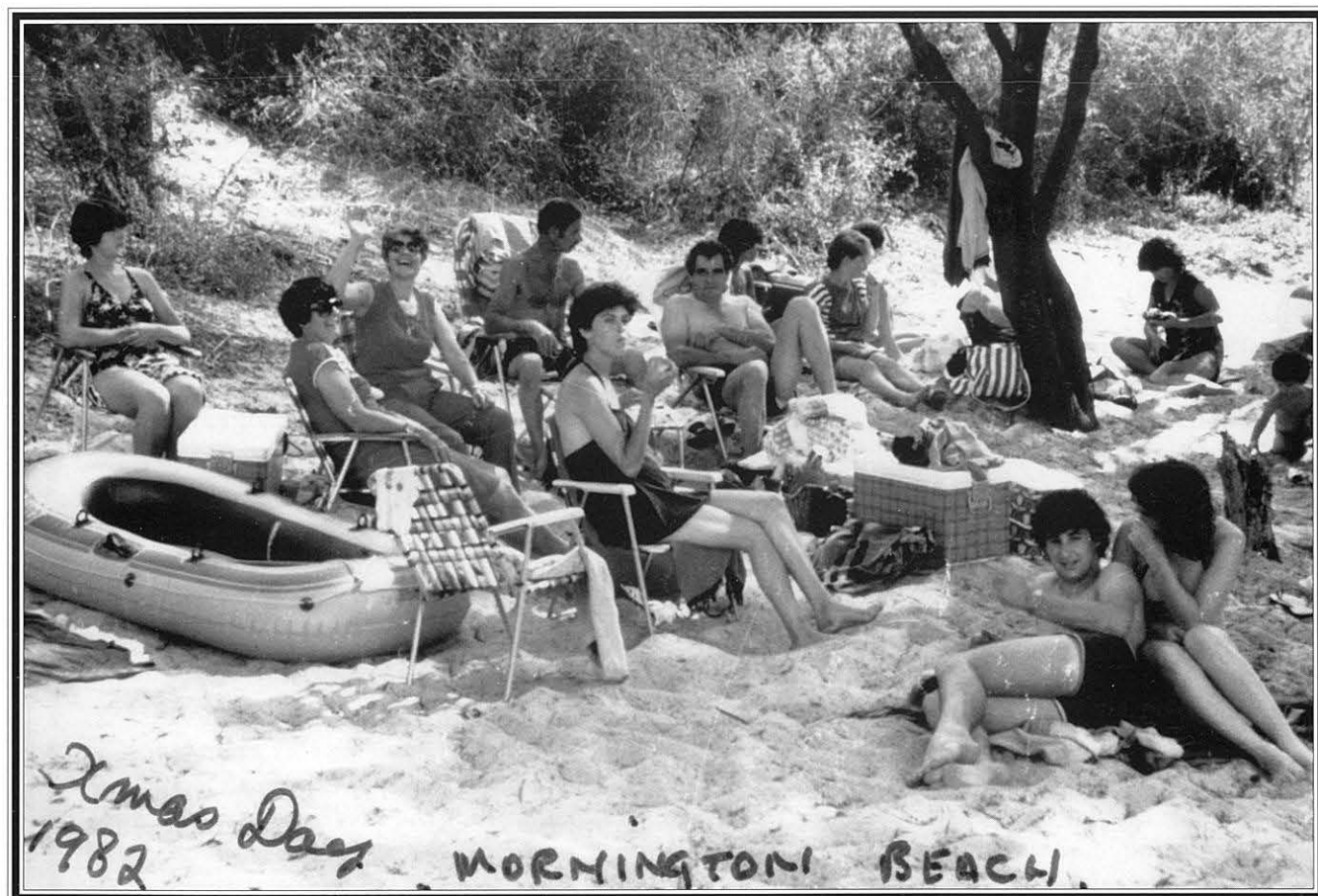




ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

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FRONT COVER:

The Parolin and Comelli families celebrating Christmas Day at Mornington Beach, 1982. Migration brought with it a change in traditions. Many of the people in this picture would have been accustomed to celebrating Christmas indoors back in Italy, especially given the climate at that time of the year in Europe. In fact, being from the north, they would have celebrated a white Christmas. What was maintained was the affinity for family and friends to celebrate.

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BACKGROUND IMAGE:

Mario's restaurant at 198 Exhibition Street Melbourne, decorated for the first official visit to the city of Melbourne by Queen Elizabeth II, 1954. Italian Historical Society Photographic Collection.

THE CONTINUING CHAIN: THE MIGRATION OF SANGIORGESI TO ADELAIDE IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

by

Giulia Ciccone and Desmond O'Connor

Giulia Ciccone is a postgraduate student in Italian at Flinders University of South Australia. In 2001 she completed her Honours degree with a thesis on Italians in Adelaide from San Giorgio La Molara in the region of Campania. Desmond O'Connor is Associate Professor in Italian at Flinders University.

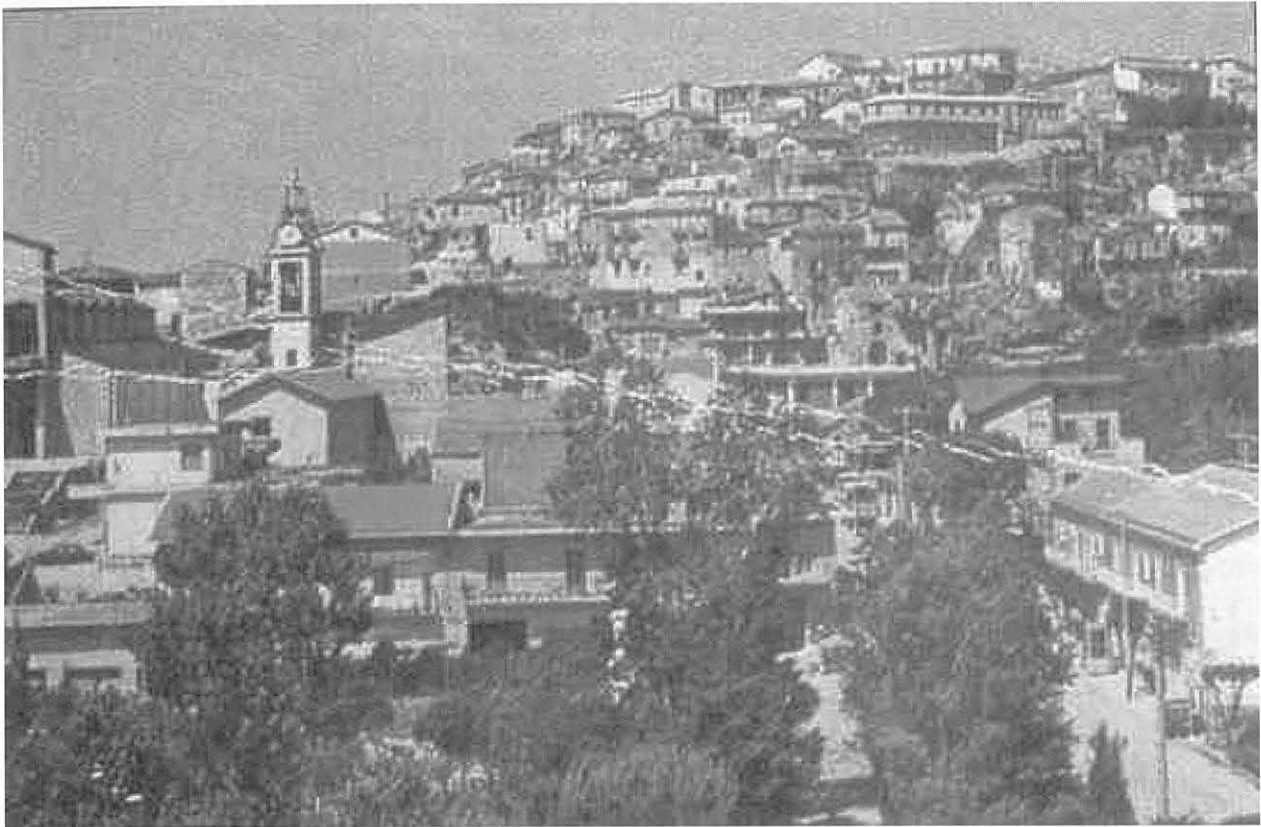
Italian migrants from Campania, together with migrants from Calabria and Veneto, make up over 50% of the Italians in South Australia.¹ In 1970, when Italian numbers were at their peak, an estimated 30% of the Italians who had settled in SA were from the Campania region, easily the highest percentage of any Australian State. In Victoria, for example, 30% were born in Sicily and 25% in Calabria; in New South Wales 24% were from Calabria and 20% were from Sicily.² Before the Second World War most of the Italians from Campania who settled in South Australia had emigrated from the two inland provinces of Benevento and Avellino,³ and this continued to be the case after 1945. Few Italians migrated to Adelaide from the port of Naples or surrounding coastal towns where there was a greater chance of finding work.

In the 1950s and 1960s there were very limited opportunities for employment in the underdeveloped and impoverished rural areas of southern Italy. Despite the input of funds from Rome through the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* (State Fund for the South), Campania, like other southern regions, continued to rely heavily for its economy on age-old agricultural practices. Between 1951 and 1971 over four million Italians left their towns in the south and migrated, some to the industrial triangle in north-western Italy, others to European countries or overseas. The number of Italians from the regions of southern Italy who migrated abroad in just the one year 1961 (270,000) was more than double the number who went abroad in 1952 (130,000). The most popular overseas destinations were Argentina, Canada, the United States and Australia, countries that had an urgent, though usually short-lived and sporadic, need for unskilled labour.⁴ For the Christian Democrat government of Alcide De Gasperi, which was keen to reduce the high post-war unemployment rates and to build up foreign capital reserves through the remittances sent home by Italians abroad, emigration became a central element of its international policy, with the export of its people

seen as a 'vital necessity'.⁵ The Italian government was happy to arrange migration agreements with countries such as Argentina, Brazil and Australia where there was a demand for labour. Indeed, the number of Italians whom the Italian government was hoping to encourage to go to Australia was far more than Australia was willing to receive.⁶

As many as 239 Italians from Campania are recorded as having already settled in South Australia in the 1930s.⁷ In a migration chain that bridges the divide of the Second World War, these early migrants were instrumental in sponsoring their relatives and *compaesani* to Adelaide in the 1950s and 1960s. This sponsorship, or *atto di richiamo*, was the means by which virtually all *campani* migrated to South Australia. The sponsor acted as guarantor, promising that the new arrival would not be a burden on the Australian government. Although 20% of all post-war Italians arriving in Australia came as assisted migrants – subsequent to the signing, in 1951, of the bilateral agreement between Italy and Australia – most of the assisted passages were offered to intending migrants from Tuscany and generally northern Italians, who were considered more easily assimilable, and more likely to have a trade qualification. Many of the farmer-migrants from Campania were not even aware of the assisted passage scheme. One Adelaide woman from San Giorgio La Molara recalls that after she embarked from Naples, the ship sailed on to Trieste where, to her surprise, 650 Triestines came aboard, all apparently with their voyage paid for by the government.

San Giorgio La Molara is an ancient town perched high on a hilltop approximately 30 km north-east of Benevento. Its name appeared in 14th century documents as *Castrum Sancti Georgii Molinari*, the descriptor *Molinari* being a derivative of the name of the nearby town of Molinara.⁸ San Giorgio's population grew from about 1,000 in the sixteenth century to a peak of



View of the hilltop town of San Giorgio La Molara in the province of Campania, Italy.

nearly 6,000 towards the end of the eighteenth century. Since then, mainly because of migration, the population has steadily declined to the three and a half thousand who live there today. The economy continues to depend above all on agriculture, especially cereals such as wheat and maize, and on the breeding of cattle, pigs, donkeys, rabbits, sheep and other farmyard animals. Other industries include clothing and leather goods.

The transoceanic migration stream from San Giorgio La Molara did not cease after the First World War when the United States imposed its entry restrictions. The *sangiorgesi* continued to look to overseas destinations where they hoped to be able to make a better life for themselves.⁹ Amongst those who migrated abroad between the two world wars, a small number chose to settle in Adelaide, having been told of the opportunities available there by other migrants from nearby villages. In September 1927 the first three *sangiorgesi* landed in Adelaide and another four arrived the following month.¹⁰ By the end of the 1930s at least thirteen Italians had arrived from the town and were working as market gardeners either in the north-eastern suburbs of Athelstone and Campbelltown or in the nearby hills districts of Piccadilly and Summertown.

On 29 September 1943, twenty-seven civilians were killed when San Giorgio La Molara, which was at the time occupied by German forces, was bombed by the Americans. Following the War, due to the acute shortage of work and the enormous destruction that the town had suffered, many *sangiorgesi* decided to emigrate. In the period between 1950 and 1970 entire families settled in Adelaide, sponsored by friends and relatives. Of the 38,000 Italians who landed in South Australia in these two decades, 797, equal to 2.1%, were from San Giorgio.¹¹ Meanwhile life in the town continued to be difficult for its townspeople: in 1962 and again in 1980 San Giorgio suffered more damage, this time from violent earthquakes.

In order to learn of the particular migration experiences of the *sangiorgesi* of Adelaide, 20 interviews were conducted, 12 with men and eight with women. All informants arrived in Australia between 1951 and 1965, the majority between 1951 and 1956. All the males and half of the females had been *contadini* in Italy, and most were aged between 18 and 35 at the time of departure. Most remember vividly the bombing of the town on 29 September 1943, and two informants had relatives who were among the 27 killed. Three male informants who had been soldiers in the Italian army were taken prisoner

by the Germans following Marshal Badoglio's declaration of war on Germany. They recall that, as prisoners of war in Germany, they had little to eat, worked all day and were treated cruelly by the Germans. One *sangiorgese* remembers: 'Ci hanno maltrattato ... ho vissuto perché io ero giovane, ma tanti più che erano anziani o vecchi o malati sono morti tutti in prigione ... eravamo più di settanta, ottantamila italiani ... era terribile' (They mistreated us ... I survived because I was young but those who were elderly or ill all died in prison ... there were seventy, eighty thousand Italians ... it was terrible).

All recall the difficulties of life in San Giorgio immediately after the war. Even though the parents of all the informants owned land and the majority of the informants also owned some land themselves, they had to work all day, every day, in order to eke out a meagre living. One woman remembers that 'everything had to be rebuilt ... there was no money ... it was very hard. My grandmother used to make soap because there was no soap available. You couldn't find money for clothes'. A man recalls women walking around, without shoes, trying to find a piece of bread.

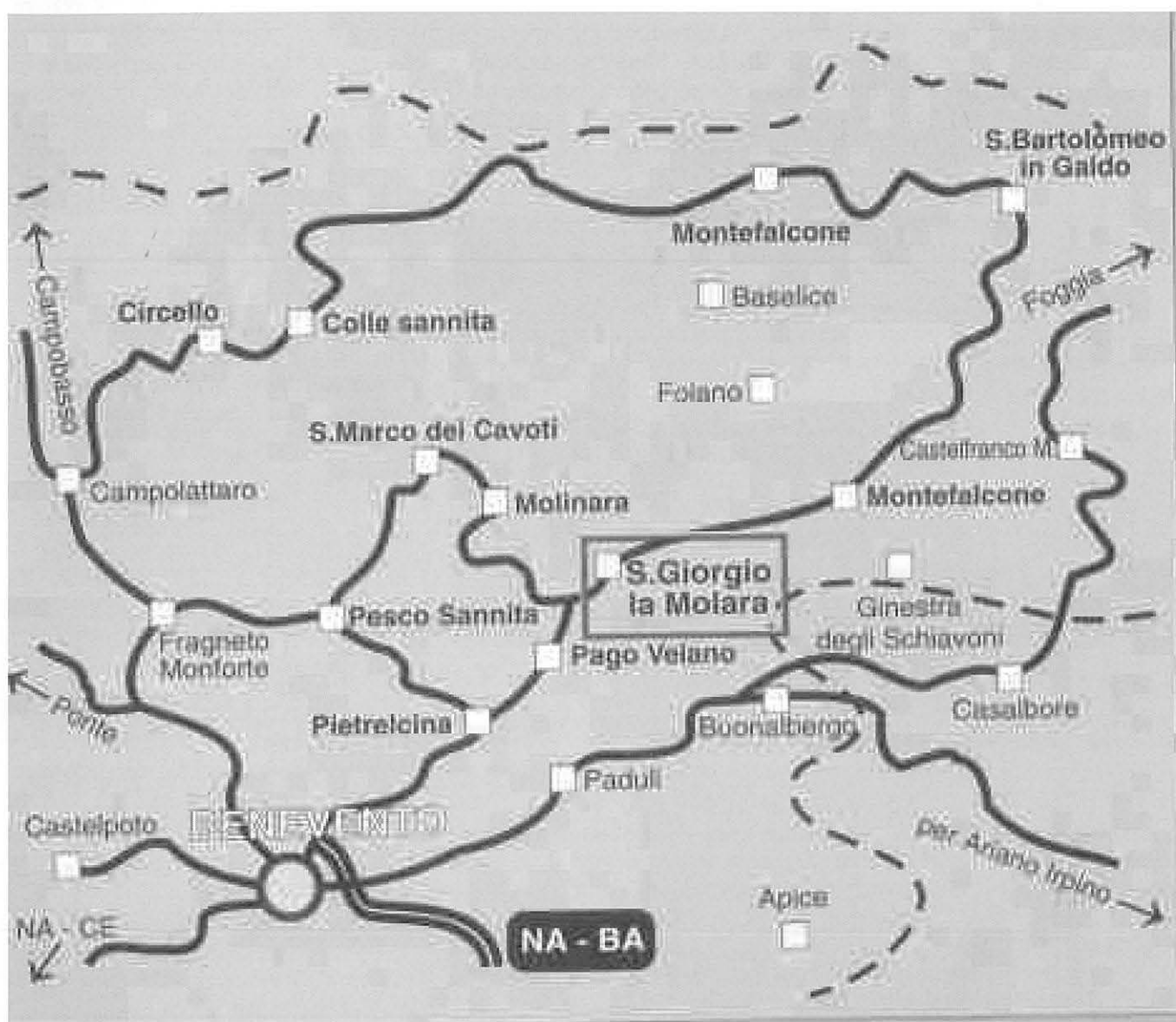
The town experienced a real exodus of its inhabitants, with as many as 20 *sangiorgesi* leaving on any one day to travel to Naples or, occasionally, to Brindisi, where they boarded their ship. Those who departed for Australia knew little about their far-off destination. One said: 'I used to hear that this was, they used to call ... [a] land of opportunity ... people used to go and never come back'. Six of the eight women informants migrated to Australia to join their husbands, from whom they had been separated for between one and five years. They had had no choice but to wait for their husbands to earn enough money to 'call' them out. Five of the six women had children. One had five children and had to wait the longest period before being able to join her husband, because he had had to save up a considerable sum of money in order to sponsor his family to Australia. While waiting in San Giorgio La Molarola all the women found life extremely difficult without their husband. They not only had to raise their children but were also required to look after the farm. Four of the six wives sometimes received money from their husbands but it was not regular or enough for them to live on. The husbands kept in contact with their wives by letter. Some of the husbands were very positive about their experiences in Australia. One wife, however, remembers that her husband's letters were always very critical of

Australia, so much so that she lost her patience and told him emphatically to choose – either return to Italy or sponsor her out, it was up to him. In the end, he decided to call her out to Australia.

