held on 8 June at the Buffalo Hall in Fortitude Valley with a gala ball. The speeches of the consul, Dr Mario Rotelli and of the president of the Friulian society, Guerrino Giavon, recalled the most important events in the history of the Italian nation.¹²¹ Under the auspices of the Nanda Macaroni firm once again, on Saturday 24 July 1965, *Fogolar Furlan* held a ball which included the election of Miss Nanda Pasta.¹²²

¹¹⁷ See *Ballo del Fogolar*, *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1960, p. 23.

¹¹⁸ See *Qui Brisbane*, 1961, 11 April, p. 17.

¹¹⁹ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 17 June 1959, p. 19.

¹²⁰ See *Eletta "Miss Pasta Nanda" alla Capilana Hall di Brisbane*, *Il Globo*, 28 August 1962, p. 7.

¹²¹ See *Rievocazioni storiche al ballo nazionale*, *La Fiamma*, 8 June 1965, p. 16; "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 June 1965, p. 16.

¹²² See *Attività del Fogolar*, *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1965, p. 16.

In September of that year, the president of ‘*Ente Friuli nel Mondo*’, Professor Ottavio Valerio, visited the Friulian immigrants in Brisbane. The Friulian society organised an evening of dance and a buffet dinner at the Buffalo Hall.¹²³ On 26 March 1966 *Fogolar Furlan* hosted a ball in this hall. On 11 April 1966, inspired by the desire to achieve as much collaboration between the Brisbane Italian associations as possible, the society joined the *Tavernetta* in Aspley to organise Easter celebrations. The traditional feast of eggs and other games and recreational activities were held at the new Italian Australian Bowling Club.¹²⁴ On Saturday 9 July, the Friulian association held a gala ball at the Buffalo Hall, during which the competition for the election of Miss *Fogolar Furlan* was held.¹²⁵ On Saturday 27 August, the election for Miss Nanda Pasta 1966 was hosted at the Orana Hall, which was decorated for the *Fogolar Furlan* gala ball. Over 300 people attended the event and Miss Fay Burton was elected Queen of the evening.¹²⁶

The sources consulted report few activities during the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, but it is likely that the activities of *Fogolar Furlan* continued as usual. In May 1974, rumours of a probable fusion between the Friulian society and the Italian Australian bowling club began to circulate. In fact, a meeting of members held by the latter was clearly in favour of this initiative. For reasons not documented, this idea was never realised.¹²⁷

In 1976, following the tragic earthquake that devastated parts of Friuli, the *Fogolar Furlan* committee decided to launch an appeal to all the Friulians in Queensland to tangibly demonstrate their solidarity with their land of birth. The “Italian” management for the funds raised was entrusted to the *Ente Friuli nel Mondo*.¹²⁸ From this moment to the end of that year, the activities of the Friulian society had one objective: to send financial aid to the earthquake victims. On 19 May

¹²³ See “Atteso a Brisbane il prof. Valerio,” *La Fiamma*, 31 August 1965, p. 16.

¹²⁴ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 22 March 1966, p. 16.

¹²⁵ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 5 July 1966, p. 16.

¹²⁶ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 6 September 1966, p. 16.

¹²⁷ See “Probabile riunione tra Fogolar Furlan and I.A.B.C.,” *Il Globo*, 3 June 1974, p. 12.

¹²⁸ See “Appello a tutti i Friulani,” *Il Globo*, 13 May 1976, p. 31.

1976, they held a cabaret at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket with over 400 people attending.¹²⁹ On 18 September the *Fogolar Furlan* organised another benefit ball, this time at the Chadwick Hall in Carina, with the aim of establishing links with the Italian families living in the southern zone of Brisbane.¹³⁰ On 6 November, the Friulian association was given the responsibility of organising celebrations for the anniversary of the Italian victory in the Great War (4 November 1918). The celebration was held at the Italo-Australian Centre; the Giuseppe Verdi Choir enhanced the evening with their repertoire of Italian songs. There was a reunion of all the former *Alpini* [Members of the Alpine Troops] for this occasion and the Italian consul, Dr A.F. Maggia gave a speech.¹³¹ On Sunday 28 November, the *Fogolar Furlan* celebrated its annual general meeting at the Italo-Australian Centre with the election of a new management committee. On the 20th anniversary of its foundation, the *Fogolar Furlan* organised special Christmas nibbles for the evening of 17 December. These nibbles were a regular activity of the association.¹³² After the brilliant presidency of Alfredo Tubaro and Leo Gonano, in July 1977, the leadership of *Fogolar Furlan* was entrusted to the young Franco Pittis, in partnership with his wife, who organised in the same month a fashion parade in cooperation with the department store, David Jones.¹³³ On 10 September 1977, the Friulian association successfully hosted the *Grande Ballo dell'Amicizia* [Grand Ball of Friendship] at the Italo-Australian Centre.¹³⁴ In respect of a by now well established tradition, on 3 November 1979, at the Italo-Australian Centre, the *Fogolar Furlan* invited all the ex-*Alpini* to celebrate the anniversary of the Victory in the Great War. The 'black feathers' (*Alpini*) arrived in numbers and the Verdi Choir enlivened the evening by performing some of the most well known mountain

¹²⁹ See "Fogolar Furlan," *Il Globo*, 3 June 1976, p. 31.

¹³⁰ See "Notiziario delle associazioni italiane," *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1976, p. 31.

¹³¹ See "Festa del 4 Novembre," *La Fiamma*, 4 November 1976, p. 31; "Festa degli Alpini," *La Fiamma*, 11 November 1976, p. 33.

¹³² See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 November 1976, p. 32.

¹³³ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 July 1977, p. 13; *Fogolar Furlan Inc, Brisbane. 40° Anniversario 1956-1996*, (1996).

¹³⁴ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 15 September 1977, p. 13.

songs. On this occasion the consular representative awarded the Italian honorific title of *Cavaliere di Vittorio Veneto* [Knight of Vittorio Veneto] to Mr Casasola, veteran of the First World War.¹³⁵ December 1979 was particularly busy for the *Fogolar Furlan* as they organised three important events: The *Ballo dei calvi* [Dance of the Bold], an evening devoted to good humour on Saturday 15 December; the Christmas party for children, with presents and sweets for everyone on Sunday 23 December, and the *Ballo di S. Silvestro* [St Silvester Dance] on 31 December.¹³⁶

The sources consulted also reported few activities during the 1980's. On 16 May 1981, *Fogolar Furlan* celebrated its first 25 years.¹³⁷ With the passing of the years and the birth of new Italian associations, the Friulian society progressively left it to other societies to organise patriotic celebrations.¹³⁸ The association continued, however, to promote various social activities for all of the Italian community. On Sunday 6 May 1984, the *Fogolar Furlan* organised a trip and a picnic along the coast of New South Wales.¹³⁹ On Saturday 5 September 1987, the Friulian society drew over 300 people to their Spring Festival at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket. The president of the society, Tony Olivo, gave the honours. The evening of dance was highlighted by a fashion parade and by the testimonies of Sonia Basile and Tina Zanuttini, two young members of the association who had recently returned from Italy following a trip organised by the Friulian regional administration.¹⁴⁰

In the following years, with the succession of management committees, in which were interspersed well-known names with new names, the *Fogolar Furlan* continued to carry out its important social mission in their service to the Italian community of Brisbane. Following their 50th anniversary celebrations, the Friulian association still appears young and strong.

¹³⁵ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1979, p. 25; "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1979, p. 26.

¹³⁶ See "Fogolar Furlan," *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1979, p. 29.

¹³⁷ See "Anniversario d'argento per il Fogolar Furlan," *Il Globo*, 18 May 1981, p. 23.

¹³⁸ See *Fogolar Furlan Inc, Brisbane. 40° Anniversario 1956-1996*, (1996).

¹³⁹ See "L'angolo del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 16 April 1984, p. 23.

¹⁴⁰ See "Festa della Primavera," *Il Globo*, 14 September 1987, p. 23.

5. The *Coro Giuseppe Verdi* [Giuseppe Verdi Choir]

The idea of forming an Italian choir in Brisbane emerged in 1951, when about thirty young immigrants at the *Casa San Francesco* decided to service the community with their singing talents. The Italian Choir, a mixed voices choir, was established without a director or a management committee. Mrs Noela Morgenstern accompanied them on piano, while Bruno Cappelletti took the role as head of the choir.¹⁴¹ In its four years of life, the Italian Choir organised various concerts and enlivened with song both religious functions and patriotic celebrations in Brisbane. It was a positive experience, but it lasted for only a short time, as various choir members left Brisbane for work elsewhere and in 1955 the choir disbanded.¹⁴²

In 1957, new migrants arrived from the mother country and the interest in choral songs, both in the folkloric and operatic sense, was reignited in the hearts of those that frequented the *Casa San Francesco*. In 1958, Bruno Cappelletti and Angelo Ivanni took advantage of the current interest and actively promoted the creation of the Giuseppe Verdi Choral Society. Ivanni was elected president of the society with Cappelletti alongside him as vice president. The first management committee also included the secretary Lino Tedeschi, the treasurer Lino Meden and the committee member, Fernando Rampa.¹⁴³ The new choir was composed of 24 men. *Maestro* Joseph Halmos accepted the role of conductor in exchange for a small recompense that the choir decided to pay out of their own pockets: two schillings per week. The Pianist Patty Farrelly accompanied them during the Verdi Choir's first rehearsal. Francesco Castellano was asked to be the patron of the newly formed choir; Castellano accepted graciously and supported the society until his death in 1976.¹⁴⁴

At the beginning of 1959, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir was a well established entity within the Italian community in Brisbane. A new

¹⁴¹ See F. Bottaz, *Forty Years of Song*, The Giuseppe Verdi Choir Inc., Brisbane 1998, p. 5.

¹⁴² See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), p. 35.

¹⁴³ See F. Bottaz, (1998), p. 6.

¹⁴⁴ As above, p. 9.

pianist from North Queensland, Patricia Duggan, joined them. The rehearsals were always held at the *Casa San Francesco*'s theatre, on Saturday afternoons. This theatre also hosted the choir's first concert. Other concerts soon followed, always with the purpose of supporting charities or contributing to celebrations. Thanks to the success that they attained, the Italian Choir was invited to participate in the centenary celebrations in Queensland organised for the following year.¹⁴⁵ Throughout 1959, the Brisbane Italian choir went on their first small tour, holding a concert in Stanthorpe for the local Italian community, who particularly appreciated the singing skills of their compatriots from Brisbane.¹⁴⁶

In 1960 Bruno Cappelletti took over the reins of the choir. New voices enriched the choir and the rehearsals were moved to Thursday, at the *Casa San Francesco* as always.¹⁴⁷ For the centenary celebrations in Queensland, the choir prepared the song, *Vergine degli Angeli* and *La forza del destino* by Giuseppe Verdi, with soprano Erica Witt performing the part of Leonora. The choir was also responsible for the scenography which was completed by the Menden brothers, Lino and Bruno.¹⁴⁸ Their performance at the City Hall received accolades. In the 1960 annual general meeting, Cappelletti was re-elected as president of the association for another year.¹⁴⁹ To replenish the funds of the society, in March 1961, the new management committee organised a social ball, during which was elected for the first time the Queen of the Verdi Choir. The honours went to the 18 year old Yvone Ghirardelli.¹⁵⁰

In 1962, the choir confirmed their faith in President Bruno Cappelletti, who, with the new committee, realised that funds were necessary to pay the conductor, the pianist and the lyric books for the singers. The idea to conduct a 'special' beauty pageant, that included musical and humourous performances was raised. This event was well-received by the compatriots attending and it was decided to

¹⁴⁵ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 January 1959, p. 15.

¹⁴⁶ See F. Bottaz (1998), p. 10.

¹⁴⁷ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 February 1960, p. 16.

¹⁴⁸ See F. Bottaz (1998), p. 11.

¹⁴⁹ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1960, p. 20.

¹⁵⁰ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 7 March 1961, p. 15.

repeat this competition biannually.¹⁵¹ On 14 September 1962, to celebrate the 4th anniversary of the foundation of the choir, they gave a concert at the Albert Hall in Brisbane.¹⁵² In December of that same year, the choir had a Christmas party for the children of the choral singers. The tenor Toni Cella dressed up as Santa Claus much to the delight of the children.¹⁵³

In 1963, pianist Doris Johnson joined the choir and remained with the group until the end of 1993. Conductor Giuseppe De Vivo also joined the choir and remained conductor until 1970.¹⁵⁴ On 27 November 1964, the choir gave a concert to celebrate the 6th anniversary of their foundation.¹⁵⁵ In July 1966, they held their annual ball with the attendance of over 300 people.¹⁵⁶ On 26 August of that year, Bruno Cappelletti left the presidency to Marino Regano.¹⁵⁷ Again on the anniversary of their foundation, on 18 November 1966, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir held a concert at the Albert Hall. The 25 singers, conducted by *maestro* De Vivo, performed in front of 400 people. On this occasion they decided to repeat the concert to raise funds for the victims of the tragic floods that in November 1966 caused death and devastation in the central-northern area of Italy.¹⁵⁸

There was little news for the year 1967. The year 1968 was marked by various social activities, amongst which was a gala evening held on 14 September at the Orana Hall for the acquisition of a new pianoforte.¹⁵⁹ Following the sale of the *Casa San Francesco* in 1969, the Verdi Choir had to move location and had a temporary arrangement at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm.¹⁶⁰ The following year the choir transferred to the Italo-Australian Centre and to

¹⁵¹ See F. Bottaz (1998), p. 13.

¹⁵² See "Eletta "Miss Pasta Nanda" alla Capitana Hall di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 28 August 1962, p. 7.

¹⁵³ See F. Bottaz (1998), p. 11.

¹⁵⁴ As above, p. XI.

¹⁵⁵ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 November 1964, p. 21.

¹⁵⁶ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 5 July 1966, p. 16.

¹⁵⁷ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 30 August 1966, p. 16.

¹⁵⁸ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1966, p. 16; "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 29 November 1966, p. 16.

¹⁵⁹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 27 August 1968, p. 15.

¹⁶⁰ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli* (1994), p. 35.

celebrate this event, they decided to present the centre with a bust of Giuseppe Verdi. The work was commissioned to the sculptor Giuseppe Ive. In the late 1960's the Giuseppe Verdi Choir performed in various live concerts, on the radio and on television. The most memorable concerts were held at the Albert Hall. The choir also continued to participate in patriotic functions held in these years.¹⁶¹ The year 1970 was marked by the sad passing of *maestro* De Vivo, who was substituted by *maestro* Olag Lapas. Under the guidance of the new conductor, the Verdi Choir commenced a fruitful collaboration with the Queensland Symphonic Youth Orchestra. Thanks to this happy marriage, they were able to present with notable success musical spectacles at the SGIO theatre and the St Lucia Campus theatre at the University of Queensland. After Fernando Rampa, Nino Lonzar and again Bruno Cappelletti, in 1974, they elected an Australian member of the society to the presidency, Don Burke, reflecting the open spirit that had always characterised the choir.¹⁶² On 20 July 1974, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir performed before a large crowd at the University of Queensland, presenting on this occasion pieces interpreted by the choir and by soloists.¹⁶³

In 1975, the choir conducted its first tour in North Queensland. The Italians in Ingham, Mareeba and Innisfail welcomed their performances with celebrations. Their patron Francesco Castellano, the honourable Don Lane and Carmelo Fiumara, Director of Alitalia in Queensland, accompanied the choral singers on their first adventure.¹⁶⁴

The year 1976 was full of events for the Verdi Choir. On 15 May, the Verdi Choir performed at the Aspley *Tavernetta* in a benefit concert.¹⁶⁵ On 11 June the choir held a concert at the Brisbane Conservatorium for the earthquake victims in Friuli.¹⁶⁶ That June the choir also organised the *Cabaret Delle tre Venezie* [Cabaret of the Three Venices], a delightful evening of song and humour, under the

¹⁶¹ See F. Bottaz (1998), pp. 18-20.

¹⁶² As above, 23.

¹⁶³ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 29 July 1974, p. 16.

¹⁶⁴ See F. Bottaz (1998), pp. 23-24.

¹⁶⁵ See "Corale G. Verdi," *La Fiamma*, 29 April 1976, p. 27.

¹⁶⁶ See "Italo-Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 30.

exhilarating direction of Bruno Cappelletti.¹⁶⁷ On 17 July the choir performed in an Italian evening at the invitation of the National Trust of Queensland.¹⁶⁸ The annual general meeting was held on 4 August and Renato Gastaldin was elected president. He was given the honour of organising the second tour of North Queensland to celebrate the Cairn's centenary.¹⁶⁹ On this occasion, they requested for the first time a contribution from the state government, which replied with a grant of 2,500 Australian dollars.¹⁷⁰ The tour to Cairns was also successful with the initiation of collaboration with other ethnic choirs in Brisbane. On 19 November the Italian choir invited the German choir to celebrate their 18th anniversary at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket. It was a particularly emotive event with over 300 supporters present. On this occasion, the president Gastaldin received a generous donation from the Queensland state government.¹⁷¹

The year 1977 continued to be very busy. *Maestro* Col Lewis took the place of Lapa.¹⁷² On 24 June, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir organised a concert and an evening amongst friends at the Italo-Australian Centre.¹⁷³ In July, the members voted for the new committee and Igor Mircovich was elected president. The new committee decided to repeat the *Cabaret delle Tre Venezie* on 13 August that year.¹⁷⁴ The success of this event led to the organisation of another event entitled *Serata delle due Sicilie* [Two Sicilies Night], that was held on 7 October with the attendance of over 800 Italians. On this occasion, the choir consisted of 39 members.¹⁷⁵ The Giuseppe Verdi Choir desired to tangibly demonstrate their fondness for their patron Francesco Castellano, who died the year before, and this led to the idea of donating a bust of Dr Castellano to the Italo-Australian

¹⁶⁷ See "Corale G. Verdi," *La Fiamma*, 24 June 1976, p. 30.

¹⁶⁸ See "Corale Giuseppe Verdi," *La Fiamma*, 10 June 1976, p. 32.

¹⁶⁹ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 12 August 1976, p. 31.

¹⁷⁰ See "Notiziario delle associazioni italiane," *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1976, p. 31.

¹⁷¹ See "La "Corale G. Verdi" ha 18 anni," *La Fiamma*, 25 November 1976, p. 32.

¹⁷² See F. Bottaz (1998), p. XI.

¹⁷³ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 June 1977, p. 13.

¹⁷⁴ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 July 1977, p. 13.

¹⁷⁵ See "Riuscita "Serata delle Sue Sicilie" all'Italo Australian Centre," *Il Globo*, 3 October 1977, p. 27.

Centre. To raise the necessary funds, the choir performed in a concert with the German choir on 18 November at the centre.¹⁷⁶ The initiative was very successful, but it was not then possible to realise the dream of donating a bust and the money raised went to charity.¹⁷⁷ The honourable Don Lane and Italian entrepreneur Cesare Pradella honoured the legacy left by Dr Castellano and sustained the choir in the following years. In December, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir organised a lovely picnic for the singers and their families at New Farm.¹⁷⁸

In 1978, on the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the choir, a new initiative was commenced, again with great success. On 8 April, under the guidance of the new director, *maestro* Mark Penman, the Italian choir presented the *Cabaret Fontana delle 99 Cannelle* [Fountain with the 99 spouts Cabaret], a true celebration of Neapolitan songs.¹⁷⁹ On 24 June, a new version of the *Cabaret delle tre Venezie*, was held again at the Italo-Australian centre.¹⁸⁰ In September, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir participated in the first ever Italian Arts Festival held in Queensland.¹⁸¹ In October, on the election of the first Polish pope, John Paul II, the Italian choir organised a concert with their colleagues in the polish choir in the church of Our Lady of Victories in Brisbane.¹⁸²

Under the presidency of Demetrio Brunello, in 1980, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir performed a fully recorded concert with the Queensland Youth Orchestra at the Brisbane Conservatorium.¹⁸³ This was how their first cassette was made. In the 1980's the presidency of the society alternated between Fernando Rampa, Igor Mircovich and Bruno Cappelletti.¹⁸⁴ They annually repeated their successful events; including the *Cabaret delle Tre Venezie*, *La Serata delle Due Sicilie*

¹⁷⁶ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 14 November 1977, p. 13; "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 December 1977, p. 13.

¹⁷⁷ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 22 June 1978, p. 28.

¹⁷⁸ See "Brisbane: i migliori della classe," *La Fiamma*, 15 December 1977, p. 15.

¹⁷⁹ See "Fontana delle 99 cannelle," *La Fiamma*, 6 April 1978, p. 28.

¹⁸⁰ See "Cabaret," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1978, p. 31.

¹⁸¹ See F. Bottaz (1998), p. 27.

¹⁸² As above.

¹⁸³ As above, p. 28.

¹⁸⁴ As above, p. X.

and the *Cabaret Fontana delle 99 Cannelle* (also called “Napoli Canta” [Naples Sings]). They replicated their singing celebrations with the German choir.

A number of special events marked the life of the Italian choir in Brisbane in these years. In April 1982, the whole choir participated in the inauguration of the Museum and of the Park of Peace at New Italy in New South Wales. On 9 October, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir, together with its patrons, Don Lane and Cesare Pradella, its new conductor, *maestro* Leo Keller and its numerous supporters celebrated their 25th anniversary in a manner worthy of the occasion.¹⁸⁵ In the same month, the choir performed at the Townsville Civic Theatre with a repertoire that ranged from opera to regional Italian folklore. In 1985, the creative furnaces of the Giuseppe Verdi Choir, produced the first edition of *L’impiastro* [The Bore], a humoristic magazine, directed by Franco Bottaz.¹⁸⁶ From 30 April to 30 October 1988, Brisbane hosted the World Expo, with a pavilion totally dedicated to Italy. For this occasion the *Caio Duilio* of the Italian Marines arrived at the Port of Brisbane and the Italian choir was asked to sing for the open air mass celebrated for all the sailors. That same evening, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir, directed by *maestro* Robert Fenton, performed in front of President Francesco Cossiga at the Italo-Australian Centre.¹⁸⁷ Also in 1988, the Italian choir received the Queensland Migrant Service Award at Parliament House. This well-deserved award acknowledged 30 years of committed service to the Brisbane Italian community. In 1989, television presenter Brian Cahill became the conductor of the choir and it was him who formed the idea of performing a concert together with the Queensland Musical Theatre. This led to the memorable evening entitled *Viva Verdi* at the Concert Hall of the Performing Arts Centre in Brisbane. The event was repeated the following September at the Civic Centre in Bundaberg.¹⁸⁸ The Giuseppe Verdi Choir exists today and continues to enliven Italian events in Brisbane.

¹⁸⁵ As above, pp. 28-37.

¹⁸⁶ See *L’impiastro*, ed. Franco Bottaz, Monfalcone 1985.

¹⁸⁷ See F. Bottaz (1998), p. 45.

¹⁸⁸ As above.

6. The Aspley *Tavernetta* [Little Tavern]

The idea of playing bocce at Aspley, a suburb in Brisbane, was that of Chiara Ceccato. A widow from Asolo (Treviso) and a mother of ten children, she emigrated to Australia in 1956. Upon her return from Italy where she spent some months in 1962, Mrs Ceccato decided to buy some bocce balls to bring back to Australia as a present for her children. These children, although certainly not experts at playing bocce, found their new pastime both enjoyable and interesting, and in 1963 they levelled a small portion of their property to construct a basic bocce green. The Ceccato family began to play every Sunday and this aroused the curiosity of some friends and acquaintances. Soon the small bocce green became the gathering place of many Italian families passionate about the game. Chiara began to offer cold soft drinks to the guests. The demand increased each Sunday and so the Ceccato brothers constructed a shed and a stall for the sale of drinks. This was followed by some benches and tables, in a rustic style. In 1964 the bocce green, that became each day more and more like an *osteria* [tavern] in Veneto, was baptised the Aspley *Tavernetta*. The number of players continued to grow each Sunday. Hence they set up new bocce greens, bought new bocce balls direct from Italy, and they built public toilets.¹⁸⁹

During the second year in operation, the *Tavernetta* was unexpectedly visited by an inspector from the office of public hygiene who obliged the Ceccato family to rebuild the locale according to legal requirements. In 1965, the new *Tavernetta*, to which had been added a kitchen for the pleasure of the *buongustai* [gourmets], was inaugurated. The clients began to once again attend the lovely gathering place, this time in greater numbers than before. The *Tavernetta*, open only on Sundays from 2 to 12, became famous amongst Brisbane Italians. The family style management of the *Tavernetta* meant that the owners were not too concerned about conducting the business strictly according to the laws. Hence a theft by three young boys caused problems for the Ceccato family. The Brisbane police, accosted the petty thieves, traced them in the end to

¹⁸⁹ See C. Ceccato, *Il Boschetto. Memoriale di Chiara Ceccato, fondatrice della Tavernetta*, unpublished manuscript [without date].

the *Tavernetta* and discovered with a trap that beer was sold at that locality without the licence to sell alcohol. The business was immediately fined and ordered to close for four months. At the end of this period, the *Tavernetta* would be able to open only on the condition that it was transformed into a social and sporting club with at least 500 signatures to support the initiative.¹⁹⁰

The campaign to collect signatures was successful and abundantly superseded the number required, with over 700 signatures obtained. In addition, the Ceccato brothers decided to ask a noted local member, Fred Campbell, for support. His mediation was essential to obtain the much needed official registration of the *Tavernetta*. At the beginning of 1966, the new club was ready to open its doors with the name Australian-Italian Bowling Club (alias Italian Australian Bowling Club or Italo-Australian Bowling Club). It was a proper legally recognised association, even to the extent of having a management committee and members. Erminio Ceccato, one of the sons of Chiara, was elected president.¹⁹¹

On Easter Monday 11 April 1966, *Fogolar Furlan* organised at the *Tavernetta*, an event that already had been a longstanding tradition, the *Sagra delle Uova* [Feast of Eggs].¹⁹² This event marked the beginning of a new era for the Ceccato's club.¹⁹³ On Sunday 29 May 1966, the first bocce tournament under the 'new management' took place and on 4 June of that year, the first dance of the Italian Australian Bowling Club was held with the election of the Queen of the club.¹⁹⁴ The activities, as much social as sporting, multiplied in the following years, always receiving great support from the Italian community in Brisbane. In April 1968, in the eyes of the *Il Globo* correspondent, the Italians attending the Easter Monday picnic at the *Tavernetta* were 'a crowd.'¹⁹⁵ On the 24th November of the same year, the Italo-Australian Bowling Club of Aspley organised a *mora* [traditional Italian game] tournament and on 14 December that year

¹⁹⁰ As above.

¹⁹¹ As above.

¹⁹² See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 March 1966, p. 16.

¹⁹³ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 12 April 1966, p. 16.

¹⁹⁴ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 24 May 1966, p. 16.

¹⁹⁵ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 16 April 1968, p. 14.

they held a ball entitled Christmas Carnival Dance. On 15 December, a soccer match was played between members of the club and those of the *Associazione Cattolica Italiana* [Italian Catholic Association] in a field prepared on the Ceccato property.¹⁹⁶ The third year of 'legal' operation was concluded with a picnic organised for 26 December, a New Year's eve party and another picnic held on New Year's Day.¹⁹⁷

In April 1969, the Australian-Italian Bowling Club, under the presidency of Walter Giugni, was marketed to the public as a first class sporting and social complex. It boasted seven bocce fields, four open air and three covered, a restaurant, a bar, ample parking, a stage and a space designed to entertain children. Once a week they organised an Australian-style barbecue.¹⁹⁸ On Easter Monday 7 April 1969, a picnic for the Italian families was organised during the day and a grand ball in the evening. The local newspapers report that around 2000 people participated in the Easter Monday picnic.¹⁹⁹ On 26 April that year the *Tavernetta* held the Brisbane Bocce Championships. On this occasion the consul also attended to award the prizes to the winners.²⁰⁰ Also at this club, they celebrated the Feast of the Republic on 2 June.²⁰¹

In the following years the Australian-Italian Bowling Club of Aspley continued its role as one of the most important social centres for the Italian community in Brisbane. The cohesive role of the club, evident since its foundation, did not pass unobserved by the Italian authorities, and in January 1974, the Italian consul, Luigi Fulvi gave them a cheque (the amount was not specified in the sources) which was the contribution of the Italian state to the activities of the club in support of the Italian community. On the 19th of the following January

¹⁹⁶ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 10 December 1968, p. 17.

¹⁹⁷ See "Attività a Brisbane dell'A.I. Bowling Club," *Il Globo*, 17 December, p. 17.

¹⁹⁸ See "Creata quasi per gioco la suggestiva "Tavernetta"" *Il Globo*, 1 April 1969, p. 18.

¹⁹⁹ See "2000 persone al picnic pasquale dell'Australian Italian Bowling Club," *Il Globo*, 15 April 1969, p. 16.

²⁰⁰ See "Creata quasi per gioco la suggestiva "Tavernetta," *Il Globo*, 1 April 1969, p. 18.

²⁰¹ See "2000 persone al picnic pasquale dell'Australian Italian Bowling Club," *Il Globo*, 15 April 1969, p. 16.

that year the club organised a dance evening.²⁰² In the following June, rumours began to circulate of a possible merger between the Australian-Italian Bowling Club and *Fogolar Furlan*.²⁰³ In August, the new committee, presided over by Franco Bottaz, announced to the society that the financial situation of the club was in dire straits. It was decided to appeal to the members of the club asking them to pay a higher subscription fee, whilst the other supporters were required to contribute by participating in all of the club activities.²⁰⁴ Considering that there was a deficit of over \$ 9,000, it was decided to call a special general meeting on 15 September 1974. On this date only 80 of the 160 members responded to the appeal, with some sympathizers participating in the meeting. The president, Franco Bottaz, obtained the support of all of the members present for a special campaign of subscriptions (to the value of \$100) that could be used as an interest-free loan to the club for three years. They immediately raised \$ 6,000. It was decided to open the bar and the restaurant on Friday and Sunday, keeping Saturday for social celebrations and to offer the dining room to be rented privately. It was agreed that non-members pay a \$1.00 entrance fee but that women and children were exempt. On 26 October, a dance evening was organised with the aim of raising more funds that could be utilised to cancel the debts of the society.²⁰⁵ The evening was enlivened by Giuseppe Castellana, the “King of the penny whistle.”²⁰⁶ The fund-raising activities continued to multiply and on 22 December 1974, Santa Claus arrived at the Australian-Italian Bowling Club for all of the children of the members. On 31 December a sumptuous New Year’s Eve Feast was held.²⁰⁷

²⁰² See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 15 January 1974, p. 24.

²⁰³ See “Probabile riunione tra Fogolar Furlan and I.A.B.C.,” *Il Globo*, 3 June 1974, p. 12. The anonymous author of the article maintains that the two societies were formed following a rift within one single association. This theory was not confirmed by the sources consulted.

²⁰⁴ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 26 August 1974, p. 12.

