

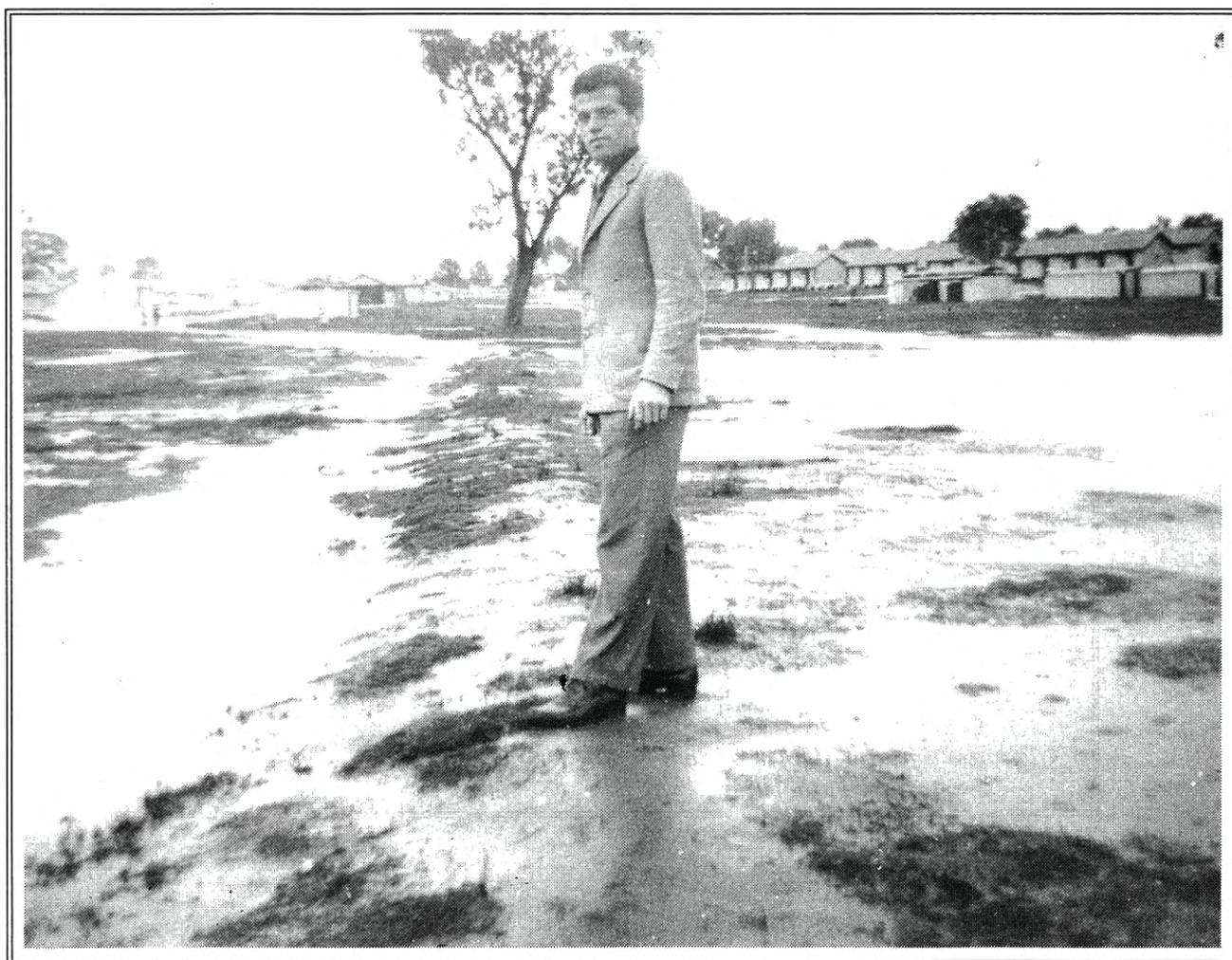


ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JOURNAL

MARCH 1995

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The *Journal* aims to provide, to those interested in the history of Australian-Italian communities, an outlet for the circulation of news and reports, the exchange of information and the notification of future activities. We invite readers to contribute newsworthy articles and short notes. Guidelines for contributors are included.

The views expressed in the *Journal* are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Italian Historical Society. The illustrations not sourced are from the Italian Historical Society Collection.

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FRONT COVER: *Bonegilla, 1952. A newly arrived Italian migrant from Friuli on his way to visit the nearest town of Wodonga, 13 km away. The isolation of the Immigration Centre exacerbated the dissatisfaction of many Italian immigrants with the long wait for jobs promised by the Australian authorities.*

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REPORT

*by Gaspare Sirianni,
Chairman of the Italian Historical Society and Vice-President of CO.AS.IT.*

First of all I wish to apologize to our members for failing to publish the December 1994 edition of the Journal (Vol.2, No.2). This will be compensated by the publication of 3 issues for 1995 (March, July and December).

The urgent need for our parent body, CO.AS.IT., to accommodate important government funded programs forced the Society to vacate its premises and go into storage from October 1994 to the end of February, 1995. At the same time the refurbishment of our new premises was completed. From the beginning of March we have been able to shift and set up the Society in its present venue within the Italian Resource Centre. The Society is now fully operational and our subscribers are most welcome to visit it during office hours. We are located on the first floor, next to a very attractive and large exhibition and conference area which the Society will be able to use.

Our program of public activities for the year is quite challenging and it includes two exhibitions. The first, called "Childsplay", is a travelling exhibition produced by the Museum of Lilydale. It will be on display at the Society from 15th September to 15th November 1995. It is about childrens' toys and games from the 1920s to the 1950s. The Society will add an Italian component by incorporating toys and games which were brought to Australia by Italian migrant children or were given to migrants during their childhood.

The second exhibition to be held at the end of November is a celebration of the contribution of Madam Serini to the development of the fashion industry in Australia. Madam Serini was a renowned fashion designer who migrated to Australia from Trieste in the 1950s. For nearly 30 years she conducted an exclusive Salon in South Yarra and her elegant clothes were worn by many prominent women all over Australia.