The day of departure presented mixed emotions for many of the informants. As one woman recalls, 'one part of you wants to go ... and another part of you ... you're leaving behind your family, your friends ... everything ... it wasn't easy'. Several informants said that they had a good time during the long voyage of a month or more by ship, since there were 'feste notte e giorno'. One informant, who migrated with her brother, thought the journey was 'beautiful ... my brother and I, we enjoyed this trip, it was the best thing we ever had ... I still remember when we passed through the Suez Canal ... the canals, all the people living in there, still remember that. The journey was wonderful ... it was long but we enjoyed it ... it was something new to us'. Others, however, were not so lucky to travel on a modern ship, but instead had to put up with old war ships or passenger vessels that were too small and too light. Some remember water leaking into the ship, plates crashing to the floor when the weather was rough and having to put on life jackets as a precaution. Sea sickness was also a problem. One informant spent eight days in the hospital on board, another lost eight kilograms during the journey as a result of sea sickness and his dislike for the food.

On arrival in Australia, the *sangiorgesi* were faced with a new reality. Many remember their first impressions: the extreme heat (most of the migrants left San Giorgio in winter and arrived to be greeted by a scorching Australian summer) and the unusual and different landscape, a 'terra morta' (dead land) that seemed to be 'bruciata ... tutta bruciata' (burnt ... all burnt). One woman, for whom Australia seemed to be a big, lifeless desert, felt upon arrival that she had 'lasciato una miseria e trovato un'altra' (left one poverty and found another). Many wanted to return immediately to Italy but were financially unable to.

The men, upon arrival, found accommodation with relatives or *compaesani* and began work immediately, some the following day. Not surprisingly, they took any work that they were offered. In fact, one *sangiorgese* recalled, with a smile on his face, that when he was asked by an Australian migration officer in Rome what he wanted to do in Australia, he replied emphatically 'che trovo, faccio!' (what I find I'll



Detail map of the province of Benevento in the region of Campania, Italy.

do!). In the two decades when South Australia's industries were booming, some found factory work, particularly at the General Motors Holden car plant at Woodville, others became cement workers, some worked on the land or found employment cutting stones for home building. All the informants gave the impression that they had had a strong work ethic. Indeed, they seemed slightly offended when asked if they had ever received unemployment benefits. They made it very clear that they had never been unemployed in their life and had never received any sort of social benefit. One said that he did not know what it meant to be unemployed.

Today all but one of the people interviewed are Australian citizens. Despite pressure from his wife, the one *sangiorgese* who refuses to become an Australian, says that not being an Australian citizen has never caused him unemployment or

other difficulties. Most became Australians because they felt that by being naturalised they would have more rights and more assistance, and would more easily be able to buy property. One concluded that 'it's right, we've been living in this country for so many years, it's only fair'. One thought that if he didn't become an Australian citizen 'maybe something might happen and they'll send me back, and I don't want to go back'. Another described all the bad things that he had left behind, including the corruption, and added: 'That's enough of Italy. I want to be an Aussie'. Not all the women who became Australian citizens, when their husband took the step, were happy to do so. One woman who became naturalised because of her husband's decision to become an Australian said: 'Io non volevo perché non volevo tradire la madre mia' (I didn't want this because I didn't want to betray my motherland).

Where do their loyalties lie? Most made it clear that although they had become Australian citizens, they were always also Italian. One stated emphatically: 'I'm Italian and I respect the country where I am, but I want people to respect me at the same time. I'm still Italian but I'm an

When asked whether they would like to return permanently to live once more in San Giorgio, the unanimous answer was no. In their early years in Adelaide a number had thought of leaving Australia and resettling in their birthplace. One informant did return to San Giorgio in 1984 with his wife and twelve-year-old son, intending to remain there. But the wife found that she had been happier in Australia, so after a brief period they returned to Adelaide. In 1995, on a subsequent trip to Italy they once again thought about resettling in San Giorgio, but decided against it



Road sign at the entrance to San Giorgio La Molara and a panoramic view of the township in the distance with the surrounding landscape.

Australian just the same ... I'm an Italian Australian, that's what I am'. Most said that they would defend Italy if necessary and would never want to harm their mother country. Two, however, showed open hostility towards Italy and said that they had been more than happy to hand over their Italian passport, one adding that if a war broke out, he would happily fight against Italy. For a minority, the scars of the migration experience, and the accompanying sense of political and social abandonment, still remain.

because they felt that their son was then too old and too settled in Australia to be uprooted. Today all the informants agree that it is too late to contemplate a permanent return. They have all made for themselves a life in Australia where they have made so many sacrifices. As one woman said: 'Come fai a tornare?' (How can you go back?). Her family is here, her children have married here, her life, she says, is in Australia. They could not contemplate starting all over again at their age, when most are in their seventies and eighties.

This does not mean that they have not revisited San Giorgio La Molara. Indeed, all but two have returned at least once to their home town, and some as many as four times. As Loretta Baldassar has noted in her recent study of Perth migrants from San Fior in the Veneto, the visit home becomes a 'secular pilgrimage', a visit to the home 'shrine', where there is not only renewed contact with family and friends left behind but a renewal of cultural ties and personal identity.¹² In the movement between two 'homes', the *sangiorgese*-Adelaidean – or the Adelaidean-*sangiorgese* – finds a bridge, continually constructed and perhaps illusory, between youthful past with its memories, and the reality of the mature-age present, between a village on a hilltop in Campania and a suburb on the Adelaide plains. The 'sanctuary' lies somewhere in between, in a hyphenated identity that the Italian migrant negotiates. Attachment to just one side of the double identity can create a sense of *absence* of the other. One *sangiorgese* from Adelaide remembers crying when he revisited San Giorgio, as he suddenly realised that he had become homesick for Australia. In San Giorgio he felt that he just could not cope.

For the *sangiorgesi*, as for other migrants in other places, the establishment in Adelaide of tangible signs of that double identity helps to come to terms with self on a day-to-day basis. Italians in South Australia, as elsewhere, have, from early post-war settlement, established clubs, associations and religious festivals as a vehicle for social and cultural affirmation, institutions that contribute to the maintenance of the collective memory, albeit frozen in time, of the village, province and region of origin. In 1978 migrants in Adelaide from San Giorgio La Molara established the San Giorgio Community Centre, which today is an important 'village' meeting place for the *sangiorgesi*. Twenty years earlier, in 1957, at the peak of post-war settlement, the *fešta* of the patron saint San Giorgio was established, with the support of the Capuchin Fathers, at the new St Francis of Assisi Church in the suburb of Newton.¹³ Today as many as 1,500 Italians, including second and third generation *sangiorgesi*, take part in the celebrations.

Like other Italian communities in Adelaide, the now-elderly first-generation migrants from San Giorgio hope that their culture and traditions will be maintained by their children and grandchildren. While this remains an aspiration, it is more realistic to think that the descendants of those who arrived in the 1950s will be willing

to acknowledge and come to terms with the heritage of their forebears and construct their own particular *sangiorgese*-Adelaidean identity. 'Return' visits of the younger generations can help achieve this and even result, if the visits are frequent or long enough, in a rediscovery of their ethnicity and the transformation of their identity.¹⁴ ■

Notes

¹ Today approximately 25 per cent of the Italian-born in SA come from Campania, 21 per cent from Calabria and 11 per cent from the Veneto. See Desmond O'Connor, 'Italians in South Australia', in James Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People*, 2nd ed., Cambridge U.P., 2001, p. 496.

² *Italiani nel Mondo*, XXVI, No. 15, 10 agosto 1970, p. 14. Australia-wide, in 1976 the most numerous Italian-born by region of origin were, in descending order, from Sicily, Calabria, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Abruzzo, and, in sixth place, Campania (Helen Ware, *A Profile of the Italian Community in Australia*, AIMA and CO.AS.IT, Hawthorn, Vic, 1981, p. 27).

³ Desmond O'Connor, *No need to be afraid*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town SA, 1996, p. 118.

⁴ Gianfausto Rosoli (ed.), *Un secolo di emigrazione italiana 1876-1976*, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Rome, 1978, pp. 43, 107-9. See also Federico Romero, 'L'emigrazione operaia in Europa (1948-1973)', in Piero Bevilacqua et al., *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana. Partenze*, Donzelli Editore, Rome, 2001, p. 398.

⁵ Romero, pp. 402-3.

⁶ *Il Popolo*, 13 agosto 1950, p. 6. Italy was hoping that 50,000 Italians would be admitted to Australia each year.

⁷ National Archives, SA, D4880/1&2, quoted in Desmond O'Connor, *No need to be afraid*, p. 118.

⁸ M. Iazeolla, *San Giorgio La Molara - il dialetto, i proverbi, i modi di dire, le immagini*, Cassa Rurale ed Artigiana, San Giorgio La Molara, 1994, p. 9.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 7.

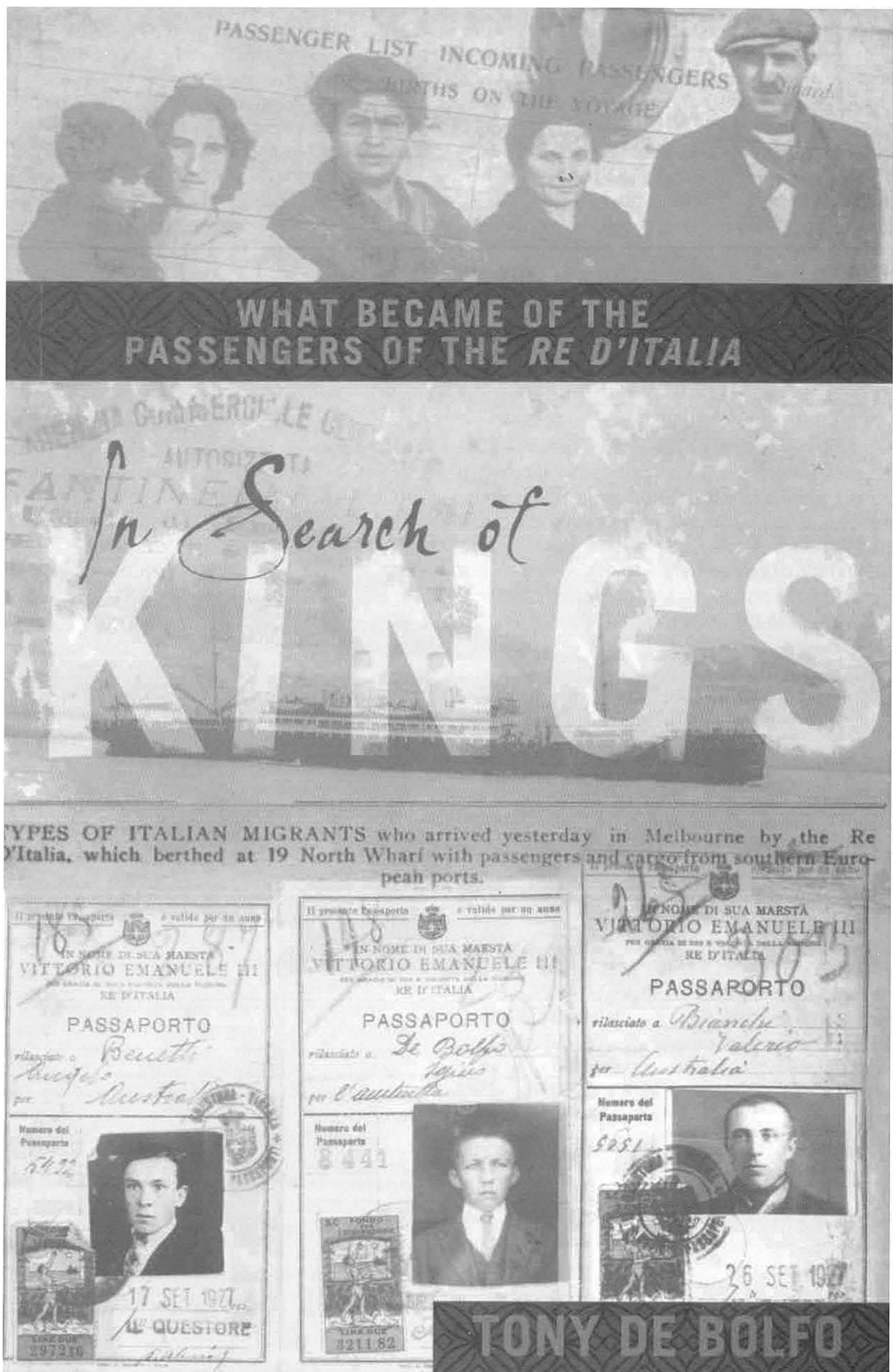
¹⁰ These seven were: Grazio Domenico De Iunno, Mariano Marciano, Carmine Paradiso (20 Sept. 1927), Domenico De Iunno, Michele Mercorella, Vincenzo Pescheta and Donatangelo Trotta (11 Oct. 1927).

¹¹ Unpublished archival data compiled by Desmond O'Connor.

¹² Loretta Baldassar, *Visits Home. Migration experiences between Italy and Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, Vic., 2001, pp. 223, 245, 323, 338.

¹³ Antonio Paganoni & Desmond O'Connor, *Se la processione va bene ... Religiosità popolare nel Sud Australia*, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Rome, 1999, p. 96.

¹⁴ Baldassar, *op.cit.* pp. 288, 331.



Cover of the book *In search of Kings* by Tony De Bolfo. The article on following pages is an extract from the book.

THE QUARRYMAN FROM SALCEDO: ANTONIO GNATA

BORN IN SALCEDO, PROVINCE OF VICENZA, 30 JUNE 1905.

DIED IN STAWELL, VICTORIA, 30 MAY 1938

by

Tony De Bolfo

In 1994, Melbourne journalist Tony De Bolfo sought to discover what prompted his grandfather and two brothers to leave their homeland in northern Italy for a new life in Australia. He turned to his great uncle, the late Igino De Bolfo – at that time the only surviving member of the original trio who undertook that arduous forty-six day journey aboard the steamship Re d'Italia [King of Italy], in late 1927.

But what began as a simple curiosity became an overwhelming obsession for Tony, and led him on his own unbelievable voyage of discovery. Working from the original passenger list of the Re d'Italia, and drawing on the research skills developed through his years in journalism, he set out to uncover the life stories of the 105 men, women and children who accompanied his forebears down the gangway, into the unknown.

Eight years later, Tony has completed a book entitled In Search Of Kings, which was released in November to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the arrival in Melbourne of the Re d'Italia. In it he discusses his recollections of the three De Bolfo brothers, he looks at what Italy and Australia were both like in the 1920s and he explores the story of the voyage and the history of the Re d'Italia and its human cargo.

The following article relates to the life of Antonio Gnata, listed 53rd in the Re d'Italia's disembarkees list.

Of all the life stories of the passengers on the *Re d'Italia*, few are as sad or as tragic as that of Antonio Gnata.