²⁰⁵ See “Fruttuosa Assemblea generale straordinaria all’I.A.B.C. di Aspley,” *Il Globo*, 26 September 1974, p. 13.

²⁰⁶ See “Serata danzante allo I.A.B.C. di Aspley,” *Il Globo*, 7 October 1974, p. 15.

²⁰⁷ See “Attività Associazioni italiane di Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 16 December 1974, p. 22.

The sources consulted did not report articles regarding the club in 1975, but it was likely that the club management had continued with their fund-raising activities. In 1976, Miss Maurizia Turco decided to participate in the Miss Australia contest. On Saturday 15 May 1976, an evening to honour the Italian candidate in this important Australian competition was held at the Aspley *Tavernetta*.²⁰⁸ The support of the Italian community towards the long-established *Tavernetta* was clearly expressed in the participation in all of the events organised at the Australian-Italian Bowling Club. To celebrate its first ten years of 'legal' operation, the Aspley Club organised a *Gran Sagra Paesana* [Grand Country Feast] on the weekend of 27 and 28 November 1976. This involved two days of Italian folklore that was described in *Il Globo* like this:

"It was an event not to be missed. The Sagra offered two memorable days of celebration with kiosks for wine tasting; fresh watermelon, polenta, fried fish, grapes and all the fruits of heaven; greasy pole competitions; a playground for the children; an exhibition of cars, jet boats and other boats, exhibitions of paintings and copper art; bocce competitions; a barbecue, choral songs and dancing."²⁰⁹

A good 1500 Italians replied to the appeal of the president and his committee, crowding the *Tavernetta*. The Verdi Choir pleased the crowd with a taste of their vast repertoire, while other little bands enlivened the dancing. The Italian consul, F.A. Maggia, attending in his official capacity, marked the historic occasion with a speech praising the organisation, offering encouragement and thanking the "oldest Italian society based in Brisbane."²¹⁰

The year 1977 began with a focus on family entertainment. On Saturday 26 February, the Australian-Italian Bowling Club organised a fun day for both young and old that included: bocce games, Bingo, and the projection of cartoons, of sporting events and a film taken by the club president, Bottaz, during a recent trip to Italy. The following

²⁰⁸ See "Serata in onore di Maurizia Turco alla Tavernetta di Aspley," *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 34.

²⁰⁹ "Gran Sagra Paesana" alla Tavernetta," *La Fiamma*, 15 October 1976, p. 31.

²¹⁰ See "Tavernetta: 10 anni di allegria," *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1876, p. 32.

Sunday was dedicated to a special bocce tournament sponsored by the Nanda Macaroni company. To reinforce the friendship between the various Italian associations, the competing couples were composed of players from the *Tavernetta* and one from the Italo-Australian Centre.²¹¹ The collaboration amongst the presidents of the Italian associations was strengthened in the following months, when the respective management committees decided not to organise events at the same time so as not to disadvantage one or other of the clubs. The Italo-Australian Centre even decided to close their doors on 11 April 1977 to encourage attendance at the *Tavernetta*'s traditional Easter Monday celebrations.²¹² On 18 June, the Australian-Italian Bowling Club organised a ball with the special attendance of Joe Castellana.²¹³

The articles reported from the consulted sources were overall increasingly rare in the following years; but this did not mean that the *Tavernetta* was less active. In 1978, a new event was introduced, the election of the Queen of Aspley. One of the candidates organised a dance at the club on 30 April 1978, the day before the election.²¹⁴ The excellent management, under the presidency of Moro and his collaborators, oversaw some exciting new developments to the social facilities. In October of the same year, the renovations to expand the main dining room was completed (from 330 m² to 600 m²), that extended it to a capacity of 800 people.²¹⁵

At the beginning of 1980, the organisation of social events at the *Tavernetta* was particularly linked to card playing. On Sunday 2 March, a tournament of *briscola* and *tressette* [Italian card games], sponsored by Carmelo Caruso, managed to draw over 200 people. Antonio Farnea and Enrico Gaiera won the *tressette* competition and Giordano Buiatti and Marco Sciosa dominated the *Briscola*.²¹⁶ On Sunday 9 March, once again the *scopone* [Italian card game] tournament was held, with an exciting match that saw the triumph of

²¹¹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 February 1977, p. 11.

²¹² See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 March 1977, p. 20.

²¹³ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 June 1977, p. 13.

²¹⁴ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 20 April 1978, p. 29.

²¹⁵ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 20 July 1978, p. 30.

²¹⁶ See "Italo-Australian Bowling Club," *La Fiamma*, 25 February 1980, p. 31; "Torneo di briscola and tressette," *La Fiamma*, 6 March 1980, p. 12.

Guelfa Michelin and Giuseppe Rigo.²¹⁷ On 15 March 1980, during the grand ball at the Australian-Italian Bowling Club, the prizes for the winners of the three card competitions were awarded.²¹⁸

At the end of 1984, the president of the *Tavernetta* was Gianni Serafin, previously president in the biennium 1979 to 1981. With almost 20 years of life and over 200 members, the social and sporting initiatives of the club regularly continued each Sunday.²¹⁹ On 29 June 1991 The Australian-Italian Bowling Club celebrated its 25th anniversary with a grand ball.²²⁰

²¹⁷ See “Torneo di scopone,” *La Fiamma*, 20 March 1980, p. 12.

²¹⁸ See “Gara di scopone alla tavernetta,” *Il Globo*, 24 March 1980, p. 23.

²¹⁹ See “Calendario Sociale,” *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

²²⁰ See C. Ceccato, *Il Boschetto* .[without date].

7. The ANFE

The acronym stands for the *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigrati* [The national association of migrant families] The ANFE was formed in Rome on 8 March 1947 on the initiative of the honourable Maria Federici, one of the most important figures of the newborn Italian Republic in the post-war period. The ANFE was established by decree of the president of the Republic on 12 February 1968. Professor Federici was president of the association from its beginnings until 1981.²²¹ The association, according to its statute, proposed to carry out ‘its assistance and educational objectives and the technical preparation of specialised personnel to enable them to help both emigrants and immigrants.’²²² From the 1950’s, ANFE expanded rapidly in all the regions of Italy and abroad, forming a strong network of support in old, new and very new continents.²²³ In Australia the association began to operate with a local branch in Sydney in 1959.

The ANFE was officially established in Brisbane in 1964, but the process of establishing the association in Brisbane began two years earlier. On 16 February 1962, the honourable Maria Federici wrote a letter to Carmelo Caruso proposing collaboration with ANFE to support the assistance offered to Italian migrants in Brisbane. In another letter dated 27 March 1962, Professor Federici asked Caruso to institutionalise this collaboration by forming a local “Committee” of which Caruso would have been able to accept the presidency. In effect, a temporary committee was already formed in Brisbane on the 15th of the preceding March under the auspices of the Italian consul in Brisbane, Dr Francesco Olivieri. A reasonable number of people met at the Carrington Lounge in the Valley to form the first committee of ANFE. Caruso was elected as president, while the honorary

²²¹ See P. Goffredo, *Maria Federici: una vita al servizio delle famiglie di emigrati*, Presentation at the Celebrations for the 60th anniversary of ANFE, Rome 23-24 October 2007, <http://www.europasera.it/vedi.php?cat=cultura&id=47>, consulted 30 April 2008.

²²² See “A.N.F.E. Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigrati, “Statuto dell’Ente,” in *Gazzetta Ufficiale*.232 (3 October 1988), art. 2.

²²³ See P. Goffredo (2007).

presidency was offered to Dr Castellano. The early support activities were principally to provide linguistic advice to the Italian immigrants in their dealings with Australian government departments. In time, however, they also organised social activities. During 1963, the association decided to prepare a statute in English in order to register the foundation with the relevant Brisbane city authorities. Processes such as member enrolments were formalised and an annual membership fee was set. On 28 January 1964, with the clear intention of officially sealing the formation of ANFE in Brisbane, the first general meeting was held.²²⁴ The meeting was held at the Carrington Lounge and was presided over by the founder of the association in Brisbane, Carmelo Caruso, who presented in detail the goals of their welfare assistance program. It was established that an enrolment fee of 3 pounds sterling per head of the family would be charged, and in exchange the whole family would be able to use the services of ANFE in Brisbane. The first official committee was elected and was comprised of: Vera Frola, president, Joan Calvisi, vice president, Eddy Krieger, vice president, Raffaele De Pasquale, treasurer, Elita Pierini, secretary and Emilia Regano, secretarial assistant. Carmelo Caruso was official elected as the person responsible for public relations for the society. It was established that the meetings would be held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Carrington Lounge.²²⁵

The first official activity organised by the new committee was a party for *Carnevale*, with masked dancing on the 15th of the following February at the Alpha Hall in West End.²²⁶ The benevolent spirit of the new committee was concretely demonstrated in April 1964, when the Brisbane branch of ANFE gave over 500 pounds sterling to an Italian family in need. The money was the proceeds from a special fund-raising initiative and was donated to the wife and five young children of Vittorio Nobile, an Italian immigrant who died suddenly from a heart attack at the beginning of February 1964. The funds were raised in collaboration with Fr Luciano da Prignano, chaplain for the

²²⁴ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro*, ed. Carmelo Caruso, Minerva, Brisbane 2002, pp. 20-29.

²²⁵ See "Eletto a Brisbane il Comitato A.N.F.E"., *La Fiamma*, 4 February 1964, p. 16.

²²⁶ See "Ballo in maschera dell'ANFE" *La Fiamma*, 11 February 1964, p. 16.

Italian community.²²⁷ On Saturday 11 April, ANFE, in collaboration with *Fogolar Furlan*, held a grand benefit ball to support the hospital run by the Canossian nuns.²²⁸ At the beginning of 1964, Alitalia promoted a program of special fares for groups of Italian members of societies. ANFE immediately took up the offer and organised the first group that left from Sydney on 16 May 1964. The success of the first trip convinced the management of the association to repeat the initiative in the following years.²²⁹ On Saturday 8 August 1964, during a gala ball organised by ANFE, the first Miss Popularity was elected. Antonietta Ceccato was the winner of this competition. Miss Ceccato then decided to enter the Miss Australia competition with the sponsorship of this association.²³⁰ Again in August, the Miss *Freccia Alata* competition was held and was won by Miss Carmela Mammino.²³¹ In the September after, ANFE held a ball in her honour. The funds raised went to disabled children.²³² Another ball was organised for 24 October²³³ and yet another for 28 November, this time to elect the first Miss ANFE.²³⁴ On 25 November, the association held refreshments in honour of Italian artists Nico Fidenco, Isabella Iannetti, Arturo Testa and Romano Vitilli on tour in Brisbane. On Sunday 6 December, ANFE proposed to its members a ferry trip to Bishop Island.²³⁵

The year 1965 began with another ball held at the Orana Hall on Sunday 16 January, while on the 24th of that month another picnic was held on Bishop Island.²³⁶ On 3 February 1965, the ANFE annual general meeting was held at the Carrington Lounge to elect the new committee. The president, Vera Frola, presented the 1964 budget for

²²⁷ See "L'ANFE di Brisbane pro vedova Nobile," *La Fiamma*, 28 April 1964, p. 17.

²²⁸ See "Ballo in maschera dell'ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 11 February 1964, p. 16; "L'ANFE di Brisbane pro vedova Nobile," *La Fiamma*, 28 April 1964, p. 17.

²²⁹ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002).

²³⁰ See "Miss Popularity eletta a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 22 August 1964, p. 17.

²³¹ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 69.

²³² See "Ballo A.N.F.E. per "Miss Australia," *La Fiamma*, 1 September 1964, p. 17.

²³³ See "Ballo A.N.F.E. a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 20 October 1964, p. 17.

²³⁴ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 November 1964, p. 21.

²³⁵ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 November 1964, p. 21.

²³⁶ See "Ballo ANFE a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 January 1965, p. 6.

the association that resulted in a profit of over 400 pounds sterling. Mrs Frola was unanimously re-elected. Finally, the management committee was composed of: Pasquale Antonelli, vice president, Elita Pierini, secretary, Marino Regano treasurer and Carmelo Caruso was given the role of public relations. At this meeting, the committee approved the idea of building their own centre in Brisbane. They decided to register the association at the Department of Justice.²³⁷ On 23 February ANFE organised with success its second masked ball, as usual at the Orana Hall, with the attendance of around 900 people.²³⁸ In the March after that, the association decided to sponsor another Miss Australia candidate, Miss Carmela Mammino.²³⁹ In April ANFE organised another ball for the community at the Cloudland Panoramic Room in Bowen Hills and a *scopone* tournament was held at the Carrington Lounge with 20 pairs participating.²⁴⁰ This latter initiative was repeated in the June of that year.²⁴¹ On 15 June 1965, the first group of ANFE members from Brisbane departed from Sydney airport en route to Italy. This group including 26 Italians ranging in age from 69 years to one year, decided to spend a long vacation in Italy until 21 September 1965.²⁴² On 24 July, ANFE with the sponsorship of Alitalia organised a dance evening at the Orana Hall with the attendance of over 400 people. On this occasion, Miss Maria Kruitof won the Miss *Freccia Alata* competition.²⁴³ On 2 September the association held a benefit ball in honour of Miss Mammino at the Carrington Lounge to raise funds to help the Spastic Welfare League, a noble cause specifically linked to that year's Miss Australia

²³⁷ See "Un anno di attività dell'ANFE di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 23 February 1965, p. 16; *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and future* (2002), p. 32.

²³⁸ See "Ballo in maschera," *La Fiamma*, 23 February 1965, p. 16; "Ha riscosso un lusinghiero successo il "Veglione di Carnevale" dell'ANFE," *Il Globo*, 9 March 1965, p. 11.

²³⁹ See "L'ANFE concorrerà a Miss Australia," *Il Globo*, 16 March 1965, p. 14; "Miss Freccia Alata al ballo dell'ANFE," *Il Globo*, 27 July 1965, p. 16.

²⁴⁰ See "Ballo a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 6 April 1965, p. 16.

²⁴¹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 June 1965, p. 16.

²⁴² See "I 26 di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 19 June 1965, p. 16.

²⁴³ See "Ballo ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1965, p. 16; "Miss Freccia Alata" al ballo dell'ANFE, *La Fiamma*, 27 July 1965, p. 16.

Competition.²⁴⁴ Some days after they also organised a very successful evening cabaret for this same reason²⁴⁵. On 23 October, ANFE held another ball while on 7 November they organised a trip to Bishop Island with the participation of over 300 people²⁴⁶. On 20 November and 18 December that year, the association organised another two balls; during the second ball, Miss *Flotta Lauro* [Lauro Fleet], was elected for the first time, in honour of the company that sponsored the event. The winner of the competition, to which attended over 500 people, was Miss Deanna Gallina. The ANFE social calendar ended with another picnic at Bishop Island and a New Year's Eve Party at the Cloudland Panoramic Room, which welcomed over 300 guests on this occasion²⁴⁷.

On 9 January 1966, ANFE held a picnic at Bishop Island that, despite the bad weather, involved 230 people²⁴⁸. On 22 January, the association organised a ball at the Orana Hall with the attendance of over 300 people.²⁴⁹ The masked ball on 19 February, held in the same location, was no less attended. Over 600 people enthusiastically participated in the event including the Italian consul, Mario Rotelli.²⁵⁰ In the meantime, the annual general meeting to elect the new management committee was held at the Carrington Lounge on 8 February. The committee was composed of: Pasquale Antonelli, president, Italo Tommasin, vice president, Marino Regano, treasurer, Nerina Confalonieri, secretary, and Carmelo Caruso, public relations. The newly elected president of ANFE reaffirmed the need to have their own centre.²⁵¹ Over 300 people attended a ball organised by the

²⁴⁴ See "Ballo di Beneficenza," *La Fiamma*, 3 August 1965, p. 16.

²⁴⁵ See "Cabaret ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 14 September 1965, p. 16.

²⁴⁶ See "Gita a Bishop Island," *La Fiamma*, 12 October 1965, p. 16; "Gita ANFE a Bishop Island," *La Fiamma*, 16 November 1965, p. 16.

²⁴⁷ See "Ballo ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 16 November 1965, p. 16; "Il 18 December Miss Flotta Lauro," *La Fiamma*, 14 December 1965, p. 16. See also "ANFE: Veglione di Capodanno," *La Fiamma*, 1 January 1966, p. 22; "Ballo ANFE a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 4 January 1966, p. 16; "Tutto esaurito al veglione dell'ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 11 January 1966, p. 16.

²⁴⁸ See "Picnic ANFE," 18 January 1966, p. 16.

²⁴⁹ See "Nuovo comitato Dante," *La Fiamma*, 1 February 1966, p. 16.

²⁵⁰ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 1 March 1966, p. 16.

²⁵¹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 22 February 1966, p. 16.

association on Saturday 19 March 1966.²⁵² The third trip to Italy organised by ANFE involved 26 people from Brisbane. The participants departed from the airport in Sydney on 8 April to return to Australia on 19 July.²⁵³ On the 23rd of that month, the association, in collaboration with Alitalia organised a ball for the election of Miss *Freccia Alata*. There were over 500 people present to see Miss Carmel Walsh win, while Miss Christina Bacchiella took the title of Miss Charity Queen.²⁵⁴ On Saturday 21 May, ANFE held another ball and on the 5th of the following June they held a card tournament for the games *scopone* and *tressette*.²⁵⁵ The fourth ANFE group to tour Italy, comprising of 27 people, left on 7 June 1966 from Sydney.²⁵⁶ In July, the association organised another ball and another *scopone* tournament at the Carrington Lounge.²⁵⁷ On 10 September 1966, ANFE held a ball for the election of Miss Lloyd Triestino. Over 600 people participated in the event that witnessed the triumph of Miss Linda Vincenzi, whilst Maria Strano was elected Miss Charity Queen.²⁵⁸ During the management committee meeting in October, Carmelo Caruso proposed the addition of three new positions on the committee: honorary president, Dr Francesco Castellano, Fr Paolo Barzoli, official chaplain of the committee and Giuseppe Rinaudo, legal advisor.²⁵⁹ In November the association held another ball, with the participation of over 300 people, and then a trip to Bishop Island.²⁶⁰

To aid the victims of the major flood that hit Italy in November 1966, the Brisbane branch of ANFE decided to donate 50% of the proceeds from the ball held on 3 December. A cheque of \$ 125 was

²⁵² See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 22 March 1966, p. 16.

²⁵³ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 12 April 1966, p. 16. The sources consulted do not report any information on the second trip.

²⁵⁴ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 3 May 1966, p. 16.

²⁵⁵ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 17 May 1966, p. 16.

²⁵⁶ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 21 June 1966, p. 16.

²⁵⁷ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 12 July 1966, p. 13.

²⁵⁸ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1966, p. 16; “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 20 September 1966, p. 16.

²⁵⁹ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1966, p. 16.

²⁶⁰ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1966, p. 16; “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 15 November 1966, p. 16.

given to Dr Castellano, president of the *Comitato Pro Alluvionati* [Committee for Flood Victims] immediately formed in Brisbane.²⁶¹

A Christmas party was organised for the children of the members thanks to the contribution sent from the central division of ANFE. In 1966, this central division also began to provide a scholarship for children of members who distinguished themselves in the study of the Italian language.²⁶²

The activities in 1967 were inaugurated with a grand ball at the Orana Hall on 14 January and a picnic on Bishop Island on the 22nd of that month which involved over 300 people.²⁶³ The third annual general meeting of ANFE took place on 1 February at the Carrington Lounge. The elections of the management committee marked only two changes from the preceding year: Deanna Gallina, secretary and Milena Nardone, treasurer. Carmelo Caruso moved that the new elections be fixed for October 1967, in keeping with the conclusion of the financial year. It was also decided to hold the general meetings on the first Wednesday of every month.²⁶⁴ Again in February, ANFE organised a ball for the election of Miss *Freccia Alata* and a *Carnevale* celebration at the Orana Hall.²⁶⁵ Another picnic on Bishop Island was organised for 12 March that year.²⁶⁶ On 21 April 1967, another group of Italians under the auspices of ANFE left Sydney for a sojourn in Italy. On the 10th of the following June the association organised a ball that was held at the Orana Hall for the election of the second queen of the year with the sponsorship of the Air India company. During the same months, the plans for the construction of the new ANFE centre in Cyntra Street, Bowen Hills, were finally approved by the Brisbane City Council. The quote for the works amounted to \$140,000 for the construction of the building and \$20 000 to furnish the interior. The committee immediately prepared the documents to acquire the land and planned a series of functions to

²⁶¹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1966, p. 20.

²⁶² See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 39.

²⁶³ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 10 January 1967, p. 13; "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 31 January 1967, p. 17.

²⁶⁴ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 14 February 1967, p. 17.

²⁶⁵ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 24 January 1967, p. 17.

²⁶⁶ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 7 February 1967, p. 17.

raise money for the construction. On 2 September, during a ball organised by ANFE, Miss Concettina Intelisano was elected Miss *Freccia Alata*, while Miss Lucy Mazzucca was awarded Miss Charity Queen. In the following October Carmelo Vintrici, the first of the ‘assisted passage’ immigrants to be sponsored by the local ANFE arrived in Brisbane. He was the first of a long series of immigrants to be assisted by the local ANFE.²⁶⁷

The first reports for 1968 regard a series of activities promoted by ANFE in support of the earthquake victims in the Belice Valley in Sicily. Other than raising funds to support the victims in Italy, ANFE was proactive in the arrangement of special visas for earthquake victims that intended to emigrate to Australia.²⁶⁸ On Saturday 10 February a ball was held by ANFE at the Orana Hall registering a good attendance.²⁶⁹ On 30 March during what had now become the traditional ball, Miss *Freccia Alata* 1968 was elected. The winner was Carol Gabriel Iacuzzi while Maria Rosa Mellino was elected Miss Charity Queen.²⁷⁰ On 20 April, another family left homeless by the Sicilian earthquake and assisted by ANFE to come to Australia, arrived in Brisbane.²⁷¹ On 22 June, the association organised at the Orana Hall, the *Festa delle Caldarroste* [Feast of Roasted Chestnuts], a dance evening to raise funds for their aid work.²⁷² Also in June, ANFE responded to an appeal by Alfio Barberino, an Italian immigrant that was gravely ill who had decided to return to his homeland to spend his last days there. In a few days they raised \$1500 but Mr Barberino’s condition deteriorated unexpectedly and his doctors would not authorise him to travel. The money was donated to

²⁶⁷ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), pp. 40-45. The assisted migration program in Australia offered advantages for the European immigrants that were sponsored and that had the guarantee from an institution or individual Australian resident.

²⁶⁸ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 45.

²⁶⁹ See “Brevi dal Queensland,” *Il Globo*, 13 February 1968, p. 14.

²⁷⁰ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 16 April 1968, p. 14.

²⁷¹ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 45.

²⁷² See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 11 June 1968, p. 16; “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 13 June 1968, p. 15.

his family in Italy in the days following his death. Another desperate case received prompt assistance from ANFE that following September; it was a five year old child, Vittorio Scarlingi, suffering from infantile paralysis. Also on this occasion, the necessary funds were immediately raised to enable the child to obtain medical care at the *Istituto Medico Rizzoli* [Rizzoli Medical Institute] in Bologna where, thanks to a special surgical operation, the child would be able to recover normality of movement. Again due to the deterioration of his condition, the doctors would not allow him to travel and the money was given to his family to help them find treatment locally.²⁷³

On Friday 18 October, the sixth ANFE annual general meeting was held at the Carrington Lounge. Pasquale Antonelli was re-confirmed as the president of the association. The importance of the construction of the social centre was confirmed as a priority for which they were already able to obtain a contribution from Rome through the national presidency of ANFE.²⁷⁴ In November, the association held a successful trip to Bishop Island with the attendance of 250 people.²⁷⁵ On Saturday 23 November, a ball was held for the election of Miss ANFE at the Orana Hall with the sponsorship of Air India. Miss Franca Di Lizio won the 1968 competition, whilst Miss Rita Patane was elected Miss Charity Queen.²⁷⁶

In January 1969, the land at Bowen Hills where the new ANFE centre would be erected was finally acquired. Although they should have proceeded with the construction of the building, they had not yet received the assurance from Rome of the availability of funds. They invited the Italians in Brisbane to become supporting members of the association.²⁷⁷

On Saturday 15 February 1969, the traditional masked ball of *Carnevale* was held at the Orana Hall with great success.²⁷⁸ On the 8th

²⁷³ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 46.

²⁷⁴ See "L'assemblea annuale dell'ANFE a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 15 October 1968, p. 17.

²⁷⁵ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 12 November 1968, p. 15.

²⁷⁶ See "Franca Di Lizio Miss ANFE 1968," *Il Globo*, 3 December 1968, p. 15.

²⁷⁷ See "Sorgerà a Brisbane la sede sociale dell'ANFE," *Il Globo*, 21 January 1969, p. 11.

²⁷⁸ See "Successo a Brisbane del ballo dell'ANFE," *Il Globo*, 4 March 1969, p. 18.

of the following March, the annual event sponsored by Italy took place. In honour of the new DC-10 jets used by the Italian company on the Italy-Australia route, the title of the beauty competition was changed to Miss Jet Age. This first edition of the competition was won by Miss Maria Di Labio, while Miss Filippa Merenda was awarded Miss Charity Queen.²⁷⁹ In the following months, ANFE held a series of events to raise money for their own activities: on 5 April the *Ballo di Pasqua* [Easter Ball] was held at the Orana Hall; on 4 May a card tournament (*tressette* and *scopone*) was held at the Carrington Lounge; on 17 May the *Festa delle Vendemmia* [Grape Harvest festival] and the election of *Mamma Ideale* [Ideal Mother]; and on 7 June a grand ball was held to celebrate the anniversary of the Italian Republic, with the attendance of the Italian ambassador to Australia, Mario Majoli.²⁸⁰ On 7 October 1969, at the Carrington Lounge, the seventh annual general meeting of ANFE was held and on this occasion Pasquale Antonelli was re-elected president. The other responsibilities were distributed as such: Luigi Pizzica, vice president, Vilma Frola, secretary, Italo Tomasin, Treasurer and Carmelo Caruso assigned to public relations.²⁸¹ On 18 October, the association organised a social ball to raise funds for their new centre.²⁸² The following November, with the exceptional attendance of over 1,000 people, the election of Miss ANFE 1969 was held at the Brisbane City Hall. Miss Rosetta Rametta was the winner.²⁸³ The last activity of the year, which again was to support the building of the new ANFE centre, was the grand Christmas ball organised for 21 December.²⁸⁴

²⁷⁹ See “Miss Jet Age di Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 18 March 1969, p. 17; *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 47.

²⁸⁰ See “Notiziario dal Queensland,” *Il Globo*, 18 March 1969, p. 17; *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), pp. 47-52.

²⁸¹ See “Assemblea ANFE,” *Il Globo*, 30 September 1969, p. 18; *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 52.

²⁸² See “Assemblea ANFE,” *Il Globo*, 30 September 1969, p. 18.

²⁸³ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 52.

²⁸⁴ See “Attività Associazioni Italiane di Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 16 December 1969, p. 22.

There were not unfortunately many articles in the sources corresponding to activities carried out by ANFE from 1970-1973. On 14 February 1970, the association organised the traditional *Carnevale* party. On 14 March they held the election of Miss Jet Age in a gala evening at the Brisbane City Hall. The title went to Miss Marina Caprioglio, while Miss Serafina Arcidiacono was judged Miss Charity Queen. On 28 March, the Easter Ball was held at the Orana Hall.²⁸⁵ On 14 November, with the sponsorship of the same company, the election of Miss Air India was held at the City Hall.²⁸⁶ On 25 September 1972, in response to a specific appeal from the Italian consul, Luigi Fulvi, ANFE organised a dance to raise money for the nursing home of the Cannossian nuns in Brisbane. The ninth annual general meeting saw the addition of two new members to the management committee: the presidency went to Annibale Boccabella, while the role of public relations was given to George Calì.²⁸⁷ In the following months, thanks to the generous collaboration of the Italian community, the construction of the first ANFE centre in Brisbane was completed, even if, due to limited resources, the original project was unable to be realised.

In January 1974, ANFE made regular requests to the Brisbane City Council to enlarge the centre at Bowen Hills.²⁸⁸ On 6 April, the association organised the Easter Ball at the Italo-Australian Centre, with the attendance of over 400 people.²⁸⁹ On Saturday 29 June, ANFE held a *Grande Serata Siciliana* [Grand Sicilian Evening] at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm.²⁹⁰ In the same hall they held the *Ballo*

²⁸⁵ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 52; *Il 14 Marzo elezione di Miss Jet Age a Brisbane, Il Globo*, 17 February 1970, p. 16.

²⁸⁶ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 52.

²⁸⁷ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), pp. 52-56.

²⁸⁸ See "Qualcosa non va tra il Centro and gli altri sodalizi," *Il Globo*, 1 January 1974, p. 22.

²⁸⁹ See "Attività delle associazioni Italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 1 April 1974, p. 16; "Riuscito "Ballo di Pasqua" all'A.N.F.E. di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 6 May 1974, p. 16.

²⁹⁰ See "ANFE di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 24 June 1974, p. 12.

del Vino [Wine Ball] on Saturday 3 August.²⁹¹ The 1974 Miss ANFE competition was characterised by a series of fund-raising activities organised by the entrants. On Saturday 24 August, at the YMCA Hall in Windsor, entrant Maria Miranda organised a dance. Two entrants, Maria Manganaro and Frances Strazzeri responded with a dance at the Italo-Australian Centre. On 1 September after that, another entrant, Nafye Rushlt, held a barbecue at her house to once again raise money for charity.²⁹² On 22 September the competition concluded with the victory of Diane Carter. Against the backdrop of the beautiful Cloudland Ballroom, in front of more than 1200 people, Miss Carter received her crown, while Miss Charity Queen went to Maria Manganaro.²⁹³ On 22 October 1974, the annual ANFE general meeting was held at the parish hall of St Thomas' Church. On this occasion the budget was well in surplus and Annibale Boccabella was reconfirmed as the president of the association. On 9 November, ANFE organised a *Ballo di Primavera* [Spring Ball] at the Italo-Australian Centre.²⁹⁴ They concluded 1974 with two gala balls: the first was for Christmas and was held on 21 December at the Holy Spirit Hall and the second was for New Year's Eve at the Valley Police Club.²⁹⁵

According to the sources consulted, there were no news on the activity of the association for the year 1975 and the first half of 1976, but one could probably suppose that the usual social and recreational activities of ANFE continued during this period. On 15 May the association celebrated Mothers Day at the Valley Police Club.²⁹⁶ At the same location on Saturday 5 June, ANFE demonstrated its support for the candidature of Maurizia Turco for the Miss Australia competition with a grand benefit ball in her honour.²⁹⁷ That June, activities relating to the new Miss ANFE 1976 competition began. On

²⁹¹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 29 July 1974, p. 16.

²⁹² See "Attività delle associazioni Italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 19 August 1974, p. 11; "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 26 August 1974, p. 12.