In the field of publications, the Society is seeking to publish the war diary of an Italian soldier stationed in Libya during the Second World War. The diary was recently donated to the Society by a Western Australian subscriber. It is a moving account of the months leading up to the battles of Sidi-El-Barrani and Tobruk where thousands of Italian soldiers were captured by the British and Australian troops and sent to Australia as Prisoners of War.

And last but not least, the Society has employed a Resource Officer, Marisa Cortese, who is an experienced history teacher. Marisa will develop educational programmes to meet the needs of secondary school students and teachers with regard to the history of Italian immigration and settlement in Australia.

The Journal will continue to rely on the support of its subscribers for membership and for the contribution of interesting articles. In the subscription renewal form for 1995, which is included in this issue, we have made provision for a voluntarily monetary contribution towards the Society's activities. Donations above \$2.00 are tax deductible.

I thank you for your continuous support and look forward to meeting many of you at our future activities.

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BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITALIAN CUISINE IN AUSTRALIA

by Vicki Swinbank

Vicki Swinbank is a food writer and cookery teacher specializing in the cooking of the Mediterranean or Middle-Eastern Regions. She was awarded (jointly with Cherry Ripe, food writer with The Australian) the 1993 Philip Muscaket Memorial Prize, the previously named National Award for Gastronomic Writing in Australia.

This is Part One of an edited talk given at the Italian Cuisine Expo held in Melbourne in 1994. Part Two will be published in the next issue.

Attempting to describe the impact and influence of Italian cuisine in Australia is rather like trying to describe the climate - it is so omnipresent that you are scarcely aware of it unless you stop to think about it. In short, it is one of those things that one almost takes for granted, but without which life would be so much the poorer and less interesting; were all Italian influence to be somehow suddenly removed from our midst, we would be painfully aware of its absence.

Possibly nowhere has the influence of Italian migration to Australia been more strongly felt than in restaurants. I think it is probably a commonly held misconception that it is only since the mass migration programmes of the 1950s and 1960s that Italian restaurants have been a dominant feature of the restaurant scene here. In fact, Italian restaurants have existed in Australia wherever any number of Italians settled. This was especially so in the capital cities, most notably Melbourne and Sydney. I will concentrate on the Italian influence in Melbourne - partly because this is where there has been the greatest concentration of Italian migrants, and also because, as a Melburnian, this is the city with which I am most familiar.

One of the earliest contributors was Vincent Fasoli, who arrived in Australia from Como in the 1870s and established Fasoli's restaurant at 108 Lonsdale Street in 1897. This trattoria became an institution, attracting a loyal and enthusiastic following amongst the Melbourne intelligentsia and bohemians of the day, where, over good and honest 'casalinga' cooking, animated discussion, conviviality and music extended far into the night. A typical menu consisted (as described in Michael Symons' history of eating in Australia *One Continuous Picnic*) of an antipasto of salame, followed by a soup or plate of spaghetti (made by the proprietors) and only one main course, which

might be a hearty stew such as osso buco, finishing up with fruit and cheese. All this was of course accompanied by copious amounts of wine - and all of this for a "trifling one shilling and threepence".



From 1897 to 1907 Fasoli's restaurant was located in these premises in Lonsdale Street.

Fasoli's set a precedent for the flourishing cafe society that developed among the Italian community in Melbourne during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1919 Ernesto Molina opened the Café d'Italia at 55 Lonsdale Street. Ernesto had arrived in Adelaide in 1912 from Rome, with his friend and colleague Salvatore (later to be chef at the Florentino), where they worked at the prestigious South Australia Hotel for two years before coming to Melbourne. Molina established his restaurant on the site of the old Rinaldi's Cucina Italiana, a popular eating place run by the Giovanni Rinaldi family since the beginning of the century. At the Café d'Italia good home cooking was served: minestrone, followed by spaghetti, lasagne or ravioli, then a main course of perhaps cutlets milanese, etc. with salad, beans and bread, finishing off with fruit and cheese. After the Second World War the



Ernesto Molina with his son's family in c.1925

restaurant moved to Bourke Street and was renamed Molina's.

The next to follow in this tradition was the famous Café Latin, established c.1919 at 206 Exhibition Street by Philip Navaretti who had arrived in Australia from Milan in 1914. The Latin was at the theatre end of Melbourne, where most of the Italian restaurants were to be established, and so attracted many artists, including Dame Nellie Melba and visiting Italian opera companies. A famous visiting Italian conductor at the time, Paolantonio, is reputed to have said *"the best spaghetti I ever tasted, I had at the Café Latin, Melbourne"*. In 1924 Navaretti sold the Latin to Rinaldo Massoni and Camillo Triaca, and as they say *"the rest is history"*. Rinaldo Massoni, a native of Lucca, had emigrated to Australia in 1911; Camillo Triaca was a sculptor, also from Lucca, who arrived here before the First World War. Both Massoni and Triaca were to have a profound influence on the restaurant scene in Melbourne, a tradition carried on by their sons, Leon Massoni and David Triaca. Later, under the sole ownership of Camillo, and then his son David, the Café Latin

remained in Exhibition Street until 1955 and then in Lonsdale Street until 1984, when it was sold to Bill and Cheryl Marchetti. Camillo Triaca held strong views about the importance of accompanying food with good wine, and did much to educate his non-Italian dining public to drink good quality table wines.

The next newcomer to the Melbourne Italian restaurant scene and which was to have a profound impact on Melbourne's culinary culture in the decades to follow was the Florentino which was founded by Rinaldo Massoni in 1928. With its dark wooden panelling, murals of famous Tuscans and formal atmosphere, it became an institution in Melbourne and a Mecca for those seeking ambience and high quality authentic Italian cuisine. I remember well, as a child, my parents on special occasions making the then long journey up to Melbourne from the Mornington Peninsula to dine at the Florentino.

Like Triaca at the Latin, Massoni promoted the pairing of good Italian cooking with good quality Australian wines. In fact the building which housed the Florentino, was leased from Samuel

Cafe Florentino Menu

FRIDAY 3RD. JULY 1942:

TABLE D'HOTE

Hors D'Oeuvres

Mixed	6d.
Special	1/-

Soup

Consomme	SEMOLINA
Minestrone	
Spaghetti in Sauce	

Entrees

FRIED WHITING AU CITRON
LOBSTER SALAD 1/- EXTRA
CHICKEN SALAD
ESCALOPINE PICCATE
FRENCH CUTLETS
CUTLETS MILANESE
GRILLED LOIN STEAK
ROAST CHICKEN 1/6 EXTRA
COLD ROAST CHICKEN & HAM 1/6 EXTRA
YORK HAM SALAD
SWEETBREAD AU MADERA
BOCONCINI VENETIANI

ICE CREAM 9D.