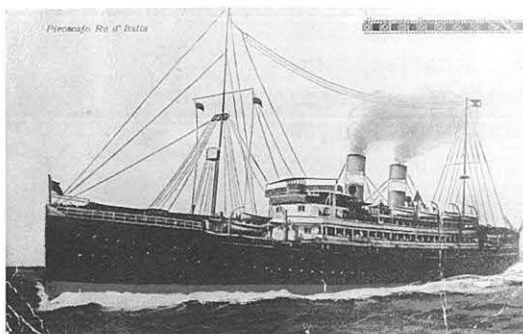
Antonio was just twenty-two years old when he took his first steps down the battered gangway and onto North Wharf Melbourne in November 1927. But he would be dead barely a decade later, in circumstances so shocking that news of his untimely demise was never conveyed to his mother in the old country, for fear it would break her heart.

In fact, Antonio's ultimate fate would remain a mystery to his descendants for the next six decades. It seemed that the man's life story died with him, and it wasn't until I had completed three months' research in early 1998 that I could convey to Antonio's niece and nephew the terrible tale of what became of the quarryman from Salcedo.

I inadvertently stumbled onto the story of Antonio Gnata in January 1998, at the western suburbs home of a good-natured man named

John Dal Sasso. I had found John's name listed in the White Pages and called him to ask if he bore any connection with another of the listed passengers, Antonio Dal Sasso. John confirmed a

connection, but said it would be best for me to talk to his father, Tony Dal Sasso. So we all met at John's home on a warm summer's night.



Postcard illustration of the passenger liner Re d'Italia, c1927.

Tony, who turned out to be Antonio Dal Sasso's nephew, is a real character. A post-World War II migrant with a happy disposition and general love of life, Tony delighted in telling tales of the glorious days of his Italian youth, over an ample glass of his home-made vino.

During a break in discussion, Tony turned to the list of passengers I had brought with me and pored over the names. To his excitement, he discovered the name of another relative, Antonio Gnata.

Tony told me that his mother, Ida, was the sister of Antonio Gnata and that Ida later married Antonio Dal Sasso's brother, Giovanni, in Italy. In other words, Tony was a nephew to the two Antonios who made the voyage on the *Re d'Italia*.

He could shed little light on what fate befell his maternal uncle, other than that he believed a man by the name of Gnata had been buried in the cemetery in the western Victorian town of Stawell many years ago. He suggested I contact his sister Maria Busana in Wonthaggi, for further information.

I called Maria, who was interested to learn of Antonio's given name, 'because he was always known as "Nini", to distinguish him from his father'.

'He served with the Alpini around the time of the First World War, and my mother told me he was a very nice man', Maria said. 'He worked here with other people from the same town of Salcedo. From what I understand, he had a bit of money saved up which he lent to people, but when he got sick and needed the money the people couldn't repay him. He was good enough to give them his heart, but he wasn't able to get it back'.

Antonio Gnata was born on 30 June 1905 in Salcedo, in the province of Vicenza in northern Italy. He was one of eight children reared by his father Antonio Gnata senior and mother Giovanna Lucia. His siblings were Luigi, Maria, Orsola, Erminia, Ida, Caterina and Amedeo.

Upon his arrival in Melbourne, Antonio was reunited with Amedeo, who had himself migrated to Australia three years earlier on the steamship *Regina d'Italia* (Queen of Italy). Amedeo, who assisted with younger brother Antonio's passage, had settled in the eastern Victorian town of Traralgon, where he split redgum for railway sleepers in and around the Gippsland area.

But the Gnata brothers' time together would be all too brief, for less than a year after Antonio's arrival in Australia, Amedeo set sail for Italy aboard the steamship *Orama*. Eight years later Antonio applied for the readmission of both Amedeo and a close friend and fellow miner from Salcedo, Vittorio Azzolin — but his application was rejected. This disappointment would later have a profound effect on the lonely Italian.

Antonio spent his first six years in Australia as a quarryman at a number of Victorian sites such as Boorara, Whitfield and Pyramid Hill and also in Berrigan in New South Wales, in the employ of Charles Snell of Oakleigh. He also worked seasonally as a cane cutter in the northern Queensland town of Giru, and in March 1934 became a naturalised Australian.

Maria's assertions of her uncle's generosity are supported by an immigration memo of August 1937, which reveals the fact that Antonio also attempted to secure passage for his old Italian friend Azzolin. The memo reveals that Antonio had lent another fellow countryman, Vittorio Livardo of Myrtleford, fifty pounds to assist him in a tobacco-growing venture, and further states: 'He maintains his people in Italy by periodical remittances and has therefore not accumulated any appreciable assets'.

Maria, a kindly woman who migrated to Australia with her mother in 1953, said that when she arrived in the country she had endeavoured to learn more of Antonio's death through those who knew him here, 'but nobody said much'. She always believed that Antonio, who never married, had died in the late 1920s, and that his furniture was sold to pay for the burial. 'But no-one would tell us where he was buried, and [his death] was bad for our family, especially for my mother's brother Amedeo, who had returned to Italy a few years before'.

'When Antonio died the other family members never told his mother, because she was blind and it would have destroyed her. She always said, "When is he going to write to me?" and until the day she died they used to read her letters that they had made up'.

'I did hear that he may have been buried in the Stawell Cemetery, which I visited more than thirty-five years ago on my honeymoon to Warrnambool and Peterborough. But some chaps working there said they had no idea where the grave was, and I never found that grave'.

Maria suggested I contact a man by the name of Antonio Quaresima, who had known Antonio Gnata and might be able to shed more light on the subject. In April 1998, I paid a visit to Antonio Quaresima at his home in a northern suburb of Melbourne. He told me that Antonio Gnata died in a quarry accident at Stawell between 1930 and 1940, but said he knew nothing else. However, I had the distinct impression that he knew more than he was revealing.

I then turned my attentions to the Stawell Cemetery as Maria Busana had done thirty-five years before. The cemetery was not listed in the phone book, so I sought assistance from the caretaker at nearby Ballarat Cemetery who referred me to the Northern Grampians Shire Council in Stawell proper. A man at the council



Charles Snell's quarry at Wild Cat Hill in Stawell, Victoria. Photograph taken c1930 , around the time that Antonio Gnata was working there. (Courtesy: the family of Fred Tilley)

then directed me to Mr Barry Werry, who had in his possession the records of Stawell Cemetery.

On the evening of 24 April, Barry revealed that Antonio Gnata, born in Italy and late of Scallans Hill (or 'Wild Cat Hill') in Stawell, died there on 3 May 1938 (a date which later proved incorrect, as Antonio actually died on the morning of 30 May). Barry confirmed that Antonio's burial was conducted at Stawell Cemetery, at grave number 4863a, although a headstone did not mark the site.

About a week later I made contact with Ellenor Musumeci of the Stawell Biarri Genealogical Society, in an effort to determine how Antonio had died. Ellenor confirmed that the Society had access to the local newspapers of the day, including the relevant edition of sixty years ago, and told me that she would investigate.

In early May, Ellenor called to say that she had discovered what had happened to Antonio, warning: 'Do you really want to know?' I told her that of course I needed to know, and a day or two later, Ellenor forwarded me a copy of the following item from the *Stawell News*, dated Wednesday, 1 June 1938.

GRIM TRAGEDY MAN KILLED AT QUARRY HEAD BADLY MUTILATED

An awful tragedy occurred at Mr C. S. Snell's quarry at Wild Cat Hill on Monday morning, the victim being an Italian named Antonio Gnato [sic], who had been engaged as a 'powder monkey' at the works.

At about 10.30 a.m. Mr Charles Holmquest had occasion to go to the quarry, and looking down he noticed the body of a man lying on a ledge about 16 feet from the surface. Holmquest called to the man, and receiving no response, concluded that there had been an accident and went and informed Mr Tilly, the manager of the works. Mr Tilly proceeded to the spot and saw that a tragedy had occurred, and communicated with First Constable T. Hunter and Dr Gibson, who proceeded to the scene.

The body was raised to the surface and the gruesome fact was revealed that the head had been blown to pieces and only a small portion of the chin remained on the trunk. Death had occurred about an hour previously.

Pappa & Mamma



Addio Pappa & Mamma
 Si Vedremo nel l'altro
 Mondo... Baci Ordeiti.

Vostro Amatissimo

Figlio di Gnata

Nulla mi potrà trattenere
 Il Destino mi Vuole.

On this page: the suicide note written by Antonio Gnata – 30 May, 1938, the day of his death – to his mother and father in Italy; a portrait photograph of Antonio Gnata, believed to have been taken in his home town of Salcedo in the province of Vicenza in 1926, the year before he left for Australia; and a photograph of the Gnata family in front of the family home in Salcedo c1926. Pictured are [from left] Luigi, Ida, Giovanna Lucia Gnata [nee Crosara], Antonio Gnata (snr), Caterina and Antonio. Absent are Antonio's older brother Amedeo, who had already left for Australia and three of his five sisters – Maria, Orsola and Erminia – by then all married. It was to Giovanna and Antonio (snr) - his parents – to whom Antonio Gnata wrote his final letter, but Giovanna would never learn of her son's fate. (Photographs courtesy: Marcello Dal Sasso and Virginia Lovison of Fara, Vicenza; documents courtesy: Public Records Office, Melbourne Victoria).

An electric battery used in blasting operations was found near the body. From the surrounding circumstances, certain conclusions were reached as to how the man met his death, and the police are collecting evidence to lay before the deputy coroner at the adjourned inquest to be held on a date to be fixed.

There was no one else working at the quarry at the time of the fatality.

Gnato was an Italian, aged about 28 years, and came from Queensland two or three years ago. He resided in a hut near the works, and when the police searched the hut they found a letter written in Italian to his parents, who reside in Italy. The letter was translated into English, and it is understood that when it is presented before the Coroner it will throw some light on the tragedy.

The police enquiries pointed to the conclusion that there was no foul play.

The deputy coroner (Mr C. C. Hunt) visited the scene of the tragedy and viewed the body, and after taking formal evidence of identification gave an order for burial and adjourned the enquiry to a date to be fixed.

The funeral took place yesterday afternoon from Messrs F. J. Crouch and Sons funeral parlours.

The internment took place in the Stawell Cemetery and many of deceased's friends attended to pay their last sad tributes of respect. The coffin bearers were Messrs Leo Savoia, Geo. Trusgnh, Adolfo Sartori, A. Boag, C. W. Holmquest and H. C. Roussac. Rev. Father W. N. Close conducted the service at the graveside. Messrs F. J. Crouch and Son carried out the funeral arrangements.

When blasting operations are in progress and after the face of stone to be brought down has been drilled, a charge of gelignite is inserted in the hole together with a cap attached to the end of a length of wire being connected to an electric battery. When the operator connects the wire to the battery, the charge is fired.

Whether Gnato placed a cap in his mouth and connected it to the battery will be disclosed at the enquiry. The extent of the injuries can be gauged by the fact that Gnato was not recognisable.

One letter in the possession of the dead man spelt his name Gnato, another Gnatto, and a third Gnata. The Italian Consul's office was communicated with, and did not seem to have any knowledge of the dead man.

Ellenor also included a further item from the *Stawell News*, dated 27 July 1938, about the Coronerial Enquiry into Antonio's death. The Coroner, Mr. C. C. Hunt, determined 'that death was due to the effect of some highly explosive substance which had blown off practically the whole of his head — such injuries having been intentionally self-inflicted'. Mr Hunt had earlier heard statements from Dr Gibson, fellow Stawell labourer Charles William Holmquest and Frederick James Tilley, the manager of Snell's Quarry. The Coroner's report stated in part:

Tilley gave evidence of Gnata's employment with the Quarry. 'He was employed as a powder monkey and had charge of the explosives. At that part of the quarry where the body was found, no blasting had taken place for the previous three or four days.' Mr Tilley then gave a demonstration on the floor of the court with the battery and charge. 'From inspection of the ledge on which the body was found I could find no evidence that deceased had been engaged in ordinary blasting operations,' concluded Mr Tilley. 'I don't think that a detonator would have sufficient power to blow his head right off; I think it would have needed a plug of gelignite as well'.

Ken Smith, a local Stawell identity now in his seventies, told me he remembered the day Antonio died. Ken's family lived not far from the quarry at the time.

'It was early in the morning and we were having breakfast at home when the blast went off, and I can remember either my brother or my mother saying "They're starting early". Charlie Snell had the contract and there was quite a team of Italians working for him. I'm not quite sure how many Italians there were all up, but there were a good twenty-five to thirty working there and they lived on the site, most of them. They had huts and tin shacks and they lived pretty rough, the poor buggers, with no electricity or running water. They had no recreation there, and the only recreation they could get would have been in the town, a mile and a half away ... they'd have to walk there to get a drink or a bit of tucker'.

'The quarry was at a place called "Wild Cat Hill" and why it was called that I can't really say. An old bloke thought it had something to do with the blokes who put down the main Melbourne to Adelaide rail line through the cutting being known as 'wild cats', but I can't be sure. In later years they filled the quarry in with the town's rubbish, and eventually it's been levelled off and the trees have grown back'.

Charles Snell, who died a little over ten years ago aged eighty-nine, operated quarries in a number of locales, including the main depot of Oakleigh, as well as Culcairn, Pyramid Hill, Axedale and of course, Stawell. Snell's nephew, Henri Claude Roussac, was one of his drivers, and a pallbearer at Antonio's funeral. Henri's son, Charles, told me in August 1998 that 'I can remember my father quite liked Tony'.

'I'm trying to think back sixty years ago, and I can only go on what my father told me. He said



*The hut believed to be the abode where Antonio Gnata spent his last hours.
(Courtesy Tony De Bolfo)*

Tony lived on his own near the quarry and he used to play the accordion. My father told me that Tony had word to go down to the Italian Consulate in Melbourne, which he did a number of times, and always came back worried.' This substantiates archival evidence that Gnata was having difficulty securing safe passage into Australia for his older brother Amedeo and for Vittorio Azzolin. 'He said Tony was one who kept things to himself and who kept things bottled up, and whatever happened in Melbourne set him off'.

Charles said that he used to accompany his father on Saturday mornings to the quarry, 'which we used to call "the black range" '. 'They [the Italians] used to bring the bluestone to the crusher, load up the trucks and transport it onto the train carriages. It was bluestone screenings for making roads or for using as ballast between railway lines. The quarry, to my knowledge, operated for about three years from 1937 to 1940 and my uncle employed a lot of Italians. Tony

was well liked at the quarry, and it was a terrible shock for them when it happened, for it's something that doesn't happen every day. I was only about fifteen at the time and these things don't impress you too much'.

The *Stawell News* of 1 June 1938 also reported the tabling to the court of Antonio Gnata's suicide note, which was translated by a local truck driver, Adolfo Sartori, who also acted as one of Antonio's pallbearers.

Sixty years later, in the Melbourne office of the Australian Archives I held this note, which had been wrapped in plastic and deposited somewhere in the Public Records Office vast depository at Laverton. The folded note was contained in an old white envelope, upon which was written the words 'Pappa [sic] E Mamma' in pen and ink. The sight of these simple words evoked a strong emotional reaction in me and I held my breath as I reached for the envelope's contents.

A few moments later I unfolded the letter and cast my eyes over the last lines penned by a deeply troubled man to his loved ones.

*Addio Pappa E Mamma
Ci Vedremo nel l'altro
Mondo., Bacci Ardenti.
Vostro Amatissimo
Figlio A. Gnata.
Nulla mi Potrà trattenere
Il destino mi vuole.*

[Goodbye Father and Mother
We'll see each other in the next
world. Ardent kisses.
From your most beloved
son, A. Gnata.
Nothing can keep me.
Destiny wants me.]

Having discovered the awful fate that befell Antonio, there was now only one duty left to perform: to relay the circumstances to Antonio's surviving niece, Maria, and nephew, Tony. Tony and Maria were grateful to learn of these developments, as the final chapter had now been

closed on a story that had for so many years remained incomplete. But with the anniversary of the death of Antonio Gnata looming, this horrific story at least carried a wonderful postscript.

On the morning of 30 May 1998 — sixty years to the day since Antonio Gnata took his own life — a small group of people made the trek to Stawell Cemetery: Tony Dal Sasso, his son John, daughter Ilda, granddaughter Veronica, and myself. Meeting us at the cemetery were Antonio's niece Maria Busana and her husband Tony, both of whom had that morning completed a four and a half hour drive to Stawell from their Wonthaggi home.

Also there were Ellenor Musumeci and the Genealogical Society's Vice President Charles Kerr, along with Father Wally Tudor, the parish priest of St Patrick's Church Stawell.

While I have never kept a diary, the poignancy of this occasion compelled me to record the day's events as follows:

At eleven o'clock on what was a fine and mild autumn day, Father Tudor conducted a short, moving service by the grave — one of three unmarked graves lying side by side. There Maria laid two bouquets made up of yellow-centred white daisies, yellow, orange and white lilies, yellow and red roses and white chrysanthemums — the first flowers ever placed there.

At the completion of the fifteen-minute ceremony, all visitors were introduced to Colin Woodgate, the owner of the site of the now filled-in quarry. On Colin's property was a ramshackle old timber and tin hut, quite possibly that in which Antonio spent his final hours.