²⁹³ See "Eletta a Brisbane Miss ANFE," *Il Globo*, 30 September 1974, p. 11.

²⁹⁴ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 4 November 1974, p. 15.

²⁹⁵ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 9 December 1974, p. 20; "Notizie da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 30 December 1974, p. 12.

²⁹⁶ See "ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 6 May 1976, p. 27.

²⁹⁷ See "L'ANFE per Maurizia Turco," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31.

June 26, an entrant, Anna Marrone organised an evening of dance which was sold out at the Holy Spirit Hall. Its success encouraged Miss Marrone to repeat the event on Saturday 7 August at the same hall. On 21 August, Lorella Cipressi organised a ball at the Holy Spirit Hall. Her competitor Bruna Giammichele chose instead 28 August for her dance evening at the Hall in New Farm. The last event of the series was a barbecue organised by Anna Marrone on Saturday 11 September at her house in Brisbane.²⁹⁸ The finals of the competition were on Sunday 17 October with a gala evening at the Cloudland Ballroom. The winner was Lorella Cepressi, while Anna Marrone was given the title of Miss Charity Queen.²⁹⁹ Regarding the other activities of the association, on 18 July 1976, ANFE had organised with success the Sicilian Evening at the Holy Spirit Hall.³⁰⁰ On Saturday 29 October, they held the elections for the management committee: Boccabella was elected the president once again³⁰¹. On Saturday 13 November, the Wine Ball was held at the Holy Spirit Hall, with the Rossetto company sponsoring the event.³⁰² The final activity organised for 1976 was the Christmas ball on Saturday 18 December, again at the Holy Spirit Hall.³⁰³

In 1977 the ANFE activities began immediately in grand style. On 13 February, the association organised with great success the traditional *Carnevale* party at the sumptuous Cloudland Ballroom, with Spanish dancers providing the entertainment.³⁰⁴ On the 5th of the following March, the "Grape Harvest Ball" was held at the Holy Spirit Hall and on 2 April the Easter Ball was held in the same hall.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁸ See "Una serata per Anna Marrone," *La Fiamma*, 1 July 1976, p. 33; "Brisbane: Clubs and Associazioni," *La Fiamma*, 29 July 1976, p. 32; see also "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 12 August 1976, p. 31; "Balli ANFE a New Farm," *La Fiamma*, 19 August 1976, p. 33; "Anfe," *La Fiamma*, 9 September 1976, p. 31.

²⁹⁹ See "Lorella Cipressi Miss ANFE 1976," *La Fiamma*, 23 October 1976, p. 31.

³⁰⁰ See "Serata siciliana all'A.N.F.E.," *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1976, p. 33.

³⁰¹ See "A.N.F.E.," *La Fiamma*, 4 November 1976, p. 31.

³⁰² See "Attività ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 11 November 1976, p. 32.

³⁰³ See "Anfe," *La Fiamma*, 9 December 1976, p. 32.

³⁰⁴ See "Notizie brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 January 1977, p. 22; "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 February 1977, p. 22; see also "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 March 1977, p. 13.

³⁰⁵ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 February 1977, p. 11; "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 24 March 1977, p. 13.

On 30 April, Miss Rosanna Febo, Miss ANFE entrant, organised a gala ball again at the Holy Spirit Hall. On May 28 for the purposes of this same competition, Miss Febo held a barbecue at her private residence.³⁰⁶ In June 1977, president Boccabella received the “Medal of the Order of the British Empire” for assistance to Italian families.³⁰⁷ Another Miss ANFE entrant, whose name is not mentioned in the sources consulted, organised a ball on 25 June and a fashion parade at the Holy Spirit Hall. On Saturday 2 July, it was the turn of another competitor, Silvana Zocaro, to hold a ball at the same hall. A gala event with a degustation of Italian delicacies was instead organised by entrant Giovanna Di Marco. On 17 September, at the Holy Spirit Hall, Miss Febo held another ball.³⁰⁸

As from September, the event called ‘Fiesta Night’ became a regular occurrence. It was an evening of fun for the whole family, which was repeated every fortnight.³⁰⁹ Around 1500 people crowded into the Cloudland Ballroom for the Miss ANFE 1977 ball; Giovanna Di Marco was elected as the winner while Rosanna Febo was crowned Miss Charity Queen.³¹⁰ On 29 October, ANFE held another ball, this time entitled *Gran Ballo Abbruzzese* [Grand Abbruzzese Ball].³¹¹ In November they held the annual general meeting at the parish hall of the Capuchin fathers and Annibale Boccabella was re-elected president.³¹²

The year 1978 was another busy year for the ANFE association of Brisbane. On Sunday 12 February, they held the traditional *Carnevale* ball at the Cloudland Ballroom with prizes for the best mask.³¹³ The Grand Grape Harvest Ball organised for Saturday 8 April 1978 in the

³⁰⁶ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 21 April 1977, p. 11; “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 12 May 1977, p. 18.

³⁰⁷ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 16 June 1977, p. 13.

³⁰⁸ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 16 June 1977, p. 13; “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 30 June 1977, p. 13; see also “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 21 July 1977, p. 14; “Brevi da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 15 September 1977, p. 13.

³⁰⁹ See “Brevi da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 15 September 1977, p. 13.

³¹⁰ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 24 October 1977, p. 14; “Brisbane: Miss ANFE,” *La Fiamma*, 10 November 1977, p. 13.

³¹¹ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 24 October 1977, p. 14.

³¹² See “Brisbane: Miss ANFE,” *La Fiamma*, 10 November 1977, p. 13.

³¹³ See “ANFE,” *La Fiamma*, 2 February 1978, p. 21.

Holy Spirit Hall followed, with a free donation of some bunches of grapes from Stanthorpe.³¹⁴ The fund-raising events linked to the Miss ANFE competition had already begun by April of that year. The first was organised by Carolina Esposito, who held a barbecue at her home on 22 April.³¹⁵

On 6 May that year, ANFE organised the traditional Mother's Day Ball at the Holy Spirit Hall with the awarding of prizes to three mothers drawn from a lottery.³¹⁶ In collaboration with the Consular Committee of Assistance, on Sunday 28 May, the association organised a grand ball to celebrate the 32nd anniversary of the Italian Republic.³¹⁷ Miss Esposito held another barbecue at her home on 24 June that year.³¹⁸ On 22 July 1978, ANFE organised a dance evening in honour of Carmelo Caruso at the Italo-Australian Centre. On this occasion, Caruso was awarded the *Croce di Cavaliere della Repubblica Italiana* [Italian Republic Knighthood Cross] in recognition of his work supporting the Italian immigrants.³¹⁹ Besides mentioning the election of Miss ANFE, planned for 28 October, the sources consulted did not report other notices for 1978 and the same could be said for the first nine months of 1979.

The umpteenth ball for the election of Miss ANFE was held at the Cloudland Ballroom on Sunday 21 October 1979.³²⁰ On 30 October, the general meeting of ANFE was held, with Annibale Boccabella reconfirmed as president of the association. The other management roles were distributed as such: Paolo Raffa as vice president; Concezio Ottobrandi as secretary; Italo Tommasin as treasurer and Santina Denaro in charge of public relations.³²¹ The year 1979 ended with two gala balls: the first was the Christmas Ball on Saturday 22 December at the Riverside Ballroom in New Farm and the second was the New Year's Eve Ball on 31 December at the Cloudland

³¹⁴ See "ANFE: il ballo della vendemmia," *La Fiamma*, 15 March 1978, p. 24.

³¹⁵ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 20 April 1978, p. 29.

³¹⁶ As above.

³¹⁷ See "ANFE Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 May 1978, p. 24.

³¹⁸ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 22 June 1978, p. 28.

³¹⁹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 8 July 1978, p. 31; "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1978, p. 29.

³²⁰ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1979, p. 25.

³²¹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1979, p. 26.

Ballroom.³²² There was only one report in the sources consulted for 1980: on 16 February, ANFE organised a grand *Carnevale* ball at the Riverside Ballroom.³²³ In 1981, ANFE celebrated its first 18 years of activity with the inauguration of their new centre in Wyandra street, Fortitude Valley. ANFE House was officially opened on 22 November. Fr Romano Franchini, chaplain for the Italian community, was responsible for the blessing of the building. The Australian federal government expressed support for the initiative by donating \$1,000.³²⁴ On 17 of the preceding October the Miss ANFE competition for 1981 was held at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket.³²⁵

There was not a wealth of articles on the ANFE activities for the 1980's in general, according to the sources consulted. On Saturday 15 October 1983, the association organised the traditional gala ball for the election of Miss ANFE; Maria Ginardi was awarded the crown, while Rosanna Di Gregorio gained the title of Miss Charity Queen, with the exceptional amount raised of \$8000 in support of ANFE. The event took place in the upper room of the Italo-Australian Centre which housed over 700 guests for the occasion.³²⁶ On 5 February 1984, after the summer break, the activities recommenced with the Sunday Socials at the ANFE house, an initiative that was well received the year before. In the meantime an ANFE youth group was formed: Claudio Capelli was the president and Giovina Cavallo the vice president. The group organised a Valentine's Day disco on 14 February 1984.³²⁷ On 10 March after that, the association held the 'Wine Ball' at the ANFE House Hall. All the guests were treated to a

³²² See "ANFE, *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1979, p. 29.

³²³ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 January 1980, p. 21.

³²⁴ See "Grande inaugurazione della Casa ANFE," *Il Globo*, 7 December 1981, p. 29; *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 58.

³²⁵ See "Grande gala per l'elezione di Miss ANFE 1981," *Il Globo*, 12 October 1981, p. 22.

³²⁶ See "Elette le reginette dell'ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 20 October 1983, p. 36; "Miss A.N.F.E. 1983" and "Miss Charity Queen," *Il Globo*, 24 October 1983, p. 23; see also "Gala reginette A.N.F.E." *Il Globo*, 29 October 1983, p. 24.

³²⁷ See "L'angolo del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 13 February 1984, p. 21.

buffet of cheese and wine.³²⁸ On Friday 24 August 1984, Barbara Anello, entrant for Miss ANFE 1984, hosted a disco night at the ANFE House Hall. In September, the association celebrated Father's Day with a grand ball once again at the ANFE House Hall. Seven days after this, Miss Barbara Anello hosted a barbecue dance in the same hall. On 15 September, another Miss ANFE entrant, Marina Di Clemente, held a cabaret night at the ANFE House Hall. In this period, ANFE House was open every Sunday afternoon for games and food.³²⁹ The finals of Miss ANFE 1984 resulted in the election of Angela Parisi, while Antonella Ridolfi was nominated as Miss Charity Queen. The entrants raised a total of \$36,870.³³⁰ On 15 December 1984, the association organised, at the ANFE House Hall, the Grand Christmas Ball with the participation of the Italian consul Dr Daniele Perico, who awarded two scholarships in memory of the honourable Maria Federici to two worthy students of the Italian language. On this occasion, the wife of the consul distributed gift baskets to all of the Italian pensioners, while the children received the welcomed visit by Santa Claus who had presents for all of them.³³¹ In August 1985, the Italian ambassador to Australia, Dr Sergio Angeletti, visited ANFE House during his official visit to the Italian community in Brisbane. In the following November, ANFE made the final payment of \$10,000 towards the mortgage on the new centre.³³² On Saturday 30 November 1985, the association organised a party for pensioners at the ANFE House Hall with the distribution of free *panettone* [Milanese Christmas cake].³³³ The Christmas Ball for young and old was also held at the hall on 14 December. For 1986 the only article regarding the activities of ANFE was the Christmas Ball held at the ANFE House Hall on 13 December.³³⁴ The sources consulted did not provide information on ANFE activities for the years 1987 and 1988. On

³²⁸ See "L'angolo del Queensland," in *Il Globo*, 27 February 1984, p. 23.

³²⁹ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

³³⁰ See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 59.

³³¹ See "Gran Ballo A.N.F.E", *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

³³² See *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie degli Emigrati. Passato, presente and futuro* (2002), p. 59.

³³³ See "Festa Natalizia dell'Associazione ANFE," *Il Globo*, 9 December 1985, p. 26.

³³⁴ See "Babbo Natale all'ANFE," *La Fiamma*, 22 December 1986, p. 16.

Saturday 19 August 1989, the ANFE Youth Group organised a dinner to celebrate *il ferragosto* [Feast of the Assumption] at the ANFE centre. Over 300 people attended the dinner.³³⁵ On 25 November, the association held a party at the ANFE House Hall for all the members on a pension. There were panettoni and lambrusco as refreshment. All the guests were given a gift basket.³³⁶

The social activities and aid work of the ANFE association continued in the following years. In 2002, to mark the 40th anniversary of the association, Carmelo Caruso produced a book entitled: *National Association of Emigrant Families: Past, Present and Future*. In fact, this author took inspiration from that book in writing the history of this worthy association that continues to be proactive in support of Italian emigrant families in Brisbane.³³⁷

³³⁵ See “Ferragosto dei giovani all’ANFE,” *La Fiamma*, 31 August 1989, p. 34.

³³⁶ See “Panettoni e lambrusco,” *Il Globo*, 18 October 1989, p. 27.

³³⁷ See “I fatti del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1966, p. 16; “Il tennis è Lidio Iezzi,” *La Fiamma*, 18 November 1976, p. 33.

8. The Italo-Australian Tennis Club

Amongst the Italian sporting associations that existed in the 1960's there was also an Italo-Australian Tennis Club (alias Metropolitan Italo-Australian Tennis Club). The origins of the club go back to July 1966, when a group of Italian immigrants, passionate about tennis, decided to establish the Metropolitan Italo-Australian Tennis Club with its temporary base at the Lederhose Tennis Courts in Yeronga. Before it was officially recognised, the structure of the association adopted a similar format to other societies, with the holding of annual general meetings for members and the formation of a management committee. The first committee included: Francesco Castellano, president, F. Traversi, vice president, Lidio Iezzi, treasurer, Loris Balestrieri and Vincenzo Palmieri were in charge of public relations. Since the beginning it was the blatant intention of the club to establish their base at the Italo-Australian Centre as soon as it would be completed. In 1968, the president was still Dr Francesco Castellano who was renominated in the following years. The principal activities of the association were linked to sporting competitions, with the athletes of the club participating in local and national tennis tournaments.³³⁸

Unfortunately, there were only a few articles on this association within the sources consulted. In November 1968, the tennis club organised a tournament in which the winners of the various categories were the 15 year old Bill Hutchinson, Mr Adessio, Mrs Val Dickson and the pairs Hunter-Pennisi and Aili-Coppick. Dr Loris Balestrieri awarded the victory cups during a ceremony at his private residence.³³⁹ On 8 December, some special guests visited the Metropolitan Italo-Australian Tennis Club. The famous tennis players Adriano Panatta, Massimo Di Domenico, Pietro Toti, Pietro Marzano and Vittorio Crotta, with the Australian champion Martin Mulligan, and also with the Italian consul, Federigo Valli, attended a reception held in their honour at the Metropolitan Hotel, kindly made available for their use by entrepreneur Cesare Pradella.³⁴⁰ The Italian tennis

³³⁸ See "Assemblea del Tennis club," *Il Globo*, 4 March 1969, p. 18.

³³⁹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 12 November 1968, p. 15.

³⁴⁰ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 10 December 1968, p. 17.

players were members of the Italian national squad who represented their country in the Davis Cup competition held at the Milton Tennis Courts in Brisbane.

In 1975, Lidio Iezzi purchased some courts and adjacent land and built the Fairfield Tennis and Squash Centre. Mr Iezzi was one of the founding members of the Metropolitan Italo-Australian Tennis Club. From amateur player, after making many sacrifices, he became a professional coach. In 1976 Lidio Iezzi, already proprietor of the sporting complex, was able to efficiently manage the activities of the club.³⁴¹ The sources consulted did not provide other news of the association.

³⁴¹ See “Il tennis è Lidio Iezzi,” *La Fiamma*, 18 November 1976, p. 33.

9. The Italo-Australian Centre

The idea of establishing a centre that offered facilities to accommodate all of the needs of the various Italian societies in Brisbane was born in 1958 and Mr Loris Balestrieri, then regent of the vice consul, was the most stringent promoter of this idea. He was able to quickly convince the management of an Italian club to sell their own centre to acquire the land where the dream of building this new centre could be realised. In 1960 a good piece of land was purchased at Newmarket³⁴² in an area to the north of the Brisbane central business district. This was situated alongside Spencer Park which was the home of the *Azzurri* soccer team. After a year and a half of negotiations, another two associations joined the initiative: *Fogolar Furlan* and the *Azzurri*. Still it was regent Balestrieri who was the driving force behind the agreement reached on 12 May 1961 at the office of the Italian consul in Brisbane. The following people participated in this meeting: Loris Balestrieri himself; engineer Cesare Pradella; lawyer Giuseppe Rinaudo; Italo Brusasco; Felice Brusasco; Guido Canale; Floriano Sferco; Osvaldo Bonutto; Guerrino Giavon; Ermes Lestani; Giuseppe Della Bianca; Bruno Singolo; and Tony De Luca. It was decided that each of the societies would put their financial resources into a common fund to initiate work on the structure. At this meeting, an executive committee was formed, composed of Bonutto, Giavon and Lestani, representatives from *Fogolar Furlan*, the Brusasco Brothers and Canale, representing the *Azzurri* and Della Bianca and Bruno Springolo (a third representative would be decided later) representing the Italo-Australian Club. Loris Balestrieri was elected honorary president of the committee.³⁴³

That June, the project adopted the name of the Italo-Australian Sport and Recreation Centre. A bank account was opened for the donations to the new centre. The executive committee, defined as transitory, was responsible for supervising the construction work until the election of the next committee. While Balestrieri was confirmed as the honorary president, within the committee other roles were

³⁴² See *Italo-Australian Centre*, unpublished manuscript [1969].

³⁴³ See "Raggiunto (finalmente) l'accordo: nasce a Brisbane l'Italo-Australian Sport Recreation Centre," *Il Globo*, 23 May 1961, p. 20.

defined: Bonutto was elected secretary, Canale, treasurer, Springolo, vice secretary, Felice Brusasco, vice treasurer, and Della Bianca, vice president. The role of president remained vacant.³⁴⁴ Despite good intentions, the work did not commence within the next months, probably due to lack of funds. The committee then preferred to adopt a different financial strategy. Thanks to the financial commitment of *Fogolar Furlan* and the collaboration of the *Azzurri*, they bought five houses in Foster Street, a road adjacent to the land in Newmarket. The idea was to finance the works through renting these houses. The income from the rents however was not even in fact sufficient to pay for the maintenance of the houses and so they decided to sell four of the houses to pay the loan for the land.³⁴⁵

There was no progress during the following years because the Italo-Australian Sport and Recreation Centre did not seem to attract the interest of the Italian community in Brisbane. In 1966, the indomitable Balestrieri decided to launch the idea again and convinced the representatives of all of the societies to attend a special meeting at his home in Ascot. A new steering committee was formed that was named the Central Committee. This committee was officially elected at the Carrington Lounge in the Valley on Sunday 6 March 1966.³⁴⁶ Dr Francesco Castellano was elected honorary president; Fr Paolo Barzoli was chaplain, Ralph De Pasquale president, Marino Regano vice president, Domenico Calvisi secretary and Guido Canale treasurer. Amongst the other members of the committee were representatives from all of the Italian organisations. Giuseppe Rinaudo offered his services as the legal advisor. Trusting in the president De Pasquale, entrepreneurs Joe Sesta and Tony De Luca agreed to finance the construction of the new centre.³⁴⁷

The committee started work immediately to develop the project and apply for building permits to the relevant authorities. They had to wait until the end of 1968 to receive council approval. On 20 November 1968, the management committee of the Italo-Australian Sporting Centre met to formalise the news and to launch a fund-

³⁴⁴ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 17 June 1961, p. 19.

³⁴⁵ See *Italo-Australian Centre*, [1969].

³⁴⁶ As above.

³⁴⁷ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 March 1966, p. 16.

raising campaign for the cost of construction. They invited members of the Italian community to enrol as members in return for a fee of \$5.00 per person. There was also an appeal to the entrepreneurs to agree in the end to reduce the cost of construction.³⁴⁸ In 1969, the work was entrusted to the building company of Delio Iezzi. The first stone was laid down on 9 June 1969, in the presence of Mario Majoli, Italian ambassador to Australia; Dr Federico Valli, Italian consul and Fred Campbell Queensland minister for Industrial Development. The project envisaged two buildings: one three-storey building with an area dedicated to bocce games on the ground level, a bar/restaurant on the second level and a ballroom on the third; a one two-storey building with ample ground floor parking and finally a reception hall on the second floor.³⁴⁹ It was envisaged that the external areas would consist of different sporting fields. That September, the construction work on the first building was at a good stage. On 24 September, president De Pasquale was able to announce to the members that the construction of the first building would be completed for the 1969 Christmas celebrations, thanks also to the guarantee offered by the Commercial Bank of Australia.³⁵⁰ The satisfaction of the management committee, however, was dulled by the death of Felice Brusasco, who died only four months after his friend, Floriano Sferco. These were two important losses for the Italian community.³⁵¹

The sources consulted are somewhat scarce regarding the first years of operation of the Italo-Australian Centre. The official opening was on 10 May 1970.³⁵² Soon after, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir transferred its base to the new centre. Ralph De Pasquale remained the president of the I.A.C. until 1972. From 1973, the role was assumed by John Parrella, who, together with a new committee, outlined a project to extend the rooms. During these years, the Verdi Choir, *Fogolar Furlan*, the Dante Alighieri Society and the Bocce

³⁴⁸ See "Approvato a Brisbane il progetto del Centro Sportivo Italo-Australiano," *Il Globo*, 3 December 1968, p. 15.

³⁴⁹ See *Italo-Australian Centre*, [1969].

³⁵⁰ See "Campagna soci a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 30 September 1969, p. 18.

³⁵¹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 30 September 1969, p. 18.

³⁵² See "Dopo le difficoltà iniziali un susseguirsi di successi," *La Fiamma*, 6 May 1976, p. 28.

Subcommittee, based at the centre in 1971, were very active at the I.A.C..³⁵³ From 1973, the I.A.C. joined the tournaments organised by the Australian Bocce Association and began to have immediate success: the pair, Robert Parrella and Dino Cecconi, won the first time they competed in the national titles for the men's doubles.³⁵⁴ From January 1974, there were regular articles on bocce championships at the I.A.C..³⁵⁵ As the sport was open to both sexes, a Women's Bocce Committee was also formed. In April 1974, the men's committee organised a fun day for Easter Monday, with games and entertainment for the whole family. The women's committee instead organised an evening cabaret, on Saturday 6 April, to honour the visiting women's team from the Apia Club in Sydney.³⁵⁶ In May of that year, the first state championship of Bocce, that would annually crown the best Bocce players in Queensland, was instituted and was hosted by the I.A.C. In the individual section, Ben Parrella, younger brother of the president of the centre, won.³⁵⁷ On 28 July 1974, the annual general meeting of the I.A.C. to elect the new management confirmed the presidency of John Parrella.³⁵⁸ It was anticipated that the funds raised for the expansion of the centre would come from a range of events, amongst which would be the election of Miss Italo-Australian Centre. One of the more than 100 entrants, Miss Manuela Raimondi, organised an evening cabaret at the centre on Saturday 31 August.³⁵⁹

The election of Miss Italo-Australian Centre 1974 was held on the evening of 27 September. Miss Rosemary Adams was the winner, awarded with an airfare to Rome kindly donated by Alitalia. Lea Mallegni was instead crowned as Miss Fundraising thanks to the \$1 360 raised to support the I.A.C..³⁶⁰ The spacious facilities at the centre made it attractive to other associations in Queensland. On 19 October

³⁵³ As above.

³⁵⁴ See "5 anni di successo," *La Fiamma*, 13 May 1976, p. 30.

³⁵⁵ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 15 January 1974, p. 24.

³⁵⁶ See "Attività delle associazioni Italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 1 April 1974, p. 16.

³⁵⁷ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 27 May 1974, p. 12.

³⁵⁸ See "Attività Associazioni italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 10 June 1974, p. 14.

³⁵⁹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 26 August 1974, p. 12.

³⁶⁰ See "Eletta a Brisbane Miss Italo-Australian Centre," *Il Globo*, 14 October 1974, p. 12.

1974, the Three Saints Committee of Silkwood, represented by Giuseppe Vitale and Alfio Barbagallo, organised a film night open to everyone with the showing of a documentary on the Three Saints Feast in Saint Alfio, Italy.³⁶¹ On the following November there was a show by three famous Italian actors: Walter Chiari, Carlo Campanini and Toni Renis. For the first two it was a welcome return, having performed with notable success at the I.A.C. during the previous year. On that occasion they were also made honorary members of the centre. The show was sponsored by Alitalia.³⁶²

The numerous activities at the I.A.C. continued into the next year, but were not documented in the sources consulted. It could be deduced from the reports from 1976 that as of May 1975, on every second Tuesday of the month, they began to organise evenings dedicated to good food, music and song which were called the *Trattoria*.³⁶³ In April 1976, they organised the umpteenth competition for the election of Miss Italo-Australian Centre, with twelve young entrants. On this occasion, they also announced, for the second year running, the Miss-ter Italo-Australian Centre competition. This was a competition of a comical nature that was very successful in 1974.³⁶⁴ On the evening of 4 May 1976, the 1st anniversary of the *Trattoria* was celebrated. The evening was enlivened by the piano accordion of Ralph De Pasquale, the mandolin of Norm Salvo, the guitar of Victor Halim and the Voice of Norm McLeod.³⁶⁵ Again in May 1976, the I.A.C. joined the fund-raising efforts for the earthquake victims in Friuli.³⁶⁶ The 6th anniversary of the centre was celebrated with a special annual general meeting of the management committee to

³⁶¹ See "Serata cinematografica all'Italo-Australian Centre" *Il Globo*, 30 September 1974, p. 11.

³⁶² See "Walter Chiari, Campanini and Renis al "Centro" di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 18 November 1974, p. 15.

³⁶³ See "Italo-Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 30.

³⁶⁴ See "Inizia il concorso per l'elezione di Miss Italo-Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 29 April 1976, p. 26.

³⁶⁵ See "Italo-Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 30.

³⁶⁶ See "Appello Italo-Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 13 May 1976, p. 31.

which all of the members of previous management committees were invited.³⁶⁷

In the meantime, the bocce competitions continued at the I.A.C.,³⁶⁸ alternating with initiatives in support of the earthquake victims.³⁶⁹ On 9 July 1976, the centre obtained its registered club licence which permitted it to sell alcohol until 10pm, while previously the I.A.C. was required to close the bar two hours earlier.³⁷⁰ In the meantime, the game of billiards also became popular at the centre. On 13 July 1976, Ralph De Pasquale, with the sponsorship of Nanda Macaroni, organised the third annual Nanda Pools Handicap, a billiards tournament that was well supported in the previous years. Over 32 players participated in the 1976 competition, including the winner of the previous two events, Joe Torrisi.³⁷¹ With the *Trattoria*, bocce championships and evening cabarets organised by the Miss Italo-Australia Centre entrants,³⁷² September 1976 came quickly and they were soon able to officially announce the commencement of the long-awaited works to expand the centre. The project envisaged a new hall for 600 people and new sporting facilities.³⁷³ On Saturday 26 September, the Italian Parish Committee of St Thomas More Church organised a benefit ball for the parish at the I.A.C..³⁷⁴ On 9 October, the President's Ball was held at the centre, a gala evening to support the I.A.C. at the cost of \$30 per couple. Over 200 people attended the event with important Queensland politicians amongst the guests.³⁷⁵ In

³⁶⁷ See "Sesto compleanno dell'Italo Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 31.

³⁶⁸ See "Centro Italiano Bocce," *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 31; "Bocce," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31.

³⁶⁹ See "Sottocomitato bocce," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31; "Brisbane: Italo-Australian Centre," *La Fiamma*, 17 June 1976, p. 32.

³⁷⁰ See "Nuova licenza alcolici," *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1976, p. 33.

³⁷¹ See "Varie dal Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1976, p. 33.

³⁷² As above; see also "Brisbane: Clubs and Associazioni," *La Fiamma*, 29 July 1976, p. 32; "Alla Trattoria," *La Fiamma*, 12 August 1976, p. 31; "Cabaret Night per i bambini spastici," *La Fiamma*, 12 August 1976, p. 31.

³⁷³ See "Primo "colpo di piccone" al Centro," *La Fiamma*, 2 September 1976, p. 31.

³⁷⁴ See "Notiziario delle associazioni italiane," *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1976, p. 31.

³⁷⁵ As above; see also "Gran Gala al Centro Italo-Australiano," *La Fiamma*, 15 October 1976, p. 31.

November, they held the final *Trattoria* for 1976; it was a cabaret night during which they showed a short film on the earthquake area in Friuli.³⁷⁶ The work of expanding the centre, entrusted to Graham Evans & Co., effectively began in December. The envisaged cost was \$224,000.³⁷⁷ On Sunday 12 December, the I.A.C. hosted an individual bocce tournament entitled *Coppa Buton* [Buton Cup], with the sponsorship of the Italian company of the same name. A good 60 players participated and the winner was Bruno Sarri, a member of the centre.³⁷⁸ The year at the centre closed with the usual dinner for young and old.³⁷⁹

The centre would have to commence well in 1977 if they were going to be guaranteed of the finances for the works that were currently in process. On Sunday 9 January 1977, a dance barbecue was organised to kick off the new year of activities. From February the traditional *Trattoria* recommenced.³⁸⁰ The members were asked to all renew their subscriptions to the I.A.C. by Saturday 26 February. The elections for the new management committee were fixed for Sunday 27 March.³⁸¹

Also the young people contributed by organising activities to support the centre. On Saturday 6 March, they held a Rock and Roll night organised at the I.A.C. by Messrs. Di Marco. From 13 March, the new opening hours for Sunday became official. The bar remained open from 10 am until 10 pm, the barbecue from 5 pm to 9 pm, while the afternoon dance extended from 5 pm until 10 pm.³⁸² The judging of Miss Italo-Australian Centre was held on Saturday 26 March in the new extended hall, which held a capacity of 600 people.³⁸³ Mrs Jessie Bozzi was the lucky winner of the competition for 1977, while Giovanna Di Marco was Charity Queen. Alitalia awarded a trip to

³⁷⁶ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 November 1976, p. 32.

³⁷⁷ See "Centro Italo-Australiano," *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1976, p. 32.

³⁷⁸ See "Coppa "Buton," *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1976, p. 32; "Coppa Buton," *La Fiamma*, 16 December 1976, p. 31.

³⁷⁹ See "Capodanno al Centro," *La Fiamma*, 9 December 1976, p. 32.

³⁸⁰ See "Notizie brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 January 1977, p. 22.

³⁸¹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 February 1977, p. 11.

³⁸² See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 March 1977, p. 13.

³⁸³ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 March 1977, p. 20.