Vegetables

FRENCH BEANS .. POTATOES

Cheese
CREAM OR ROMANO 6D.

Black Coffee
(Italian Style)

MINIMUM
CHARGE

2/6

SEE BACK FOR WINE LIST

A LA CARTE

Hors D'Oeuvres

Large Plate Oysters	2/6
Small Plate Oysters	1/3
Mixed Hors D'Oeuvres	6d.
Sardines in Oil	1/-
Tunny Fish in Oil	2/-
Fillet Anchovies	1/-
Alici Picanti	1/-
Italian Salame	1/-

Entrees

Fish or Chicken Mayonnaise	2/6
Roasted Chicken	2/6 3/6
Escaloppe Viennese	2/6
Chateaubriand Parisienne	3/6
Grilled Fillet Steak	2/6 3/6
Grilled Beef Steak	2/-
Florentine Omelette	2/-
Vegetable Omelette	2/-
Sweet Omelette	2/-
Plain Omelette	2/-
Rum Omelette	2/6
Pancake Assortie	1/-

Vegetables

Asparagus in Oil	2/-
Asparagus Alla Parmigiana	2/6
French Beans in Salad	1/-
French Beans Saute in Butter	1/-
Artichokes Natural	1/-
Green Olives	1/-
Black Olives	6d.
French Salad	6d.

Careful selection of Vintage
expert handling, long years of
maturation in English oak and
in bottle, have each contributed
to the final achievement
Wynn's Prize Wines

Wynn's Wines have secured
the highest distinctions at all
Exhibitions in the Common-
wealth and at the Empire
Exhibition, London.

Wynn, one of the most prominently wine-makers of the time.

The first chef at the Florentino, Salvatore, who had cooked for King Victor Emmanuel of Italy is credited with having created Australian's first 'cassata'. After Rinaldo Massoni's death in 1941, his son Leon, in partnership with George Tsindos, carried on the business, adding the bistro and the cellar bar whose sophisticated but casual decor and atmosphere continues to this day. To step off Bourke Street into the cool dimness of the cellar bar with its dark wooden panelling briefly provides us with the delightful illusion of being in Italy.

In 1925 Giuseppe Codognotto, who had also emigrated from North Italy, founded the Italian Society or Società Italian in Little Bourke Street, moving to its current premises in Bourke Street

in 1932. It was originally established as a club for the Italian community in Melbourne. During the Second World War the word 'Italian' was deleted from the name, to be reinstated during the post-war years. Interestingly, the clientele which had been largely Italian before the war, changed to predominantly non-Italian Australian in the post-war years.

Mario and Teresa Viganò arrived in Australia in 1928 and opened Mario's restaurant in 1932, where they served traditional trattoria-style meals. It was also something of a cabaret as well, a distinctive feature being its singing waiters. Like the other restaurants mentioned, Mario's attracted artists, writers and people from the theatre. All of these restaurants created a vital and vibrant café society where good food, wine, stimulating conversation and entertainment flourished, transforming and

Dinner Party

GIVEN BY
THE ITALIAN SOCCER TEAM "SAVOIA"
TO WELCOME
THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN JUNIOR
SOCCER TEAM

M E N U

Hors d'Oeuvres
a la "Play the Game"

Soup
a la "Mind the Shins"

Spaghetti
a la "Melee"

Scaloppine
a la "Crook Referee"

Coffee
a la "Pick-me-up"



Fruit
a la "Raspberry"

ITALIAN SOCIETY
RESTAURANT

Melbourne,
August, 1939.

commonplace as hamburgers, even if it is sometimes adapted to the Aussie palate, with the addition of pineapple and fried eggs.

During the two decades following World War II, Carlton, (which had previously had a large Jewish population), became the focal point of Italian settlement in Melbourne. I have very fond memories of living in Carlton as a student in the late 1960s and early 1970s; I loved the little Italian bistros where you could get inexpensive authentic Italian home-cooking, the cafés with their continental atmosphere and real coffee and Italian pastries, the treat of enjoying a real fruit gelato or a granita. Even the famous Watson's Wine bar, where students spent many a pleasant long afternoon (when we should have been at lectures!) had an Italian ambience - after all, Jimmy Watson's mother was Italian!

(End of Part I)

enriching Melbourne's otherwise rather dull and drab restaurant scene at the time. These families, or perhaps more accurately these dynasties, were closely knit, as indeed was the whole of the relatively small Italian community at the time, being bound up with each other personally and professionally - intermarriage between the families was common. Individually and collectively, they helped bring about a massive change in Australian eating habits, a change that was to gain great momentum with the programme of mass migration that took place after the Second World War.

Typical of the Italian restaurants that sprang up in Melbourne in the 1950s were Pellegrini's of Bourke Street, and the University Café and Café Sport in Carlton. A majority of post-World War II migrants came from the south - Calabria and Sicily especially, bringing with them their distinctive southern cuisines. It was during the 1960s that many pizza restaurants began. Toto's, opened by Salvatore Della Bruna from Naples in the early 1960s in Lygon Street was reputedly the first in Australia. Now pizza is as





Café Florentino's waiting staff with proprietor Rinaldo Massoni in 1938.