The visitors followed Colin in their cars on a short three-kilometre journey to the hut. It adjoined what was an elongated timber work shed, built beneath a magnificent ghost gum, whose huge limbs jutted out over the dwelling like the timber spokes of a giant umbrella. The living quarters of the hut, the dimensions of which I would compare with those of an old prison cell, comprised greying, weather-beaten, vertical weatherboards, a timber door with a rusty chain lock, and a red-brick chimney.

Inside could be found a few hay bales and the brick fireplace, from which dangled a piece of old rusty chain, presumably for the purpose of supporting the boiling billy. A few pieces of corrugated iron roofing were missing — the legacy of a recent storm, according to Colin.

Colin said people had asked him why he had never demolished the hut, and he always replied that there was something interesting about the old structure. The story involving Antonio Gnata only served to rekindle this interest, and the archival information I presented to Colin was gratefully received.

He then took us on a five-minute walk from the hut up a small incline to the quarry. I say 'up' to the quarry, because where the quarry had once been was now a man-made earthen mound rising 100 feet above its natural surrounds, having been gradually filled in over the past fifty years. From the top of this mound one has an unimpeded view over a pea-green valley to the blue-grey of the majestic Grampians.

Afterwards we returned to the cars. I walked back with Maria, who was clearly moved by the whole experience. In contemplating the reality that this was the place where Antonio met his terrible end, Maria could be heard saying softly to herself 'Life ... life'.

Then we all drove a couple of hundred yards to the site of the old cement crusher — or what was left of it. Scattered around the scrub, in loose granite and quartz-encrusted earth, were jagged chunks of bluestone — the stone Antonio Gnata helped extract from the mine during the last eighteen months of his life.

At one point, Colin uncovered an elongated fifty-centimetre by twenty-centimetre bluestone slab, which John Dal Sasso suggested should become the temporary headstone of Antonio Gnata's grave — so it did. In fact, everyone took their little pieces of bluestone to remember their very special time here.

We then gathered at the local Stawell hotel, The Brix, to talk about Gnata and the Italian quarry workers. Father Wally made a pledge to Maria Busana and Tony Dal Sasso that Antonio Gnata's memory would be acknowledged at mass the following day. We then said our goodbyes and went our own ways.

**'...Maria laid two
bouquets...the
first flowers ever
placed there...'**



A gathering at the grave of Antonio Gnata in Stawell Cemetery to mark the sixtieth anniversary of his death, 30 May 1998. (Photographs courtesy Tony De Bolfo)

On the night of Thursday, July 30, 1998 Maria Busana rang to say that a wonderful photograph of Antonio as a young man, taken prior to his ill-fated departure for Australia, had just arrived from Italy. Maria has since suffered a severe stroke, which has greatly restricted movement in one side of her body. However, with the support of her family, she is making steady progress and her spirit has been buoyed no end by a bronze plaque since placed on the grave of her dear uncle.

Antonio Gnata's difficult life and lonely death brought home to me in the most resounding manner the adversities confronting the migrant — of having to farewell family, friends and home, maybe forever, and of embarking on an uncertain future in some faraway place where differences in culture, lifestyle, language and customs are as vast as the oceans separating the new land from the old.

Perhaps such sentiments will strike a chord with future visitors to Stawell Cemetery, who may care to place a flower at the final resting place of the quarryman from Salcedo. ■

I later learned that on the following morning, at Maria's request, Charles Kerr returned to Antonio's grave and dug holes for the vases that Maria had brought for the flowers. There he found the Bible and bottle of Holy Water mistakenly left behind by Father Tudor at the completion of the service.

'PIONEER' VENETI IN GIPPSLAND AND THEIR ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ITALIAN FARMING COMMUNITY

by
Anna Davine

Anna Davine is a PhD student in the Department of History at University of Melbourne. Her thesis is Italian Speakers in the Walhalla Gold Mining District – 1865-1915. The following article has been taken from her Masters thesis The Veneti in Central and West Gippsland 1925-1970. This thesis attempts to capture the lives of early veneti in the Gippsland area and the role of chain migration on the development of the community. It examines the continuities and change in migrant life, the interplay between the two and the dynamics involved in the evolution of a migrant community.

Italian emigration to Australia between 1924-1939 mainly consisted of single or unattached men and their subsequent work choices often led to the development of migrant clusters in the Victorian countryside in the interwar period. Frequency in change of work and varying occupations were characteristic before a migrant eventually settled. Personally organized processes existed where initial or 'pioneer' immigrants to Australia had settled in particular areas and had formed core migrant clusters. While economic need was always the underlying reason for emigration, the process was not random and, on their arrival, most later and post Second World War immigrants moved along well-defined paths laid down by kin or friends who had preceded them to Australia.¹ This process is commonly referred to as 'chain migration' and has been a noted feature among migration groups worldwide. In Central and West Gippsland the role of 'pioneer' settlers and small migrant clusters of *veneti* [people from the Veneto region] was crucial to the development of a strong Italian dairy farming community.²

The *veneti* who settled on dairy farms in the Gippsland area prior to the Second World War retained links with their districts of origin in Italy and traditions and after the War a secondary migration chain brought new blood and change to the migrant clusters. Continuity of traditions and customs within the migrant clusters of traditions and customs cushioned the impact which a new environment would necessarily have on the migrant's life. This helped him make some sense of his new life in Australia. While living in a remote rural area could be isolating and difficult, the existence of small clusters of *paesani* [people from the same village] softened the harsh reality of the transition from life in Italy.

Prior to 1939, Gippsland was predominantly rural with dairying, pig raising and potato-growing the main occupations. Economic progress

in the area was affected by poor roads and the consequent difficulty in getting primary produce to markets. Most of the area was bush and scrub needing a lot of effort to make the land work. It was an ideal scenario for the *veneti* who first went to the area, as it provided economic opportunities for them.

The Italian migrants who lived in the Trafalgar/Yarragon farming district before the Second World War were almost exclusively *vicentini* [people from the district of Vicenza] or *bellunesi* [people from the district of Belluno], but migration after the War saw the arrival of an increasing number of *vicentini*, fewer *bellunesi* and a large group of *trevisani* [people from the district of Treviso].³ However, many postwar immigrants were drawn to Gippsland, not only by a nucleus of kin and *paesani* already established within a support system, but also by a 'push' factor which continued to force males from the same communities in the Veneto to work away from their village of origin to support their families.

A number of individuals and their families provide a picture of the migration process and the importance of certain individuals within the migrant clusters in a migrant community's development. The Parise and Moscato families were two examples and their stories are typical of many early Italian settlers.

Cirillo Parise was born in Pianezze (Vicenza) in 1899, the youngest of 12 or 13 children. He was a soldier during the First World War and afterwards he sold fruit around Marostica and surrounding districts, an occupation he had undertaken before the War. His father had died and his family collectively had three *campi* (fields - of approximately 1.2 hectares) and, as there were family tensions, he decided to go to the United States of America. However, at that time entry restrictions were being imposed on southern Europeans and he therefore decided to

migrate to Australia instead. Cirillo borrowed some money and, along with several others from his village, left Italy on the *Orvieto* for Australia, arriving in 1923. Over a number of years, he worked in the sugar cane plantations at Babinda Queensland and then in Victoria, he cleared and cut timber near Mildura, tended horses on a wheat farm at Donald and worked on road construction at Colac. As a single male, unencumbered by a wife and family, his mobility permitted him to travel quickly to wherever he heard there were work opportunities.

In 1927, Cirillo arranged for a girl he had previously known in Italy to emigrate and marry him. Antonietta Frigo was chaperoned by his nephew Giacomo (Jack) Moscato, and the marriage took place at St. Ignatius Church, Richmond, on the day after their arrival.⁴ After the marriage, they travelled together to Colac and, while the two men worked on the construction of the Apollo Bay Beach Forest Road, Antonietta fed and washed for 4 or 5 Italian men who were also working on the project. In 1928, they moved to the Yarragon district only after their employer had obtained a government contract to asphalt the Princes Highway.⁵

Jack Moscato was born in Pianezze in 1905 and prior to his emigration lived with his mother and five siblings. He was sponsored by his uncle Cirillo Parise and arrived on the ship *Regina d'Italia* with Antonietta in 1927.⁶

Early migrant settlers such as Cirillo and Jack took advantage of any economic possibilities for their further advancement, whenever the occasion arose. In 1928, they had the opportunity to lease and later purchase from the Closure Settlement Board approximately 94 acres of mainly uncleared farmland at the foothills of the Strezelecki Ranges. The previous lessee, Charles Veith, had been a returned soldier who had failed to make a success of the farm and had advised the Board that 'I am unable to make a living from the block for my family'. The property was transferred from Veith to Parise on a walk in-walk out basis, with the agreement that the lessee was to pay as purchase price only the monies in arrears to the Board, but not the unpaid land account balance. The land may have been cheap but, while some was cleared, it was rabbit infested and contained 15 acres of timber country and 12 acres of bracken.⁷

Shared households were significant in the development of the migrant clusters. Kinship ties



Wedding photograph of Cirillo and Antonietta Parise, 1927. The two groomsmen are Giovanni Frigo [left] and Jack Moscato.

and support from *paesani* provided the only sense of community most early immigrants experienced, and it provided a system of support which often saw several families living together in one household. Other families often lived within close proximity of one another. Often, several males lived under the same roof until they were joined by their families or married. Mixed households could contain a married couple and a male relation. This was the arrangement between Cirillo and Antonietta Parise and Jack Moscato, who shared a household and worked as an economic unit, with each person contributing to the work arrangements and needs. In 1932, Jack Moscato married by proxy Santa Zuliani from the Friuli region. It was the beginning of a long and successful association of both families with the Gippsland district.⁸

Antonietta Parise and Santa Moscato are examples of the women within the migrant clusters who contributed significantly to the emerging settlement, not only by providing another pair of hands, but by being the hearth of the household and providing a solid foundation within it. Historical studies have tended to emphasize the movements and contributions of men towards the migration process with women's role as being secondary. Furthermore, a

patriarchal attitude within the community of *veneti* tended to undermine and undervalue the contribution of women's work in the economics of the household unit.

After her arrival in the Yarragon district in 1927, Antonietta Parise recalled that she had (apart from her husband and his nephew Jack) no contact with other Italians in her first three years in the district. In her narrative, she reflected on the excitement she had felt when contact was made with later arrivals. On early farms, life for migrant women involved hard physical work, economic survival, isolation and loneliness, and Antonietta recalled that 'I saw only sky, cows and land'. The language and cultural gulf between *veneti* and the local host community did not always prevent attempts towards friendship and goodwill between farming neighbours. Antonietta referred to the occasional visits of Australian neighbours and their wives, but the visits were awkward and never very successful, and the visitors eventually stopped calling.⁹

Within the migrant community, leadership qualities held by certain individuals became clearer and these men became informal leaders, financial advisers and mentors among the *veneti*. They were men who had advanced their positions economically in the migrant community to such an extent that their advice and support was

sought by other immigrants, and new arrivals deferred to them and accepted their counsel. They became natural leaders through the respect they earned by their economic and material success and, by helping others achieve their aspirations, advanced the interests of the whole community.

Well established migrants like Parise and Moscato assisted, not only kin or *paesani* after their arrival in Australia, but also *veneti* from other districts or provinces. They also advised them in financial matters and in dealings with the host community. In particular, after the Second World War, they sponsored relations or friends to Australia and provided work for them on their farms.¹⁰

On occasion, the established *veneti* acted for fellow migrants who were themselves not in a financial position to sponsor family members or friends to Australia. It was possibly also an unspoken obligation among Italian migrants generally. This was particularly so after the Second World War when the new arrivals were not just *vicentini* and *bellunesi* but also *trevisani*.

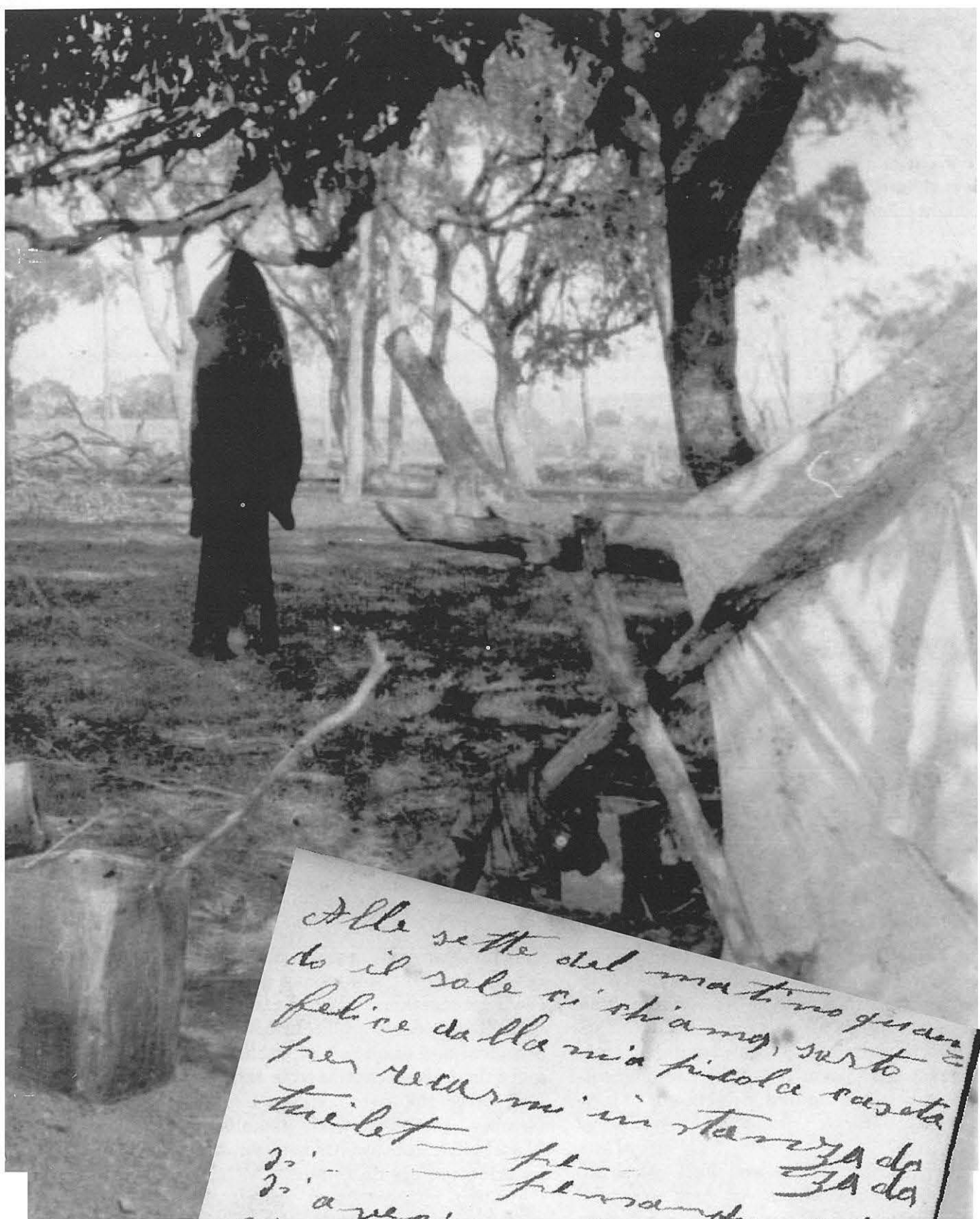
This was Jack Moscato's role in how the system of sponsorship and process of wider assistance functioned.¹¹ After the Parise/Moscato partnership dissolved in 1948, Jack Moscato purchased several other farms around Yarragon and his prominent



Bert Newman at the wheel of an automoblie with Agostino Zuliani [left] and Cirillo Parise in the back seat. The men are on a farm in Corryong in Gippsland, c1930.



Jack Moscato during his early days in the Gippsland bush, c1929, pictured standing outside his 'home' and attending to the domestic chores. Note the food safe, the 'wardrobe' and the washing board. The top photograph is annotated by him in Italian and translates: 'At seven o'clock in the morning, when the sun calls me, I get up and happily leave my small home to go to the bathroom thinking that the beginning of my working day is fast approaching. [Signed] Giacomo.'