Italy for both winners.³⁸⁴ John Parrella retained the presidency of the centre in the March 27 meeting. On 3 April, the Coppa Arquilla Imports Company sponsored a bocce competition at the I.A.C. with brothers John and Ben Parella winning.³⁸⁵ On Sunday 8 May, the Premier of Queensland, the honourable J. Bjelke-Petersen, inaugurated the new buildings of the I.A.C. that could now boast:

“[...] an upper hall that could accommodate more than 600 people, with a luxurious bar, a restaurant, an entertainment hall (billiards etc), a meeting place , a meeting hall, offices and finally a large, modern kitchen. In addition, the downstairs hall could hold over 400 people.”³⁸⁶

In addition to all of this there were obviously also the external sporting facilities. Attending the ceremony were: the Italian consul, Dr Felice Maggia, the Mayor of Brisbane, the Italian chaplain, Fr Paolo Barzoli, and the Giuseppe Verdi Choir.³⁸⁷ It took 7 years to complete the second phase of the project for the centre. The I.A.C. could now boast 1,500 members, but the goal was to reach 2,000 before the end of the year. In time, a youth committee was formed to organise activities orientated towards the young.³⁸⁸ On Saturday 14 May, the I.A.C. organised a grand ball to celebrate its 7th anniversary.³⁸⁹ On 22 May, with the aim of promoting sporting activities in the Italian community, Consul Maggia sponsored a women’s bocce tournament at the centre.³⁹⁰

At the beginning of June, the constitution of the Youth Club Committee of the Italo-Australian centre was formalised. Tony Cicchiello was elected as the first president.³⁹¹ In July 1977, The Miss Italo-Australian Centre for 1977 was announced and at this time, as had become by now traditional, the bocce competition sponsored by

³⁸⁴ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 31 March 1977, p. 13.

³⁸⁵ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 1977, 14 April 1977, p. 16.

³⁸⁶ “Il Centro sette anni dopo,” *La Fiamma*, 5 May 1977, p. 11.

³⁸⁷ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 12 May 1977, p. 18.

³⁸⁸ See “Il Centro sette anni dopo,” *La Fiamma*, 5 May 1977, p. 11.

³⁸⁹ See “Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 12 May 1977, p. 18.

³⁹⁰ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 19 May 1977, p. 13.

³⁹¹ See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 9 June 1977, p. 13.

Nanda Macaroni was held.³⁹² The Bocce competition for pairs finished on 9 September with the Cecconi and Buttazzoni pair triumphing. A new billiards competition for pairs called the Leach Motors Cup Double Handicap was introduced on 20 September.³⁹³ On Sunday 4 December, the Youth Club organised a very successful car rally. This was the second time they had organised the rally which left from the Newmarket centre and finished at Hinze Dam on the Gold Coast.³⁹⁴ On 18 December, the *Coppa buton* bocce competition was held with G. Scaini winning the competition.³⁹⁵ On 23 December, the Youth Club organised a dance evening on a ferry along the Brisbane River.³⁹⁶

The good result of their previous initiatives encouraged the Youth Club to organise more activities in 1978. On Friday 27 January they organised a Disco Night at the I.A.C. The public success of these initiatives convinced the organisers to reschedule this event from monthly to fortnightly. The Youth Club also had the idea of putting on a comedy written by Leonardo Panella on the adventures of an Italo-Australian couple on vacation in Italy. It was anticipated that the actors for this comedy would be found amongst young Italians in Brisbane.³⁹⁷ On 10 February they held the final round of the Coppa Leach Motors bocce tournament and the brothers Robert and Ben Parrella were the victors.

The traditional activities of the centre recommenced in March. Each Sunday, for those passionate about dancing, there was dancing and music in the lower hall from 4 until 8 in the evening.³⁹⁸ Every second Tuesday of the month, they held the by now famous *Trattoria*.³⁹⁹ On Sunday 19 March, with the annual general meeting for members and the election of the new management committee, a

³⁹² See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 July 1977, p. 13.

³⁹³ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 15 September 1977, p. 13.

³⁹⁴ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 November 1977, p. 13; "Brisbane: i migliori della classe," *La Fiamma*, 15 December 1977, p. 15.

³⁹⁵ See "Studenti che si fanno onore," *La Fiamma*, 19 December 1977, p. 14.

³⁹⁶ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 November 1977, p. 13; "Brisbane: i migliori della classe" *La Fiamma*, 15 December 1977, p. 15.

³⁹⁷ See "'Youth Club'," *La Fiamma*, 2 February 1978, p. 21.

³⁹⁸ See "Coppa Leach Motors," *La Fiamma*, 15 February 1978, p. 24.

³⁹⁹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 27 February 1978, p. 26.

very successful year for the centre came to a close. The centre could now boast a new hall and covered bocce greens.⁴⁰⁰ The budget for the centre was finalised in December 1977 with a surplus of almost \$60 000. As would be predicted, John Parrella was again elected as president of the I.A.C..⁴⁰¹ The 1978 program of activities revealed that various Italian societies made regular use of the facilities at the I.A.C. during this period: the Dante Alighieri Society, the *Fogolar Furlan*, the Abruzzi Association and the Verdi Choir.⁴⁰² 15 April should have marked the opening of the premiere of *Parole in Libertà* [Free words] put on by the youth of the I.A.C.⁴⁰³ but for reasons not reported by the sources consulted, the debut of the actors was postponed until 23 June. A large audience, gathered in the main hall of the centre, applauded enthusiastically the hilarious show and the performance of the debutante actors.⁴⁰⁴ A simple ceremony was held on Friday 9 June at the I.A.C. to commemorate Dr Francesco Castellano, with the unveiling of a bronze bust by sculptor Giuseppe Ivi. The Verdi Choir honoured the occasion with the execution of some classical pieces.⁴⁰⁵ In the same month, the Italian consulate gave a cheque of \$1,524 as a contribution towards expenses incurred during the year.⁴⁰⁶ On Sunday 18 June, Philip Cacciola was elected president during the annual general meeting of the Youth Club.⁴⁰⁷

In the following months, the centre continued to churn out cultural, social and sporting activities for young and old. Thanks to the enterprise of the Youth Club, a new competition for Miss Italo-Australian Centre Youth Club was initiated, and the first competition was won by Miss Joanne Ercole.⁴⁰⁸ There were also fashion parades⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁰ See "Assemblea generale al Centro Italiano," *La Fiamma*, 2 March 1978, p. 16.

⁴⁰¹ See "John Parrella riconfermato presidente," *La Fiamma*, 6 April 1978, p. 28.

⁴⁰² See "Assemblea generale al Centro Italiano," *La Fiamma*, 2 March 1978, p. 16.

⁴⁰³ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 3 April 1978, p. 24.

⁴⁰⁴ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 22 June 1978, p. 28; "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 29 June 1978, p. 29.

⁴⁰⁵ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 June 1978, p. 23; "Commemorato il dott. Castellano," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1978, p. 31.

⁴⁰⁶ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 June 1978, p. 23.

⁴⁰⁷ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 22 June 1978, p. 28.

⁴⁰⁸ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1978, p. 26.

⁴⁰⁹ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1979, p. 25.

and the old tradition of holding a picnic on Bishop Island was reinstituted.⁴¹⁰ In the following years, the I.A.C. continued to be one of the most important meeting points for the Italian community. The sources consulted, however, rarely reported activities for the years 1980-83 and activities in this period were more linked to the events that the other Italian societies held at the I.A.C.. The year 1984 began with new activities, such as the "Multicultural Evening" organised for 17 February for students originating from different countries with successful presentations of the different cultures of these countries. Fabia Forni animated the session dedicated to the Italian culture.⁴¹¹ In April, the *Carosello dei Buongustai*, [The Gourmets' Carousel], an evening dedicated to fine cuisine was organised. The success of this initiative meant that it became a monthly event.⁴¹² On Saturday 26 August the *Porchetta Night* was held in honour of the Miss Italo-Australian Centre entrant Gloria Lombardi.⁴¹³ Miss Lombardi then went on to win the title of Miss Charity Queen, while the Miss Italo-Australian Centre title went to Miss Robin Murphy.⁴¹⁴ In December 1984, the Coppa Boral bocce competition, sponsored by the company of the same name, was disputed. On Sunday 9 December, the usual children's entertainment was held for the children of the members of the society, with Father Christmas and presents for everyone. This delightful event had been going on for ten years. The members' fee for 1985 was fixed at \$30, with a fee of only \$4 for pensioners.⁴¹⁵

There were few reports on the activities of the I.A.C. after 1985 but it could be supposed that all the major activities continued with regularity. Until the 1990's the Italo-Australian centre represented a privileged meeting place for the Italian societies ... and still continues to be such.

⁴¹⁰ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 November 1979, p. 26.

⁴¹¹ See "L'angolo del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 27 February 1984, p. 23.

⁴¹² See "L'angolo del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 16 April 1984, p. 23; "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22; see also "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

⁴¹³ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

⁴¹⁴ See "Incoronate le reginette 1985 dell'Italo-Australian Centre," *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

⁴¹⁵ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

10. The Juventus

The *Azzurri* were not the only soccer club founded by the Italians in Brisbane. There was also Juventus (alias Valley Soccer Club or Juventus Fortitude Valley or Juventus Valley Soccer Club) that, although they hadn't asserted themselves like their Spencer Park colleagues, were able to reach a respectable level of achievement. According to the sources consulted, the first articles regarding the Italian team in Fortitude Valley appeared in 1970. It was a society which was officially formed in Brisbane with the name and colours of that famous team from Turin. It had a management committee and a shortlist of competitive players. In 1970, Antonio Franchin was the sponsor of the black and white team from the Valley.⁴¹⁶ On 22 February that year, the Juventus society organised a small tournament for teams. The team representing Stanthorpe won the trophy.⁴¹⁷ The 1970 season proved particularly successful for the Valley Soccer Club. On Saturday 17 October, the management committee decided to celebrate with a grand ball at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket. In the presence of Consul Federigo Valli, honorary life member of the society, of Dr Francesco Castellano, all players were awarded the trophies donated by the Air France Company U.T.A. On the following Sunday, the whole Juventus team left to participate in a tournament, this time held in Stanthorpe. It was similar to the one held in the previous February. On 22 November, the management committee organised a fashion parade at the Festival Hall in Brisbane, with the models of Maria Pizzica, followed by a musical spectacular. They also held the judging of the Queen of the evening and Miss Charity Queen.⁴¹⁸

At the end of 1973, the Valley Soccer Club was able to obtain from the Australian federal government, almost twelve acres of land in Murray Street, Wilston, and a grant of \$8,000 for the establishment of sporting facilities to carry out their activities. The plan was to update two of the soccer fields and a gymnastic field and to construct

⁴¹⁶ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 October 1970, p. 20.

⁴¹⁷ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 February 1970, p. 16; "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 October 1970, p. 20.

⁴¹⁸ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 October 1970, p. 20.

dressing rooms for the players.⁴¹⁹ Evidently, the government grant didn't sufficiently cover all of the expenses and in 1974, the management committee began to organise fund-raising activities for the completion of the dressing rooms. It was for this reason that they hosted a grand ball at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm on 15 June 1974.⁴²⁰ In 1976 the Juventus of the Valley played again in the third division, but at the end of the season, thanks to a worthy second place, they got a long-awaited promotion.⁴²¹ The 1977 championship signalled the maturation of the team and their permanence in second division was properly celebrated with a barbecue on Sunday 8 October at their home ground. In the meantime, the work for the construction of the club social centre had begun.⁴²² At the end of 1977, every Thursday night the club began to organise Bingo nights at Bingo Pete's in the Valley. To increase the number of families attending, a special entertainment service was provided for the children.⁴²³

On 9 December 1979, they inaugurated, with a simple but well-attended ceremony, the new social centre, also in Murray Street. The president of the Juventus Valley Soccer Club, Fausto Beninca, gave the authorities that attended the ceremony a tour of the new dressing rooms and showers on the first floor of the building, and the little hall with an annexed bar on the second floor.⁴²⁴ In 1980, the management committee of Juventus continued to fund raise by holding a dance evening every Friday night at the new social centre of the club. The club, which was still in the second division, began training in the last week of January.⁴²⁵ This was the last report on the Juventus Club in the sources consulted.

⁴¹⁹ See "Qualcosa non va tra il Centro and gli altri sodalizi," *Il Globo*, 1 January 1974, p. 22.

⁴²⁰ See "Attività Associazioni italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 10 June 1974, p. 14.

⁴²¹ See "Juventus," *La Fiamma*, 9 September 1976, p. 31.

⁴²² See "Barbecue Juventus," *La Fiamma*, 6 October 1977, p. 13.

⁴²³ See "Juventus," *La Fiamma*, 19 December 1977, p. 14.

⁴²⁴ See "Inaugurazione della sede della Juventus Soccer Club," *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1979, p. 29.

⁴²⁵ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 24 January 1980, p. 22.

11. The *Comitato Assistenza Italiani* (CO.As.It.) [Italian Assistance Committee]

Solidarity was always a distinctive element of the small but tenacious Italian community in Brisbane since its origins. After the Second World War, because there was a massive influx of Italian migrants to Brisbane, there was ample opportunity to demonstrate these virtues. These actions of solidarity, both within and beyond the Italian community, took shape and structure above all thanks to the involvement of the Italian consulate in Brisbane. The sources consulted report articles regarding an assistance fund for Italian immigrants established since 1959. On Saturday 1 October, Carmelo Caruso, in collaboration with a well-know Brisbane seamstress, Maria Guerrera, organised an Italian fashion parade. The event, the first of its kind in Brisbane, was very successful with the public. Dr Loris Balestrieri, regent of the vice consul, also attended. All of the proceeds were donated to the above mentioned assistance fund.⁴²⁶

The Consular Committee of Assistance to Italians (alias the Committee of Consular Assistance or the Italian Committee of Consular Assistance or Italian Committee of Assistance), was established in 1972 with the joining of some notable members from the Italian community. This was the initiative of the Italian consular representation in Brisbane, subsidised almost entirely by funds from the Italian government. In its early years, other than to provide help in emergency cases, the committee began to organise Italian language courses for the children of the immigrants on Saturdays at the *Casa San Francesco*. This was a way of supporting communication between the first and second generation Italians and to maintain links to their distant mother country.⁴²⁷ The committee was also intended to act as a coordinator for all of the Italian associations that were set up in Brisbane in the 1960's. One of the immediately visible results of this mediation work was the collaboration between the various societies for a unified celebration of the anniversary of the Italian

⁴²⁶ See "Sfilata di moda italiana," *La Fiamma*, 30 September 1959, p. 15.

⁴²⁷ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli* (1994), p. 19; "Un consuntivo ed un appello," *La Fiamma*, 23 December 1976, p. 27.

Republic. On 8 June 1974, the committee organised a grand ball at the City Hall Auditorium for all of the Italian community and the different associations.⁴²⁸ Another activity promoted by the committee was the Debutante Ball, a gala ceremony for the presentation to society of the young catholic women in the presence of the archbishop of Brisbane and other local authorities. The first ball scheduled for October 1974, was unable to be held due to the lack of eligible candidates. Everything was then postponed to April of the following year. During these early years, the Committee of Consular Assistance regularly met on a monthly basis.⁴²⁹ In September 1974, the committee was charged with the organisation of the third annual celebration to honour St Francis of Assisi, patron saint of Italy. The solemn mass in honour of the Saint was celebrated for the first time in St Stephen's Cathedral and presided over by Archbishop Francis Robert Rush, in the Italian language. The celebration was enlivened liturgically by the Canossian nuns and by the Verdi Choir. Numerous local authorities and representatives from all of the Italian associations in Brisbane attended.⁴³⁰ On 22 December, the committee organised for the second consecutive year, the "Christmas for Italian children" at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket.⁴³¹ In 1975, the Committee for Consular Assistance, to solve some difficulties linked to the Australian citizenship of many of its voluntary members, decided to become legally (but not financially) autonomous from the Italian consulate in Brisbane. The committee, with the explicit agreement of the Italian consulate, was registered by the name Italian Welfare Committee at the Department of Justice in Queensland and this was how they obtained an autonomous legal identity. There were three primary aims of their activities: to provide direct assistance to the Italian migrants, community representation and liaison between

⁴²⁸ See "Con una grande serata danzante gli italiani di Brisbane celebreranno la festa della Repubblica Italiana," *Il Globo*, 6 May 1974, p. 16.

⁴²⁹ See "Attività delle associazioni Italiane di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 19 August 1974, p. 11.

⁴³⁰ See "La Messa degli Italiani sarà officiata dall'Arcivescovo Rush," *Il Globo*, 26 September 1974, p. 13; "S. Francesco d'Assisi degnamente celebrato dagli italiani di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 7 October 1974, p. 15.

⁴³¹ See "Natale per i bambini italiani di Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 18 November 1974, p. 15.

the Italian community, the consular authorities and the Australian government boards.⁴³² The Italian Welfare Committee organised the Debutante Ball on Saturday 8 March at the Italo-Australian Centre. The event, that attracted over 300 Italians, was coordinated by Mrs Claudette McLeod. The solemn entrance of the 14 debutantes was applauded by Archbishop Rush and by many other authorities. On this occasion, Miss Maurizia Turco, Miss Australia entrant, presented a campaign of solidarity linked to the national beauty contest.⁴³³

The tragic earthquake in Friuli on 6 May 1976 had profoundly shocked the Italian community in Brisbane. The committee immediately launched an appeal to all the Italians in Queensland. On the 12th of the following May, the president, Dr Francesco Castellano, met the committee in a special sitting at the Italian consulate. In addition, all of the directors of all of the Italian associations in Brisbane were invited to this meeting. Other than Dr Castellano and the regent of the Italian consulate, the following people attended the meeting: Vincenzo Palmieri, Antonio Reggi, Marino Regano, Pizzica, Pasquale Antonelli, Alfio Barbi, Filippo Mangano, Micalizzi, Paolo Raffa, Vera Frola and Fr Silvano Dalla Pina, and some representatives from: the Azzurri sporting association; the Italo-Australian Centre, the Italo-Australian Bowling Club, *Fogolar Furlan*, the Verdi Choir, ANFE and the Dante Alighieri Society. The convention ratified the appeal to the whole Italian community. An executive committee was formed for the fund-raising in aid of the earthquake victims and a series of communal events were planned.⁴³⁴ A few days after, the Italian Welfare Committee organised a meeting with some leading Italian businessmen at the Ridge Motel in which they were able to secure \$5,000 to support the earthquake victims.⁴³⁵ On Sunday 6 June 1976, the 13th anniversary of the Italian Republic was celebrated at the Italo-Australian Centre. The organisation was entrusted to the Italian

⁴³² See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli* (1994), p. 19; "Un consuntivo ed un appello," *Il Globo*, 23 December 1976, p. 27.

⁴³³ See "Ballo delle debuttanti," *La Fiamma*, 13 May 1976, p. 30.

⁴³⁴ See "Riunione Straordinaria" del C.I.A., *La Fiamma*, 13 May 1976, p. 31; "La Tragedia del Friuli. Tutti uniti per aiutare," *La Fiamma*, 20 May 1976, p. 31.

⁴³⁵ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 27 May 1976, p. 26.

Welfare Committee. A large number of Italians participated in the event. The solemn open-air Mass was presided over by Fr Claudio Moscatelli, chaplain for the Italian community. After the speeches for the occasion, the new consul, Dr Antonio Felice Maggia, gave the *Croce di guerra al valor militare* [War Cross of Military Valor] to Mr Lo Giudice. The Italian Assistance Committee gave awards to three people who were noted for their service to the Italian community in Brisbane: Claudette McLeod, Giovanni Ettore, and Bruno Cappelletti. Then there were games and entertainment for young and old. All of the proceeds of the event went to the earthquake victims of Friuli.⁴³⁶ On Friday 25 June, the appeal in aid of the Friuli earthquake victims concluded with a ceremony in the upper hall of the Italo-Australian Centre. Dr Castellano, representing the committee, gave the Australian Red Cross, the organisation charged with gathering and sending to Italy all the funds raised in Australia, a cheque for \$42,000.⁴³⁷ On Sunday 12 December, the Italian Welfare Committee, in collaboration with the Italian consulate, organised the traditional Christmas for Italian children at the Imperial Cinema in Lutwyche. They showed cartoons, and gifts were drawn out of a bag for all of the children. Books were also handed out to everyone who attended.⁴³⁸ A few days after the death of its president, the committee published in the Italian newspaper *Il Globo* the 1976 budget, accompanied by a breakdown of expenses that indicated an expenditure of \$5,000 for the assistance to Italian migrants and \$10,000 in expenses for the School of Italian. The Vice President, Giuseppe Rinaudo, clarified that the funds received from the Italian government were just enough to cover the sustained expenditure. They did however express the intention to expand the assistance and cultural programmes in the following year.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁶ See "Festa nazionale italiana," *La Fiamma*, 6 May 1976, p. 27; "Festa nazionale," *La Fiamma*, 3 June 1976, p. 31; "Celebrato il 2 Giugno dal Console di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 10 June 1976, p. 32; see also "A Brisbane è cominciata una tradizione. Premiati 3 italiani," *La Fiamma*, 10 June 1976, p. 33.

⁴³⁷ See "Concluso a Brisbane l'appello pro Friuli. Superati 80.000 dollari," *La Fiamma*, 1 July 1976, p. 32.

⁴³⁸ See "Natale dei bambini," *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1976, p. 32.

⁴³⁹ See "Un consuntivo ed un appello," *La Fiamma*, 23 December 1976, p. 27.

The following year, 1977, proved to be another year of feverish activity for the Italian Welfare Committee. During the meeting on 24 January held at the Italian consulate, Giuseppe Rinaudo was elected president, assisted by the vice president, Vincenzo Palmieri. On Saturday 26 February, the committee organised a grand benefit ball at the Italo-Australian Centre.⁴⁴⁰ On Saturday 29 July 1977, on the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary of the Italian Republic, the Italian Welfare Committee decided to repeat the ceremony for awarding certificates of merit and silver medals to persons or Italian institutions that were distinguished in their service to the Italian community. In 1977, in front of Italian and Australian authorities and over a thousand Italians, the Giuseppe Verdi Choir, Mrs Doris Johnson, pianist for the same choir, Sister Pera Tosoni, of the Canossian nuns, Pasquale Antonelli, ex-president of ANFE and Vincenzo Calice, president of the Brisbane City Soccer Club were decorated with honour.⁴⁴¹

In 1978, thanks to a grant by the Australian Ministry for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the Italian Welfare Committee was finally able to develop its welfare, education and health programs. The Italian School was opened to children from non-Italian backgrounds.⁴⁴² On 27 March 1978, on Easter Monday, the committee organised a barbecue for all Italians at New Farm Park. It was the first time that the acronym *Co.As.It.* referring to the Italian Welfare Committee appeared in the sources consulted.⁴⁴³ At the beginning of April, representatives from *Co.As.It.*, together with the Verdi Choir, visited the sick at the Cannossian hospital in Oxley.⁴⁴⁴ In 1979 the committees' programmes continued successfully. Professor Leonardo Panella, didactic director of the *Co.As.It.* Italian courses returned to Italy and was substituted by Dr Adriana Jacobelli. Under the guidance of this new didactic director, the lessons were held regularly and a

⁴⁴⁰ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 February 1977, p. 22.

⁴⁴¹ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 2 June 1977, p. 13; "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 June 1977, p. 13.

⁴⁴² See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli* (1994), p. 19.

⁴⁴³ See "Barbecue Co.As.It.," *La Fiamma*, 15 March 1978, p. 24.

⁴⁴⁴ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 3 April 1978, p. 24.

training course for the Italian teachers was held in November 1979. On Saturday 24 November, Dr Jacobelli organised the traditional end of course show at the Italo-Australian Centre for the *Co.As.It.* Italian students. In the presence of the Italian consul, Dr Mario Sganga, the students performed dialogues, choral songs and delightful little skits.⁴⁴⁵ On Sunday 16 December, the committee organised a barbecue at the Brisbane City Soccer Club. The proceeds of this initiative went to the special school at Tennyson in Brisbane. This was the only school in Queensland, at this time, for children with psychological disturbances.⁴⁴⁶

The sources consulted did not report much information on *Co.As.It.* throughout the decade of the 1980's. At the beginning of February 1980, the lessons for the Italian language courses run by *Co.As.It.* began. They were held, as in 1979, at St Patrick's College in the Valley on Saturday mornings from 9 until 11.⁴⁴⁷ In 1981, the Australian federal government, convinced of the valid contribution of the ethnic school to a better multicultural society, began to directly subsidise their programmes. The scholastic programmes of *Co.As.It.* were greatly benefited by the new Australian educational policy. In the same period the welfare activities of the committee concentrated on the problem of isolation for many Italian migrants that did not know how to respond positively to the integrative demands of a multicultural society.⁴⁴⁸ In 1981, *Co.As.It.*, presided over at this time by Carmelo Caruso, presented to the Australian federal government a project outlined by social assistant Fiorenza Jones entitled "Outreach Family Support Service." A Toyota Hiace Minibus was purchased with the government grant that they received. To serve the aims of the project, it was utilised as a mobile assistance unit to Italian women and children who, for various reasons, did not attend the official assistance centres. It was equipped with didactic and audiovisual

⁴⁴⁵ See "Notiziario di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 11 October 1979, p. 30; "Corso aggiornamento insegnanti," *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1979, p. 28; see also "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 29 November 1979, p. 26.

⁴⁴⁶ See "Barbecue," *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1979, p. 29, "Saggio scolastico degli alunni di italiano," *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1979, p. 28.

⁴⁴⁷ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 28 February 1980, p. 42.

⁴⁴⁸ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli* (1994), p. 19.

material for children of pre-school age and for this reason it was affectionately called the “Pre-school on four wheels.” The implementation phase of the project was successfully managed by Fiorenza Jones, Nella Alba and Lisa Darveniza.⁴⁴⁹

The lack of reporting on *Co.As.It.* activities for the rest of this decade was in some way compensated for by a detailed report on the *Co.As.It.* activities in 1994. These activities, in fact, resulted from the efforts of the committee during the preceding years. In 1994, the *Co.As.It.* programme of social assistance was divided into four sections: community development; family support; services for children and assistance to the elderly. The services offered by the committee in these fields were partly social and partly paramedical and ranged from domestic assistance to assistance at a day centre. Their activities also ranged from providing transport and interpreters to giving information to the Italian community and organising recreational activities. The educational programmes were centred around teaching the Italian language. The fact that there were 11 000 students, 44 teachers, and regular courses were held in 60 schools by itself illustrates the workload of the Brisbane committee in this field. In addition, *Co.As.It.* organised annual courses for the training of their teachers and extracurricular activities for students (concerts, competitions etc.).

Co.As.It. still continues its precious work to support the sectors of the Italian community that are most in need, particularly the elderly.

⁴⁴⁹ See “Asilo pre-scuola su quattro ruote per il Comitato Consolare di Assistenza,” *Il Globo*, 19 January 1981, p. 23.

12. The *Casa Italia* [Italy House]

The story of Italy House is intimately linked to the procession of St Joseph, a very popular religious event amongst Italian immigrants in the world. Its origins, however, are intertwined, almost one and the same, with another existing association in Brisbane, the Italian Social Club at New Farm. This seemed, according to the documents consulted, to be more a community centre than an ethnic association. There were reports from 1976, the year in which the club obtained the use of St Micheal's Hall in Balfour Street, New Farm. The Hall, used for social functions and entertainment, was open to the public every Sunday from 1pm. until 9.30pm. Some of the activities organised by the club had a broader scope in that there was a tendency to involve all of the Italian community. This was the case for the variety show held at the Brisbane City Hall on Saturday 4 September 1976, which included some Italian singers and musicians resident in Australia. The Italian Social Club was also predominantly responsible for organising in Brisbane the Feast of St Joseph.⁴⁵⁰

The idea to celebrate the feast of St Joseph with a solemn procession along the streets of Brisbane was that of Samuel Tornatore, who, recalling the sumptuous celebrations in his distant homeland, wanted to give greater emphasis to the commemoration of the Saint. In January 1976, a small group of volunteers formed the first St Joseph Festival Committee. This committee, along with Mr Tornatore, included the following names: Franco Zullo, Giuseppe Raiti, Santo Raiti, Giuseppe Cosentino and Mimma Furlan.⁴⁵¹ Also, although not specified in the sources consulted, it could probably be deduced that the above cited activities were aimed at raising funds for the feast. At the beginning of 1977, everything was ready for the first big celebration of St Joseph. A tribute to the commendable efforts of the committee, Samuel Tornatore, president of the Italian Social Club, was able to invite all of the Italian community to the 'grand feast in honour of St Joseph' set down for Sunday 20 March 1977. The program of festivities included a Holy Mass at St Patrick's Church in Fortitude Valley; a procession at 2p.m. that ended at New Farm Park,

⁴⁵⁰ See "Brisbane Italian Social Club," *La Fiamma*, 29 July 1976, p. 32.

⁴⁵¹ See *Saint Joseph Festival Committee 1980* [1980], p. 6.

the solemn blessing and then games, entertainment, sport, music, dance and fire works. The feast received unexpected success with over 6000 people participating in the festivities.⁴⁵²

In the days following the feast, the committee began immediately to plan the celebration for 1978. The *Gruppo della Fratellanza* [The Brotherhood Group] was founded to assist with more evenly distributing organisational responsibilities. This group was entrusted with the organisation of the religious side of the event. Filippo Mangano was elected as ‘governor’ or person responsible for this brotherhood. There was the need also for a better statue of St Joseph and this delicate charge was entrusted to Vincenzo Di Marco. The statue was blessed by Fr J.Hynes towards the end of 1977 at St Patrick’s Church. Some Sicilian nuns were given the responsibility of preparing the committee’s official banner.⁴⁵³ The second Feast of St Joseph was held on Sunday 19 March. The celebrations began with a Holy Mass celebrated by Fr Claudio Moscatelli, Italian chaplain at St Patrick’s Church. The Verdi Choir enhanced the liturgical songs. A procession to New Farm Park, adorned with all of the colours and flavours of a *paesano* feast, then followed. After the solemn blessing, there were the official speeches by various participating authorities: The Mayor of Brisbane, Frank L. Sleeman; the Italian consul in Brisbane; Dr Felice Maggia, the committee patron; Dr Giuseppe Rinaudo; and the president Samuel Tornatore. Games and entertainment for all followed, including the crowning of the Queen of the Feast of St Joseph, Miss Carolina Esposito. Towards six in the afternoon, the playful activities ceased momentarily to allow for a few words from the Australian Minister for Immigration, Michael MacKellar, who came from Canberra to demonstrate federal government support for this event.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵² See “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 17 February 1977, p. 11; *Saint Joseph Festival Committee 1980* [1980], p. 6; see also “Notizie da Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 17 March 1977, p. 20.

⁴⁵³ See *Saint Joseph Festival Committee 1980* [1980], pp. 7-8.

⁴⁵⁴ As above, pp. 9-12; see also “Brisbane: il programma della festa di San Giuseppe,” *La Fiamma*, 9 March 1978, p. 23; “Festa di S. Giuseppe. Folclore italiano,” *La Fiamma*, 6 April 1978, p. 28.