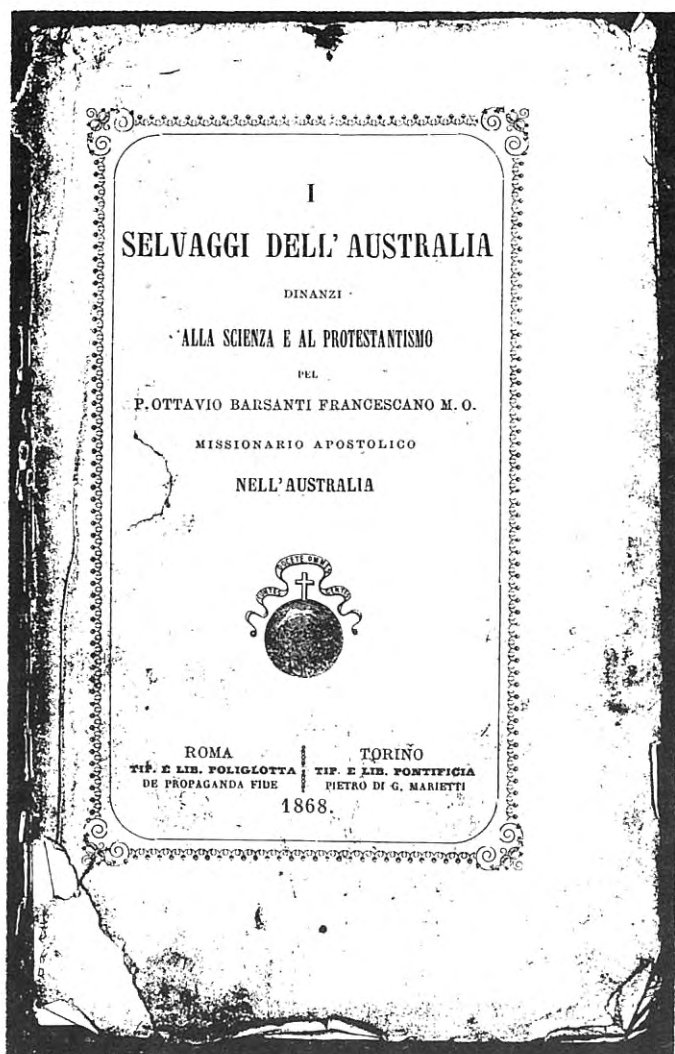
From left to right (bottom row): Ernesto Comunello, Bruno Comunello, Rinaldo Massoni, Moia and Alzo Mazzoni. Top row: ?, Dom Pancrazio, Mazzola, George Tsindos, Joe Molina, Andrea Pancrazio, Johnny Oanazotis and Amilcare (Mick).



Waiting staff at Mario's restaurant are entertaining their patrons singing a popular Neapolitan song, accompanied by Rino and Giovanni Cera.

AN EXCITING FIND

by Laura Mecca



It was with great excitement that, during my recent visit to Rome I spotted and purchased in an antique bookshop *I Selvaggi dell'Australia Dinanzi alla Scienza e al Protestantismo* (The Savages of Australia as opposed to Science and to Protestantism) by Fr. Ottavio Barsanti, Franciscan OFM. This publication reflects nineteenth-century thinking and attitudes towards indigenous peoples, and as such is of historical interest. Despite nineteenth century modes of expression and obvious limitations in the existing anthropological knowledge concerning indigenous Australians, the commentary emphasizes the innate skills, perceptions and abilities of Australian Aborigines.

Published in Rome in 1868 by Propaganda Fide,

Fr. Barsanti dedicated his work to Monsignor Bernardino Trionfetti, the prelate who had admitted him to the Order of Friars Minors and who had sent him to serve as a Franciscan missionary to Oceania.

About the book:

The book is divided into two parts. The first part is an anthropological study of the Aborigines and a biblical and theological analysis of native people in general. The second part is an historical and critical analysis of the Aborigines' origins, history, living conditions, customs, skills and their physical and intellectual characteristics. He also discusses the reasons for the failure of the British to 'civilize' and convert them to Christianity.

Throughout the book, Fr. Barsanti refers to the Aborigines as 'Savages' or 'Australians'. He dedicates a chapter explaining that it would be wrong to interpret the term "savage" as a derogatory term for the natives, and maintains that it is used to define human beings who live in isolation, in their 'natural state' and who have not been subjected to, or have rejected, the 'beneficial' influence of religion or of a 'civilized life'.

About the author:

Fr. Barsanti was a colourful though somewhat tragic figure. He had a fiery temperament. He was born in 1825 in Pietrasanta, Tuscany and, before his mission to New Zealand and Australia, was a lecturer in theology at the Aracoeli in Rome, which was the principal House of Studies for the Franciscans of the Observance. He went to New Zealand in 1860 and served as a Superior from 1862 to 1865. In 1865 he arrived in Sydney and during his four years in this city served at Sacred Heart in Darlinghurst and was secretary to Archbishop Palding, with whom he came into conflict. He migrated to Melbourne in 1869 where he served at St. Patrick's Cathedral until 1872. During his service in Daylesford (1872-5) he came into sharp conflict with another Italian missionary, Fr. Nicola Bassetto. He was sent back to New South Wales and in 1875 at St. Benedict's Broadway had a stand-up fight with Archbishop Vaughan, who suspended him. Fr. Barsanti left the priesthood, but soon regretted it and appealed to Rome against the suspension.



Fr. Ottavio Barsanti, Franciscan Missionary to New Zealand and Australia from 1860 to 1884. (Courtesy Fr. T.J. Linane)

He returned to the priesthood shortly before his sudden death from heart disease in Sydney in 1884. He is buried in the churchyard of St. Thomas of Canterbury at Petersham, NSW.

The Italian Historical Society is examining the possibility of publishing this rare book in English. In the meantime, I have translated some of the fascinating perceptions relating to Aborigines as described by Fr. Barsanti, which may be of interest to the Society's members.

The Food of the Australians.

(Extract from Part Two - Chapter V)

Not only marriage, which is at the base of society and the bond of the family, but also food, which is the most important part of life, is regulated by very complicated laws. As nothing is sown by the Australians, nothing is harvested. Thus, their food is very limited in terms of quality and quantity. In Australia there are no fruits or indigenous products which can be classified as staple food for the Savages. To survive they are

forced to live on wild roots, insects, resins and most of all on animal meat, which they procure by hunting or fishing. Ah! If Ovid lived among them and saw them devour these animals without sparing not even the entrails, he would repeat this verse with anger:

*Heu! quantum scelus est in viscere viscera
condi,
Alteriusque animantem animantis vivere
laetho.*

*(Alas! What a crime it is for flesh to be buried
in flesh,
and for one living being to live by means of
the death of another.)*

The most important animals which provide food to the Australians are dogs, birds, Kangaroo, Emu, Opossum, Kangaroos, Bandicoot, Wallaby, snakes and even bees. But not everybody is allowed to feast on all this food. Young men and women cannot eat certain types of food. Only the children and old people are allowed to eat all sorts of animals, fish, roots and insects. In some tribes, the young people are not allowed to eat Kangaroo, because it is a noble food and is therefore kept for the elders. Other tribes do not eat Opossum or Bandicoot if killed too young. Young women do not eat young and tender animals, except the Wallaby which they can eat when the animal is young and not when it is fully grown. Married women cannot eat emu eggs. Women are not allowed to eat fish caught in the areas where emus lay their eggs.