Alle sette del mattino guardando il sole ci si chiama, tutto felice dalla mia piccola casata per recarmi in stanza da letto — pensando che è ancora la sera di ricominciare il lavoro. *Giorno*

position among the *veneti* meant that he provided support and work for a steady stream of immigrants newly arrived in the area. In 1950 he sponsored several families. One was his nephew Oreste Parise and family. Moscato settled the Parise family on one of his farms, employing Oreste and his wife as farm labourers, and later entered into a sharefarming agreement with them which lasted until 1956 when Oreste and Rosa Parise bought their own farm.¹²

Provision of finance was crucial in helping new arrivals make a start. Jack Moscato, and his wife Santa, had a reputation for lending substantial amounts of money to new arrivals, most often without security, and expressing complete confidence and trust in their borrower's ability to



Italians of the farming community in Gippsland gathered for the baptism of Maurice Girardi. Included are members of the Girardi, Parise, Moscato, Colpo and Pizzato families.

repay the loan. They were also known to provide the outstanding balance between a bank loan and the immigrant's own funds to enable the purchase of farmland.¹³ It was understood among the Australian community that *capitani*, men like Jack, were useful to the immigrant community when 'you wanted influence or to buy land'.¹⁴

In this way, Cirillo Parise and Jack Moscato provided links and contacts for new arrivals. When the Parise and Moscato partnership was dissolved in 1948, Cirillo and Antonietta Parise moved to Melbourne and purchased six shops in Brunswick Street Fitzroy but still retained a dairy farm at Traralgar which was sharefarmed.¹⁵ The Parise family lived in one Fitzroy shop and rented the others out, while also

taking in boarders, mainly *veneti* newly arrived from Italy. The significance of boarding houses in the initial periods of migrant settlement has been a common feature among many immigrant communities and a crucial factor in providing accommodation for single men newly arrived from either Italy or another area of Australia.¹⁶ The *trevisani* brothers Orfeo and Ernesto Bragagnolo arrived in Melbourne in 1949 and boarded with the Parise family for a number of years, and were later joined by their younger brother Giovanni in 1952.¹⁷

During his time in Melbourne, Cirillo Parise worked in a transformer factory in Fitzroy which was owned by the Nicoletti family, which owned several hill farms in the Yarragon district (but lived in Melbourne) and had, at different times, provided work opportunities for a number of *veneti* living in the district.¹⁸ In 1956, the Bragagnolo brothers pooled their resources and, with some financial assistance from an uncle, purchased Nicoletti's 129 acre farm at Yarragon. Ernesto and Giovanni worked on the farm, milking cows and clearing the land while Orfeo, reluctant to live in the country, continued to work in Melbourne, but joined his brothers on weekends to help with the farmwork. Orfeo later married and settled in the district.¹⁹ Cirillo and Antonietta Parise moved back to the Traralgar area in 1954 and purchased more farm land which was sharefarmed by new arrivals.²⁰

Certain families among the more successful *veneti* became focal points for socialising and getting together. The Parise and Moscato household became a place where the *veneti* (both *bellunesi* and *vicentini*) could meet and socialise, and this practice continued in the postwar period, long after the two families had divided their farming interests and established separate households. In the years between the Wars visits occurred mainly on Sundays with most families travelling by horse and jinker, as few *veneti* owned or drove a motor vehicle. Visiting occurred between the morning and evening milking sessions and most families living within a reasonable distance maintained a regular contact with each other.²¹ Bocce rinks were prepared on a flat area near the farmhouse and, while the men played and enjoyed a glass of wine, the

women chatted inside and the children played.²² Core families also provided a base and sustenance for lonely single men and for itinerant workers searching for work, in particular during the depression years.²³ The establishment of *bocce* rinks on a number of farms continued in the postwar period, further fostering a social tradition that had commenced in the interwar years among the *veneti*.

Emigration by the *veneti* to Australia was generally a well-planned individual process and the sponsorship system saw a number of farming clusters develop in Gippsland. Certain pioneer settlers maintained a conduit between the Veneto and Australia and their support and maintenance of traditional customs and practices provided new arrivals, particularly those arriving after the Second World War, with a support base which enabled them to get onto their feet and become established economically. Cirillo Parise and Jack Moscato were not the only prominent *veneti* in their community but are examples of how the migration process worked, how migrant clusters occurred and how a migrant community developed.

Jack Moscato died in 1972. Antonietta Parise died in 1995. Cirillo Parise died in 1996. and Santa Moscato died in 2000. ■

Notes

¹ C.Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1963. This challenges Handlin's outdated view of the mass migration from Europe as one where the migrant was stereotyped as a victim of circumstance, naïve and passive. See O. Handlin, *The Uprooted*, Little Brown & Co. Boston 1973 p. 6.

² The Central and West Gippsland area lies to the east of Melbourne and extends roughly between Traralgon and Drouin. It is flanked on the north by the Baw Baw mountains and to the south by the Strzelecki Ranges. It contains a large expanse of fertile flat and undulating farmland bordered on two sides by steep hills and bush. Trafalgar and Yarragon are neighbouring townships in the area.

³ Number of *vicentini* 1924-39: male 21; female 9

Number of *bellunesi* 1924-1939: male 14; female 11

After WW2: over 120 families of *veneti* lived for some time in Gippsland.

⁴ Antonietta Frigo born Canove (Vicenza) 1903. Cirillo and Antonietta Parise had two children: James born 1928 and Mary born 1930.

⁵ Italian Historical Society (IHS) Audio Tape 51.1 & 51.2, Cirillo and Antonietta Parise. Interviews with Mary Zaltron (Parise) 1997 and James Parise 1998.

⁶ Carlo Moscato 23 October 1996.

⁷ After World War 1, the Closer Settlement Scheme was an attempt to place ex-servicemen and their families on the

land. In many cases, it proved to be a failure, as the land was often unsuitable for farming and the men did not have sufficient farming skills.

VPRS 5714, unit 900. Parise was the 'lessee' but farmed in partnership with Moscato. The purchase price was 437 pounds 6 shillings and 7 pence. In 1937 the lease was transferred to a Crown Grant; Parise and Moscato were registered as tenants in common in equal shares.

⁸ Giacomo Moscato knew his wife's uncle, Agostino Zuliani and the marriage was arranged through him. Santa Zuliani was born Ziracco (Udine) in 1910. Jack and Santa had two sons, Carlo born 1937 and Elio born 1942.

⁹ IHS audio Parise, op.cit.

¹⁰ A sponsor was to guarantee work and accommodation for the new immigrant for a period of two years after his or her arrival.

¹¹ This was also the case with Cirillo Parise and others

¹² Interview Oreste & Rosa Parise 1998; Questionnaire Maria Morello 1998.

¹³ Interview Gino and Albina Cortese 1998

¹⁴ Interview Frank Wall 1998.

¹⁵ Interview Divina Grigoletto 1998; Giacomo and Divina Grigoletto were the sharefarmers.

¹⁶ L.Jenkins, *Il Potere della Terra – A social History of Italian Settlement at Lismore*, Northern Star Printing 1993 noted the significance of the Nardi boarding house in Lismore in the 1920s in providing accommodation for migrants, p.19. The importance of boarding houses in the processes of chain migration has been noted also in American studies. See D.Hoerder, 'From Migrants to Ethnic: Acculturation in a Societal Framework' in *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives*, New England UP, Boston 1996. This writer's own paternal grandparents ran a boarding house in Chicago (USA) in the period prior to 1925.

¹⁷ Interviews John, Ida, Lina and Rina Bragagnolo 1998

¹⁸ Francesco Nicoletti was from the Trentino region but had married Concetta Tomasi, a native of Conco (Vicenza). During the war years, the Nicoletti farm provided work for Angelo and Santa Girardi from Conco (Vicenza). In the early 1950s they gave work to Aldo Dalle Nogare, Attilio Bagnara and Gino Cortese (all from Conco). Elio Bordinon and Vittorio Alberton from Bassano del Grappa (Vicenza) and Santa Grande from Vallonara (Vicenza) worked at the farm before it was purchased by the Bragagnolo Bros. (Treviso). Concetta was first cousin to Aldo Dalle Nogare.

¹⁹ Ernesto married Rina Faoro in 1957, Giovanni married Rina's sister Ida in 1960 and Orfeo married their cousin Lina Faoro in 1959.

²⁰ IHS audio Parise, op.cit.

²¹ Milking times varied seasonally. They were generally between 5 am and 8 am and 4 pm and 6 pm. Early spring, until March/April, was the busiest period. Springtime meant calving and feeding of calves. In October/November, silage was cut from fresh grass and packed. Later, in December, hay was baled and stored.

²² *Bocce* is similar to lawn bowls and is generally played outdoors.

²³ Interview Divina Grigoletto 1998. She cooked for single men who wanted to be fed *polenta e pollastro* - maize meal and chicken.

L'ITALO-AUSTRALIANO *AUSTRALIA'S FIRST ITALIAN LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER*

by
Francesca A. Musicò

Francesca Musicò is a PhD student in the Department of History, University of Sydney and a Committee member of Co.As.It. Italian Heritage and Italian Family History Group.

A recent initiative of Co.As.It. Italian Heritage, Sydney, working with the State Library of New South Wales, was to bring a microfilm copy of *L'Italo-Australiano* to Australian shores.

L'Italo-Australiano, which appeared between January and July 1885 in Sydney, was the first Italian-language newspaper to be published in Australia. It was intended to be a political paper and contains much comment on European politics. The existence of the newspaper was made known through the meticulous research carried out by scholars Gianfranco Cresciani and Gaetano Rando.¹ Unfortunately, there are no known surviving copies of the newspaper in Australia. Hence, the microfilmed copy is of paramount importance.

The founder of *L'Italo-Australiano*, Francesco Sceusa, returned to Italy in 1908 and donated the newspaper along with his personal papers to the Biblioteca Fardelliana in his home town of Trapani, Sicily. The Biblioteca Fardelliana kindly gave permission to Co.As.It. and the State Library of New South Wales to produce a microfilm of the newspaper from their collection. *L'Italo-Australiano* complements the extensive pre-Second World War Italian language newspaper collection deposited at the State Library, which includes *Uniamoci* (1903-4), *L'Italo-Australiano* (1905-9),² *Oceania* (1913-15), *The Italo-Australian* (1922-1940) and *Il Giornale Italiano* 1932-1940).³

Francesco Sceusa, journalist and land surveyor, was born in 1851. He was a committed socialist who was forced to flee Italy for his attacks on corrupt administrators, arriving in Sydney in 1877. In Italy, Sceusa had edited the fervently socialist publication *Lo Scarafaggio* [The Scarab]. Soon after his arrival Sceusa became involved in the emerging Australian socialist movement, representing Australia in 1893 at the International Socialist Congress in Switzerland in his capacity as secretary of the Socialist Democratic Federation.⁴ Out of his socialist ideals and strong beliefs of the need to improve

the plight of Italian workers in Australia, Sceusa established in 1890 the *Società Operaia Italiana Mutuo Soccorso* [The Italian Workmen's Mutual Benefit Society of NSW]. In 1892, Sceusa described Sydney's Italians as 'hundreds of little Italian slaves who, as musicians and flower vendors, haunt our streets working under stern compulsion for cruel masters, starved, ill-clad, and beaten almost to death'.⁵ Sceusa publicised the exploitative nature of contracted migrants, particularly fuelled by the arrival of 333 Italians on the ship *Jumna* in 1891 as a substitute for Kanakas to work on the sugar cane plantations of North Queensland.⁶ A prolific pamphlet writer advocating the socialist cause, Sceusa's intention was to radicalise and unite Sydney's conservative Italian community.⁷

Consisting of only six issues, *L'Italo-Australiano* provides vital information on the nature of Sydney's small Italian community during the 1880s. In 1881 there were 521 Italians living throughout the State of New South Wales, with approximately 200 residing in Sydney.⁸ The Italian community comprised professionals, entrepreneurs and importers. The newspaper's advertisements give an important insight into the many Italian businesses operating in Sydney. The first issue dated 12 January 1885 records G. B. Modini's gun shop in George Street, G. Guazzini's bakery and *biscotteria* in Crown Street and Charles Carugati's butchery in Oxford Street. Clockmaking and jewellery-making appears to be the domain of the Piora Brothers and Antonio Pugliese; both had their establishments in Park Street. Italians were also publicans with Oscar Mayer operating the Carter's Hotel on the corner of George and Park Streets and G.B. Bassetti running the Solferino Hotel in Paddington. A large number of advertisements were placed in the paper by A. Ferrari & Co of George Street, importers of food delicacies. Wines, spirits, olive oil, spaghetti and vermicelli, Parmesan cheese, *funghi secchi* [dried mushrooms], Bologna mortadella and salami were some of the products imported from Italy. Ferrari & Co. also sold colonial wines produced in the Hunter Valley and in Albury.

L'Italo-Australiano

RIVISTA MENSILE

Organo degli Italiani sparsi per le terre Oceaniche

ANNO I. NUM. 5.

SYDNEY, NUOVA GALLES MERIDIONALE

1 GIUGNO 1885.

TUTTO COL LAVORO. NULLA SENZA LAVORO:
TUTTO DEL LAVORO.

PREZZI D' ABBONAMENTO

Per Sydney e N. S. W.,	10 scellini all' anno.
.. la Colonia Australas,	11
.. l'Italia ed Estero,	15 franchi

Dirigersi: C. CARPENA, Amministratore dell'Italo
526, Bourke St., Surry Hill, Sydney.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS

For N. S. W. — 10s per annum, in advance: Australas. Co-
lonies — 11s; Other Countries — 12s, or 15francs.
ADDRESS: C. Carpena, Publish. of the ITALO-AUSTRA-
LIANO, 526 Bourke St. Sydney.

SOSPENDEREMO l'invio del Giornale a
TUTTI coloro che non si sono degnati di pa-
gare il prezzo del loro abbonamento, e ne pub-
blicheremo i NOMI se non pagheranno entro
questo mese.

AGLI ITALIANI DI AUSTRALASIA

Publicando l'Italo abbi mo fatto as-
segnamento sugli italiani di Melbourne,
Adelaide, Brisbane, Wellington, ecc. Ci
illudiamo che essi risponderanno favo-
revolmente alle nostre previsioni.

Gli abbonati che non ricevono regolar-
mente il giornale sono pregati di far recla-
mo e di fornirci il loro esatto indirizzo.

Sappiamo che molti italiani di Sydney, Province e Colonie
si lagnano di essere stati da noi dimenticati. Comprende-
ranno che noi non possiamo conoscere tutti i nostri connazionali
d'Australas, e chi desidera il giornale farebbe bene a farcelo
sapere, inviandoci il suo indirizzo.

Giuseppe Garibaldi

(VEDI: FIGLI DEL LAVORO.)

Da Parigi si annunzia la morte di Victor
Hugo, poeta e romanziere insigne, il Garibaldi
del Pensiero, l'Apostolo della Fratellanza dei
Popoli.

L'ITALO-AUSTRALIANO

RIVISTA PER ORA MENSILE, MA SETTIMANA-
LE, TOSTOCHE' LO SPACCIO LO PERMETTERA'.

L'ITALO-AUSTRALIANO

Non sarà il giornale di alcun partito, ma sibbene l'organo
di tutti gli italiani di Australas, o almeno della maggioranza
di essi. Sostenendo la Causa del Lavoro, non intenderà di cre-
are un nuova Aristocrazia, o di fomentare odii fra le varie
classi, ma semplicemente di elevare il Principio, unica base
di prosperità delle nazioni, e di sconfiggere la tendenza egoista
di una certa classe che purtroppo è di diritto al nome italiano.
Non tratterà che di questioni di interesse generale intimamente
connesse colla esistenza del commercio delle industrie del benessere
d'Italia. Si uniformerà ai dettami del progresso civile, politico e
religioso ed eviterà le personalità. Mentre aprirà le sue colonne
alle corrispondenze dei suoi regolari abbonati, rifiuterà la pub-
blicazione di qualsiasi comunicato destituito di interesse pubblico
e mirante esclusivamente alla individualità.

SCOPO DEL GIORNALE

è di promuovere gli interessi della Colonia italiana d'Au-
stralas, tenerne alto il prestigio e vender noti all'Italia i suoi
bisogni e sentimenti;

TENER DESTO

l'affetto dell'elemento italiano di queste regioni per la terra
nativa, conciliando coll'affetto per la patria adottiva;

PROMUOVERE RELAZIONI

amichevoli e commerciali fra l'Italia e l'Australas; guidare
i nuovi arrivati, ignoranti della lingua e costumi locali, in modo
che l'Italia non abbia ad arrossire d'aver data loro la vita e
l'Australas non abbia a pentirsi d'averli ospitati;

INSTIGARE

certe classi dei nostri compatriotti al lavoro, stigmatizzare
l'ozio e il vizio e lodare la virtù e l'operosità;

TENERE GLI ITALIANI DI AUSTRALASIA

al corrente degli eventi che accadono nella madre patria, e
la stampa italiana di ciò che avviene agli antipodi;

FINALMENTE SUGGERIRE DELLE RIFORME.

L'ITALO-AUSTRALIANO

darà un movimento della popolazione italiana delle Colonie
sarà pubblicato in breve due volte al mese, e il prezzo ribassato
tostochè lo spaccio lo permetterà.

Per abbonamenti e annuari dirigersi:

C. CARPENA, Amministratore dell'ITALO,
526 Bourke St. Sydney.

L'ITALO-AUSTRALIANO 25 MAGGIO 1885

Publicando l'Italo abbi am fatto temuto che il
noto radicalismo delle nostre individuali opini-
oni avrebbe potuto essere di ostacolo al suo cre-
dito preso dalla parte moderata dei nostri con-
nazionali, e disperammo, in sul principio, del suo
successo. Ma i nostri timori furono di breve
durata e li vedemmo ben presto dissipare. I
nostri compatriotti ci sono stati, indistintamen-
te, larghi d'incoraggiamenti e di materiale ai-
uto, e noi ci siamo convinti d'aver avuto torto
di disprezzare dei nostri sforzi e di supporre
gli italiani d'Australas intolleranti al punto da
lasciar solo chi, pur differendo dalle loro vedute
politico-economiche, aveva dedicato i suoi
risparmi e le ore di ricreazione ad un'opera
patriottica.