Still 'fresh' from the celebration of the feast, on 25 March the untiring St Joseph Festival Committee organised the "Ball of the Easter Lamb" at the Buffalo Hall in the Valley.⁴⁵⁵ On 20 May 1978, the committee organised, thanks to the help of the women from Catholic Action, the Mother's Day Ball which was held at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm.⁴⁵⁶ On 23 May, the Committee for the Feast of St Joseph received, as a gift from the Queensland parliament, the Australian flag. Later on, the Brisbane Italian consulate also donated the Italian flag to the committee. On 13 July 1978, the general meeting of the committee members was held. On this occasion they officially presented and approved the statutes of the St Joseph Festival Committee.⁴⁵⁷ The committee decided to construct a new stretcher for the statue of the saint before the next celebration in 1979. It took 10 months and \$3,000 to bring this project to its completion. The Ferranti Studio kept a photograph album of the events of 1977 and 1978, that was placed in the custody of the lawyer Rinaudo.⁴⁵⁸ The ceremony of handing over the album was held during a ball organised by the committee on 22 July at the Holy Spirit Hall.⁴⁵⁹ In the meantime, a youth section of the Committee for the feast of St Joseph was born, called the St Joseph Youth Club. In order to contribute to the fund-raising effort, it organised a disco on 4 August 1978 at the Polish Club in Milton.⁴⁶⁰

There were a record number of people at the Feast of St Joseph in March 1979 with 15,000 attending, superceding the more than 10,000 in the previous year.⁴⁶¹ It could be deduced from the invoice of expenses of the committee for 1979 that 50% of this total was reserved for activities that were not directly linked to the Feast of St Joseph. This money was used, however, to assist the immigrants and their families to set up a musical band and musical instrument lessons for their children. Moreover, it could also be deduced that the

⁴⁵⁵ See "Ballo," *La Fiamma*, 9 March 1978, p. 23.

⁴⁵⁶ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 20 April 1978, p. 29.

⁴⁵⁷ See Saint Joseph Festival Committee, *Constitutions*, Brisbane 1983.

⁴⁵⁸ See *Saint Joseph Festival Committee 1980* [1980], pp. 14-16.

⁴⁵⁹ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1978, p. 29.

⁴⁶⁰ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 3 August 1978, p. 30.

⁴⁶¹ See *Saint Joseph Festival Committee 1980* [1980], pp. 17-18.

committee had changed its address as the letterhead on the invoices in fact indicated that the St Joseph Festival Committee resided at 539 Brunswick Street, New Farm.⁴⁶² The obvious success of the event convinced the committee to increase it to a two-day celebration. In 1980, the celebrations were held on Saturday 22 March and Sunday 23 March. The Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr Romano Franchini and the associated procession with the statue of St Joseph, as usual the core of the feast, occurred on Sunday morning.⁴⁶³ The celebration of the Feast of St Joseph was celebrated every year throughout the 1980's. In 1981 and in 1983 there were some minor changes to the statutes of the association.⁴⁶⁴ Unfortunately the sources consulted did not provide much information regarding other activities by the committee. In the course of these years, the St Joseph Festival Committee changed its name to Italy House Community Centre (often abbreviated to Italy House), but the changes were not registered within the statutes until 10 June 1985, during the annual general meeting of the association.⁴⁶⁵ In the same period, the social centre was transferred to 26 Gray Street, New Farm. In April 1984, Italy House organised a bocce tournament, sponsored by the Air India Company and also a *tressette* card tournament. The association centre, which functioned as a social meeting place, was open to the public everyday from Tuesday to Saturday from 6pm onwards and Sunday from 1pm onwards.⁴⁶⁶ A public notice on *Il Globo* in August 1984 also included the name "New Farm Community Centre," alongside Italy House, giving the impression that the two were conjoint associations.⁴⁶⁷ It could be supposed that the first was a development of the Italian Social Club and that the second was a modification of the Committee for the Feast of St Joseph. The fact remains that the two existing associations coincided at least until 1985.

⁴⁶² See Saint Joseph Festival Committee, *Preventivo Spese 1979*, 25 September 1978, Casa Italia's Archive.

⁴⁶³ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 February 1980, p. 22.

⁴⁶⁴ See Saint Joseph Festival Committee (1983).

⁴⁶⁵ As above. On the cover of the document consulted by this author, there is a typescript note which confirms this.

⁴⁶⁶ See "L'angolo del Queensland," *Il Globo*, 16 April 1984, p. 23.

⁴⁶⁷ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

Probably due to some substantial changes in the management of the two associations, in the years 1986-1987 there was a clear split between Italy House Community Centre and New Farm Community Centre. This fracture resulted in a series of misunderstandings, disputes and complaints that hindered the activities of both associations.⁴⁶⁸ In 1986, the Feast of St Joseph was in its tenth year. From the programme one could deduce that Saturday 22 March and Sunday afternoon on 23 March were dedicated to an Ethnic Festival organised in conjunction with the Sicilian Association. The use of the English language and the number of shows clearly indicated that this event in New Farm Park was progressively transforming into a multicultural event. The religious activity, normally held on the Sunday morning, was not included in the official programme. This could indicate that the religious celebrations were the responsibility of someone else.⁴⁶⁹ It was different for the 1987 festival, which included on the programme, the Holy Mass and the traditional late morning procession on the programme.⁴⁷⁰

The final notices for the period dealt with, refer to the year 1988. From June until October that year, Italy House, under the presidency of Sam Olivieri, was like all of the other Italian associations occupied with the preparations for the official visit by the president of the Italian Republic, Francesco Cossiga, for the World Expo in Brisbane. The interviews conducted indicate that the activities of the association continued regularly throughout the following years.

⁴⁶⁸ See Miscellaneous documents at *Casa Italia*'s Archive.

⁴⁶⁹ See *Saint Joseph Festival - Italian Festival 1986*, Casa Italia's Archive.

⁴⁷⁰ See *The 11th Saint Joseph Festival*, Casa Italia's Archive.

13. The *Associazione Abruzzo* [Abruzzo Association]

The sources consulted indicate that since 1966 there was a special occasion which gathered together all of the immigrants in Brisbane who originated from Ripa Teatina in the Abruzzi region. This was the commemoration of the *Madonna del Sudore* [Sweating Madonna], a religious feast with secular roots. At Ripa Teatina, in the province of Chieti, on 22 March 1728, a pious woman noticed that the picture of the *Madonna dell'Alento*, painted by Antonio Solaro (the Gypsy), was sweating blood. The miracle was confirmed by the big crowd that arrived full of curiosity. The popular devotion created after this prodigious event changed the name of the picture to *Madonna del Sudore*. They dedicated two feasts to her: one on 22 March, the date the miracle was discovered, the other on the fourth Sunday of September, to celebrate the transfer of the picture from the church of *Santa Maria dell'Alento* to the town. The festivities in Brisbane, reported by the sources in 1966 were linked to the latter date. On 24 and 25 September, the devoted Abruzzesi organised a series of religious events at the crypt of the new cathedral under construction in Fortitude Valley. The religious events were followed by a social event at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm.⁴⁷¹

L'*Associazione Abruzzo* (alias *Associazione Abruzzese* o *Abruzzo Club*) in Brisbane was formed at the beginning of 1978. The society proposed to unite all of the children of the abruzzese region that now lived in Brisbane. The first committee was composed of Luigi D'Onofrio, president, Nick Pizzica, vice president, Romano Masci, treasurer and Nick Mancinelli, secretary. The association welcomed the tradition of the *Madonna del Sudore*, that was more than ten centuries old and took responsibility for its organisation. In March 1978, two events were programmed that were linked to the date of the miracle. The first, more of a social nature, was an evening dance with porchetta cooked in a traditional Abruzzese mode on Saturday 25 March at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket. The second, more religious in nature, was a solemn Mass, on Tuesday 28 March at the

⁴⁷¹ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1966, p. 16.

church of St Thomas More in Petrie Terrace.⁴⁷² After a few months, the *Associazione Abruzzo* was occupied with the organisation of another religious feast originating from the region of Abruzzi. This was the commemoration of San Pantaleone, a 4th century martyr and patron of Miglianico, in the province of Chieti. On 27 July 1978, a solemn Mass was celebrated in honour of the saint in the church of St Thomas More. On 29 July that year, they held a dance evening with *porchetta* at the Italo-Australian Centre, around 500 people crowded into the central hall. On 23 September, the association organized a ball at the elegant Eastern Suburbs Rugby League Club.⁴⁷³

On Saturday 26 May 1979, the association celebrated its 1st anniversary with a grand ball at the Colussus Hall in West End.⁴⁷⁴ In the same hall, on 8 September the *Associazione Abruzzo* organised the *Ballo delle Quattro Province* [Ball of the Four Provinces]. Over 250 people gathered for the occasion; amongst the authorities present was the Italian consul, Mario Sganga, motivated by the desire to get to know better the Abruzzese in Brisbane.⁴⁷⁵ On 31 October 1979, the *Associazione Abruzzo* held their annual general meeting and election of the new committee. Nearly all of the previous committee were voted in again.⁴⁷⁶ On Saturday 17 November, the committee organised a dance evening at the Colussus Hall. The number of Abruzzese families exceeded expectations and they had to make up some tables at the last minute for the late arrivals. The president of the association, D'Onofrio did not attend the event because he had a meeting with another Abruzzi society based in Melbourne. In this meeting they discussed various collaborative initiatives between the two associations.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷² See "Ass. Abruzzo," *La Fiamma*, 2 March 1978, p. 16; "Costituita a Brisbane l'Associazione Abruzzese," *La Fiamma*, 15 March 1978, p. 24.

⁴⁷³ See "Ass. Abruzzo," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1978, p. 31, "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 13 July 1978, p. 29; "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 3 August 1978, p. 30.

⁴⁷⁴ See "Anniversario dell'Abruzzo Club," *Il Globo*, 4 June 1979, p. 29.

⁴⁷⁵ See "Associazione Abruzzo," *La Fiamma*, 6 September 1979, p. 30; "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1979, p. 30.

⁴⁷⁶ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 November 1979, p. 26; "Notiziario da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1979, p. 26.

⁴⁷⁷ See "Cronache locali," *La Fiamma*, 22 November 1979, p. 26; "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 29 November 1979, p. 26.

In the 1980's, the information on the *Associazione Abruzzo* in the sources consulted was scarcer. As the first event of the year, on 9 February 1980, the association organised a dance evening in familiar style at the Colussus Hall.⁴⁷⁸ In May 1981 Monsignor Di Donato, priest from Scaffa, a town in the province of Pescara, came to Brisbane to visit his parishioners that had emigrated to Australia. All of the community from the Abruzzi gathered on Sunday 10 May for a lunch in honour of the prelate at the *Casa d'Abruzzo* [Abruzzi House].⁴⁷⁹ On 1 September 1984, the *Associazione Abruzzo* organised the *Ballo delle Quattro Province* at the Valley Leagues Club in Albion.⁴⁸⁰

On Tuesday 11 December, at the Gondola Reception Lounge, the association celebrated their annual general meeting with the election of the new management committee for 1985.⁴⁸¹ The outgoing president was Camillo Masci.⁴⁸² Although not confirmed by the sources consulted, the interviews gathered indicate that the *Associazione Abruzzo* continued to organise activities and social and religious events throughout the following years.

⁴⁷⁸ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 January 1980, p. 21; "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 February 1980, p. 22.

⁴⁷⁹ See "Mons. Di Donato alla Casa d'Abruzzo," *Il Globo*, 18 May 1981, p. 27.

⁴⁸⁰ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

⁴⁸¹ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

⁴⁸² See *Italian Associations in Brisbane*, 25th October 1984, Casa Italia's Archive.

14. The *Associazione Trevisani nel Mondo* [Association of Trevisani in the World]

From the 1960's, the trevisani immigrants living in Brisbane usually met at the *Tavernetta* in Aspley, managed by the Ceccato family. Every now and then they organised a dinner, ball or large barbecue, all for social purposes. This was how they continued throughout the 1970's. The idea to found their own association was that of Armando Nasato, an immigrant from Paese. In reply to a challenge by his work colleagues, Mr Nasato wanted to demonstrate how simple it would be to gather the Trevisani into an association. Having knowledge of an association that already existed in Melbourne, Armando Nasato asked and obtained from Fr Giuliano Cavarzan, a priest from Treviso working in Melbourne, all the information required to commence operations. After having secured the necessary funds through a brief awareness campaign amongst friends and *paesani*, Mr Nasato called the first general meeting of the society in 1982. The first president of the newborn branch of the *Associazione Trevisani nel Mondo* was Gianni Colussa. The association was based at the Italo-Australian Centre in Newmarket.⁴⁸³

Throughout the 1980's, the activities of the association were predominantly of a social nature: large barbecues, dinners, balls, *briscola*, *scopa* and *tressette* tournaments and bus tours. The *Festa dei Folpi* [Feast of the Octopus] had become in a short time an event not to be missed, offering polenta and quail *alla trevisana* and good music for all. The contact with the *Tavernetta* in Aspley was never lost. On Saturday 8 September 1984, the association organised a *Gran Veglione di Primavera* [Grand Spring Party] at the Italo-Australian Bowling Club.⁴⁸⁴ In 1985, the presidency passed from Gianni Colussa⁴⁸⁵ to Armando Nasato, who would direct the Association until 1992. The solidarity with the Italian immigrants in Brisbane was always a committee priority even through various leadership changes.

⁴⁸³ See *Trevisani nel Mondo, Sez. di Brisbane*, in *Il Terzo Convegno Nazionale Trevisani nel Mondo d'Australia*, Melbourne 1994, p. 6; *Veneti d'Australia*, ed. Luciano Segafreddo, Longo Editore, Ravenna 2005, p. 174.

⁴⁸⁴ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

⁴⁸⁵ See *Italian Associations in Brisbane, 25th October 1984*, Casa Italia's Archive.

At the end of the 1990's there were more than 120 members. The *Associazione Trevisani nel Mondo* continues until this day to carry out its wonderful work amongst the immigrants of Brisbane.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁶ See *Trevisani nel Mondo, Sez. di Brisbane* (1994), p. 6; *Brisbane 2002. VI Convegno Nazionale Trevisani del Mondo D'Australia*, Brisbane 2002, p. 15.

15. Other Associations

From 1945 to 1990, many other Italian associations operated in the metropolis of Brisbane. The sources consulted report fragmentary information on some of the associations and a mere mention of others. In his article, Cesare Marletta referred to an Italian Club (Alias Italian Community Association) that would be inaugurated at the *Casa San Francesco* on 10 May 1955. The club would be ‘baptised’ by the vice consul, Massimo Castaldo.⁴⁸⁷

From the end of the 1950’s, there was a clear indication of the existence of an Italo-Australian Club (alias Club Italo-Australiano), situated in Hope Street, South Brisbane. In April 1957, the election of the new management committee resulted in Bruno Cappelletti, president, Giuseppe Della Bianca, secretary, and Vittorio Morella, treasurer. The financial management in 1956 held a budget deficit that the new committee intended to rectify with a series of fund-raising activities for the society.⁴⁸⁸ In March 1985, the club changed management which now included: B. Cappelletti as president, A. Dell’Otto as vice president and H.Fritz as treasurer, V.H. Corazzol as secretary and Mr F. Cattaneo and O.Mazzaracca as committee members.⁴⁸⁹ On Saturday 2 August, the Italo-Australian Club held a ball at the Buranda Hall.⁴⁹⁰

In the 1970’s, the assistance to the Italian community in Brisbane included an organisation that had a ‘woman’s touch’; the Women’s Help Association. On 8 October 1974, the association organised an evening cabaret at the Italo-Australian Centre.⁴⁹¹ In December 1976, it was cited as one of the Italian societies present at Dr Castellano’s funeral.⁴⁹²

In 1974, a local branch of the dell’*Associazione Nazionale Alpini* (A.N.A.) [National Alpini Association] was established in Brisbane.

⁴⁸⁷ See M. Cesare, “Come eravamo ...,” *Presenza* 1 (1994), p. 13.

⁴⁸⁸ See “Sette Giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 2 May 1957, p. 8.

⁴⁸⁹ See “Sette Giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 14 March 1958, p. 13.

⁴⁹⁰ See “Sette Giorni nel Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 1 August 1958, p. 12.

⁴⁹¹ See “Associazione Femminile Assistenziale,” *Il Globo*, 26 September 1974, p. 13.

⁴⁹² See “L’estremo omaggio della comunità italiana al Dr Castellano,” *La Fiamma*, 16 December 1976, p. 31

The sources consulted repeatedly mention this association but do not provide much information about it. It seems that the actions of the society were predominantly linked to the celebration of the feast of 4 November. The president in 1984 was Mr Claudio Bidoli.⁴⁹³

At the beginning of 1977, the *Campania social club* was established and Mr Enea Sciarretta was the first president. The first activity of the club was a barbecue *alla napoletana* [Neapolitan style], held in March of that year.⁴⁹⁴ The following June the society sponsored a show by a folkloristic group from Campania that performed for the anniversary of the Italian Republic. According to the sources consulted, the club folded in the same month.⁴⁹⁵

The articles report the existence of an *Associazione Siciliana* [Sicilian Association] (alias *Associazione Sicilia* or Sicilian Association), whose activities were somewhat linked to those of Italy House. The society was often cited as supporters in the organisation of the folklore festival that followed St Joseph's procession. In 1984, the president was Giuseppe Castellana.⁴⁹⁶

A list of Italian Associations in Brisbane, dated 25 October 1984, and kept at the Archives of Italy House, declared the existence of the following Italian associations: the *Associazione Carabinieri in Congedo* [Retired Carabinieri Association], whose president was E. Furlan; the Brisbane branch of the *Associazione Fiumani nel Mondo* [Association of Fiumani in the World], whose president was G. Ferlan; and the Brisbane branch of the *Associazione Marinai d'Italia* [Italian Sailors Association], under the responsibility of Nunzio Giuseppe De Vincentis and Walter Maieroni.⁴⁹⁷ On 23 November 1988, the *Associazione Carabinieri in Congedo* organised the *Ballo della Benemerita* [a ball to celebrate the Carabinieri Army Corp].⁴⁹⁸

In 1984, the *Associazione Ostigliesi* (alias *Associazione Emigrati Ostigliesi* [Association for the Ostigliesi Emigrants]) already existed.

⁴⁹³ See *Italian Associations in Brisbane, 25th October 1984*.

⁴⁹⁴ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 10 March 1977, p. 20.

⁴⁹⁵ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 June 1977, p. 13; *Queensland, La Fiamma*, 30 June 1977, p. 13.

⁴⁹⁶ See *Italian Associations in Brisbane, 25th October 1984*.

⁴⁹⁷ As above.

⁴⁹⁸ See "Gran ballo della Benemerita," *La Fiamma*, 24 November 1988, p. 36.

On Sunday 9 September 1984, the president, Antonio Mazza, called all of the society members together for a meeting that concluded with a lunch.⁴⁹⁹

The Queensland branch of the dell'Associazione Nazionale delle Donne Italo Australiane [National Association of Italo-Australian Women] (alias *National Italiana Australian Women's Association Inc.*) was established on 25 February 1987. The initiative was started by some Italian women in Brisbane that had attended the first conference held by the association, that took place in Sydney and was entitled "We Italo-Australian Women." This was followed by a second conference, organised in Brisbane on 16 November 1986, with the title "Who am I?" The society was principally dedicated to the organisation of annual conferences, tours and other social and recreational activities.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁹ See "Calendario Sociale," *Il Globo*, 20 August 1984, p. 22.

⁵⁰⁰ See F. Jones, "Associazione Nazionale delle donne Italo Australiane - Sezione del Queensland," *Presenza* (1994) 1, p. 7.

CHAPTER FOUR

Religious Assistance to the Italian Community

1. The local Church

At least from 1942, according to the sources kept in the archives of the Brisbane Catholic Archdiocese, Mons. James Duhig was personally interested in a number of cases of Italian immigrants imprisoned in South Australia, responding to appeals from their families. The prelate always acted prudently as the political environment at that time was not favourable to the immigrants. Requests for the assistance of the Archbishop from the families of the detained Italian immigrants notably increased during 1943. Initially Mons. Duhig was requested to deal with the Australian authorities on behalf of the families in specific cases, but later on the requests were predominantly for financial support.¹ During these years, Mons. Duhig was also attentive to the spiritual needs of the Italian prisoners of war, personally going to offer comfort to detainees at Gaythorne, near Brisbane. One of those that were assisted was Doctor Manlio Cariglia, official medical officer, who some years later remembered the Archbishop's work:

“My deepest thanks for everything that you have done to heal the spiritual suffering of the prisoners. A colleague that came after me had the honour of knowing you and told me how you are continuing your good work with the prisoners [...] ... Only you have consoled us prisoners with your spiritual help

¹ See letters and miscellanea in AAB, Box Italians III, Folder 1942 and Folder 1943.

and have uplifted our spirits because we have known in you a superior spirit, full of goodness [...].”²

In the days after the Italian surrender and on the threshold of his priesthood jubilee, Mons. Duhig set to work immediately with the aim of renewing the influx of immigrants from Italy. In the following years, as before the war, the Archbishop assisted parish priests and relatives in Italy to find missing Italians, recommending immigrants for jobs, and financially helping those in most need.³

In 1945, Mons. Duhig decided to entrust the pastoral care of Italian immigrants residing in his diocese to the Capuchin missionaries who, from 1949, worked alongside the Canossian nuns. The Archbishop continued, however, to follow with great interest the developments of the pastoral works by the Italian missionaries, and personally participated in the main celebrations of the Italian community. In November 1955, on the Episcopal jubilee of Mons. Duhig, the Brisbane Italian community tangibly expressed their gratitude to the prelate. An appeal was launched through *La Fiamma* asking for a contribution from all Italians in Queensland to a fund established by the Archbishop for the construction of two Catholic university colleges. Mons. Duhig’s Episcopal Jubilee was celebrated with great solemnity from 13 to 28 November 1955. Thirty bishops attended, amongst whom was the apostolic delegate, Romolo Carboni. The Italian tribute to the work of the Archbishop exceeded 10,000 pounds sterling.⁴ The jubilee celebrations for Mons. Duhig continued in 1956. On the morning of 17 June in 1956, the Italian community invited the Archbishop to preside over a mass at the crypt (Holy Name) of the new cathedral under construction in Fortitude Valley.⁵

² M. Cariglia, *Letter to Mons. James Duhig of 12 February 1947*, AAB, Box Italians III, Folder 1947.

³ See letters and miscellanea in AAB, Box Italians III, Folder 1944, Folder 1945, Folder 1946, Folder 1947, Folder 1948 and Folder 1949

⁴ See “La voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 28 October 1955, p. 9; “La voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 18 November 1955, p. 9; see also “La voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 25 November 1955, p. 9; and “La Voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 2 December 1955, p. 9.

⁵ For further information on the Holy Name crypt see J. Rinaudo, “The Crypt,” *Presenza 2* (1995), pp. 2-3.

In the afternoon of that same day, Mons. Duhig attended a reception in his honour at the *Casa San Francesco*. On this occasion, in the presence of many Italians, the prelate was given a splendid gold-encrusted pectoral cross, as a sign of profound gratitude from the Italian community.⁶ Despite his venerable age and related ailments, Mons. Duhig remained close to the Italian community until his death on 10 April 1965.

Following the example of their bishop, numerous diocesan priests in Brisbane did not show a lack of pastoral awareness with regards to the Italian community in the capital of Queensland. Some of them had studied in Italy and were able to express themselves well in Italian. At the beginning of August 1966, Fr Espinoll, priest of the Holy Spirit parish at New Farm, to more adequately cater for the needs of the Catholic community in his care, commenced a regular Sunday Holy Mass in Italian at 10 am in the parish church.⁷ The new Archbishop, Mons. Patrick O'Donnell, supported the initiative. In fact, as auxiliary Archbishop, he had already demonstrated the tendency to be very attentive to the needs of the ethnic communities in Brisbane. It was his decision in 1969 to consign the St Thomas More parish to the Capuchin missionaries with the aim of improving the pastoral care to the Italians. Mons. O'Donnell, already old when elected, retired due to age at the beginning of 1973.

In the same year, Mons. Francis Robert Rush took over the archdiocese. The prelate showed immediate knowledge of the ethnic composition of the archdiocesan community and worked to sustain their religious expressions, proposing opportunities to meet and for community celebrations. During these years the Holy Spirit parish in New Farm, with its beautiful hall, progressively became one of the preferred centres for the activities of the various Italian associations. The various priests were always close to the Italian community in general. As a sign of their gratitude, in July 1976, the Italian community gave father John Nee, priest of the Holy Spirit parish, a

⁶ See "Presentation of Magnificent Gold Cross and Chain to Commemorate Episcopal Golden Jubilee," *The Catholic Leader*, 21 June 1956, p 1.

⁷ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 9 August 1966, p. 16.

trip to Italy, after he had decided to study Italian at the University in Perugia.⁸

In the days following the arrival of the Scalabrinian missionaries and the departure of the Capuchin missionaries, Mons. Rush continued to provide for the spiritual needs of the Italian community also through his diocesan priests. At the beginning of 1982, Fr James Spence, recent arrival from Rome where he had completed his theological studies, was assigned to the St Thomas chapel to continue the work begun by the Franciscans. Fr Spence immediately recommenced the Sunday Mass in Italian.⁹ The chapel continued to have its *Comitato Cattolico Italiano* [Italian Catholic Committee], founded by the Capuchin missionaries some time before. This committee was responsible for the organisation of religious celebrations important to the Italian community. In December 1984, the committee met to elect a new management. On this occasion, the outgoing president, Villiano Cavallo, gave the role to Carmelo Giampaolo.¹⁰ On Sunday 14 June 1987, the *Comitato Cattolico Italiano* organised the annual feast of St Anthony of Padua at the St Thomas More Church. As it did during the previous years, this religious event attracted many Italians from all different suburbs of Brisbane. The *Polifonica Perosi* [Perosi Polyphonic Choir], directed by Carmelo Giampaolo, animated the liturgical songs.¹¹

⁸ See “Viaggio ‘premio’ al prete degli italiani,” *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1976, p. 32.

⁹ See “Italian Mass to resume in city,” *The Leader*, 1 February 1982, p. 4.

¹⁰ See “Nuovo Comitato,” *Il Globo*, 3 December 1984, p. 23.

¹¹ See “Solennemente celebrata in letizia la festa di S. Antonio da Padova,” *Il Globo*, 22 June 1987, p. 22.

2. The Capuchin Missionaries (OFM Cap.)

In the immediate post-war period, Mons. Giovanni Panico, apostolic delegate to Australia, busy with the spiritual assistance of many Italian immigrants both old and new, decided to ask the Order of Capuchin Friar Minors to send some Italo-American missionaries to take care of the Italian community in some of the large Australian cities. Mons. James Duhig immediately expressed his willingness to welcome the Franciscan missionaries to his archdiocese.¹² On 8 August 1945, responding to clear instructions from Rome, Fr Felix Miritello from the Immaculate Conception Monastery in New York informed Mons. Duhig, that he had already assigned four excellent friars to the mission in Brisbane: Fr Accursio Rasi, Fr Egidio Scarpini, Fr Anastasio Paoletti and Fr Gabriele Italia.¹³ The four missionaries, after an obligatory stopover in San Francisco to fulfil some bureaucratic requirements, sailed towards Australia. They arrived in Brisbane on 22 October 1945. Mons. Duhig warmly welcomed them and entrusted them to their Guardian Angels parish at Wynnum, on Moreton Bay. From there the Capuchin began to serve the Italian communities of Ingham, Texas and Inglewood.

In early 1946, Fr Anastasio Paoletti began to visit Italian immigrants living in Brisbane and held a popular mission at the city cathedral. From this time the religious activities of the Brisbane Italian community began to assume some regularity. In November of the same year, Fr Paoletti was assigned a new parish in Sydney, but the pastoral work of the Brisbane friars continued successfully.¹⁴ Towards the middle of 1947, the Italian community's religious functions were officiated by the Capuchin fathers on every first Sunday of the month at the Crypt in the Valley.¹⁵ At the end of the year, Fr Carlo De Matteo, who was an excellent speaker, arrived. He

¹² See A. Paoletti, "Assistenza religiosa and sociale degli emigrati italiani in Australia," *Bollettino Ufficiale dei Frati Minori Cappuccini della Provincia di Mantova*, XII (1952) 6, p. 7.

¹³ See F. Miritello, Letter to Mons. James Duhig of 8 August 1945, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 1.

¹⁴ See A. Paoletti (1952), p. 7.

¹⁵ See "Funzioni religiose a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 15 July 1947, p. 6.

dedicated himself to the preaching of popular missions around Brisbane. Due to his presence, the regular Italian community functions that had waned over the preceding months, commenced again.¹⁶ At the end of May, Fr De Matteo preached a popular mission in the valley crypt in preparation for the Feast of SS. Trinity and of St Mary Auxiliary. Numerous Italians participated.¹⁷ In August 1948, Fr Accursio Rasi and Fr Gabriele Italia were recalled to the United States. At the end of the same year, Fr De Matteo also left and Fr Bonifacio Zurli arrived and was entrusted with the care of the Italian community in Brisbane.¹⁸ In February 1949, another two Capuchin missionaries, Fr Nicola Simonazzi and Fr Ladislao da Guastalia, joined the community at Wynnum; the latter was assigned to work amongst the Brisbane Italians alongside Fr Zurli.¹⁹

In the following July, Mons. Duhig nominated Fr Bonifacio Zurli chaplain of the Italian community, which extended across all of the parishes in the Brisbane archdiocese.²⁰ It was Fr Zurli's idea to erect an Italian community centre in Brisbane where religious and social functions to support the community could be held. The missionary was notified of a four storey building at 40 Elizabeth Street that would perfectly suit this purpose. With the agreement of Fr Paoletti, superior of the Capuchin Friars in Australia, and Archbishop Duhig, Fr Zurli called together some representatives from the Brisbane Italian community to guarantee funds to support the project.²¹ There was an enthusiastic response and on 4 August 1949, the building was bought.²² At first they intended to call the new centre *Casa degli*

¹⁶ See "Funzioni religiose a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 15 May 1948, p. 6.

¹⁷ See "Triduo," *La Fiamma*, 1 June 1948, p. 6.

¹⁸ See A. Paoletti, (1952) 6, pp. 10-11.

¹⁹ See *Arrivano altri Padri Cap.*, *La Fiamma*, 1 March 1949, p. 6; see also Paoletti Anastasio, *Assistenza religiosa and sociale degli emigrati italiani in Australia*, Bollettino Ufficiale dei Frati Minori Cappuccini della Provincia di Mantova, XII (1952), pp. 10-11.

²⁰ See J. Duhig, *Circular Letter of 7 July 1949* [minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 1.

²¹ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli, O.F.M. Cap.*, *Brisbane 1° October 1994*, unpublished manuscript, p. 12.