Other laws apply to the provision of food and are based on the following reasons.

- 1. To impel young men, who are stronger and faster, to hunt the animals which are harder to catch and to leave those easier to catch to the elderly and the incapacitated.*
- 2. To prevent the destruction of those animals which are still capable of reproducing.*
- 3. To avoid diminishing the sustenance resources in the area.*

If the nature of this work would allow it, I would include a Zoology treatise describing the animals eaten by the Savages of Australia. I will however provide a description of only the most important. I said "animals" because who can count the insects or describe the roots? In New Zealand the Maori in winter eat the roots of ferns which are full of starch and quite nourishing. In Australia ferns are not common and the Aborigines have never revealed to the Europeans their herbs, trees

or shrubs from which they eat the roots when they cannot hunt or fish. As a matter of fact, they are very careful not even to mention them in the presence of Europeans, fearing that they would uproot and destroy them for hatred, envy or vendetta.

CAPO V.

DEL CIBO DEGLI AUSTRALIANI.

Ma non solo il Matrimonio, che è la base della società, il vincolo delle famiglie, ma sibbene anche il cibo, la cosa la più necessaria alla vita, è regolato da leggi complicatissime. Siccome gli Australiani nulla seminano così nulla raccolgono; quindi il loro cibo è assai misero e in quanto alla qualità e in quanto alla quantità. Nell'Australia non vi sono né frutti né prodotti indigeni, che si possano considerare come l'ordinario sostentamento di quei Selvaggi. Per campare la vita sono essi da dura necessità costretti a nutrirsi di radici selvatiche, d'insetti, di gomma e sopra tutto della carne degli animali, che si procacciano o colla caccia o colla pesca. Ah! se Ovidio visse, fra i medesimi, al vederli divorarsi questi animali e non risparmiare neppure

In Australia there are no wolves, tigers, lions or panthers. The only animals which could be classified as ferocious are the dog [dingo] and the seal. The dog is from the Felidae family, it is similar to a fox, does not bark but wails, is very useful to the natives as it can be easily tamed and used when hunting. The seal in Greek mythology is the mermaid, the enchanting goddess on the sea waves. The settlers called it calf or sea cow; it belongs to the family of Phocidae, it is amphibious, lives along the coasts on fish and is between eight and nine feet long. Also the seal is easily tamed.

But the two classical animals of Australia, which are depicted in its national crest, are the Kangaroo and the Emu. The Kangaroo is timid, harmless but alert; it grows up to seven feet high, lives on grass, moves with a skipping action because it does not use its front legs which are very short and are used only when it grazes. It runs very fast when chased: it carries only one foetus and it belongs to the Marsupial family. After some time the foetus transfers from the uterus into the pouch or marsupial, where it fully develops and lives as if in its own bed. The mother does not free herself of her offspring even when it is capable of walking and procuring its own food or when she is chased by hunters. The tail is the best part of the kangaroo. It can weigh up to twelve pounds and it makes an exquisite stock.

The Emu is the largest bird after the New Zealander Moa and the African Ostrich. It lays

between eight and ten eggs, and each one is equivalent to fifteen eggs of one of our domestic fowls. Its feathers which consist of many thin rows, are scarce and just enough to cover the skin. On its back it has a very useful adipose tissue: they say it is so thin that it slides off a crystal bottle. The Emu can run faster than dogs and horses. The easiest way to catch it is after it has drunk water from a pond; it drinks so much water that it swells, becomes sick and often dies. The Emu and the Kangaroo can be tamed to follow their masters like little dogs.

CAPO XII.

DELLE QUALITÀ E DONI DEGLI AUSTRALIANI.

Gli Australiani si distinguono in molte cose, che possono dirsi *abilità o attitudini naturali*. Fra queste si dee porre
1. La loro grande facilità d'imitare qualunque cosa. Alcuni Selvaggi delle tribù d'Illawarra essendo stati condotti al teatro di Sidney, dove si rappresentava l'opera del famoso *Der Freischütz*, tornati appena alle loro foreste, non solo furono abili a raccontare ai propri gli atti principali di quell'opera, ma anche riprodurre tutto ciò, che v'era di mimico. Un Europeo li visitò sei anni dopo, e a sua gran sorpresa trovò, che non solo ritenevano l'idea più chiara di quell'opera, ma perfino la riprodussero in sua pre-

(1) Flanagan. Op. cit. v. I. C. VII. §. 6.

12

The Qualities and Talents of the Australians

(Extract from Part Two - Chapter XII)

The Australians distinguish themselves in many ways, which can be described as their abilities or natural aptitudes. Among these, we must include:

1. Their great capacity to imitate anything. A group of Savages of the Illawarra tribes were taken to Sydney to the performance of the opera of the famous *Der Freischütz*. When they went back to their forests, they skilfully recounted the main events of the opera and re-enacted the scenes. A European who visited them six years after, found, much to his amazement, that they still remembered the opera very clearly. They re-enacted it before him during one of their evening celebrations.

To their art of imitating one has to add:

2. Their ability of tracking people by scent and of finding any lost objects. In some instances they were able to track in forests never crossed by human footprints of men lost fifty or a hundred miles further away. Thus if anything, an animal a man or a

child gets lost, it is sufficient to seek the help of one of these Aborigines to find him dead or alive. The following example can be taken as proof. A murder had taken place but the judiciary did not have any evidence of why or where it had been committed. Only some suspicions. As they wanted to solve the case, they sought the help of one of these Natives. He was taken to the banks of a river where they suspected the crime had been committed. The Native inspected the area all around, went close to the river's edge, sniffed the air, drank some water from the river and soon after said: the murdered body is here. And so it was.