Eglino hanno ammirato i nostri sforzi e ci
hanno prodigato la loro simpatia. E tanto più
inquantochè han visto che noi non abbiamo abu-
sato del potere della stampa; che noi, che
pur l'avremmo potuto, non abbiamo fatto del
nostro giornale l'organo di un partito, ma sib-
bene quello di tutti gli italiani che con Bovio
pensano che "al di là dei confini i partiti spar-
iscono e rimangono gli italiani".

Ben è vero, eglino non sono stati sempre e
pienamente d'accordo coi giudizi da noi emessi;
ma non ci han voluto del male per questo, che
anzi hanno ammirata la nostra franchezza e im-
plicitamente han riconosciuto la necessità di par-
tecipare anch'essi alla collaborazione del giornale,
saviamente osservando che, fintanto che la red-
azione si limita ad un individuo, un giornale non
potrà collimare col modo di vedere dei più, an-
meno che quell'individuo non faccia appello all'
ipocrisia e spacci le idee altrui.

Noi ringraziamo sinceramente i nostri con-
patriotti della lor simpatia e tolleranza.

Convinti della grande importanza di un gior-
nale scritto nella lor lingua, orgogliosi di avere
in un paese, dove essi contansi a dito, un porta-
voce che parecchie colonie italiane e che contan
delle migliaia di membri non han saputo o voluto
metter su, spinti dal desiderio di veder questo
periodico, che oggi è semplicemente una rivista
mensile, pubblicato settimanalmente e divenire
addirittura la perfetta espressione della nostra
comunità, molti nostri connazionali parlano ora
di allargare il campo della nostra iniziativa, e ci
propongono che non dei privati, ma una pubblica
compagnia debba curare le sorti del giovane
ITALO. Parecchi sono animati da puro patriottismo
nel proporre la creazione di una Compagnia, ma
altri al patriottismo associano l'utilità, preve-
dendo che se non oggi, domani certamente, un
giornale italiano in questa terra ancor vergine
dara' dei profitti non disprezzabili ai suoi pro-
prietari.

Se noi fossimo più partigiani che italiani, più
venali che disinteressati pubblicisti, respinge-
remmo l'offerta, perchè il periodo critico della
vita dell'ITALO può dirsi passato e la Compagnia
viene ora a raccogliere il frutto dei nostri passati
sforzi. Ma noi non esiteremo di affidare nelle mani
di una Compagnia il presente e il futuro del nostro
giornale. E saremmo anche pronti di lasciarne
la direzione a qualunque più abile di
noi, se ciò sarà necessario, riservandoci la sod-
disfazione di aver dimostrato col fatto che un
giornale italiano è possibile in Australas, e che
si può essere cosmopoliti e tribuni delle classi
sofferenti pur non cessando di essere italiani.

Senonchè, noi non potremmo ritrarci e las-
ciare una terza persona arbitra del giornale,
senza fare un torto alla maggioranza dei nostri
abbonati, i quali ci han dato il loro appoggio in
base ad un indirizzo prestabilito e da essi tacita-
mente approvato. Un cambiamento nella Dire-
zione implica un cambiamento d'indirizzo, e noi
non possiamo permetterlo senza consultare i
nostri lettori. Perciò, quei signori che si
son resi mallei per il nostro Giornale, contro
ogni possibile opposizione, han fatto sulla stampa,
l'han fatto pubblicare, e han fatto che la
Direzione del giornale sia composta di
posti ad elezioni, e non di nomi ad
conoscenza.

Ci si chiede se la Compagnia
alla Compagnia nostra, o se la
nostro giornale, o se la
colla Compagnia nostra, o se la
secondo la Compagnia nostra, o se la
I Compagnia nostra, o se la
paese, o se la Compagnia nostra, o se la
fini, o se la Compagnia nostra, o se la
trovare, o se la Compagnia nostra, o se la
attenzione, o se la Compagnia nostra, o se la
annun-
più.
SCUSA.
San Bartolomeo

el famo

Front page of the fifth issue of the newspaper L'Italo-Australiano dated 1 June 1885;
and a portrait photograph of its founder Francesco Sceusa.

<p>AVVERTENZE</p> <p>Gli abbonati hanno la facoltà di poter contribuire materia letteraria al Giornale; e i loro articoli o corrispondenze saranno pubblicati, qualora d'interesse pubblico, e a seconda le convenienze. Gli anonimi si rifiutano. I manoscritti non si restituiscono.</p>	<p>PER GLI ANNUNZI E INSERZIONI</p> <p>Dirigersi per lettera al Sig. C. Carpena 526 Bourke St. Surry Hills, Sydney. O personalmente allo stesso al Club Italiano.</p>	<p>PREZZI</p> <p>Annunzi in 8ª Pagina - in ragione di 2s per pollice (un tratto di colonna un pollice alto) per intere colonne e annunzi annuali da stabilirsi - inserzioni o comunicati nel corpo del giornale in ragione di 6d per ogni 12 parole.</p>
<p>CARTER'S HOTEL SUL CANTO DI GEORGE & PARK STS</p>  <p>CARTER'S HOTEL DIRIMPETTO IL TOWN-HALL</p> <p>Chi soffre del mal di Patria gli sarà di refrigerio il fermarsi sul Canto di George e Park Streets, Carter's Hotel e indi far due passi in dentro e bere un bicchiere di Vino Coloniale buono tanto da figurarsi d'essere in Italia</p> <p>Stante l'immenso spaccio, la Birra che si mesce nel mio locale è preparata espressamente, cosicchè in nessuna parte di Sydney si può bere un bicchiere di birra da paragonarsi in bontà alla mia.</p> <p>3d  3d</p> <p>Tutti i liquori che si servono nel mio locale sono importati direttamente. Sicchè mi trovo in posizione da offrire generi di 1ª qualità a 3d il bicchiere</p> <p>Il mio Rum, Whiskey, Brandy, ecc. ecc. ecc sono rinomati per tutta la città e a coloro che ancora non lo sanno una sola visita al mio stabilimento basterà per farli diventare assidui clienti.</p> <p>CARTER'S HOTEL George & Park Streets Il Proprietario: O. W. MEYER</p>	<p>A. FERRARI & CO Negoziante di Vini, Spiriti &c &c Importatori di Generi Italiani CANTINA DI VINI AUSTRALIANI VARI ITALIAN DELICACIES</p> <p>Maccheroni, Spaghetti, Vermicelli, ecc Formaggi: Parmigiano, Gruyere, ecc Salsami di Bologna, Milano, ecc Tonno, Ventresca, Sardelle, Acciughe Funghi secchi - alla stufata - all'olio Torrioni Conserva di Pomodoro - SIGARI VIRGINIA, TOSCANI, CAVOUR, ETC.</p> <p>VINI ITALIANI</p> <p>Marsala, Barbera, Barolo, Grignolino, Nebiolo, Malvasia, Chianti, Falerno Lacryma Christi, Asli Spumante, ecc Vermouth di Torino e Fernet Branca</p> <p>OLII D' OLIVA Lucca, Garantito Genuino (*), (**), (***) Sicilia, Nizza & Genova</p> <p>BRANDY, RUM, WHISKY, GIN ACQUAVITE, ACQUA DI CEDRO</p> <p>STOUT, ALE, LAGER BEER Liqueurs</p> <p>A. Ferrari & Co. sono i soli italiani in Sydney che possono offrire le migliori qualità di Vini Coloniali</p> <p>li: HUNTER RIVER Albury, ecc. ecc</p> <p>Raccomandando il loro speciale "Vino Belford" per Pasto</p> <p>Note the Address: A. FERRARI & CO. Wine Merchants Importers of Italian Goods 382 George St. Sydney</p>	<p>G. B. MODINI 602 (già 610) George Street ARMERIA E COLTELLERIA Importatore d'Armi bianche e da fuoco Con annesso Ufficio dove ogni lavoro e riparo è eseguito colla massima esattezza e promptezza</p> <p>Il Sig. G. B. Modini è il solo depositario e rappresentante del FERNET FRATELLI BRANCA - MILANO</p> <p>Fratelli Priora  Sydney - 48½ Park St Sydney GIOIELLIERI, INCISORI, OROLOGIAI SMALTATORI, LAPIDARI IN PIETRE FINE Ogni ordine eseguito nel più alto stile d'arte, prezzi onesti</p> <p>ANTONIO PUGLIESE 58 Park Street Orologiaio-Gioielliere Si eseguisce qualunque lavoro in Oro, Argento & Barometri, ed altri lavori meccanici 58 Park St - Sydney</p> <p>616 Crown Street - Sydney Surry Hills G. Guazzini Panetteria & Biscotteria I carri girano qualunque regione della Città Panne giornalmente a domicilio</p> <p>Charles Carugati 181 Oxford St Wholesale & Retail Family Butcher Le migliori qualità di Carne che si possono avere in questo Mercato. 181 Oxford St - Oppos. Kidman's</p> <p>LEANDRO GALAZZINI Pensione Italiana BOARD AND RESIDENCE 57 Goulburn Street I migliori Vini Coloniali trovano a modicissimi prezzi.</p> <p>Solferino Hotel Prop. - G. B. BASSETTI ANGOLO DI ELIZABETH & SUTHERLAND ST. PADDINGTON Birre e liquori scelti. Prezzi moderatissimi Bigliardi &c &c Grande vista della Valle di Morea e Ruscharters Bay. Published as a Specimen by C. Carpena 526, Bourke St. Surry Hills, Sydney</p>

An advertisement page from an issue of the newspaper L'Italo-Australiano.

The newspaper documents the presence of Italian artists in the 1880s commissioned to execute public works in Sydney. The first issue records Tommaso Sani's completion of the Mercury statue on the *Evening News*' building in Market Place and Achille Simonetti's work on the Colonial Secretary's building.⁹ The issue of 6 June records Simonetti's completion of a bust of George Allen MLC and a visit to Augusto Lorenzini's Phillip Street studio. Italians were also involved with opera productions. Signor Majeroni had an opera house in Sydney and Chiarini's Italian circus was touring at the time of publication.

The paper also records the celebrations held at Sydney's *Club Italiano Democratico* for the third anniversary of Giuseppe Garibaldi's death.¹⁰ Sceusa was one of the major organisers of this event. Speeches were made by Drs Fiachi and Marano, sculptor Del Vescovo and signori Guazzini, Pisoni and Modini. A meeting held at Meyer's Carter's Hotel to devise an Italian Legion in the event of the colony's invasion is also recorded in the 6th June issue of the paper.

Together with Cesare Carpena, Francesco Sceusa published *L'Italo-Australiano* from the premises of the Italian Club at 526 Bourke Street, East Sydney. After only six months, the newspaper folded. The reasons were twofold. Firstly, Sceusa was transferred by the Department of Lands to Orange. Secondly, the Italian community was too dispersed throughout New South Wales and such distance prevented the newspaper's economic feasibility. It took nearly twenty years for another Italian-language newspaper to appear in 1903. *Uniamoci* was also founded by political exiles and short-lived. ■

Notes

¹ Gianfranco Cresciani, 'The Making of a New Society : Francesco Sceusa and the Italian Intellectual Reformers in Australia 1876-1905', in J. Hardy (ed.) *Stories of Australian Migration*, New South Wales University Press, Kensington, 1988, pp. 83-98; Gaetano Rando, 'Aspects of the History of the Italian Language Press in Australia 1885-1985', in G. Rando & M. Arrighi (eds.), *Italians in Australia - Historical and Social Perspectives*, Department of Languages (Romance), University of Wollongong, Wollongong, 1993, pp. 197-214.

² This paper bears no relation to the 1885 version. It was published by Count Giovanni Pullè. See Catherine Dewhurst, 'Symbolic Ethnic Identity Through an Italian Family Heritage', *Convivio*, Vol. 3, No. 2, October 1997, pp. 149-159.

³ On Italian-language newspapers see Robert Pascoe, 'The Italian Press in Australia', A. Wade Ata & C.

Ryan (eds.), *The Ethnic Press in Australia*, Academia Press & Footprint Publications, Melbourne, 1989, pp. 201-206.

⁴ Gianfranco Cresciani, *Migrants or Mates : Italian Life in Australia*, Knockmore Enterprises, Sydney, 2000, pp. 25-29.

⁵ 'Signor Sceusa', *Truth*, 17 January 1892, p. 5.

⁶ For further reading on this episode, refer to Ferrando Galassi, *Sotto la Croce del Sud - The Jumna Immigrants of 1891*, Department of History and Politics, James Cook University, Townsville, 1891.

⁷ Verity Burgmann, *In Our Time - Socialism and the Rise of Labour, 1885-1905*, George, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985, p. 52. For example, the following pamphlets by Sceusa in the Mitchell Library; *Hail Australia!*, Jarrett & Co., Sydney, 1888, and *The Glorious House of Savoy - The Socialists Tribute to the Memory of Humbert I*, Co-operative Printing Works, Sydney, 1900.

⁸ N.O. Pyke, 'An Outline of Italian Immigration into Australia', *The Australian Quarterly*, Vol. XX, No. 3, September 1948, p. 101.

⁹ On these artists see F.A. Musicò, *Italian Art and Artists in Late Nineteenth Century Sydney*, B.A. (Hons.) Thesis, Department of History, University of Sydney, 1998 (Copy available at the State Library of New South Wales and at the Italian Historical Society, Melbourne).

¹⁰ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 5 June 1885, p. 1. Commemoration of Garibaldi's death began in Sydney in 1882. See R. Pesman Cooper, 'Communication - Garibaldi and Australia', *Teaching History*, Vol. 16, part 3, October 1982, pp. 62-67.

The launch of the *L'Italo-Australiano* was held on June 19, 2002 at 'Casa d'Italia' in Leichhardt. Well known author Anna Maria Dell'Oso officiated the launch and spoke about her experience as a journalist, as well as the importance of newspapers as historic evidence. Historian Gianfranco Cresciani discussed the Life of Francesco Sceusa and the establishment of the newspaper. Linda Nellor, Coordinator of Co.As.It. Italian Heritage, and Francesca Musicò gave a brief illustrated survey on the contents of *L'Italo-Australiano*. Diana Richards of the State Library of NSW, spoke of how the newspaper complements the extensive pre-Second World War Italian-language newspaper collection held at the State Library. The launch proved to be a success with over 70 guests attending.

If you are interested in purchasing a CD-Rom of *L'Italo-Australiano*, please contact Linda Nellor at linda.nellor@coasit.org.au - Telephone on 02 9564 0744 or Francesca Musicò at fmus0991@mail.usyd.edu.au

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

From the Italian Historical Society's collection of Newspaper Cuttings we have chosen an article which highlights the contribution of Italians to the sugar industry in north Queensland at a time of heated debate in Australia over the Italian presence and immigration in the region.

ITALIAN MIGRANTS "GOOD WORKERS AND CITIZENS"

The Argus, Melbourne, 4 July 1927

Effects upon Sugar Industry

Mr. A. J. Draper, who has been associated with the Queensland sugar industry for many years, and is a director of a successful co-operative sugar mill in the Cairns area since its inception, discussing the much-debated question of the menace of Italian encroachment upon the sugar industry in north Queensland, said that Italian immigration was beyond the control of those engaged in the sugar industry, and even beyond the responsibilities of the Queensland Government. It was in the hands of the Commonwealth Government. Every Italian entering Australia was subject to the immigration laws. Certain restrictions were imposed upon those seeking admittance to Australia from Italy, and no Italian could enter Queensland from overseas unless he was nominated. This implied that employment on the land was guaranteed to him, and it was undertaken by responsible persons that he should not become an addition to the ranks of the unemployed.

"Experience has shown," said Mr. Draper, "that the Italian immigrant, in districts where he is most numerous, shows no inclination to form exclusive Italian communities. He mixes freely with Queenslanders, joins the Australian Workers' Union, and on becoming himself an employer of labour he takes a leading part in associations connected with the industry. The children of Italian migrants, whether their parents continue as labourers, or in course of time acquire farms of their own, are by law required to attend State schools; they associate freely with the Australian children and some of them have taken up higher branches of study. Thus, while there has been no occasion to fault Italians as Australian citizens, it is practically certain that succeeding generations, through the influence of environment and, in many instances, by intermarriage, will become thorough Australian. While I hold no brief for the Italian, preferring whenever possible to give preference to the Briton, whether Australian-born or otherwise, it is essential, in the cause of justice, to state the facts as they have come under my notice during an experience dating back before the arrival of the first Italian immigrant in the north. Many Italians have proved themselves excellent

agriculturists, and they have contributed materially to primary production in the other States as well as in Queensland. The question is asked. Does not the existence of Italian competition tend seriously to depress the standard of living and of comfort in the industry? The general standard of living of the Italian is as high as that of most farmers in north Queensland. He demands the best means of transport from one part of the district to another; he uses the latest implements and equipment in the cultivation of the soil, and he is required by law to pay and demand the same rates of wages and the same conditions of employment as Australians, subject to heavy penalties for infringement of the law. It has been said that, even so, there is room for exploitation of the inexperienced new arrival; but I can say definitely that such men have always access to compatriots who are able and willing to see that they are not imposed upon. It is even said that unscrupulous employers of their own nationality will sometimes impose upon the ignorance of new arrivals; but under the industrial laws of Queensland there is an army of inspectors to see that the conditions prescribed by industrial awards are strictly complied with, to say nothing of the ceaseless activity of union organisers.