²² See *Capuchin Franciscan Fathers and St Francis House* [senza data], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 2.

Italiani [Home of the Italians] but in the end it was the name *Casa San Francesco* that prevailed for two reasons: the name was more consistent with the work of the Capuchin missionaries and St Francis was the patron saint of Italy and protector of the Italians abroad.²³ In order to become inhabitable, the building needed urgent restoration work and Fr Zurli appealed to the generosity of all of the Italian immigrants in the area. Thanks to the tenacity of the Italian missionary and to the precious collaboration of many Italians, the *Casa* was partially opened to the public on 3 September 1949. Upon its inauguration, Fr Zurli organised a reception with official speeches, a concert of classical and popular music and a friendly *tressette* competition.²⁴

The original project envisaged the establishment of a large hall for meetings and theatre performances and some other rooms for religious, cultural and sporting activities. The *Casa* would also include a permanent “information office” to assist the Italians with their bureaucratic and legal needs.²⁵ While the restoration and reconstruction work rapidly progressed, Fr Zurli decided to open the *Casa* to the Italians two Sundays per month, from 2 to 6pm for the following activities: music concerts, card games, chess and backgammon, and a small buffet with espresso coffee and soft drinks. From 12 September 1949, English courses began at the *Casa* for the Italian immigrants who had recently arrived. These were held every Monday from 7 until 9 pm.²⁶ On the first Sunday of October, Fr Zurli organised the celebration for the commemoration of St Francis. The celebration began with a solemn Holy Mass in the Valley crypt and continued with a reception at the *Casa*. On this occasion, the piano accordionist Osvaldo Maffei uplifted the gathering with his music.²⁷ To raise funds for the work in progress, on 14 October 1949, Miss Rosina Battaglia organised a gala ball at the South Brisbane Library.²⁸ On the 25th of the following December, the Italian community

²³ See “La casa degli Italiani di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1949, p. 2.

²⁴ See “Cronache di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 30 September 1949, p. 2.

²⁵ See “La casa degli Italiani di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1949, p. 2.

²⁶ See “Cronache di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 30 September 1949, p. 2.

²⁷ See “La festa di S. Francesco,” *La Fiamma*, 21 October 1949, p. 4.

²⁸ See “Cronache di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 30 September 1949, p. 2.

celebrated Christmas with a solemn Mass presided over by Fr Zurli at the Valley crypt.²⁹

Although situated in the extreme south of Queensland, the *Casa San Francesco* sought to serve all of the Italians in the state. Hence the title *Casa degli Italiani del Queensland* [House of the Italians of Queensland] was used in the first months of 1950 to solicit members and financial collaborators also from other towns. Rosina Battaglia, Angelo Vattuone, Luigi Cervetto and Pietro Demartini were trustees for the loan borrowed for the works. This constituted more than two steering committees, one all male, presided over by Domenico G. Roveta and one all female presided over by Rosina Battaglia. Other than effective members who were all noted Italians in the Brisbane community, some honorary members from other Queensland cities were nominated. They were entrusted with organising activities and raising funds for the *Casa San Francesco* in their respective places of residence.³⁰ During 1950, the Capuchin missionaries decided to give a stable structure to the English courses for immigrants. Thanks to the interest of the director of the Education Department in Queensland, they were given a classroom at Patrick Terrace Girl's School. In a few months, 50 students had enrolled and they were divided into different classes according to their linguistic knowledge.³¹ Towards the middle of 1950, the reconstruction works on the *Casa* were already at a good point. On 20 September, Fr Zurli visited the Italian consul general, Dr Nicola Simone, in Sydney, and outlined his project in detail. The diplomat gave his support to the valuable work. Fr Zurli then went to Giuseppe Bissietta's art studio to check on the progress of six paintings that he had commissioned the artist to do for the large hall of the *Casa*.³²

At the beginning of 1951, they put the last touches to the *Casa San Francesco*. On Sunday 4 March, they held the inauguration ceremony in the large hall that was adorned by Bissietta's six

²⁹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 January 1950, p. 2.

³⁰ See "Sorge 'la Casa degli Italiani del Queensland,'" *La Fiamma*, 21 April 1950, p. 1; "Membri Onorari per la Casa degli Italiani del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 May 1950, p. 6.

³¹ See "Scuola d'inglese a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 10 September 1950, p. 2.

³² See "Per la casa di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 29 September 1950, p. 2.

paintings. There were both Italian and Australian authorities in attendance for the ceremony. After the national anthems of the two countries, Mons. Duhig said the first words, followed by Minister Giulio del Balzo and by Consul General Simone. The following notables appeared on the stage that was painted by the artist Giuseppe Ive: a representative for the Queensland Premier, the Brisbane mayor, a delegate for the Minister for immigration and Mons. Carlton. The speeches were concluded by Mr Domenico Roveta who, on behalf of the steering committee of the *Casa*, thanked the illustrious guests and all who attended. The celebration continued with a concert that included the performances of: *maestro* Osvaldo Maffei, the Italian choir who was directed by pianist Dora Franca Mandia and the Italian girls who had been prepared by the Canossian nuns. Everyone was then invited to share refreshments on the first floor.³³ The opening of the *Casa* led to the formation of the new *Comitato della Casa San Francesco* [St Francis House Committee]. This was composed of Domenico Roveta (president), Rosina Battaglia (vice-president), Giuseppe Rinaudo (secretary), Maria Antoni, Gloria Battaglia, Nicla Bortolotti, Maria Cunico, Vido Lippi, Mondolo Mirandola, Alessandro Rossi, Olimpia Risso, Luigi Villanova, Rina Sartor, Giovanni Sartor and Fr Bonifacio Zurli (committee members).³⁴ The funds raised for the *Casa* continued to go towards the repayment of the loan for the reconstruction work and generous donations kept on arriving.³⁵ The committee planned some special activities to increase donations. With the help of the Italian community in Melbourne, they organized a huge raffle which was drawn on Saturday 26 May 1951. The first prize was a *Lambretta* motorcycle, the second prize was a bedroom suite, the third prize was a sewing machine and the fourth prize was a radio. The raffle was very successful.³⁶ On Friday 10 June 1951 they presented the first theatre show at the *Casa*. The play,

³³ See "Inaugurazione solenne de la "Casa degli Italiani" del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 23 March 1951, p. 1; "Opening of St Francis House," *The Catholic Leader*, 8 March 1951, p. 1.

³⁴ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), pp. 12-13.

³⁵ See "Il Comitato della Casa di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 4 May 1951, p. 2.

³⁶ See "Risultati Estrazione Lotteria Pro Casa S. Francesco," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1951, p. 2.

based on the theme of the militant Church, involved some actors from amongst the young Italians who were well prepared by the Canossian nuns.³⁷ On 31 July, the Capuchin missionaries celebrated the 1st anniversary of the commencement of English courses for the Italian immigrants; the ceremony was held at the *Casa* where, along with the students, various Italian and Australian authorities attended. The speeches by those attending recognised the broad success of these courses which were directed by Robert McDonnell.³⁸

In the following months, the Capuchin friars, without neglecting the religious assistance duties entrusted to them, were busy actively promoting the social life of the Brisbane Italian community. The *Casa San Francesco* had become a point of reference for all of the Italians. In February 1952, for *Carnevale*, a grand masked ball was held in the main hall of the *Casa*, with the election of the “Queen of Brisbane”. The gracious winner was Concetta Mazza.³⁹ In the same months, it was announced that the debt for the construction of the *Casa* amounted to 19 500 pounds sterling. In the meantime, the *Casa* had become the focal point for the Brisbane Italians, and for new arrivals it was a hearth of assistance. Still, through *La Fiamma*, the committee renewed its appeal to the generosity of the Italians in Australia.⁴⁰

On 30 March 1952, Fr Zurli founded the first Australian Branch of the Third Order of Franciscans in Brisbane. In the following July, during the procession of *Corpus Domini* the newly formed branch carried their banner which was the work of the Italian artist, Luigi Favretto.⁴¹ The first *Comitato Della Casa San Francesco*, that had worked hard to pay off all of the debt on the loan for the construction, believing that they had completed their mission, submitted their resignation *en masse* on Thursday 26 February 1953. On 10th of the following March, Fr Zurli organised a lunch in honour of the outgoing

³⁷ See “La prima recita italiana nella “Casa S. Francesco,” *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1951, p. 2.

³⁸ See “Simpatica Festa a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 27 August 1951, p. 2.

³⁹ See “Ballo in maschera a Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 8 February 1952, p. 2.

⁴⁰ See “£19,500: debito della ‘Casa di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 23 February 1952, p. 2.

⁴¹ See “Attività a Brisbane. Pregevole opera artistica di un connazionale,” *La Fiamma*, 8 August 1952, p. 2.

committee at the *Casa*.⁴² Fr Carlo De Matteo returned to Brisbane from 26 April to 1 May 1953, to carry out a popular mission at the Valley crypt. The preaching of the missionary was able to capture the hearts of the Italians, who welcomed him in numbers at their functions. Over 1000 people congregated for the last celebration, which was honoured by the presence of Mons. Duhig. Animated by the enthusiasm of the Capuchin preacher, 20 people decided to join the Third Order of Franciscans immediately after this mission.⁴³ Meanwhile the new committee of the *Casa*, led by Giuseppe Rinaudo, struggled to manage the difficult task that they had inherited. The new committee began to be criticised for the manner in which they organised some of the various activities, but they did not lose their enthusiasm.⁴⁴ At the end of November 1953, a portion of the ground floor section of the *Casa* was rented to Pasquale Regano, who established his restaurant *Santa Lucia* there.⁴⁵

At the beginning of 1954, the *Casa* committee decided to recommence some activities that had attained reasonable success in the preceding years. In January, they ran a large raffle that was supported by the Italian communities across Australia. The final draw was held in May of that year.⁴⁶ Again, in January 1954, the *Casa* elected their new beauty queen during a ball. The crown went to Miss Delsi Morano who succeeded the previous winner, Bruno Granciotti.⁴⁷ On the 4th of the following March, the 3rd anniversary of the *Casa San Francesco* was celebrated. During the celebrations, the group of children who would welcome Queen Elisabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh at Brisbane airport wearing traditional Italian costumes, were officially presented. In the same month, a Sunday School was started at the *Casa*, that would offer a moment of recreation and instruction for the Italian children and their families. The school was held each Sunday and was coordinated by the

⁴² See "Le dimissioni del Comitato della Casa per gli Italiani," *La Fiamma*, 13 March 1953, p.2; see also [untitled], *La Fiamma*, 27 March 1953, p. 2.

⁴³ See "Riuscitissima la missione a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 23 May 1953, p. 2.

⁴⁴ See "Vivo malcontento a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 26 June 1953, p. 2.

⁴⁵ See *Capuchin Franciscan Fathers and St Francis House* [without date].

⁴⁶ See "Entusiasmo degli Italiani per la Lotteria Pro Casa S. Francesco," *La Fiamma*, 15 January 1954, p. 2.

⁴⁷ See "Reginetta Casa S. Francesco," *La Fiamma*, 15 January 1954, p. 2.

Canossian nuns.⁴⁸ On Sunday 28 March 1954, in the Valley crypt, there was a ceremony to confer membership cards and badges to the youth of *Azione Cattolica Italiana* [Italian Catholic Action] in Brisbane. They decided to place the group under the protection of St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows. This was also the initiative of Fr Zurli who was nominated as spiritual director of the group.⁴⁹ In the following May, Fr Zurli went on vacation to Italy and Fr Alessandro da Firenze was invited to preach a popular mission at the Valley crypt. There was reasonable participation from the community.⁵⁰ In June 1954, a mobile library was set up by the *Casa San Francesco* for the benefit of the immigrants. There were about 100 books available to the Italian immigrants. Interested persons could 'hire' any book for a small weekly fee. The responsibility for the library was entrusted to Mrs F. Trovato.⁵¹ In the following August, Fr Zurli organised the *Peregrinatio Mariae* [St Mary's Pilgrimage] at the homes of the Brisbane Italians. This devotional practice, very common in Italy, involved the passage of the statue of the Madonna of Fatima from house to house. Each evening, a different Italian family received the sacred image with a brief ceremony officiated by the Capuchin missionary that included reciting the rosary and the blessing of the house.⁵² On the morning of Sunday 3 October 1954, a solemn Holy Mass was celebrated at the Valley crypt for the Feast of St Francis. A large number of the Italian community attended. The Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Fr Bonifacio Zurli, was also attended by Archbishop Duhig, who relayed a message in Italian to the faithful who were gathered there. In the afternoon, again in the crypt, there was the recital of the rosary and a short procession inside the chapel.⁵³ Each Sunday, the main hall of the *Casa* was crammed with the Italian and Australian public that came always in increasing numbers to the balls organised by the committee. Given the success of this initiative, Fr Zurli decided to expand the rooms. The work began in October

⁴⁸ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 April 1954, p. 2.

⁴⁹ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 14 May 1954, p. 2.

⁵⁰ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 7 May 1954, p. 2.

⁵¹ See "Biblioteca circolante," *La Fiamma*, 18 June 1954, p. 12.

⁵² See "Cronaca di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 24 August 1954, p. 2.

⁵³ See "La Cronaca di 7 giorni," *La Fiamma*, 22 October 1954, p. 9.

1954 and in two months a much larger main hall was again ready to welcome the Sunday dancers.⁵⁴

In 1955, the commercial value of the *Casa San Francesco* was estimated at around 50,000 pounds sterling. The *Casa* by now had become the indisputable centre of the life of the Brisbane Italian community, opening everyday except Tuesday from 10 am until 11pm. Despite the multiple initiatives of Fr Zurli and the committee however, not many Italians attended the *Casa* regularly. Even though the Sunday ball was always full, the one on Friday was not very successful. The groups formed at the *Casa* with either religious, cultural or sporting aims did not seem to be able to involve the masses. A *circolo* was formed. This was a kind of private club for those who were interested in playing billiards and other table games. There were, however, few supporters of this initiative. On the other side there was still a debt to pay for the renovations.⁵⁵ Almost in defiance of the unfavourable circumstances, during 1955, Fr Bonifacio Zurli decided to build a chapel on the ground floor space that was not occupied by the restaurant *Santa Lucia*. In the preceding years this space had been rented by a barber who had set up shop there.⁵⁶ On Sunday 9 October 1955, the feast of St Francis was celebrated at the *Casa*. The main hall was crammed full of Italians, amongst whom was also the consul, Massimo Castaldo and his wife. To mark the occasion, there were exhibitions by local artists: Mrs Burke, Sam Maccarone, Miss Messina, the young Gianita Cavasin and Domenico Pagano.⁵⁷ On 16 October 1955, at the *Casa San Francesco*, Fr Alessandro da Firenze gave the first of a series of lectures on topics such as science, religion, ethics and society. The initiative was repeated across several weeks, each Sunday at 3 pm.⁵⁸ In the following November, the *Casa San Francesco* [St Francis House] Committee was renewed. Fr Zurli preferred to adopt a democratic method, assigning a vote to each head of the household

⁵⁴ See "La Cronaca di Sette giorni," *La Fiamma*, 29 October 1954, p. 9.

⁵⁵ See "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1955, p. 9.

⁵⁶ See *Capuchin Franciscan Fathers and St Francis House* [without date]; and "New Catholic Chapel," *The Catholic Leader*, 19 January 1956, p. 1.

⁵⁷ See "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 October 1955, p. 9.

⁵⁸ See "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 14 October 1955, p. 9.

and to each member of the *circolo* group at the *Casa*. The 12 people who received the most votes would make up a new ‘de facto’ committee. They were given the responsibility of overseeing the work on the Capuchin missionary’s chapel project.⁵⁹ During his stay in Brisbane for Mons. Duhig’s episcopal jubilee, Mons. Romolo Carboni, paid a visit to the *Casa San Francesco*, where he was received with honours by Fr Zurli, Consul Castaldo, other Italian notables, and a crowd of Italians. In a brief speech, the pontifical representative praised the faith and enterprise of the local Italian community in Brisbane.⁶⁰

At the beginning of 1956, the construction work for the *Casa San Francesco* chapel progressed rapidly. The new *oratorio*, dedicated to St Joseph, should have been completed by March, but the construction phase took longer than expected and the consecration of the chapel was possible only in the following spring.⁶¹ On 4 October, Mons. Duhig gave the Capuchin missionaries authority to open the St Joseph’s *oratorio* to the public, with permission to take custody of and celebrate the holy sacraments in that same chapel.⁶² On 7 October, Brisbane auxiliary Archbishop Patrick O’Donnell presided over the blessing ceremony for the new *oratorio*, in the presence of the Queensland Premier, Vince Gair, and a crowd of faithful that were mostly Italian. The interior of the chapel was decorated by Giuseppe Ive, an Italian artist who had arrived in Australia six years before. The feasts of the Virgin Mary of St Joseph, St Francis of Assisi and St Anthony of Padua, who were very dear to the Italians, would, according to the orders of the archdiocese, be held at the *oratorio*.⁶³ On 24 December 1956, during the grand Christmas ball, the new *Casa* beauty queen was elected. The crown went to Miss Emilia Regano, daughter of the owner of *Santa Lucia* restaurant. The winner was

⁵⁹ See “La voce del Queensland,” *La Fiamma*, 18 November 1955, p. 9.

⁶⁰ See “Mons. Carboni tra gli Italiani di Brisbane,” *La Fiamma*, 9 December 1955, p. 9.

⁶¹ See “New Catholic Chapel,” *The Catholic Leader*, 19 January 1956.

⁶² See J. Duhig, *Letter to Bonifacio Zurli of 4 October 1956* [minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 1; J. Duhig, *Letter to Romolo Carboni of 4 October 1956* [minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 1.

⁶³ See “Solemn Blessing of St Joseph’s Chapel at 40 Elizabeth St, Brisbane,” *The Catholic Leader*, 25 October 1956.

awarded free entrance into all of the balls organised at the *Casa* for the following year.⁶⁴

From January 1957, Professor J. Quane began to hold a practical English course at the *Casa*, every Monday and Thursday from 7pm until 9pm. There was a very enthusiastic response from the students.⁶⁵ On 6 February 1957, Fr Anastasio Paoletti wrote to Mons. Duhig to inform him of Fr Bonifacio Zurli's transfer to Melbourne. Fr Samuele Rodomonti was chosen as his substitute.⁶⁶ Fr Zurli left the Brisbane mission quietly, without celebrations or farewelling anyone. He wrote, however, an open letter to the community that was published in *La Fiamma*. The words of the entrepreneurial Capuchin missionary expressed his deep satisfaction with his eight years of pastoral work amongst the Italians of Brisbane and the fulfilment of his dearest dream: St Joseph's Chapel.⁶⁷ In March 1957, Fr Rodomonti met with the *Casa* committee to immediately continue the work of his predecessor.⁶⁸ On Sunday 24 March, the celebrations in honour of St Joseph were held. The committee had been organising the celebrations since the previous January. At 11 am Fr Rodomonti celebrated a solemn Holy Mass in the Valley crypt, followed by a procession with the statue of the saint in the square above. Numerous faithful participated in the event.⁶⁹ In the following April, the functions of Holy Week were all officiated by Fr Samuele Rodomonti in the Italian language, at the crypt. The missionary invited all of the compatriots to participate with devotion. The Italian community responded *en masse* to the friar's appeal.⁷⁰ In August 1957, Fr Rodomonti was forced to make some changes at the *Casa San Francesco* to guarantee an environment that was more coherent with

⁶⁴ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 January 1957, p. 8.

⁶⁵ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 1 February 1957, p. 7.

⁶⁶ See A. Paoletti, *Letter to Mons. Duhig of 6 February 1957*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 1.

⁶⁷ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 February 1957, p. 8.

⁶⁸ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6.

⁶⁹ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 January 1957, p. 6; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 5 April 1957, p. 12.

⁷⁰ See "Funzioni Pasquali," *La Fiamma*, 12 April 1957, p. 10; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 2 May 1957, p. 8.

the aims of their work. Hence a new orchestra for the musical animation of the dances arrived, while some people who did not integrate well into that environment were invited to leave.⁷¹ On 7 September 1957, a ball was organised at the *Casa* to support the work of the Canossian nuns. More than 200 people attended the event. Following the success of this initiative, the nuns were given 238 pounds sterling and many boxes of pasta and fruit.⁷² At the end of October 1957, a new Capuchin missionary came to Brisbane, Fr Timoteo da Pistoia, Doctor of Theology at the *Pontificia Università Gregoriana* in Rome. Fr Timoteo was assigned the work of teaching a theology course to the seminary students at the Capuchin seminary in Wynnum and to create a cultural *circolo* in Brisbane for the discussion of biblical themes.⁷³ Towards the middle of November, the *Casa* committee held a ball to raise funds for the expenses at the *Casa San Francesco*.⁷⁴

At the beginning of 1958, Fr Paolo da Carù, already a missionary in Griffith, was assigned to the community in Wynnum to substitute Fr Rodomonti in the care of both the Italian chaplaincy in Brisbane and *Casa San Francesco*. In February of the same year, Fr Paolo published an open letter in *La Fiamma* in which he introduced himself and praised *Casa San Francesco* as the only work of its kind in Australia. The new chaplain, in his first days of pastoral work, had already noted some coldness in relation to the *Casa* by many Italians. He thought that the Italian community was much divided.⁷⁵ On 24 February 1958, Fr Timoteo da Pistoia died suddenly. The funeral was celebrated in the Valley crypt by Archbishop Duhig, who expressed his condolences in Italian to the Capuchin family and to all of the Italians who attended the funeral in large numbers.⁷⁶ On Saturday 20 March 1958, the *Casa* committee organised a dance cabaret in support of the *Azzurri* team. The show included the performances of the magic

⁷¹ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 2 August 1957, p. 12.

⁷² See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1957, p. 10; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 20 September 1957, p. 10; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 27 September 1957, p. 12.

⁷³ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 8 November 1957, p. 13.

⁷⁴ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 11 October 1957, p. 11.

⁷⁵ See "Sette Giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 28 February 1958, p. 12.

⁷⁶ See "Improvvisa morte di padre Timoteo," *La Fiamma*, 14 March 1958, p. 13.

illusionist, Luigi Rocella, and the singer, Vito Parisi. The public response was poor.⁷⁷ On Sunday 27 April, the new seminary of the Capuchin fathers was inaugurated at Wynnum. It would be the largest in Australia. At the solemn blessing, officiated by Mons. Duhig and Mons. Romolo Carboni, there were over 600 people, mostly Italian.⁷⁸

On Sunday 3 August, the Brisbane Italian community met for the second time at Wynnum to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the vocation of Fr Ladislao da Guastalia, one of the first Capuchin missionaries.⁷⁹ On 4 October 1958, at the *Casa San Francesco*, the annual ball was held to support the work of the Canossian nuns. This event was organised by the male and female committee of the *Casa*. On the 8th of the following November, again at the *Casa*, there was the debutante ball.⁸⁰

In 1959, the Italian community in Brisbane received its fourth chaplain, Fr Stefano Favali, Capuchin missionary. Concerned about the deplorable condition of the Valley crypt and the distance from his residence (Wynnum) to the community he should have served, on 17 February 1959, Fr Favali wrote to Mons. Duhig asking that he assign St Mary's parish in South Brisbane to the Capuchin fathers. If this was possible, the missionary envisaged moving all of the activities at the *Casa San Francesco* to the new parish and giving the *Casa* to the archdiocese.⁸¹ The request was not fulfilled and both the crypt and *Casa San Francesco* continued to carry out their role in the service of the Brisbane Italian community. On 3 August 1958, Cardinal Gregoire Pierre Agagianan, prefect of *Propaganda Fide*, came to Brisbane. There were 5,000 people, many of whom were Italian, at the exhibition ground to welcome the pope's representative on the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of the Catholic Church in Queensland.⁸² From the beginning of 1960, Fr Stefano Favali worked with Fr Zeffirino da Sabbione, who was previously occupied in the

⁷⁷ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 April 1958, p. 12.

⁷⁸ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 25 April 1958, p. 12; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 9 May 1958, p. 12.

⁷⁹ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 August 1958, p. 15.

⁸⁰ See "Dal Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1958, p. 16.

⁸¹ See S. Favali, *Letter to James Duhig of 17 February 1959*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

⁸² See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 26 August 1959, p. 15.

apostolic delegation.⁸³ The pastoral work of the Capuchin missionaries continued to be successful while the flock in their care grew in numbers. During the Easter period in 1960, Fr Stefano celebrated the Holy Mass with a 'last supper' in the Valley crypt and twelve young Italian men were chosen to represent the apostles in the foot washing rite. After the celebration, Mrs Ferlito invited the priests and the young people who had participated in the Holy Thursday ceremony to her house for dinner.⁸⁴ In August of the same year, Fr Stefano and Fr Zeffirino, together with the Canossian nuns, organised a reception for the Italian consul general, Dr Giulio Carnevali, who was on an official visit to Brisbane. On Friday 12 August 1960, the *Casa* hall was crammed full of Italians: after the national anthems and songs by the Verdi choir, there was a series of poems and songs interpreted by the children. The official program concluded with some speeches from the authorities that were present.⁸⁵ On Sunday 9 October, the Italian community celebrated the feast of St Francis with a solemn Holy Mass that was presided over by Fr Cassiano Wolak at the Valley crypt. Fr Zeffirino preached the panegyric of the Saint from Assisi and Mons.Duhig, who attended the celebration, gave a salute in Italian to all the faithful who were there. The liturgy was animated by the choir that had been prepared by the Canossian nuns.⁸⁶ On 13 November, again at the crypt, the Archbishop of Brisbane administered the sacrament of Confirmation to some little boys and girls of Italian origin who had been prepared by Fr Zeffirino.⁸⁷

The sources consulted report fragmented information regarding the pastoral work of the Capuchin missionaries in the early 1960's. It is probable that the religious activities continued according to what had become the 'traditional' calendar for the Italian community in Brisbane. In these years, Fr Luciano da Prignano was assigned the

⁸³ See A. Paoletti, *Letter to James Duhig of 12 February 1960*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

⁸⁴ See "La cena dei dodici apostoli," *La Fiamma*, 10 May 1960, p. 21.

⁸⁵ See "Carnevali accolto festosamente dagli italiani alla "S. Francesco," *La Fiamma*, 27 August 1960, p. 15.

⁸⁶ See "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 4 October 1960, p. 16; "Qui il Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1960, p. 20.

⁸⁷ See Zeffirino da Sabbione, *Letter to James Duhig of 2 December 1960*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

Italian chaplaincy in Brisbane and was also in charge of the administration of the *Casa San Francesco*. In September 1962, worried by the *Casa's* debt, Fr Luciano wrote to Mons. Duhig to ask permission to organise a public raffle. The permission was granted.⁸⁸ In 1963, the Capuchin missionaries tried to ask the Brisbane Archbishop for a parish closer to the city so that they could more adequately satisfy the needs of an apostolate that was becoming by day more widespread. Fr Claudio Moscatelli, superior of the Australian Capuchin community, sent two letters to Mons. Duhig regarding this matter. The first was on 5 February 1963, and the second was on the 1st of the following May. Together, the letters sent by Fr Moscatelli made specific reference to the parish in Brisbane that was assigned to the Capuchin missionaries for the Polish community (this parish was known as Our Lady of Victories) and begged the Archbishop to consider a similar solution for the Italian community, which was significantly larger than that of the Polish.⁸⁹ Also on this occasion the request was not fulfilled. At the beginning of 1965, both Fr Luciano and Fr Zeffirino were assigned to other missions.⁹⁰ It could be deduced from the sources consulted that the Italian community remained without a chaplain for the first months of 1965. The Capuchin missionaries, busy with the pastoral care of the Polish, Spanish and Dutch communities continued however to ensure that religious services were provided to the Italians in Brisbane.⁹¹ From June onwards, Fr Silvio Spighi and Fr Paolo Barzoli alternated the Italian chaplaincy. The latter organised, on 2 November 1965, a special commemorative celebration for the dead at the Nudgee cemetery. Accompanied by a large crowd of Italians, Fr Barzoli led

⁸⁸ See Luciano da Prignano, *Letter to James Duhig of 18 September 1962*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

⁸⁹ See C. Moscatelli, *Letter to James Duhig of 5 February 1963*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3 and Idem, *Letter to James Duhig del 1 May 1963*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

⁹⁰ See Zeffirino da Sabbione, *Letter to James Duhig of 12 February 1965*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

⁹¹ See C. Moscatelli, *Letter to James Duhig of 9 March 1965*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

the recital of the rosary and blessed all the tombs of the compatriots.⁹² During 1965, the Capuchin missionaries who were charged with the care of the Italians in Brisbane celebrated two masses in Italian each Sunday; they officiated over 50 marriages and 80 baptisms; met the new immigrants at the port; and regularly visited the sick compatriots in the hospitals.⁹³

In 1966, in preparation for Easter, Fr Barzoli invited Fr Lino Concas to preach a popular mission for the Brisbane Italian community. The mission began on 27 March with a solemn Holy Mass at the Valley crypt. In the following days, each evening the Capuchin preacher gave a spiritual lecture in the same chapel. The mission finished on Palm Sunday, 3 April, with a solemn Eucharistic celebration and the traditional blessing of the palms.⁹⁴ In the following June, for the Feast of *Corpus Domini*, the Brisbane archdiocese organised an impressive procession with the participation of more than 30 000 faithful: among them were many Italians gathered together under the banners of the *Azione Cattolica*, the *Terz'Ordine Francescano*, and the *Figlie di Maria* [Daughters of Mary].⁹⁵ On 24 and 25 September 1966, a special committee composed of immigrants from the town of Ripa Teatina in the Abruzzi region, in collaboration with the Italian chaplain, Fr Paolo Barzoli, organised the Feast of the *Madonna del Sudore* at the Valley crypt. On Saturday 24 September, Fr Barzoli blessed the statue of the Virgin Mary and led the recital of the Rosary. On Sunday 25 September, the chaplain celebrated a solemn Mass in honour of the Madonna.⁹⁶ On Sunday 2 October 1966, Archbishop Patrick O'Donnell confirmed 32 young Italians at the Valley crypt. Fr Paolo Barzoli, who had prepared the candidates, and Fr Bernardino Zabatta co-celebrated the mass.⁹⁷ On 2 November 1966, as he had done the previous year, Fr Barzoli held a solemn ceremony for the

⁹² See "Picnic Associazione Cattolica," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1965, p. 16; "Commemorazione defunti," *La Fiamma*, 16 November 1965, p. 16.

⁹³ See *Report of the Work of the Capuchin Fathers among the Migrants in Australia in 1965* [without date], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

⁹⁴ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 March 1966, p. 16.

⁹⁵ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 21 June 1966, p. 16.

⁹⁶ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1966, p. 16.