To this power of their senses, one has to add:

3. The skill to describe, classify and call by its proper name all plants, roots, animals, insects; skills which could be called memory and semiological power. The Australians are not naturalists by study and art, but by nature. Had they studied Plinius and Cuvier they could not possibly know the science of Botany or Zoology any better.
4. And last but not least, their agility in fighting and in climbing trees; the sharpness of their sight is capable of distinguishing even the most minute objects far away; and their exceptional capacity to hit targets. These are all proper and characteristic qualities of the Savages of Australia, which confirm that nature is impartial and that if it lacks in one area, it compensates in another.

But how could I not mention throwing the Boomerang? I had read and heard marvellous things about this instrument and I could never believe them as they appeared to be impossible and an illusion. But at a public show that took place in Sydney, at Redfern, to celebrate St. Patrick's day, I changed my mind. After a few uneventful performances, an Australian of the Colony of Victoria came on to the open field with his boomerang and threw it to the ground with total indifference. The boomerang began to spin around like a top in a perfect circle. Then, after whirling it around two or three times, he let it go. The boomerang shot into the air like a sky-rocket, went up and down a few times, made several turns, then it shot off to remove the hat of a gentleman and finally returned to the thrower's feet amidst loud cheers and the appreciation of the spectators. Thrown a third time, the

boomerang glided close to the ground around the field like a swallow, then suddenly rose, came down again and then exited through the fence and flew to hit the omnibus on which the Native came and then flew back to his feet, much to the amazement of the crowd. These things cannot be believed if not seen. As the boomerang becomes a lethal weapon in the hands of the Australians, the Government prohibits its throwing in areas where the Europeans live.

I want to add another word about the talents of the Australians. In a race which represents man in his primitive natural state, in a race which has lived isolated for centuries, unknown to the world and wandering in a very large continent, in a race which has no history or memories of the past, it would be foolish to try to detect those nice prerogatives which ennoble human nature and demonstrate to what level of excellence it [human nature] can rise through education. Philosophy teaches that in nature there are no jumps; as for the vegetative, organic and animal life that develop gradually, the intellectual and civil life also follows this pattern. Thus, to degrade the Savages to the condition of brutes because they do not show those moral qualities which highlight human nature, is an insult to this race not as a collective of individuals, but as a species and therefore an insult to nature itself. What a young man is in the physical order as an individual, the Savages are in the moral order as a species. This must be never forgotten in studying the customs of barbarian people. All those who have seen only animalism, passions, brutal instincts and ferocious sentiments in the Australian Aborigines and have depicted (as in a painting) the deformity of their degradation, have done nothing else but degrade themselves. To claim that they have no talent, morality, intelligence, nor common sense, is an insult to human nature. Those who only see them wandering here and there in the forests of their territories, cannot to judge the degree of development and dignity of their gifts and natural talents.

.....

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish acknowledge the assistance of the Jesuit Fathers, Hawthorn, for the translation of Ovid's Latin verse and of Charles D'Aprano and Gabriella Belgiovane for checking my translation.

The information on Fr. Barsanti's mission in Australia has been extracted from the publication *From Abel to Zundolovich* compiled by Fr. T.J. Linane. Volume I, 'Footprints' Editor, Torquay, Vic.

BONEGILLA

Forty years later. Some observations.

by Charles d'Aprano

Charles D'Aprano came to Australia in 1937. He served in the Australian Armed Forces during WWII and was very active in the Italian migrant organisations in the post-war period. He has published several books and articles on Italian immigration. The most recent is From Goldrush to Federation - Italian Pioneers in Victoria 1850-1900, released in November 1994. D'Aprano is a committee member of the Italian Historical Society.

It is rather difficult, after more than four decades, to be absolutely precise about the events that took place at the Bonegilla Migrant Centre in the spring of 1952.

At that time I was the Victorian State Secretary of the Italia Libera Movement, an anti-fascist organization that had been set up in 1943 by a number of individuals and groups united by the fear and hatred of fascism. Apart from the obvious aims of defeating fascism, which had already been achieved on the battlefields if not in the social and political arenas, our main aim was to bring about a closer working relationship between the Australian people, and more particularly the Trade Unions, and the thousands of Italian immigrants then beginning to arrive in Australia. The members of our State Committee were constantly engaged in informing the newly arrived immigrants from Italy about their rights as workers: their salaries, their annual leave and the need to belong to their appropriate Trade union.

For many months in 1952, Italian assisted immigrants gathered at the Bonegilla Migrant Centre, having been brought to Australia by the government of the day to supply labour for developing industry.

But the government had not foreseen the approaching economic crisis; the expected industrial growth did not take place and industrial production regressed for a time. The idle occupants of Bonegilla were stranded without employment and with no foreseeable opportunity for work in the future. They idled away their time chasing rabbits and catching them for their meals, as an alternative to the military style food that they were being served.

Some of the men left the camp and came to Melbourne to seek work through friends or relatives. It was from these men that we heard of the plight of their friends and acquaintances at Bonegilla.

I decided to visit the camp in the company of other activists. Knowing that we would not be welcomed by the authorities, we smuggled ourselves in under cover of darkness and visited many huts where the residents were only too willing to tell us of the boredom and the lack of hope felt by many men in the centre. In fact, by our first visit, four young men had already committed suicide. I clearly recall one young Calabrese weeping unashamedly as he told us of how he had found his friend hanging from the rafters of their ablution block.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

SECRET

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT
D BRANCH
BOX 521188 G.P.O.
MELBOURNE

18th July, 1952

MEMORANDUM for:
Headquarters, A.S.I.O. (2)

ITALIA LIBERA

Reference telephone conversation
of 17th July, 1952.

2. Informed this office
at 1100 hours on 17th July 1952 that a group of members
of the above organisation was on its way to Bonegilla
Migrant Camp where at present there are some 1500 unemployed
Italian migrants. suggested
that the reason for the visit was to cause discontent among
the migrants there. He stated that he had informed
Mr. Dwyer, Department of Immigration. The reason for
belief is not known.

3. Mr. Dwyer rang this office during the afternoon
of 17th July to reiterate this information and was
requested to furnish this office with a report, in due
course, covering the names of those concerned and their
activities if of a nature as suggested above.