"The Italian immigrant has shown himself willing in north Queensland to undertake pioneering work, with the one object of making a home for himself and his family. It is true that in the achievement of this purpose he applies lessons of co-operation and mutual helpfulness learned in his own country; but that surely is a matter for emulation rather than criticism. The animosity shown towards Italian immigration is too often the result of mere thoughtless prejudice, and the repetition of statements passed from mouth to mouth without inquiry into the grounds on which those statements are based. We hear the frequent assertion that the sugar industry has encouraged within its ranks an entirely disproportionate number of foreigners. In view of the admitted difficulty of obtaining efficient agricultural labour from Great Britain, there should be a less hostile feeling towards Italians, who admittedly include a large proportion of men whose families have been associated with agriculture for generations. The well-defined objective of the sugar industry is that we should be able to maintain Australia as an integral part of the British Empire by means of effective occupation of tropical areas: and

it cannot be denied that Italian immigration, under its restricted and regulated conditions, is contributing materially to that end. The addition of foreigners to the population of the Commonwealth is by no means confined to north Queensland. During the crushing season 25,000 men are employed in sugar mills and in canefields, in addition to about 7,000 farmers. The Italians, in comparison with this total, are a negligible quantity. But for the fact that they have found such districts as the Herbert River and Johnstone River areas more congenial than district farther south, we should probably seldom hear anything of the alleged 'peaceful penetration' of the industry, and the supposed danger of it falling into the hands of foreigners." ■

BAN ON ITALIANS.
NO EXPLANATION MADE.
APPEAL TO MINISTER FAILS.
TALK OF HIGH COURT ACTION.
CANNBERRA, Friday. — Representations to the Minister for Home Affairs (Mr. Blakeley) to-day for permission for the 92 Italian men who reached Sydney earlier in the week on the Otranto to land were refused, and it is intended to send the men away from Australia to-morrow on the Orama. Mr. Blakeley has announced also that 102 Italian men who are travelling to Australia on the Otranto will not be permitted to land because they do not come within the approved categories.
A request was made to-day by the secretary of the Italian Association of New South Wales (Mr. J. Chapman) to Mr. Blakeley that the ban imposed on the men should be removed. Mr. Chapman said afterwards that Mr. Blakeley had declined to vary his decision, but had not given any specific reasons. Within the last four weeks the Ministry had permitted 110 Italians of the same class as those now banned to enter Australia, including one man who had served a sentence of three years imprisonment in Italy. The men on the Otranto were of a good type, and were provided with money in excess of the amount which the Customs department required when immigrants to have. Four



PROHIBITED ITALIANS.
Confusion When Ship Arrives.
SYDNEY, Wednesday. — Despite the vigilance of officials, much confusion arose on the arrival of the Otranto to-day with 92 prohibited Italian migrants on board. Friends thronged the third-class deck, and within half an hour it was impossible to distinguish migrants from visitors. Customs officials were determined to prevent the migrants landing. Lady Isaacs and her son and daughter were the only passengers allowed to land until the ship had been granted a clearance. Third-class passengers were detained more than an hour, and migrants were sifted from returning Australians and visitors.



Clockwise from top left: emigration papers for Modesta Cantamussa, 1922; newspaper excerpt from The Argus, 13 May 1920; Australian Workers Union membership ticket, 1927; sugar cane cutters in northern Queensland, c1930; newspaper excerpt from The Argus, 18 December 1930; passport photograph of the Provera family, 1923.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The Italian Historical Society Collection has been enriched by a number of significant recent acquisitions. During the year 2002 many hundreds of historic photographs have been lodged with the Society for preservation. We would like to highlight a few of these here:



An advertisement for General Motors Holden featuring a model wearing a dress designed by Madame Itala Serini, the Australian Women's Weekly, 29 August 1956:

Madame Itala Serini has made a significant contribution as a designer to the world of high fashion in Melbourne in a career that spans over three decades from the 1950s to the early 1980s. Itala Serini was born in Fiume (near Trieste) in 1918 and began training as a designer at a young age. She migrated to Australia with her husband and two children in January 1950, settling first in Hobart where she established a small salon in the city centre. In 1953 she moved to Melbourne and worked with Miss Whiteman at the prestigious Le Louvre salon at 74 Collins Street, where she remained for six years.

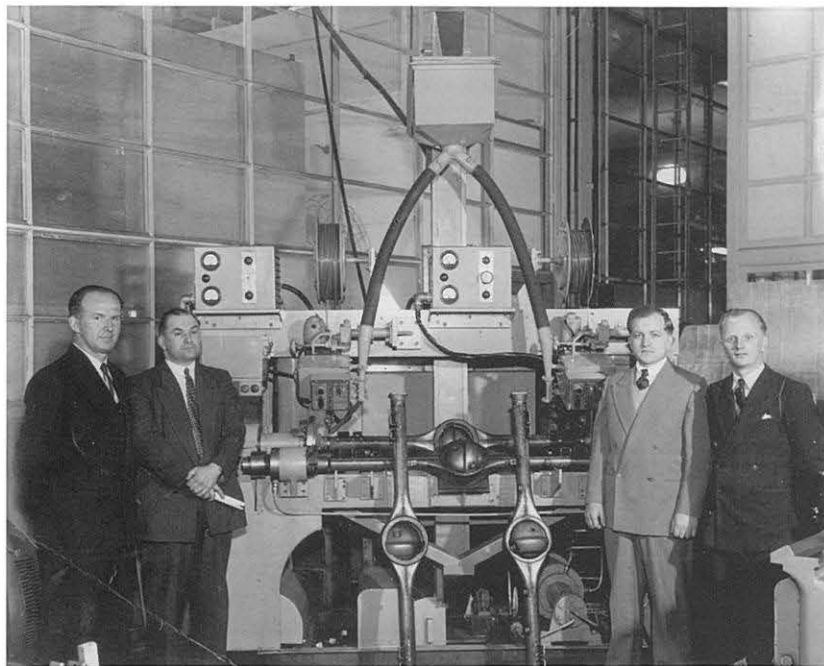
In 1959 Madame Serini opened her own salon at Toorak Village and created her own hand-made designs using only the best imported fabrics from Italy and France. She achieved a growing reputation for the originality of her designs and the high quality of her craftsmanship. Her high attention to detail meant that some garments required over 130 hours to complete. She claims to have inherited her creativity from her father, Antonio Morietti, who was a sculptor. Fashion parades were a regular feature at Madame

Serini's salon to showcase her seasonal collections which attracted a prominent clientele. In 1967, she was awarded second prize in the Gown of the Year competition. She travelled regularly to the big fashion houses of Paris, Rome and Milan to keep abreast of current fashion trends. She also travelled widely to other Australian cities to show and promote her designs. In 1970 Madame Serini went to Adelaide with Sir Robert Helpmann to take part in a charity event for the Arts Festival, during which she staged a fashion parade of her exclusive designs in aid of the Royal Children's Hospital.

Madame Serini retired in the 1980s and has now made her documents and photographs available to the Italian Historical Society. She has allowed the Society to copy these items for future researchers. The collection will be an invaluable resource on the contribution of an Italian migrant to Australia's fashion industry.

An oral history with Madame Serini was recently conducted by Luciana Katsalidis, a volunteer at the Italian Historical Society.

Italian actor Walter Chiari [left] in Melbourne, c1957. Several years after this photograph was taken, Chiari was again in Melbourne to act in the film *They're a Weird Mob*, based on the novel by Nino Culotta, which examines the plight of a newly arrived Italian migrant in Australia and the culture shocks which he encounters. The other person in the photograph is Guido Di Filippo, himself a migrant who had recently arrived from Italy and settled in Melbourne. Di Filippo visited Chiari on learning that the famous actor was in Melbourne and fortuitously was 'caught' in this snapshot.



Engineering staff at General Motors Holden, Fishermen's Bend, Melbourne, 1951. Guglielmo [Bill] Varrenti [third from left] was the designer of this innovative arc welding machine used for the manufacture of axle housings. Others pictured are [from left]: Jim Lean, Geoff Day and Fred Saunders. Guglielmo worked for GMH for a total of thirty-five years. After this photograph was taken he became Process Engineer (1953) and Senior Process Engineer (1963). Twice, in 1980 and 1981, he was stationed in Germany for the company working on the production of the Front-Wheel-Drive engine.

Leonardo and Emanuela (nee Ciavarella) Villani and their children Raffaele (left) and Michele in Flinders Street Melbourne. Leonardo migrated to Australia from San Marco in Lamis, Foggia, Puglia in 1937. His father was already in Australia as early as 1920. It is reputed that Emanuela was one of the first female immigrants to arrive in Australia from Italy by aeroplane shortly after the Second World War.



FAMILY HISTORY

The following enquiries were selected from the many received for the interest which they might generate with people researching their family history.

THE FAMILY OF GIACOMO FILIPPO MARTINOJA AND DOMENICA RIGHETTI

The story of Filippo Martinoja and his wife Domenica (nee Righetti) has been recently researched and written by Joy Edmestone from Birkdale, Queensland. Joy has based her research on several sources, including Joseph Gentili's directory The Settlement of Swiss Ticino Immigrants in Australia [Geowest 23, The University of Western Australia, July 1987], passengers lists, Birth, Death, Marriage certificates and Naturalization records. The story of Filippo and Domenica Martinoja is far from complete and there are many questions relating to the origin of three of their daughters for which Joy would like to find answers.

Giacomo Filippo Martinoja, commonly known as Filippo Martinoja, was born in Cevio, Canton Ticino, Switzerland, c1836. He was 18 years old when, on 9 June 1854, he sailed from Liverpool on board the *John and Lucy*, arriving in Melbourne on 3 September 1854.

He travelled to Australia with a group of men from the same town, including Vincenzo BOLLA; Barnaba COMISTÒ; G. Martino CRISTOFANINI; Giovan Battista Filippo GUGLIELMINI; Carlo Giovan Battista GUGLIELMINI; Giuseppe GUGLIELMINI; Giuseppe MARTINOJA [possibly a cousin]; Giuseppe Antonio MATTEI; Giuseppe Antonio MORELLI; Giovan Battista PALLI; Giovan Battista RE; G. Martini RE and Antonio Maria RESPINI. Upon his arrival in Victoria, Filippo headed for the goldfields. In the 1860s he settled in Guilford where from 1865 to 1868 he operated 'L'Antica Helvetica Hotel' [The Old Switzerland Hotel], previously run by Domenico GIOVANNINI, another Swiss Italian from Maggia, Canton Ticino. On 4 August 1862 he married Domenica Righetti, aged 24, at the Church of the H.N. of Mary at Castlemaine.

Filippo Martinoja died on 9 April 1899 in Castlemaine.

Domenica Righetti was born in the village of Someo, Canton Ticino, Switzerland, c1838. At 21 years of age, on 16 February 1861, she sailed from Liverpool on board the *Great Britain*, arriving in Melbourne on 2 May 1861. She shared Compartment 2739 with six men, all from Someo, namely Giuseppe and Marco RIGHETTI (possibly relatives); Antonio CALIGARI; Eustacchio

MORGANTI; Battista PEZZONI and Giacomo Antonio TOGNAZZINI. Two married women from Someo, Lucrezia GIACOMETTI (nee Righetti) and Maria Susanna TOMASINI (nee Tognazzini), lodged in a nearby compartment, were travelling to rejoin their husbands in Victoria.

When Domenica married Filippo Martinoja in 1862 she was 24 years old. The Marriage Certificate indicates that she was a servant and the daughter of Matteo Righetti, farmer, and Maria Righetti. Domenica signed the certificate with an 'X'.

After their marriage they settled at Shicer Gully in Guilford. Two children were born out of their marriage: Matilda in 1866 deceased in the same year, and Antonio Filippo, born 5 January 1870.

Antonio Filippo Martinoja married Theresa Emily Dale on 30 December 1896 at Guilford. They had six children: Mary Dale, Lillian Inez, James Phillip, Victor Roy, Emily Antoinette and Sara Jane Deminica [Domenica]. Antonio died at Castlemaine in October 1907, aged 37 years. His wife remarried in 1913 to George Moon and died in 1918 at Castlemaine.

Included in the Martinoja family were three girls: Margaret, Mary Anne (Marianna) and Katerina (Catherine). Some mystery surrounds the origin of these girls. They were known by the surname of Martinoja and the death record for each, lists Filippo and Domenica as the parents. However they were born before Filippo and Domenica married. No records of birth could be found under their names. Their age and birthplace was obtained from Death and Marriage certificates. It appears that these girls may have been fostered or adopted by Filippo and Domenica.

Margaret Martinoja, was born in 1857 at Guilford. She was sometimes known as Margaret Steffen and/or De Steffenos [possibly Di Stefano]. She never married and died at Guilford in 1922. The pallbearers included Messrs Alf and J. Passalacqua. She was not buried in the Martinoja family grave nor did her headstone state the names of her parents as was common.

Mary Anne (Marianna) Martinoja was born in 1860 at Back Creek, near Talbot. She was 19 years old when in 1879 she married Prospero Passalacqua, aged 46 with three children. They had eight children born between 1880 and 1895. Mary Anne died at Guilford in 1947.

Keterina (Catherine) Martinoja, born in 1862 at Guilford, was 21 years old when she married Charles Cowan Stewart in 1883. They spent most

of their lives in Guildford, where their six children were born. Katerina died at Castlemaine in 1953 aged 91 years.

Any information on the history of this family would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the Italian Historical Society.



Typical stone houses in the township of Someo.

ASSUNTA TERZI: A WOMAN WITH A DIFFERENCE

It appears that Assunta was very much ahead of her time in the way her life unfolded in Australia!

Assunta Terzi was possibly born in Rome on 12 October 1870. Her parents, Antonio and Serafina Terzi (nee Gentili), originated from the town of Cavriago, near Reggio Emilia. In Italy Assunta married Domenico Augusto Pollastrelli who died before she came to Australia. She arrived at Port Melbourne in 1902. By 1904 she was in Perth living or boarding with a Michael Iles. She gave birth to a baby girl on 20 November 1904 and a year after, on 18 December 1905, she married Cecil Heberle in a Roman Catholic church. Between 1906 and 1910, Assunta lived in Adelaide and/or Sydney and may have returned for a trip to Italy. In 1910 she lived in Fremantle,

Western Australia and in the same year, on 18 July, her marriage to CE Heberle was dissolved in Sydney on grounds of desertion! She may have returned to Italy for another trip. However, in 1916/1917 she was in Perth and on 21 February 1919 she died in the gold town of Kalgoorlie.

It is not known why and with whom Assunta came to Australia. Any information as to her whereabouts in this country between 1910 and 1916 is eagerly sought by her great-grandson Leonard Fletcher from Western Australia. Please contact the Italian Historical Society.

An online enquiry at RecordSearch [National Archives of Australia] revealed that a person by the name of Cecil Edwin Heberle, born in Adelaide, joined the Australian Imperial Forces in 1914 enlisting in New South Wales. Next of kin is wife Emily Mary Heberle. Most likely Cecil remarried soon after the dissolution of his marriage to Assunta Terzi.

VINCENZO ALMAO [ARMAO]

The Italian Diplomatic Archives Collection, held in microfilm format at the Italian Historical Society, proved to be an important source of information for Stuart Almao, a descendant of Vincenzo Almao living in New Zealand. A register of Italian nationals residing in the Colony of Victoria compiled by Consul Biagi in 1868 and correspondence between the Consulate and the Italian Ministry of Foreign affairs reveals that the correct spelling of the name of this Sicilian pioneer was ARMAO. He was the son of Biagio and Maria (nee Pintauro), born in Palermo on 19 April 1840, an 'itinerant' [without fixed address in Victoria] and a tradesman. At the time of registration he was married. His parents and two sisters, Teresina and Michelina, lived in Palermo. Vincenzo owned some land in Naples where he originally resided. In August 1867 Consul Biagi advised the Ministry that Vincenzo Armao, who worked as a dispenser of medicines on board the Italian Royal Navy Corvette *Magenta* on a voyage to circumnavigate the world in c1864, had voluntarily left the ship in Sydney and upon his arrival in Melbourne wanted to return to Italy. However, Armao was not able to find work on another ship to pay for his passage home and borrowed 10 pounds from the Italian consulate to pay for his fare on the *Essex* sailing for London on 29 August 1867. It is not known when Armao returned to Victoria or if he ever left. According to his descendant, Vincenzo Almao married Jane Downie in Melbourne and in 1871 left the colony for New Zealand, where they settled.

ACTIVITIES

STUDENTS GALORE!

The number of tertiary students who accessed the Italian Historical Society's resources and collections for research projects was at times overwhelming. Of particular interest were the students from Italian Universities, some of whom spent long periods at the Society. The students from Università' Bocconi, Milan, combined work experience in industries such as Pirelli Cables Australia and the Italian Australian Chamber of Commerce with research-based analysis of the history of Italian presence and contribution in the manufacturing and commercial sectors after WW2. The students from Università' Statale and Università' Cattolica, Milan, and from Università' Ca' Foscari, Venice and Treviso campuses, were mainly focused on researching the involvement of migrants in setting up small businesses, the development of Italian language mass-media and active participation in political or union-based organisations.