⁹⁷ As above; see also "I fatti del Queensland," *la Fiamma*, 11 October 1966, p. 16.

commemoration of deceased Italians at the Nudgee cemetery. Over 250 compatriots met to accompany the Italian chaplain in the rite of the blessing of the graves.⁹⁸

The sources consulted did not report news regarding the Italian chaplaincy of the Capuchin missionaries in Brisbane during 1967. Despite this, from the information gathered, it appears that the Italians no longer frequented the *Casa San Francesco* as they had done in the preceding years. The Italian associations preferred other venues for their cultural, social and sporting activities. In 1968, the Italian chaplaincy in Brisbane was served by a full time Capuchin missionary and another one that was part-time. They continued to celebrate the two Masses every Sunday. The 'figures' from records of the pastoral work of the friars reveal a decline in the participation of the Italian faithful: 100 confessions and 200 communions per week, 40 baptisms and 20 marriages in 12 months. The Italian missionaries continued to welcome the new immigrants at the port and airport in Brisbane and they regularly visited sick compatriots in hospitals, at home and in the hospices.⁹⁹ At the beginning of 1969, after the failure of the umpteenth attempt to obtain a parish for the pastoral care of the Italians in Brisbane, the Capuchin missionaries decided to abandon the chaplaincy and sell the *Casa San Francesco*. In fact, the sale of the *Casa* was already discussed the year before, but with the condition of finding a space more consonant with the activities of the chaplaincy. The news of the closure created a certain amount of confusion within the Italian community and Archbishop, Patrick O'Donnell, in the end, personally intervened to find a satisfactory solution for everyone. Discussions between the prelate and the Capuchin missionaries stretched out for some months. Various options were considered and in the end St Thomas More parish in Petrie Terrace was chosen. On 20 November 1969, the *Casa San Francesco* was sold and on the 13th of the following December, the new parish was consigned to the Capuchin missionaries.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 November 1966, p. 16.

⁹⁹ See *Report of the Work of the Capuchin Fathers among the Migrants in Australia in 1968* [without date].

¹⁰⁰ See F. Castellano, *Letter to Coletta Alberto of 25 April 1969*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; see also P. O'Donnell, *Letter to Alberto Coletta of 5 May 1969*

The first parish priest at St Thomas More was Fr Franco Delia and Fr Felice De Candia was nominated assistant priest and chaplain for the Italian community.¹⁰¹ At the beginning of 1970, Fr De Candia called a meeting with some representatives from the Italian community with the aim of drawing up a community calendar with all the religious events that would be held during the year. On this occasion, an organisational committee was formed, presided over by Felice Formica.¹⁰² In February 1971, Fr Patrick Colbourne, provincial superior of the Capuchin friars, presented Mons. O'Donnell with the list of friars assigned to the various parishes of the Brisbane archdiocese. After the nominees were approved by the Archbishop, Fr Claudio Moscatelli became the parish priest at St Thomas More and the director of the apostolate amongst the immigrants. Fr Felice De Candia was reconfirmed as assistant parish priest and Italian chaplain.¹⁰³ In 1973, Fr Felice was substituted in his pastoral work by Fr Bonaventura Rodighiero.¹⁰⁴ According to the information reported in the sources consulted, it could be deduced that at the beginning of the 1970's, the religious life of the Italian community was intrinsically linked to that of the St Thomas More parish. The pastoral care given by the Capuchin missionaries concentrated on providing: spiritual assistance; catechism; administration of the sacraments; the celebration of traditional religious feasts and some fund-raising activities. In March 1973, Mons. Francis Robert Rush was handed the reins of the Brisbane archdiocese and immediately paid particular

[minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; Zeffirino da Sabbione, *Letter to Patrick O'Donnell of 1 August 1969*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; A. Coletta, *Letter to Patrick O'Donnell of 27 September 1969*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; P. O'Donnell, *Letter to Alberto Coletta del 3 December 1969* [minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; and *List of Tenants* [untitled and undated manuscript], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 1.

¹⁰¹ See "Italian Mass to resume in city" (1982), p. 4.

¹⁰² See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 17 February 1970, p. 16.

¹⁰³ See P. Colbourne, *Letter to Patrick O'Donnell of 5 February 1971*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; see also P. O'Donnell, *Letter to Felice De Candia of 19 February 1971* [minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3; P. O'Donnell Patrick, *Letter to Claudio Moscatelli of 19 February 1971* [minute], AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

¹⁰⁴ See P. Colbourne, *Letter to Patrick O'Donnell of 31 March 1972*, AAB, Box Franciscans, Folder 3.

attention to the different ethnic communities in the local Church. In May 1974, for the first time, the Archbishop celebrated a Solemn Mass with all of the migrant communities in the city cathedral. The Italian community, led by its chaplain, participated in numbers and the Verdi choir contributed to the animation of the liturgy.¹⁰⁵ On the occasion of the feast of St Anthony of Padua on 15 June 1974, the Italian parish committee of St Thomas More organised a social evening with the sale of *porchetta* at the Y.M.C.A. centre in Lutwyche Road. All the proceeds went to the St Thomas More parish and the Italian chaplaincy. On Sunday 16 June, a Mass was celebrated at the parish Church, which was followed by a procession with the statue of the saint and the traditional distribution of the holy bread.¹⁰⁶

To support the feast of the *Madonna del Sudore*, on 5 October, the *Centro Cattolico Italiano* [Italian Catholic Centre] at St Thomas held a grand benefit ball at the Y.M.C.A. hall in Lutwyche. Also on this occasion the funds raised went to support the St Thomas More parish.¹⁰⁷ On 5 and 6 October, in the Holy Spirit parish hall in New Farm, the final meeting of the diocesan synod summoned by Archbishop Rush was held. In this important gathering, Fr Claudio Moscatelli and Mrs Giuseppina Emmi represented the Italian community.¹⁰⁸ To mark the closure of the Holy Year and in preparation for Christmas celebrations, the Italian chaplaincy and the St Thomas More parish organised a popular mission from 8 to 15 December 1974. The mission opened on Sunday 8 December with a Mass in the parish church, following which there was a rich programme of religious functions in Italian, animated by Fr Claudio Moscatelli and by Fr Silvano Dalla Pina. The end of the celebrations was presided over by Archbishop Rush.¹⁰⁹

The sources consulted do not report much news related to the Italian chaplaincy of the Capuchin missionaries in Brisbane for the final years of the 1970's. Fr Claudio Moscatelli continued to be the parish priest at St Thomas More and to dedicate himself to the

¹⁰⁵ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 27 May 1974, p. 12.

¹⁰⁶ See "Festa di S. Antonio a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 3 June 1974, p. 12.

¹⁰⁷ See "Centro Cattolico Italiano," *Il Globo*, 30 September 1974, p. 11.

¹⁰⁸ See "Concilio patronale a Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 14 October 1974, p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 9 December 1974, p. 20.

pastoral care of the Italian community. At the beginning of 1977, Fr Camillo Grisendi was assigned to the St Thomas More Parish as an assistant priest, but after not even a year was transferred to the seminary at Wynnum. He continued, however, to provide pastoral care to the Brisbane Italians from his base in Wynnum.¹¹⁰ On 27 August 1978, the *Centro Cattolico Italiano* at St Thomas More organised the Feast of St Gabriele, patron saint of Abruzzi. After the Holy Mass, held in the parish church, there was a procession with a painting of the saint. This was followed by a social at the Sorrento Lounge.¹¹¹ On 22 and 23 September 1979, the Feast of the *Madonna del Sudore* was held, organised as usual by the *Centro Cattolico Italiano*. The Feast began on the evening of Saturday 22 September with a ball at the Azzurri clubhouse. The proceeds went to the Italian parish. On Sunday 23 September, a Holy Mass was held at St Thomas More Church followed by the traditional procession with the statue of the Virgin.¹¹²

At the beginning of the 1980's, the Capuchin missionaries redesigned their apostolate in Australia according to the new pastoral needs of the various dioceses. In January 1980, Fr Claudio Moscatelli, after almost 10 years of dedicated service to the St Thomas More parish was transferred to Melbourne. Fr Romano Franchini from Perth took his place. The assistance to the Italian community was still one of the priorities for the Capuchin mission in Brisbane, and so Fr Camillo Grisendi helped Fr Franchini while living at the seminary in Wynnum.¹¹³ In the presence of the new priest, the *Comitato Parrocchiale Italiano* [Italian Parish Committee] met on 14 February 1980, to elect a new management committee. Antonio Reggi was elected as president.¹¹⁴ During the following months, the specific pastoral activities for the Italian community were somewhat reduced. The initiatives often coincided with the normal parish calendar. By this time, the Italians were living across various suburbs in Brisbane.

¹¹⁰ See "Si trasferisce Padre Camillo," *La Fiamma*, 26 January 1978, p. 25.

¹¹¹ See "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 27 July 1978, p. 30.

¹¹² See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 20 September 1979, p. 27.

¹¹³ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 17 January 1980, p. 21; "Italian Mass to resume in city" (1982), p. 4.

¹¹⁴ See "Notiziario di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 February 1980, p. 42.

It was for this reason that a new model of pastoral care was requested that seemed more consonant with the work of the Scalabrinian missionaries that had recently arrived in the archdiocese. At the end of 1981, the Capuchin missionaries handed back the St Thomas More parish to the archdiocese. Mons. Rush immediately transformed it into a chapel annexed to the Sacred Heart parish in Rosalie.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ See “Italian Mass to resume in city,” (1982), p. 4.

3. The Daughters of Charity - Canossian Nuns (F.d.C.C.)

Following the postwar period, during a visit to Singapore, Mons. James Duhig was able to appreciate the work of assistance to the poor and derelict carried out by the Daughters of Charity – Canossian in this British colony. Impressed by their apostolic zeal, the Brisbane Archbishop invited the congregation, founded by St Magdalene of Canossa, to form a community in Brisbane in order to educate the children of the Italian immigrants. In October 1947, in Rome, Mons. Duhig met Mother Antonietta Monzoni, superior general of the Canossian nuns, and espoused the project. The response was positive and the initiative received the blessing of Pope Pius XII during a private hearing given to the Brisbane Archbishop. The first agreement signed with Mother Monzoni envisaged the sending of at least four nuns, one of which would have to speak English. Mons. Duhig would be busy obtaining the necessary visas, paying the travel expenses and finding convenient accommodation in Brisbane for the missionary sisters. In May 1948, two Canossian nuns visited Australia and were presented to the Italian community during a reception organised in their honour. On this occasion, Mons. Duhig officially announced the imminent establishment of a Canossian community in Brisbane.

The preparation time for the first group of nuns was longer than predicted, but at the beginning of November 1948, seven sisters were ready to leave: Sister Giuseppina Palmery from Rome (teacher); Sister Giuseppina Rezzanico from Nerviano (Milan) teacher; Sister Maria Conti from Vedano Olmo (Varese) teacher; Sister Angela Rusconi from Valmadrera (Como) cook; Sister Assunta Motto from Missaglia (Como) nurse; Sister Elsa Sabbadin from Candiana (Padua) teacher; and Mother Elisa Merlo, general assistant for the overseas missions, whose role was to monitor the first steps of the new foundation. Mons. Duhig obtained the entry visas and sent the necessary funds to cover the travel expenses.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ See V. Di Marco, "Suore Canossiane nel Queensland," *Presenza* 2 (June 1995), p. 5; see also J. Duhig, *Letter to Antonietta Monzoni of 27 October 1947*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 1; A. Monzoni, *Letter to James Duhig of 5 November 1948*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 1; "Attività religiose a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 15 May 1948, p. 6.

On 22 December 1948, six Canossian nuns (Sister Assunta Motto did not figure in the group) embarked on the ship *Napoli* en route to Sydney. The journey was not the most enjoyable one due to the bad weather conditions at sea. The boat, full of Italian emigrants heading to Australia, offered the missionary nuns the first opportunity for their apostolate. After disembarking in Sydney on 6 February 1949, the six pioneers immediately took a flight to Brisbane where they were welcomed by Mons. Duhig. Unable to offer them a reasonable residence in the city, the Archbishop asked the Canossian nuns to lodge for some time at the Nazareth House of the Poor Sisters of Nazareth at Wynnum.¹¹⁷

In the following April, Mons. Duhig began to make a move for the acquisition of Gregory Private Hospital and for a house annexed to Gregory Terrace. This property was considered an ideal base to begin the work of the missionary nuns. The Archbishop was not able to obtain the necessary building permits to build a school for the children of Italian immigrants. This school had been an essential part of the original project. Hence he wanted to offer the Canossian sisters an alternative apostolate until the above cited school would be completed. The private hospital, when completed, would be fully-functioning with a capacity of 25 beds. With the support of the Italian community, the hospital would also represent a mode of obtaining finances for the congregation. The nuns, although not professionally prepared for this service, accepted the challenge and transferred to Gregory Terrace towards the middle of July 1949. The hospital, renamed Canossa House, was transformed into a home for the terminally ill. It was inaugurated on 14 August 1949.¹¹⁸

The first months of the apostolate were very successful for the Canossian nuns. Having completed her duties, Mother Elisa Merlo,

¹¹⁷ See E. Merlo, *Letter to James Duhig of 8 January 1949*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 1; see also A. Monzoni, *Letter to James Duhig of 9 January 1949*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 1; V. Di Marco, "Suore Canossiane nel Queensland," *Presenza* 2 (June 1995), p. 5; and J. Duhig, *Letter to Pat Josephson of 23 February 1949* [minute], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 1.

¹¹⁸ J. Duhig, *Letter to the Manager of the National Bank of Australasia of 19 April 1949* [minute], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2; see also J. Duhig, *Letter to Elisa Merlo of 18 May 1949* [not sent], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2; and J. Duhig, *Letter to S. L. Quinn of 3 August 1949* [minute], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2.

returned to Italy in September 1949. In collaboration with the Capuchin fathers, the missionaries were gradually inserted into the pastoral care of the Italians. In preparation for the feast of St Francis, they were occupied with teaching liturgical songs to the Italian girl's choir. From November 1949, the nuns began to teach Italian lessons and catechism to two groups of Italian children and to make home visits to immigrant families. On 11 December, the little children's choir, prepared by the Canossians, performed for the first time at a feast organised to raise funds for the *Casa San Francesco* at the CDA hall. At Christmas time, Canossa House was adorned with a decorated tree given to them by Mons. Duhig. The decorating of the tree presented the opportunity to host a large Christmas party for the Italian children on 18 December.¹¹⁹

In April 1950, the Superior Generals of the Canossian nuns assigned two new nuns from Hong Kong to the Gregory Terrace Hospice: Sister Regina Gaspardo and Sister Teresa Peruffo. In the same year, the archdiocese acquired a property on Royal Parade that would be used as a convent. The archdiocese, thanks to a bank loan, had advanced 17 000 pounds sterling to acquire two blocks of land and an annexed building with the intention that the Canossian nuns would have tried to redeem the property thus eradicating the debts in a relatively short time. It was not easy work for this religious community that did not initially find much support from the Italian community.¹²⁰ Tangible support did, however, arrive in the following years. On 24 September 1952, the Italian vice consul in Brisbane organised a benefit ball for Canossa House on the ship *Sydney* offered freely for their use by the *Lauro* fleet.¹²¹ The benefit ball for Canossa House became an annual event. During these years, some of the pioneers left and other nuns arrived. On 14 May 1953, on the occasion of the taking of the vows of sisters Emilia Basilico and Teresa

¹¹⁹ See A. Monzoni, *Letter to James Duhig of 13 October 1949*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2; see also G. Palmery, *Letter to James Duhig of 5 December 1949*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2; "La festa di S. Francesco," *La Fiamma*, 21 October 1949, p. 4; "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 January 1950, p. 2.

¹²⁰ See J. Duhig, *Letter to The Officer in Charge – Immigration Dept. of 3 April 1950* [minute], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2; J. Duhig, *Letter to Giuseppina Palmery of 5 September 1950* [minute], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2.

¹²¹ See "Leonardo commemorato a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 5 September 1952, p. 2.

Peruffo, presided over by Mons. Duhig, the whole Canossian community was present. Other than Mother Maria Drago, general delegate, there were; Mother Antonietta Monzoni, ex-superior general and now superior of Canossa House, Sister Susanna Castelli, Sister Angelina Bianchin, Sister Maria Tanzi, Sister Maria Sironi, Sister Rosetta Lassini, Sister Luigina Brambilla, Sister Maria Conti, Sister Maria Clerici and Sister Emilia Cazzaniga.¹²² As mentioned above, in 1954, under the presidency of the *Casa* and with the co-ordination of the Canossian nuns, the Sunday school was instituted and this occupied the nuns every Sunday.¹²³ On 7 September 1957, the *Casa* committee was busy organising the annual benefit ball for the hospice of the Canossian nuns. Over 200 people attended the event and gave generously to the cause. The committee treasurer, Michele Calvisi, gave the mother superior a cheque for 238 pounds sterling and many cases of pasta and fruit. The success of the initiative was also due to the support of Carmelo Caruso, who freely advertised the ball on his radio program.¹²⁴

The progressive increase in numbers of those in need of care at the Canossa House in Gregory Terrace prompted the *Figlie delle Carità* to consider the possibility of expanding the facility, but to do this they needed to find a property that allowed for the building development. They had their eye on a 45 acre piece of land in Oxley, the property of the Orsoline nuns. In December 1959, Mother Ada Nardi, general assistant, signed the contract to acquire the land on which stood a convent and a school.¹²⁵ In February 1960, Mons. Duhig wrote to the mother general of the Canossians to express his total support for the initiative and gave his authorisation for the opening of a new religious community in Oxley.¹²⁶ It would take several months to establish a hospital in the building left by the

¹²² See *Il 14 Maggio* [without date], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 2.

¹²³ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 April 1954, p. 2.

¹²⁴ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 August 1957, p. 10; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 20 September 1957, p. 10; and "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 27 September 1957, p. 12.

¹²⁵ See V. Di Marco, "Suore Canossiane nel Queensland," *Presenza* 2 (June 1995), p.

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¹²⁶ See J. Duhig, *Letter to the Mother superior of the Canossian nuns of 26 February 1960* [minute], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 3.

Orsoline nuns. On 28 and 29 October 1960, 41 patients were transferred to the new hospice in Oxley. Six of the nuns left the Gregory Terrace community to permanently reside in the convent that was erected beside the hospital. Two days after, Mons. Duhig went to personally bless the new Canossian facility, a wooden construction that had been given approval from the Queensland Department of Health on the condition that a new brick structure was built within five years.¹²⁷ There was obviously the need to raise the necessary funds to realise the project and the Italian community in Brisbane were not remiss in offering their support. On 9 November 1961, the pro-Canossian ball was held at the *Casa San Francesco*. Thanks to an auction organised by the committee, almost 500 pounds sterling were raised to support the Oxley hospital.¹²⁸ The building of the new hospital complex, particularly dedicated to the care of the elderly patients, began in March 1964. The new hospital was inaugurated in October the following year. The project envisaged the construction of nursing accommodation, a new convent and a chapel. All were completed in the following years, thanks also to a loan of 70,000 pounds sterling from the Bank of New South Wales at a very good interest rate. This loan was almost totally covered by the 63,000 pounds sterling contribution from the Queensland government, donated in March 1966 to support the new hospital of the Canossian nuns.¹²⁹

The 1970's marked the consolidation of the Canossian work, that continued to receive tangible signs of appreciation by the Brisbane and Queensland Italians. In 1970, the nuns opened an elementary school in Gregory Terrace. In 1971, the Canossian complex at Oxley enclosed a modern hospice for the elderly. The new construction

¹²⁷ See V. Di Marco, "Suore Canossiane nel Queensland," *Presenza* 2 (June 1995), p. 6; M. Drago, *Letter to James Duhig of 24 October 1960*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 3.

¹²⁸ See "Gara di generosità al ballo pro-Canossiane," *La Fiamma*, 14 November 1961, p. 17.

¹²⁹ See A. Bianchin, *Letter to James Duhig of 28 February 1964*, AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 3; V. Di Marco, "Suore Canossiane nel Queensland," *Presenza* (June 1995) 2, p. 6; N. Buratti, *Letter to Giovanni XXIII of 11 November 1965* [copia], AAB, Box Canossians, Folder 3; "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 15 March 1966, p. 16.

could house 250 bedridden patients.¹³⁰ In May 1974, the Canossian nuns celebrated the bicentenary of the birth of their founder and the 25th anniversary of their arrival in Australia. On 17 May, a display depicting all of their charitable activities across the world was inaugurated by the Italian consul, Admiral Luigi Fulvi, on the ground floor of the Oxley hospital. The exhibition outlining the work of the Canossians in the world remained opened for a month. On 18 May, Mons. Rush presided over the solemn open-air Eucharistic celebration that was attended by thousands of people.¹³¹ The requests for assistance continued to increase and in 1975 the *Figlie Della Carità* decided to extend the Oxley complex, adding a second nursing home. Thanks to a government contribution of over \$1,300,000, in a few months Villa Verona sprung up, an impressive geriatric complex capable of housing 100 people. The work was entrusted to Tony De Luca's building company, that had already carried out the previous construction works.¹³² During these years, the Canossians also opened a primary school at Gregory Terrace. The Holy Family Child Care Centre for children from 3 to 5 years of age was open on working days from 7.30 am to 7.30 pm.¹³³ In September 1979, the Italian consul Dr Mario Sganga, who had recently arrived in Brisbane, wanted to visit the hospital complex in Oxley with the builder, Tony De Luca. The diplomat was positively struck by the work of the Canossian nuns and entertained some of the elderly who were staying there.¹³⁴

The pastoral care of the Italian migrants, the principal objective of their original missionary project, was always a priority for the *Le Figlie Delle Carità* in Brisbane. The precious collaboration with the Capuchin missionaries at the *Casa San Francesco* and the St Thomas More parish was widely documented. Also, in their service to the sick and the elderly, the Canossian nuns paid particular attention to the

¹³⁰ See "Villa Verona: un'esemplare casa di riposo," *La Fiamma*, 7 October 1976, p. 31.

¹³¹ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 27 May 1974, p. 12.

¹³² See "Villa Verona: un'esemplare casa di riposo," *La Fiamma*, 7 October 1976, p. 31.

¹³³ See "Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 3 February 1977, p. 22.

¹³⁴ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 September 1979, p. 30.

members of the Italian community. The same could be said in regard to their apostolate in the field of education.

4. The Scalabrinian Missionaries

The missionaries of St Charles - Scalabrinians began their ministry to the Italian migrants in Queensland in the 1950's. Their apostolate, however, concentrated on Italians in North Queensland. In 1952, the Scalabrinians established a missionary centre in Silkwood to assist the Italian cane cutters there. After less than a decade, the immigration to this zone began to noticeably diminish and in 1968 the Missionaries of St Charles decided to abandon their position in Silkwood. Thirteen years later, the Scalabrinians returned to Queensland to open a missionary centre in Brisbane.¹³⁵

The opening of the Scalabrinian pastoral position in Brisbane occurred through a series of circumstances external to the religious congregation itself. A small group of Italians living in Lutwyche dreamt for some time of having a permanent Italian priest that could minister to the numerous Italian families living in the northern zone of Brisbane, that was too distant for the zealous Capuchin fathers. Supported by the parish priest of the Holy Cross Church in Woolloowin, Fr Brian McMullen, contact was made with the Scalabrinians who replied positively to the appeal. In October 1980, Fr Vito Pegolo came to Brisbane to hold a mission among the Italian families from Woolloowin and its surroundings for two weeks.¹³⁶ It was so successful that there was the immediate prospect of opening a missionary centre in Brisbane. Archbishop Rush immediately demonstrated his support for the idea and entrusted to the Scalabrinian fathers the pastoral care of the Italians in Brisbane. In order to avoid miscommunications and possible interferences, the Scalabrinians signed an agreement with the archdiocese and with the parish priests at New Farm, Woollowin, Wilston, Windsor and Kangaroo Point that clarified the pastoral responsibility of the missionaries. In January 1981, the first two Scalabrinians, Fr Francesco Lovatin and Fr Michele Cagna, arrived in Brisbane and set themselves up in a rental

¹³⁵ See D. Cahill, *Missionaries on the Move*, Center for Migration Studies, New York 2004.

¹³⁶ See *20 anni di vita della Federazione Cattolica Italiana, Sezione di North Brisbane*, ed. Rosanna Boccalatte and Nerina La Spina, unpublished manuscript [2000], pp. 4-5.

house at 32 Bonython Avenue, Windsor, that served for some months as the centre of pastoral activities. On 6 March, the two priests began to celebrate Sunday Mass in Italian in all of the above mentioned parishes except that of Wilston. The families living in this last area were a little distanced from religious practices. Intense pastoral work which constituted home visits and a mission was necessary to guarantee a stable Italian community that wanted to attend Eucharistic celebrations. Towards the end of 1981, the house at Windsor was sold and the Scalabrinians decided to transfer to 35 Lamington Avenue in Lutwyche.¹³⁷

At the beginning of the 1980's, the Italian wave of migration to Brisbane had all but ended and the Italian families tended to move from the centre of the city to more peripheral areas. The dispersion of those in need in a somewhat vast territory, and the challenge posted by administering to the 'Australianised' second generation, forced the Scalabrinians to develop new pastoral strategies. Other than visiting homes and giving assistance to the sick, the Missionaries of St Charles began to offer Sunday Masses in Italian in the various city parishes. The young and not so young were invited to join the *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* [Italian Catholic Federation], a religious association which will be dealt with in detail in the next subchapter.¹³⁸

The end of the Capuchin presence at St Thomas More parish, at the end of 1981, saw a notable increase in pastoral work for the Scalabrinian fathers across the whole city territory. In February 1983, on request from the local priest, the Scalabrinians ended their pastoral work in Windsor. In May, the missionaries began to celebrate Sunday Mass at Sunnybank and in the following July, another was celebrated at Aspley.¹³⁹ At the beginning of 1984, the signed agreement with the Brisbane archdiocese was reviewed in the light of the new pastoral circumstances. While some financial and juridical questions were to be clarified, the parishes of Aspley and Sunnybank were officially

¹³⁷ See D. Cahill (2004), pp. 283-284; and "Cartella sulla sede di Brisbane," *Australis*, 2 (1987), p. 112.

¹³⁸ See D. Cahill (2004), pp. 284-285.

¹³⁹ See "Cartella sulla sede di Brisbane" (1987), pp. 112-113.

added to the territories of Scalabrinian action.¹⁴⁰ In February 1984, Fr Michele Cagna was assigned a new mission and Fr Giovanni Pagnin took his place in Brisbane. On 12 February, the Italian community, wanting to show their support for Fr Cagna, attended a Holy Mass and a party to farewell him at the Holy Spirit parish church in New Farm.¹⁴¹

In the following years, the pastoral activities of the Scalabrinians to support the Italian community had to adapt to new circumstances. In November 1984, to reach the more distant Italians, Fr Lovatin founded a religious bulletin, *Rintocchi*, printed and distributed to many Italian homes.¹⁴² At the end of that year, the Sunday Mass at Sunnybank was cancelled due to poor attendance on the part of the faithful.¹⁴³ At the beginning of 1986, the two fathers living in the missionary centre in Lutwyche celebrated five masses in Italian every weekend in the parishes of New Farm, Woollowin, Kangaroo Point, Aspley and Wilston, to a total of around 700 Italians.¹⁴⁴

In March 1986, Fr Giovanni Pagnin, who could speak Spanish, gave impetus to pastoral activity to support the central-American immigrants at the “Migrant Camp” at Wacol. Towards the end of the same year, a new priest was assigned to the Aspley parish. The new pastor, a strong supporter of a single pastoral ministry for all, decided to terminate the collaboration with the Scalabrinian fathers, who had to move their missionary activity to Geebung parish.¹⁴⁵

At the beginning of 1988, Fr Francesco Lovatin was transferred to Wollongong and Fr Angelo Cagna took his place. In the following years, the Scalabrinian missionaries extended their pastoral activities to the Italians in Carina and to those in Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast. Fr Angelo Cagna relaunched the *Rintocchi* bulletin inserting

¹⁴⁰ See “Agreement between the Archbishop of Brisbane Archdiocese and the Provincial of the Scalabrinian Fathers (24 January 1984),” *Australis* 2 (1984), pp. 11-14.

¹⁴¹ See D. Ceresoli, “Circular letter of 18 January 1984,” *Australis* 2 (1984), p. 4; “Farewell Fr. Michele,” *Australis* 3 (1984), p. 10.

¹⁴² See D. Cahill (2004), pp. 284-285.

¹⁴³ See “Cartella sulla sede di Brisbane” (1987), p. 113.

¹⁴⁴ See “Alcune statistiche della Provincia S. Francesca S. Cabrini,” *Australis* 3 (1986) p. 12.

¹⁴⁵ See “Cartella sulla sede di Brisbane,” *Australis* 2 (1987), p. 113.

pages dedicated to the different geographical areas covered by the work of the Scalabrinian mission.¹⁴⁶ The Missionaries of St Charles still continue, to this day, to serve the Italian community in Brisbane.

¹⁴⁶ See D. Cahill (2004), pp. 284-286.

5. The lay apostolate

The picture of Catholic religious assistance to the Brisbane Italian community would not be complete if it did not include the precious contribution of the lay people. Given individually or collectively, the lay apostolate has contributed enormously to the social, moral and spiritual growth of the Italian community in Brisbane. It was generally developed to assist the priests, religious officials and religious missionaries to support the migrant community. Due to the type of methodology chosen, I am limited in this volume to the description of the indefatigable apostolic work carried out only by those groups that were officially formed.

The “Ordine Francescano Secolare” [Secular Franciscan Order]

The *Ordine Francescano Secolare* (or *Terz’Ordine Francescano*) was formed by St Francis with the aim of offering a legal structure to those who intended to live according to the charisma of the Saint but without leaving their secular state.

A Special “Rule,” which was approved by the ecclesiastical authorities, was developed for this group of people. From the 13th century on, the Franciscan religious community promoted the development of their secular arm, giving the Third Order an important partnership role in carrying out their pastoral ministry.¹⁴⁷

As previously indicated, the first group of the *L’Ordine Francescano Secolare* in Brisbane was founded on 30 March 1952, at the initiative of Fr Bonifacio Zurli. This first cell, that had their base at the *Casa San Francesco*, included only three members, amongst whom were Paolo Raffa and Marino Regano, who were respectively nominated as president and vice-president of the temporary committee of the society. In the following months, other volunteers joined the initiative.¹⁴⁸ The *Corpus Domini* procession in 1952 provided an

¹⁴⁷ See P. Chiminelli, *Terz’Ordine Francescano. Forza viva nella Chiesa di ieri and di oggi*, Centro Nazionale del T. O. F., Roma 1951.