REC'D
22 JUL 1952
A.S.I.O.
HEADQUARTERS

Original 27

for REGIONAL DIRECTOR, VICTORIA

Source: Australian Archives (ACT): CRS A6122; XRI384.

During our visits, my friends and I would hold three or four meetings in one night, going from hut to hut, always a step ahead of the Commonwealth Police who had obviously been informed of our presence in the camp and were seeking to arrest us. But the immigrants protected us by pretending not to know our whereabouts or by sending the police in the opposite direction from the one we had taken.

On our return to Melbourne, we endeavoured to inform the general public of the plight of Bonegilla residents but to no avail. The dailies of the day played down the tragedy of these men, forgotten in a migrant camp miles from anywhere. Our only recourse was the left-wing press and our own paper *Il Risveglio*.

Italia Libera saw itself as the legitimate representative of the immigrants and made strenuous efforts to discuss the question of these men with the Italian Consul in Melbourne. To this end, Dr. Omero Schiassi, National President of Italia Libera, and I visited the Consul General in Punt Road. The meeting was a dismal failure. The Consul General flatly denied that there was anything to be concerned about and that work would be found for these men sooner or later. We left rather disgusted with the lack of care shown by the representative of the Italian Republic or, rather, the agent of the De Gasperi government.

There was an obvious conspiracy of silence which I was not to discover until later. While in Italy with three other Melbourne delegates on our way to the Vienna Congress of Peoples for Peace in 1952 I was asked to speak at a congress in Florence. When asked to say a few words about the lives of the Italian migrants in Australia, I told the audience about Bonegilla. They were stunned. In the meantime, I had received news from home that the disgruntled men at Bonegilla had held a meeting at which they threatened to go to Canberra to lodge a complaint with the Minister of Immigration if work was not found for them very soon. I was able to inform my Florentine listeners of the anger and the frustration felt by the men in the camp and that these men were ready to come home rather than continue an idle life in a desolate place. They had demanded work, for which they had been induced to come to Australia, and the government had sent tanks and personnel carriers to surround the camp to keep the 'revolt' under control. But the workers were defiant. "We want work" they shouted.

SECRET

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

P.1.
15

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT
D. BRANCH
BOX 1111, G.P.O.
MELBOURNE

MEMORANDUM for:
Headquarters, A.S.I.O. (2)

3rd November, 1952.

DISTURBANCES AT BONEGILLA MIGRANT CENTRE

Reference is made to Headquarters memorandum dated 21st October, 1952 (addressed regional Director, N.S.W. - copy to this office), in which particulars of participation of Italia Libera members in the above disturbances are requested.

4. It is now necessary to show the existing connection between Hector VARENTI, (recorded in this office as Charles or Charlie (pseudonym) (Italian form of Charles) D'APRANO (recorded in this office as and the ITALIA LIBERA (known variously as Italia Australian Association; free Italy; Australian-Italian association; Italian anti-Fascist League, and recorded in this office as

5. Firstly, reference is made to police Department C.I.B. Special Branch report dated 18th July, 1952, forwarded to Headquarters under this office reference of 1st August, 1952. In this report, there is mention of Consul L. DAINELLI informing senior detective that "he had received information that communist members of the ITALIA LIBERA association were frequenting the migrant camp at Bonegilla for the purpose of creating 'dissension' amongst unemployed Italian migrants at the camp". It was this report, (passed by telephone to Headquarters on 17th July, 1952) (this office of 18th July, 1952 refers) that originally gave this office grounds for suspecting the ITALIA LIBERA of fomenting the disturbances.

Source: Australian Archives (ACT): CRS A6122; XRI384

Jobless migrants give P.M. ultimatum today

AN ultimatum, "jobs now, or send us back to Italy," will be presented to the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) in Canberra today by seven men representing 2000 unemployed Italian migrants at Bonegilla Camp.

The Minister for Immigration (Mr. Holt) conferred until late last night with Mr. Menzies on the problem of finding jobs for migrants.

Today's deputation follows week-end threats and protests by the migrants who say that they are tired of being jobless.

The seven spokesmen for the migrants will be: Galvani, M. Moretti, G. Gandini, E. Zamagni, P. Stenucci, G. Cecchi and L. Nucci.

Meanwhile the Italian community in Melbourne is trying to find jobs for the unemployed Italians.

The Italian Consul in Melbourne (Dr. Dainelli) said yesterday that already they had found jobs for eight of the migrants.

He had appealed for more help and hoped it would soon be given.

But the problem was primarily one for the Federal Government, he said.

Inter-Government discussions had already been held on the Italian migrant problem. A report had been made on workless migrants to the Italian Government through the Italian Legation in Canberra.

Bel thought it better to slow down migration from Italy and elsewhere while the labor market was uncertain.

Dr. Dainelli said that 25 per cent of the Bonegilla migrants were skilled workers. Rural workers comprised 40 per cent, and the rest were unskilled workers.

● Can be handled, says Minister — Page 5.

The Sun, 22 July, 1952.

The Florentines clapped and cheered the determination of the migrants to have their rights respected. At the end of the conference, the police came and cautioned me about spreading rumours regarding Italian workers in Australia. It was my turn to be stunned. When I protested that my facts were correct, they laughed at me and warned me to keep my mouth shut or suffer the consequences.

Three days later in Modena, the police arrested me and the three Australian friends travelling with me. When I was interrogated by the *Questore*, after midnight on a foggy Modena night, the policeman screamed at me that I had no right to travel around the world and spread lies about honest Italian workers who were bringing money and honour to their motherland. When I protested that I had seen thousands of men unemployed for months on end, he resorted to banging the table and threatening diabolic consequences for my filthy lies, for my gross stupidity.

"Communist inventions, fabrications, lies, that's all you're capable of saying. I will change your mind very quickly. You and your friends will be my guests for as long as I please..."

Naturally, I asked to see the Australian Consul as I was an Australian citizen, carrying an Australian passport. The policeman laughed in my face and told me quite openly that the Consular staff had supplied him with the most detailed dossier on my activities in Australia. *"They are my friends, not yours, Signor D'Aprano"*, were his words.