The students from the University of Melbourne, with whom the Italian Historical Society has a



University students from Italy at the Italian Historical Society: Veronica Misciattelli, Sara Ruscitti, Roberto Gabbin and Simone Battiston.

partnership agreement, were mainly visiting overseas students from U.S.A. and Japan. Their field of research was concentrated on the history and presence of Italians in Carlton.

A WELCOME VISIT

When Guido and Marjorie Cavedon, from country Eurobin in the Ovens Valley, had to decide on how to use specially discounted train tickets, they thought a visit to the Italian Historical Society was the best way to spend their day in Melbourne. The Society was indeed very pleased to host them! Lorenzo Iozzi, Curator and Collection Manager,

took advantage of their visit to properly identify photographs deposited in the Society's collection documenting the history and contribution of Guido's father, Remigio Cavedon, to the development of tobacco farming in the Myrtleford district.

The Cavedon family has also donated to the Society a valuable collection of original documents, including share-farming contracts stipulated by Remigio Cavedon with fellow Italian workers from 1931 to 1969.

LYGON STREET FESTA 2002

The week-end of 26 and 27 October, saw the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Lygon Street Festa, the oldest street festival in Australia. Roberto D'Andrea and Carmelina Di Guglielmo,



From left: Performers Roberto D'Andrea, Sergio De Nardo, Carmelima di Guglielmo and Jema Stellato-Pledger at the Lygon Street Festa. Photo Imogen Hall.

working closely with Emanuela Savini, the Festa associate producer, brought to Lygon Street a variety of theatrical street performances. The characters included a gypsy fortune-teller, an *Arlecchino*, a roving barber, a story telling *Nonna*, a singing waitress and the *Giullari* Connies (Jester tram conductors). The Connies took on the role of story tellers, theatrically informing festa patrons about events, working as conductors on a tram which originally operated in the City of Milan. They distributed a series of Connies Collectables swap cards which were created especially for the Festa to celebrate the history of Italians in Australia. The five swap cards depicted the stories of five immigrants from Raffaello Carboni, 1854, to Rosella Mastrippolito, 2002. A key part of the Festa celebrations were the story telling/bocce playing thatrical event 'Oh My Papa' with Italian senior citizens from Merrilands Community Centre and the roving *Zingarelli* (Gypsies) Choir from St. Joseph's Primary School, Northcote.

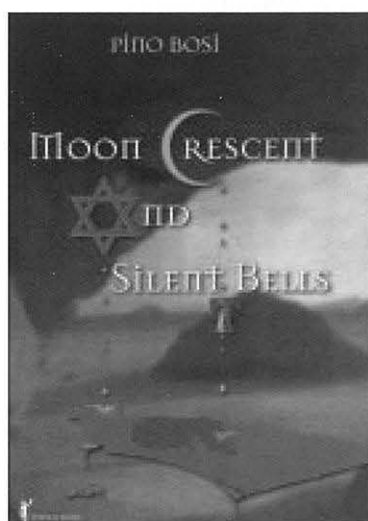
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The following publications have been recently purchased by or donated to the Society. They may not necessarily be recent releases but every attempt is made to acquire all current publications in the field of Italian-Australian history.

BOOKS IN ENGLISH

Moon Crescent And Silent Bells

Pino Bosi, Perseus Books, Camberwell, 2002, \$25.00 paper back. The book is for sale at



Pino Bosi's latest publication is an engrossing book to read. The novel centres around the character of Ludovico, an Italian "visiting" Israel, who meets Shulla, an Israeli woman and soldier with whom he has an intimate liaison.

Ludovico's "travels" take him to the front line of the Israeli-Palestinian war, where the questions of right and wrong are far too simplistic, and concepts such as who should "own" which area of land and who should abandon its claim on a specific territory, ought

to ultimately answered by compromise, not sacrifice. The reader willingly takes the all too brief "journey" with Ludovico, whilst trying to understand what drives him on. The ending of the novel may surprise!

Reception and Training Centre Bonegilla

Department of Immigration, Bonegilla, 1964.

This very rare booklet highlights the procedures for newly arrived migrants and the activities that were available to them at the Centre. The booklet is an original publication and was donated to the IHS by an Italian migrant who was placed at Bonegilla immediately after his arrival in Australia. This and other original memorabilia from Bonegilla are available for consultation at the IHS.



Migrants at Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre c1954. (Italian Historical Society Collection)

Melba loved Italy: Melba amava l'Italia

Sue Thompson and Wanda McPherson, Lilydale and District Historical Society, Lilydale, 2002. Available from the Lilydale Museum, \$3.00.

Helen Porter Mitchell aka Nellie Melba, first performed professionally at the Melbourne Town Hall in May



1884. Her debut was arranged by Pietro Cecchi,, an Italian tenor who arrived in Melbourne in 1872 and taught Melba for approx. 7 years. This booklet covers her involvement with and attraction to Italian composers, singers, musicians and other artists.

Land Of Gold & Silver

Louise Zaetta, Penguin Books, Camberwell, 2002. Kindly donated by the author.

Zaetta's novel, based on the lives of her Italian ancestors, is best summed up by a quote from the book:

From the old world to the new. A timeless saga of life, love, separation, toil and dreams. [The book] charts the course of the Cerutti family from Northern Italy..... to the mines of Tasmania's wilderness.

📖 ***Franca: My Story***

Franca Arena, Simon & Schuster (Australia), East Roseville, 2002. \$30.00.

In this direct and candid book, the former New South Wales politician recalls her life thus



far. Her lonely childhood in Genoa, her migration to Australia in April 1959, her rise in the Australian Labour Party and subsequent election to the New South Wales Legislative Council and her active participation in the Australian Republican Movement are all topics she shares with her readers.

Arena also writes openly about the enormous controversy created in the New South Wales parliament in October 1996 when she questioned the terms of reference of the Wood Royal Commission and the appearance of former Supreme Court Justice David Yeldham and former member of parliament Frank Arkell in front of the commission. The storm of acrimonious debate that ensued was even more controversial.

The IHS is selling copies of this autobiography at \$30.00 per copy.

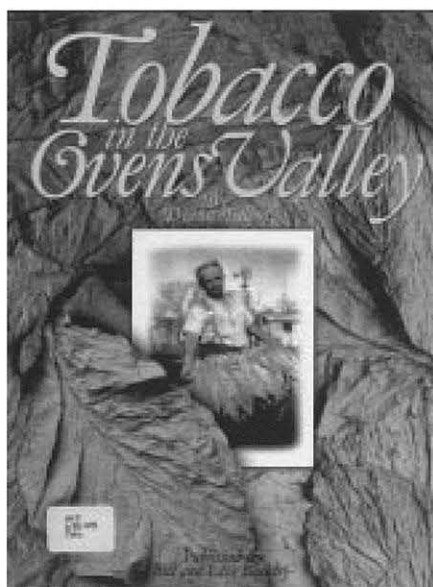
📖 ***Mamma Mia! Memories Of A Migrant Childhood, 1946-1966***

Rosa Verocchi-Miot, self-published, Melbourne, 2002. Kindly donated by the author.

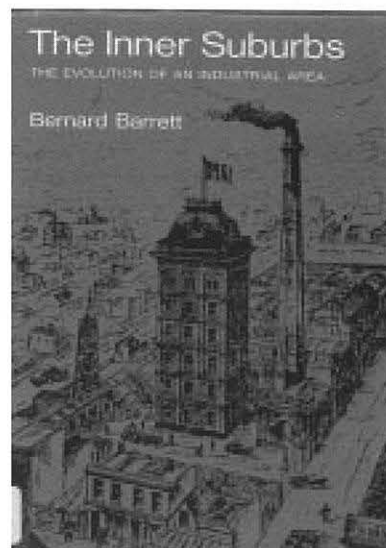
This publication is the "story" of Rosa Verocchi who, like so many other Italians, arrived in Australia in the post-war period as a child. She lovingly recollects her life in Australia as well as recalling what it was like growing up in a land of contrasts. As well as containing a photographic history of her life in a new land, the book is interspersed with photographs of cultural life in Sulmona, the Verocchi family's home town.

📖 ***Tobacco In The Ovens Valley***

Diann Talbot, Specialty Press, Albury, 2002. Book kindly donated by Don and Marjorie Cavedon.



The history of the cultivation, harvesting and drying of tobacco in the Ovens Valley area is traced in this book. Italian families such as the Cavedon and Pianagonda are mentioned at length throughout the book.



📖 ***The Inner Suburbs : The Evolution Of An Industrial Area***

Bernard Barrett, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1971. \$20.00.

A colleague remembered this book on Collingwood from his university days and we were able to eventually chase it up. It retells the history of the area of Collingwood and colourfully depicts the Italian community contained within.

📖 ***Census Of Population And Housing: 1974.***

Australian Government Printing Office, Canberra, 1975.

The 11 volumes of un-interpreted results for the national census of 1974 were kindly donated by Lidio Bertelli. The raw data is divided into folders classed by state, and then broken down further into smaller divisions and sub-divisions. These folders are a valuable addition to our library as they highlight the shifts and changes of Italian migrants and Australian born children of Italian descent. We are also in the process of acquiring the raw data for the censuses of 1971 and 1981.

The Longest Journey: A History Of Migration To The Shire Of Lillydale

Jana Samargis-Murphy, Lillydale Museum, Lillydale, 2002. Available from the Lillydale Museum, \$5.40.

A brief account of the history of the area since White settlement and the unique contributions Italian families have made to it.



A History of Migration to the Shire of Lillydale

From White Australia To Woomera: The Story Of Australian Migration

James Jupp, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002. \$29.95 paper back, \$99.00 hard back.

Jupp's account of Australia's immigration programme from Federation to the present day, highlights how the concept of assimilation is once again on the political agenda, and how the notion of multiculturalism has all but eroded in the Howard-Ruddoch administration. The author examines the immigration policies of the Fraser, Hawke and Keating governments from 1975-1996. Peter Mares' best sums up the feeling of this book in his review of it in the Saturday Extra pages of *The Age* newspaper [14/9/02], offering us this message: ...[Jupp] notes that the Australian population has been 'planned and engineered to a greater extent than is true for

almost anywhere else' in the world. The story of our migration program is a story of deliberate selection and control; we have migration in order to shape the nation. The crime of the boat people is not so much that they lack a visa, it is that they challenge the pattern of migration that has been established over more than a century.

BOOKS IN ENGLISH AND ITALIAN

Italians Abroad: 140 Years Of Photography Of The Italian Communities, 1860-2000

Edited by Michele Rak, BCM, Rome, 2001

A photographic exploration of Italian migration to all areas of the world. The photographs are divided into three major chronological periods: 1860-



1920; 1930-1970; 1980-2000. The book depicts Italians living and working in their country of adoption.

BOOKS IN ITALIAN

Andata e Ritorno: Commedia Italiana In 2 Tempi

Nino Randazzo, Italo-Australian Theatre Company Inc., Carlton North, 2002.

This is the recently published version of the play, first performed at the Open Stage Theatre, Carlton in April and

May 1998. See the enclosed leaflet for a synopsis of the book.

Summary Of History Of The Venezia Giulia And Dalmazia Regions

Luciano Marampon [translator], Edizioni ASTRA, Trieste, 2001. Kindly donated by Sergio Czar.

This book tries to chart the separate histories of the area in a socio-political context. At the end of every chapter there is an extensive chronology of the historical incidents mentioned in that chapter.

CD-ROMS IN ENGLISH AND ITALIAN

L'Italo-Australiano 1885: The First Italian Language Newspaper In Australia

Biblioteca Fardelliana, COASIT Italian Heritage and the State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002.

The first Italian language newspaper in Australia, *L'Italo-Australiano*, was published in Sydney between January and July 1885. The newspaper's founder, Francesco Sceusa, donated a complete run of the newspaper to the Biblioteca Fardelliana, Trapani, Sicily upon his returned to Italy in 1908. As the introductory chapter to the CD-ROM explains: *Despite only 6 issues, [the paper] provides a vital key to understanding the nature of Sydney's small Italian community during the 1880s.* COASIT Italian Heritage and the State Library of New South Wales, in collaboration with the Biblioteca Fardelliana, produced a microfilm copy of the six issues. This CD-ROM is the end-product of that collaboration. See article on page 24 in this issue.



Primelife™

LEXINGTON GARDENS

From 'Surriento' to Melbourne's 'Gold Coast'

"Surriento – it's a name that I shall never forget," says Eugenio Mirabelli, Secretary of the Italian Senior Citizens Club of Springvale. And why would he forget it, after all it's the name of the ship that carried him from his hometown of Castrolibero all the way to his new life in Australia back in 1954.

For the young man from a small country village in Calabria, the prospect of such a long sea voyage was very exciting but when he got on the ship his view dramatically changed. He can remember nearly every detail of the trip and although he laughs about it now, at the time it wasn't so funny.

"The sea was rough all the way from Italy to Australia. There were five hundred emigrants on board and nearly every one of them was seasick. I was trying to help them and they thought that I must have been one of the crew-members seeing I hadn't been ill. They kept telling me how lucky I was, but my luck changed when we were just three days out from Australia. I got sick. Very sick! It was terrible."

Although his seasickness is a vivid memory, what has also endured is Eugenio's desire to help his fellow migrants to Australia. It is this passion and desire to serve his community that made him accept the role of Secretary of the Italian Senior Citizens Club of Springvale.

"There is a lot to do, but I get a lot of enjoyment out of it. There are 165 members of the Club and it gives me great satisfaction to be able to help them," he says.

Eugenio and his wife, Francesca, married in 1956 and moved to Springvale. He first worked as a bricklayer and later moved into installing heating and cooling systems. He and Francesca had two children and also kept themselves busy with their commitment to the local Italian community.

When Francesca passed away a little while ago Eugenio felt it was time for an easier lifestyle. At the age of 76 he decided to move into Lexington Gardens and he has not looked back.

"As I was on my own I wanted a bit more security and comfort. Someone from the Italian Social Club told me to visit Lexington Gardens and it really was love at first sight."

Eugenio says he was overwhelmed by the charm and quality of Lexington Gardens and found the environment very welcoming.

"It is like living in a holiday resort. I can enjoy a quiet walk in a beautiful garden, play tennis and bowls, there's a swimming pool and spa, a fully equipped gymnasium, an elegant community centre, excellent meals, a bar, dances and other social events, even a small shop for all my needs," he says.

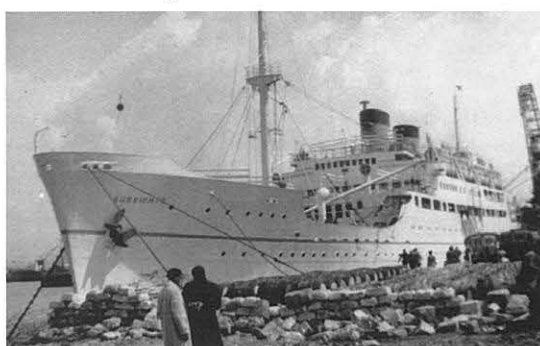
Eugenio also says that the feeling of security living at Lexington Gardens gives him is another great bonus.

"There is always someone around if you need them and Primelife's 24-hour emergency call system means that help is never far away."

"It is never too late to enjoy the good things in life and I would recommend Lexington Gardens to anyone. You really do not need to go to Gold Coast, when you can have it all right here."



Eugenio enjoying a cup of coffee with Jill Stacey, staff member at Lexington Gardens.



The ship Surriento of the Lauro Line, docked at the port of Messina, Sicily, on her way to Australia, c1950

ADVERTISEMENT

According to the 2001 Census, 22% of the total population living in Australia was born overseas and originated from more than 200 different countries.

More than 9 million Australian Residents have one or both parents born overseas.

Another interesting statistic is that of the 18,972,350 people living in Australia, 218,718 were born in Italy and 353,605 Australian residents speak Italian.

Primelife is aware that Italian born Australians represent the largest and the fastest ageing non-English speaking group in the country. Also Primelife recognises the need to consider the culture of Italian people in the delivery of care and the risk of social isolation due to the language difficulties and cultural barriers.

Until a few years ago there was a low number of Italian people in Residential Care facilities. For many, residential placement "meant they had entered the tomb before the time of Death". Primelife is now changing this negative attitude with the provision of Residential Care facilities designed especially for them.

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ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. The journal of the Italian Historical Society is produced for a general readership. Preference will be given to articles which increase an understanding of the history of Italian immigrants and their descendants.
2. The *IHS Journal* is published twice yearly. The deadline dates for submission of articles for each issue are:
 - June issue: 30 April
 - December issue: 30 October
3. The *IHS Journal* accepts unsolicited articles but may decline publication for various reasons. Articles are equally welcome from both professional and amateur historians and writers.
4. The Italian Historical Society does not offer remuneration for articles submitted for the *Journal*.
5. All materials submitted may be subject to editing.
6. Articles should be normally submitted on a white A4 paper, typed with double spacing. Contributors are also encouraged to submit work on IBM compatible format. In general articles should not exceed 5000 words.
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