¹⁴⁸ See “La Cronaca di 7 giorni” *La Fiamma*, 22 October 1954, p. 9; *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d’Assisi Patrono d’Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), p. 25.

opportunity for the first public appearance for the *Ordine Franceseano Secolare* in Brisbane. Fr Zurli asked the Italian artist Luigi Favretto to design a special banner depicting St Francis, patron saint of Italy and of Italians abroad. Favretto's beautiful work was blessed by the auxiliary Archbishop, Mons. O'Donnell in the Eucharistic celebration that concluded the popular mission, preached by Fr Alessandro da Firenze in May 1952.¹⁴⁹

The popular mission, preached by Fr Carlo De Matteo in April and May 1953 at the Valley crypt, added fervour to the hearts of many of the faithful. The preacher invited them to join the *Terz'Ordine Franceseano* at the end of the mission, and about twenty enthusiastic people decided to join the secular society immediately.¹⁵⁰

In October of the following year, the *Terz'Ordine Franceseano* in Brisbane had over 70 members, all from the Italian community. On 3 October 1954, a special meeting was held to elect the management committee of the Order, resulting in the following composition: Paolo Raffa (minister); Marino Regano (vice minister); Maria Lodoli (minister); Concettina Garuffi (secretary); Angela Basile (teacher of the novices) Angelina Pennisi; Grazia La Bruna; Luciano Pagano and Olimpia Rossi, committee members. The society members met once a month for a spiritual conference that finished with a Holy Mass dedicated to all the members, both living and dead. Their pastoral activities involved visiting sick Italians either in hospital or at home, an important ministry in tight collaboration with the Capuchin fathers.¹⁵¹ Later on, thanks to the constant promotion by the missionaries, two other cells of the *L'Ordine Franceseano Secolare* were formed, one at Wynnum and the other in Kedron.¹⁵² In 1969, the group at the *Casa San Francesco* transferred, together with the Capuchin fathers, to the St Thomas More parish in Petrie Terrace.

The sources consulted do not report other notices regarding the *Ordine Franceseano Secolare*, but from the interviews recorded one

¹⁴⁹ See "Attività a Brisbane. Pregevole opera artistica di un connazionale," *La Fiamma*, 8 August 1952, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ See "Riuscitissima la missione a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 23 May 1953, p. 2.

¹⁵¹ See "La Cronaca di 7 giorni," *La Fiamma*, 22 October 1954, p. 9.

¹⁵² See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), p. 25.

could deduce that the Italian members of this Order continued to cooperate with the Capuchin missionaries until the latter left the St Thomas More parish in 1981. Faithful to their spirituality, secular charisma and ethnicity, in the following years the Italians belonging to the order continued to collaborate with the priests at Petrie Terrace. The society exists still today, with all its distinctive features, under the name of the Fraternity of St Thomas More.

The “Azione Cattolica”

Founded in Italy in the second half of the 19th century to organise young lay Catholics who wanted to live a life more coherent with Christian ideals, *Azione Cattolica* was officially approved on 2 May 1868, by Pope Pius IX. In various modes, the association spread immediately throughout the Italian peninsula, eventually constituting the principal scheme for young pastoral ministries in all of the Italian dioceses. After the Second World War, Pope Pius XII worked tirelessly to promote *Azione Cattolica* in Italy and throughout the world.¹⁵³

The first female section of *Azione Cattolica* in Brisbane was founded in the first half of 1949 under the name of *Gioventù Cattolica Femminile Italiana* [Young Italian Catholic Women]; also in this case, the initiative came from Fr Bonifacio Zurli. It was a group of young Italian women who were interested in living fully their Christian vocations. The first meetings were held on Sunday at the Valley crypt, but after that the meetings were held at the *Casa San Francesco*. The first president of the *Gioventù Cattolica Femminile Italiana* was Emilia Modellato, who was succeeded by Graziella Bona. They also chose uniforms to wear at official celebrations: a long dark skirt, white blouse and cravat.¹⁵⁴ In 1954, the male section was also formed with the name *Azione Cattolica Italiana di San Gabriele dell'Addolorata* [Italian Catholic Action of St Gabriel of Our Lay of Sorrows]. On Sunday 28 March 1954, with a solemn

¹⁵³ See *Azione Cattolica*, <http://www.azionecattolica.it/aci/chi/storia>, consulted on 12 June 2008.

¹⁵⁴ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli*, (1994), p. 21.

ceremony at the Valley crypt, Fr Zurli gave out the membership cards and badges to about 20 young Italians. On this occasion, the Capuchin missionary, spiritual director of the society, reminded the members of their duty to be involved in the apostolic work of propagating the Christian faith.¹⁵⁵

Despite the initial enthusiasm, the male section struggled to obtain new members.¹⁵⁶ In November 1955, on the occasion of the visit of the apostolic delegate, Mons. Romolo Carboni the two sections of the *Azione Cattolica* were busy preparing a special welcome celebration at the *Casa San Francesco*. The president of the *Azione Cattolica Italiana di San Gabriele dell'Addolorata*, C. Di Marco, was part of the welcoming committee. The women's Catholic Action choir sang the anthem of the *Azione Cattolica* and a representative of the society welcomed the pontifical delegate. Mons. Carboni was positively struck by the developments of the *Azione Cattolica* in Brisbane and made specific mention of them in his vote of thanks.¹⁵⁷ The activities of the society were not exclusively religious. This was demonstrated by the invitation to a boat trip to Mandalay, with music and games, on Sunday 18 December which the *Azione Cattolica* published in *La Fiamma* at the beginning of December 1955.¹⁵⁸ In 1957, a new section appeared called *Associazione Cattolica Gruppo Famiglie* [Catholic Association Group for Families]. The sources consulted do not provide much information on this group, but certify that on 23 March 1957, this section organised a ball at the *Casa San Francesco*.¹⁵⁹ In 1958, the men's and women's sections collaborated to organise a ball at the *Casa*. The event, on Sunday 3 August, was enjoyed by more than 200 people in attendance. The same organisers decided to host, the following month, a *Ballo per papà e mamma* [Ball for Fathers and Mothers] with music from the past.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ See "Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 14 May 1954, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ See "La voce del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 16 September 1955, p. 9.

¹⁵⁷ See "Mons. Carboni tra gli Italiani di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 9 December 1955, p. 9.

¹⁵⁸ See "L'Azione Cattolica a Mandalay," *La Fiamma*, 9 December 1955, p. 9.

¹⁵⁹ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 March 1957, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ See "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 1 August 1958, p. 12; "Sette giorni nel Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 August 1958, p. 15.

From 1959, the news on *Azione Cattolica* in Brisbane, reported in the sources consulted became scarce. One could likely suppose that it was a moment of stasis. The notices recommenced some years later. On 12 June 1965, the women's section of the *Azione Cattolica* organised a picnic at the Canossian convent at Mt. Tamborine. After the Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr Silvio Spighi, the day trippers shared a picnic lunch and then participated in games and activities prepared by the young organisers.¹⁶¹

On the 3rd of the following October, the women's section proposed a bus trip to Toowoomba.¹⁶² On 12 February 1966, the enterprising young people decided to support the work of the Canossian nuns by hosting a ball at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm. The proceeds for the evening went towards the hospital run by the religious order.¹⁶³ At the same hall, on the 8th of the following October, the women's section of *Azione Cattolica* organised a ball with a fashion parade. Some designs exclusively by dressmaker Coral Lea were presented. At the end of the event, the president of *Azione Cattolica*, Connie Nicolò, completely satisfied with the number of people who attended, publicly thanked the sponsors and all of the collaborators.¹⁶⁴

In December 1966, the new management committee of the women's *Azione Cattolica* was elected and it included: Iva Bardini (president), Emilia Regano (vice president), Antonietta Ceccato (secretary), Iris Vincenzi (assistant secretary) Angela Nicolò (treasurer), Assunta Maccarone (assistant treasurer), Lina Pessato and Milena Nardo (committee members). The new committee organised a picnic for 18 December at the Capuchin monastery in Wynnum and were given the use of a bus for the occasion.¹⁶⁵

In 1968, the male and female sections, under the name of *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana di Brisbane* [Young Italian Catholics in Brisbane], renewed the strong collaboration of the past to organise a

¹⁶¹ See "Picnic Associazione Cattolica," *La Fiamma*, 15 June 1965, p. 16.

¹⁶² See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 21 September 1965, p.16.

¹⁶³ See "Ballo dell' Azione Cattolica a Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 8 February 1966, p. 16.

¹⁶⁴ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 20 September 1966, p. 16; "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 18 October 1966, p. 16.

¹⁶⁵ See "I fatti del Queensland," *La Fiamma*, 13 December 1966, p. 16.

series of social and philanthropic events. On 9 March 1968, to raise funds to support the earthquake victims in Sicily, the young Catholics organised a cabaret night entitled ‘Sicilian Night’ at the Valley Police Club hall.¹⁶⁶

In the same month, the *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana di Brisbane* made the collaboration between the male and female sections of the organisation more official with the drawing up of new statutes. The management committee of the society decided to organise a dance evening on 28 April entitled *Aprile in Fiore* [April in flowers], at the Valley Police Club hall.¹⁶⁷ On Sunday 10 September 1968, the same committee organised a car rally from the Valley to Aspley, with the main prize being a trophy from the Serafini Service Centre. The motorcade finished with a large barbecue at the Australian-Italian Bowling Club.¹⁶⁸ On the 2nd of the following November, the *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana di Brisbane* hosted a dance evening at the Valley Police Club, during which was elected Miss *Gioventù* [Miss Youth]. The crown went to nineteen year old Lucy Mazzucca, while the title of Charity Queen went to Miss Silvia Mejak. Over 500 Italians attended the event.¹⁶⁹ On 18 November 1968, the annual general meeting of the society was held with the election of the new management committee. For the male section, the new president was G. Nicolò; for the female section, the role of president went to Flora Di Lizio. The new committee organised a ball on 28 December 1968, entitled “The Sunset of 1968” at the Holy Spirit Hall.¹⁷⁰

On 30 March, the *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana* decided to once again stage the car rally that was so successful the previous year. The event was organised in conjunction with the Aspley Tavern and the Serafini Service Centre. The motorcade wound through the main streets of the city and then met back at the Australian-Italian Bowling Club for a barbecue. The event finished with a ball at the same

¹⁶⁶ See “Sicilian Night” pro-terremotati, *Il Globo*, 27 February 1968, p. 15.

¹⁶⁷ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 16 April 1968, p. 14.

¹⁶⁸ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 13 August 1968, p.15; “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 27 August 1968, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 12 November 1968, p. 15.

¹⁷⁰ See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 10 December 1968, p. 17.

club.¹⁷¹ On the 21st of the following June, the *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana* held a dance evening at the Holy Spirit Hall. The evening was highlighted with a fashion parade by dressmaker Corral Lea.¹⁷²

Even if the sources consulted did not report much news for the first years of the 1970's, it could be supposed that the activities of the *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana di Brisbane* in Brisbane continued to hold events on a regular basis. On 16 June 1974, the management committee organised a ball at the Y.M.C.A. centre in Windsor.¹⁷³ On Saturday 7 December, the *Gioventù Cattolica Italiana di Brisbane* in Brisbane held a Supper Dance for Christmas at the Lupis of Kenmore Hall in Brookfield.¹⁷⁴

The “Associazione Donne Cattoliche Italiane” [Italian Catholic Women’s Association]

In September 1949, Miss Rosina Battaglia founded the group called Figlie di San Francesco [Daughters of St Francis] aimed at offering Italian women the chance to meet and talk at the *Casa San Francesco*. In the following October, the group formed the *Circolo delle Donne Italiane* [Italian Women’s Club]. Under the guidance of Fr Bonifacio Zurli, they elected the first management committee that included the following people: Rosina Battaglia (president), Olimpia Rossi (vice president), Maria Antoni (treasurer), Caterina Strano (vice treasurer), Rosanna Mattei (secretary) and Maria Cunico (vice secretary). In the December after that the women of the club hosted the first ‘Christmas tree’ at the *Casa San Francesco*. On the 11th of the following December, the club organised their official inauguration with a party during which gifts were distributed to all of the Italian children. On that occasion, the women also held a benefit fete to support the *Casa*.

¹⁷¹ See “Notiziario dal Queensland,” *Il Globo*, 18 March 1969, p. 17.

¹⁷² See “Notiziario da Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 10 June 1969, p. 18.

¹⁷³ See “Gioventù Cattolica di Brisbane,” *Il Globo*, 3 June 1974, p. 12.

¹⁷⁴ See “Gioventù Cattolica Italiana,” *Il Globo*, 18 November 1974, p. 15.

Mons. James Duhig personally participated in the event along with a large crowd of Italians.¹⁷⁵

In the following years the sources consulted do not report a lot of information in regard to the *Circolo delle Donne Italiane*. It could be supposed that the society became part of the committee that supported the *Casa San Francesco*. At the beginning of 1969, however, the club was reformed by a group of humble women with the support of the Capuchin missionaries under the name of the *Associazione Donne Cattoliche Italiane di Brisbane*. In September 1969, the association had a large number of members. The monthly meetings were held at the Holy Spirit Hall in New Farm. On 5 October 1969, the management committee held a meeting to outline the program of activities for the following months.¹⁷⁶ On the 26th of the following October, they held a large meeting for all of the association members. Other than spiritual conferences, they organised entertainment for young and old so that the whole family could be involved. The society continued to gain success even amongst non-Italian women. In 1976, the president was Miss Mazzocato and the secretary was Miss Rainieri.¹⁷⁷

The news reported by the sources consulted for the following years are rare and fragmented, but it could be supposed that the society continued to consolidate. In 1978, the *Associazione Donne Cattoliche Italiane* continued to hold its monthly meetings at the Holy Spirit parish in New Farm every first Sunday of the month. The Catholic society had already obtained official recognition from the archdiocesan authority in Brisbane and was registered as a non-profit association in Queensland. Their spiritual assistant was Fr Camillo Grisendi, and he shared the role with the Canossian nuns. On 13 May 1978, the association held a Mother's Day celebration at the Holy Spirit Hall.¹⁷⁸ In October 1984, the president was Santina Denaro.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ See "Cronache di Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 30 September 1949, p. 2; "La festa di S. Francesco," *La Fiamma*, 21 October 1949, p. 4; "Notizie da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 13 January 1950, p. 2.

¹⁷⁶ See "Notiziario dal Queensland," *Il Globo*, 30 September 1969, p. 18.

¹⁷⁷ See "Notiziario da Brisbane," *Il Globo*, 14 October 1969, p. 18.

¹⁷⁸ See "Brevi da Brisbane," *La Fiamma*, 1 May 1978, p. 27.

¹⁷⁹ See *Italian Associations in Brisbane*, 25th October 1984, Casa Italia Archive.

The activities of the society continued until 1992, when the *Associazione Donne Cattoliche Italiane* folded.¹⁸⁰

The “Federazione Cattolica Italiana” [Italian Catholic Federation]

The *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* was founded in Melbourne in the 1960's on the initiative of Fr Aldo Lorigiola, Scalabrinian missionary. The idea of forming a lay group able to collaborate with the missionaries in their pastoral work of supporting the Italian migrants, captured the attention of about 30 men and women. On 11 December, in the All Saints parish hall in Fitzroy, they held the first membership ceremony of the F.C.I., (*Federazione Cattolica Italiana*), thus becoming the society's founders. The enthusiasm of the pioneers inspired many other Italian communities that were under the care of the Scalabrinian missionaries, and in three years the *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* already had 13 branches. In 1966, they already had 1 147 members, divided into 25 branches in different Australian localities. The year after there were 35 branches and the F.C.I. became known across Australia.¹⁸¹

Towards the end of the 1970's, rumours of the F.C.I.'s success reached the Italian community in Brisbane. Mr Piero Pezzopane presented the F.C.I. for the first time to the small Italian community at the Holy Cross Church in Woollowin. Parish priest, Fr Brian McMullen, had given Mr. Nave, a leader in that parish, the task of forming a permanent committee that represented the Italian community. The F.C.I. was considered a good model. Sister Giuseppina Colombo, a Canossian missionary who had known of the federation from her previous mission, provided further information on the *Federazione Cattolica Italiana*. The committee, guided by Mr. Nave, decided to invite a Scalabrinian father and a representative of the federation to a retreat. Towards the middle of 1980, Fr Luciano Ferracin and Sauro Antonelli, national president of the F.C.I., came to explain in detail the goals of the federation. During the Holy Mass that concluded the retreat, Fr McMullen invited the Italians to gather

¹⁸⁰ See *Celebrazioni della Festa di San Francesco d'Assisi Patrono d'Italia and del 50.mo di sacerdozio del Rev. Padre Bonifacio Zurli* (1994), p. 21.

¹⁸¹ See D. Cahill (2004), pp. 149-150.

with him that evening in the parish hall. During this meeting, it was decided that a temporary committee of the F.C.I. would be formed at the Holy Cross parish. Rosanna Boccalatte was nominated as the president, Nerina La Spina as the secretary and treasurer and Rosario Merenda, Josie Cerqui, Nicola Nave, Addolorata De Michele and Sister Giuseppina Colombo as committee members. On 26 October 1980, during the Eucharistic celebration, Fr Vito Pegolo, to conclude his popular mission, ceremoniously distributed the membership cards and badges of the *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* to the first 12 members.

The newborn branch organised a successful trip for Italian families to the Gold Coast on 30 November 1980. The children of the members wanted to copy the good example of their parents and organised a trip to Point Danger on 4 December in that same year. They were accompanied by some adult members of the federation. That month, the young Rosario La Spina hosted Christmas carols.¹⁸²

In the days following the arrival of the first Scalabrinian missionaries, Fr Francesco Lovatin and Fr Michele Cagna, some members of the F.C.I. branch in Brisbane contacted these fathers and decided to hold a meeting in the Woolloowin parish hall to present and plan pastoral activities. The federation, entrusted to the spiritual guidance of Fr Lovatin, made a commitment to collaborate with the missionaries in order to: animate the liturgy for the Sunday masses in Italian, visit the sick and organise fund-raising activities. Among the latter, there was a special collection for the victims of the earthquake that hit Irpinia in November 1980. They raised more than \$400.

Considering that many young Italians were interested in the association, Fr Lovatin suggested the idea of founding a youth group attached to the federation. This idea was accepted and Gino Boccalatte became the first president of the youth group. At the beginning of 1981, the Federation organised various activities. On 26 April, they organised a trip to Mt. Tamborine. In May, they held a Rosary recital, Bible study meeting and celebrated Mother's Day at the Valley Soccer Club. The Federation walked for the first time with its banner in the *Corpus Domini* procession at Nudgee the following

¹⁸² See *20 anni di vita della Federazione Cattolica Italiana, Sezione di North Brisbane*, [2000], pp. 4-6.

June. In the same month, the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Fr Francesco Lovatin was celebrated. In July 1981, the federation decided to assist with the production of the first bulletin of the Scalabrinian mission with Maria Toscano and Lidia Gri volunteering to fulfil this role. In the following September, the members actively participated in the celebration of 'Immigration Sunday' in the Brisbane cathedral. They also held an F.C.I. stall at the Warana Festival that year. On 26 September 1981, the Federation held its first Dinner Dance at the Mayne Sporting Club. This event was held to raise funds for the Scalabrinian seminary in the Philippines. Amongst the 470 people who attended, there were the auxiliary Bishop Mons. John Caskelly and the Italian consul, Luigi Fulvi.¹⁸³

In January 1982, the Brisbane F.C.I. attended the national congress of the *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* held in Melbourne. On 21st of the following March, there was the second membership ceremony in the Holy Rosary Church at Windsor, with many new members joining the association. The new management committee was elected, with Rosanna Boccalatte as president, Maria Toscano as vice-president, Nerina La Spina as the secretary and Nicola Nave, treasurer. At the same time the *Gruppo Giovani*, which had over 50 members, became independent, although continuing to collaborate in the activities of the Brisbane section. During 1982, the Federation proposed again the religious, social and charitable activities that they had successfully carried out in the previous year. On 27 November, to support the Scalabrinian magazine, *Il Messaggero*, the F.C.I. organised the first walk-a-thon, a 20 km walk from the Holy Cross church to the Banyo Seminary where they shared a picnic lunch. At Christmas time, the *Federazione* hosted a Christmas concert in the Woollowin parish hall.¹⁸⁴

In March 1983, Maria Toscano was elected president of the Brisbane branch and a new programme of activities was drawn up in collaboration with the chaplain, Fr Lovatin. In the following July, the Scalabrinian missionaries extended their activity to the Our Lady and St Dymphna parishes in Aspley and the idea of founding a new branch of the *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* emerged. Fr Lovatin and some

¹⁸³ See *Ibidem*, pp. 8-15.

¹⁸⁴ See *Ibidem*, pp. 16-18.

lay collaborators carried out a door knock of all the Italian families in the area to find a group of people interested in the initiative. The work was arduous but in the course of a few days the mission began to produce the results it had hoped for: in July the Aspley branch of the F.C.I. became a reality. On 26 February 1984, the two Brisbane branches of the F.C.I. conjointly held a membership ceremony during a Holy Mass which was presided over by Mons. Rush in the church parishes of Our Lady and St Dymphna. The Aspley branch had 40 candidates. On the 5th of the following August, the new branch elected its first official management committee, with Giuseppina Musarra as president.

Throughout the following years and months both branches were occupied with the organisation of: religious events (Holy Masses, *Via Crucis*, *Corpus Domini* procession, family rosary recitals, prayer groups and spiritual retreats); recreational activities (balls, picnics, bus tours) and raising funds to support the scholarship for Scalabrinian seminarians in the Philippines. They were also involved in fund-raising for the production of *Messaggero* and contributing to the African Famine Appeal. The *Gruppo Giovani* always co-operated in the various enterprises of the F.C.I. In November 1986, the cessation of pastoral activity by the Scalabrinian fathers in the Our Lady and St Dymphna parishes marked the transfer of the Aspley branch to Geebung, to St Kevin's parish and the change of name to the 'Aspley/Geebung branch'.

In order to more efficiently coordinate branch activities of the *Federazione*, in February 1987 the first F.C.I. state committee in Queensland was formed. This included Rosanna Boccalatte and Joe Miranda, representatives from the Woolloowin section (or North Brisbane), Camillo Impellizzeri and Carmela Bozzi, representatives from the Aspley-Geebung section and Emilio Raglione and Ross Mancuso, representatives of the youth group. In May 1987, Anna Sassu became the president of the Woollowin branch and remained in charge until 1990. On 6 December 1987, at the Kangaroo Point parish, the South Brisbane branch of the F.C.I. was established with Elena Furlanis as president. At the beginning of 1988, Fr Angelo Cagna, took Fr Lovatin's place as spiritual assistant of the *Federazione*. On 17 April 1988, Fr Angelo Cagna presided over the membership

ceremony where the results of eight years of fruitful pastoral work were clearly evident. On the 2nd of the following May, Carmela Bozzi was elected president of the Aspley/Geebung branch. In May 1989, she handed over the reigns of the group to Leo Bozzi. Throughout the next years, the branches continued to actively work with the Scalabrinian missionaries. On 21 June 1989, a new state committee was formed with Mariano Le Mura, president, Gaetano Caltabiano, secretary, Ross Mancuso as the treasurer and Isidoro Aprile, Gino De Angelis, Rosanna Boccalatte and Elena Furlanis as committee members.

In November 1989, Fr Giuseppe Visentin, provincial superior of the Scalabrinian missionaries, was invited by the F.C.I. to Aspley/Geebung to enliven an open retreat based on the spirituality of the charismatic movement. This was held at Banyo seminary. Following the fervour created by the preacher, on 30 November 1989, the *Gruppo di Preghiera del Rinnovamento nello Spirito di Sant'Andrea* [Prayer Group for the renewal of the spirit of St Andrew] was established. Carmela Bozzi and Agatino Le Mura were elected as the group leaders. In April 1990, the 10th anniversary of the Brisbane *Federazione Cattolica Italiana* was ceremoniously celebrated.¹⁸⁵

Eighteen years on, the Brisbane F.C.I. is still strong and dynamic. Its tireless apostolate amongst the Italian immigrants, always in conjunction with the Scalabrinian fathers, has at times extended its specialised work beyond national boundaries. This was the case when assistance was given in recent times to numerous Sudanese refugees relocated to Brisbane.

¹⁸⁵ See *Ibidem*, pp. 18-24; see also *Interview with Camillo Impellizzeri*, 30 June 2008 and *Interview with Carmela Bozzi*, 30 June 2008.

CONCLUSION

Italian migration after the Second World War left its mark not only on the Australian rural communities, but above all on the major cities of the country. In 45 years, over 300,000 Italians arrived in Australia, added to the 33,000 who were already recorded in the 1947 census. Thanks to an agreement between the two countries, from 1951, Italian emigration to the New Continent was encouraged through government support. In some cases, the Australian dream became a terrible nightmare as the promise of work, which prompted many to undertake the Australian adventure, remained unfulfilled. In lots of other cases, the Italian immigrants made their fortune, above all thanks to their hard work and inventiveness. After World War II, Queensland did not exert its charm on the new generation of migrants as it had for migrants in the interwar period. The spectres of deportation and the imprisonment of thousands of Italian enemy aliens during the conflict, often slowed the cogs of chain migration, which was essential to the Italian presence in Australia after the Second World War.

Moreover, the industrial development of Victoria and New South Wales and agricultural progress in South Australia seemed to offer many more opportunities. In the 1950's, almost half of the Italian community in Queensland came from Sicily. The other regions that were strongly represented were respectively: Veneto, Lombardy, Piedmont and Friuli Venezia Giulia. In the same period, agriculture employed around two-thirds of the Italian labourers in the state, but the statistics note a clear interest in the building and tourist industries. The 1966 census registered a record number of Italian-born migrants in Australia. This was a little more than 20,000 individuals living

in Queensland. The ‘small but tenacious’ Italian community discussed in my first volume did not grow on par with those of Sydney and Melbourne. The community did, however, maintain their tenaciousness, rising again from the ashes of the Australian prison camps. The Italian presence in Brisbane was reinvigorated by internal migration from the northern part of the state and the influx of new migrants. The integration process was not the easiest and the women often remained at the margins of society.

From 1945 to 1990, the life of the Italian community in Brisbane was marked by a long series of events that manifested all of its dynamicity. From the first tours to Bishop Island to the Sundays at the Aspley *Tavernetta*, from the meetings at the *Casa San Francesco* to the mass events at New Farm Park, the Italian community never missed an opportunity to celebrate the joy of gathering together. In the early post-war period, some notable members of the Italian community distinguished themselves as facilitators and organisers of community events. Amongst them, names such as Francesco Castellano and Rosina Battaglia stand out.

From the 1950’s, the Italian diplomatic representation played a crucial role in the process of the formation and consolidation of the Brisbane Italian community. All the vice-consuls and the consuls (not forgetting the acting ones) in succession from 1951 until 1990, contributed, even if in a different way, to the reinforcement of the national identity. The national celebrations (2 June and 4 November) always brought the whole Italian community in Brisbane together. Many events helped to promote the Italian culture in Brisbane.

More than the art exhibitions and the erudite conferences, which were of a high standard, there were the classical and popular music performances to capture the attention of both the Italian and Australian public, providing the opportunity to mingle and for intercultural exchange. The Italian community

never missed the opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity with the mother country in moments of need. Private donations, special collections and proceeds derived from fund-raising events permitted the Brisbane Italians to send considerable economic contributions to Italy, on the occasions when several catastrophes hit the country after the Second World War. Thanks to their hard work and tenacity, all the Italian migrants in Brisbane were able to attain adequate financial stability. Some, gifted with particular skills and creativity, were able to break into the fields of building, industry, commerce and catering. The vitality of the Italian community in Brisbane was wonderfully 'captured' by correspondents from *La Fiamma* and *Il Globo*, who have methodically described the main events and the protagonists of the enthusiastic ventures. Different radio stations offered their frequencies to skilled Italian presenters, who, through a rich schedule of radio programmes, built bridges of friendship and solidarity amongst Italian immigrants in Brisbane and in all of Queensland.

The Italian associative spirit did not die in the prison camps. Certainly it suffered a little at first, due to the fascist 'shadows' that had characterised some associations in the 1930's, but with the arrival of the new generation of migrants, the will to stay together rose to the fore once again. The numerous Italian associations that were formed from the 1950's onwards were responses to specific interests: literary, musical, sporting, religious and welfare. With the exception of the *Fogolar Furlan*, the Italian societies assumed a regional character only in the 1970's. The sources consulted reveal a rich program of activities of a different nature, with a significant concentration of activities on the weekend. It was clearly evident that these opportunities to gather socially, particularly at dinners and balls, other than important occasions for meeting with other compatriots, also served to facilitate the obvious preference for marriages within the community. The multiplication of the

associations, from the beginning of the 1970's, created an increase in social functions, which began to clash in a calendar of events that was already somewhat full. In some cases, such clashes seemed to nurture a spirit of competition between different associations, not facilitating cooperation between them. The response was immediate. Concerned about the potential consequences, the directors of the Italian associations, with the support of the consulate, organised an annual common program that began to re-establish the equilibrium. It should, however, be noted that, despite the indefatigable efforts of many, the ideal of a single centre for all of the activities of the Italian community was never realised.

The religious dimension always played an important role in the migratory experience of the Italians. The tight link between faith and culture, learnt at home, at school and at catechism becomes stronger on foreign soil, with the desire to recreate an 'oasis' of a familiar, secure environment. Mons. Duhig understood this so well that during all the years he spent as head of the Brisbane archdiocese, he always paid particular attention to the Italian immigrants. The warm welcome and the 'personalised' accompaniment reserved for the Italians by the local Church (bishops and priests) in the interwar period continued to mark the relationship with the Italian community also after the Second World War. Since the 1940's, the religious assistance provided by diocesan clerics was added to by the indefatigable socio-pastoral work of the Capuchin missionaries. The pioneers, and in particular Fr Bonifacio Zurli, were able to comprehend the spiritual and material needs of the migrants and provided the appropriate responses. The *Casa San Francesco*, one of the many initiatives of Fr Zurli, represented for over 20 years a true 'home' for all of the Italians in Brisbane and in fact Queensland. In 1949, the Canossian nuns also arrived. Other than taking care of the terminally ill and elderly in Brisbane, they constantly collaborated with the Capuchin fathers,

broadening the scope of the pastoral activity amongst the Italian families by adding a female perspective. In the 1980's, the Scalabrinian missionaries arrived in Brisbane and they progressively assumed the responsibility of the Italian chaplaincy. Their socio-religious assistance, in line with the wider geographical distribution of the Italians and the inevitable generational change, structured itself according to a migratory pastoral ministry coordinated with the local church in a cross-cultural context.

Since its beginning, the lay contribution to the assistance work of the priests and religious orders was fundamental. Whether individually or part of a group or religious association, the lay community represented a pillar of support for the ethnic chaplaincy. They always responded promptly and generously to their vocation, using a variety of different approaches, talents and charismas. In doing so, they promoted the conservation of the faith and the continuation of good national traditions.

The small but tenacious Italian community in Brisbane can be proud of its past, rich with successes and worthy achievements. It is without doubt important to keep alive the memory of past events, but yet more important to inspire in the future generations a desire to know their history, the history of their parents and grandparents, and to not lose contact with their roots. In doing so, they will not lose an identity which was established through the blood and sweat of those who preceded them. I hope these pages of mine have served this aim.

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