After several hours, when the people of Modena demanded our release, we were photographed, finger-printed like common criminals and escorted to the border.

Later, at a Press Conference in Vienna, the Congress organisers sent a protest to the Italian and Australian governments about our unfair treatment but nothing came of it.

The conspiracy of silence was adhered to by both sides. Truth, however, does eventually emerge from the dungeons of suppression.

It is with some pride that I was imprisoned for telling the truth.



A group of Italian immigrants at the Bonegilla Migrant Centre in 1952.

THE ANTIFASCIST POLITICS OF THE NOVEL *MAD MEG*

by Sally Morrison

In 1989 Sally Morrison gave up her career as a geneticist with the Melbourne University microbiology department to write and research her first major novel Mad Meg. Set in Milan and Melbourne, the novel traces the history of two Italian families escaping Mussolini's regime in the 1930s. Mad Meg is published by Reed Books Australia, Melbourne, and is available from leading book stores in paperback at \$15.95.

In the novel *Mad Meg* I set myself the task of constructing a feasible history for a fictitious Italian-born Australian called Henry Coretti. The task was difficult because the story demanded that this young man arrive in Australia in 1936, at the age of twenty. I knew already that he would have had difficulty coming in as an immigrant labourer at that time because Australia was not favouring the immigration of southern Europeans. In the 1930s The Australian government decided to follow the lead of the USA and encourage only migrants of "nordic stock". This policy lasted until after World War II.

Although I took modern history in high school (thirty years ago), I realised when I started to write this book, that my knowledge of Italian history was scanty. I knew of Garibaldi and Mussolini, but nothing of the period between the Risorgimento and the rise of fascism. In fact, although aware that Mussolini was a lesser tyrant than Hitler and had been admired abroad in his day, I had always equated fascism with Nazism. It seemed to me that the great crime of the twentieth century was to have been fascist and that vileness could be equated with people of a crypto-fascist temperament still alive today. But I worried that in this definition, which is probably a wide-spread one amongst Australians of my age (approaching fifty) we were over-concerned with distancing ourselves from the "baddies" of World War II.

It is all too easy, when on the side of the victors, to attribute all evil to the vanquished. After all, there are many incidents involving high-handedness in Australia's history, and one could put a case for the existence in Australia of a long line of people who, for various reasons, have believed themselves 'born to rule', just as Mussolini believed himself to be.

As related in *Mad Meg*, the arrogance behind the 'born to rule' mentality was publicly demonstrated in Australia in 1929, when, during

long-running, widespread and bitter strikes in the coal and timber industries, Stanley Melbourne Bruce had his offices redecorated and went to play golf at Frankston, rather than involve his government in urgently needed industrial arbitration. When he was brought to an election (though not by the Opposition) his side was thrashed, and the ex-secretary of Trades Hall [EJ Holloway], who had been fined fifty pounds for inciting the timber workers, took his seat.

Although fascism has hardly figured in the history of colonial and post-colonial Australia, there are plenty of examples of public behaviour that could have served as fascism's political raw material in our past. However, I believe we are less guilty of fascist tendencies than anyone else. If we want Australia to become a shining example of multi-cultural democracy, then we had better develop an understanding of democracy's limits. Democracy, though broadly tolerant, is not an "anything goes" culture.

I cast Henry Coretti as a thinking man. He is an avant-garde painter, so his history involves the general topic of art and its capacity to reflect politics. This essay is about the politics his art reflects.

Following the Thread

From Gianfranco Cresciani's book, *Fascism, Antifascism and Italians in Australia*¹, I learned that Henry Coretti's only ways into Australia were through the Italian Consulates and cultural organisations, or through the sponsorship of a relative. Since Henry was a figure through whom anti-fascist sentiments were to be expressed, I found myself searching for a suitable relative who might have sponsored his entry. I found a model for this relative in Omero Schiassi, whose anti-fascist activities in Melbourne will be well known to many, but who was unknown to me at the beginning of my search.

To look briefly at the life of Omero Schiassi: he was born in 1877 in the province of Bologna and graduated in law from the University of Bologna where he was a fellow student with Matteotti. From the age of twenty-two to twenty-four he was First Secretary of the Provincial Federation of the Workers of the Land for the province of Bologna and became a propagandist for them in 1900. That year he organised peasant leagues and strikes all over the country. He then wrote a monograph on his activities for the Humanitarian Society of Milan and worked for them for some time, during which he joined the Italian Socialist Party. He served with the Alpini in World War I and then resumed his socialist activities as a lawyer at Trades Hall in Bologna. In 1921, when Schiassi was in Sorrento convalescing from a serious illness, Bologna Trades Hall was wrecked by fascist *squadristi*. Schiassi received a telegram telling him not to return, as he was on a hit list. Following this, he was beaten up in Sorrento, in his sickbed.

He was in Genoa as a legal counsellor to the Federation of Workers of the Sea in 1922 when *squadristi* attacked Genoa Trades Hall. His papers were burnt and his office wrecked. He decided it was time to emigrate.

For unknown reasons, since he knew nobody there, he came to Melbourne in 1924 and was actively antifascist during the life of the regime. He made a meagre living as the first tutor in Italian at the University of Melbourne and acted as the Australian correspondent for the Socialist paper *Avanti!*

Schiassi was a Socialist of the Moderate Left, allied to Filippo Turati, Claudio Treves and Emanuele Modigliani. In order to understand where his views came from, I read Renato Monteleone's biography of Turati², which also supplied me with the information I needed to piece together Mussolini's rise to power through the eyes of the moderate socialists. Reading the biography led me to choose Milan as the city from which my character, Henry Coretti, would come.

Milan, of course, was a political hotbed prior to, during, and after World War I, and in some ways had a role in Italy parallel to Melbourne's in Australia. Both were commercial cities where labour organisations had begun and had developed a significant voice.

More specifically, because the Monteleone



Pamphlet printed by Omero Schiassi in 1928 containing the text of his address delivered in Melbourne's New Gaiety Theatre on 10th June, 1928.

biography is excellently documented, it gave me locations where activity took place and a feel for Milan, without ever having seen it. When I did visit in 1990, I was fascinated by its landmarks and its history, both political and cultural. I felt it was a city where superstition and modernity played tug-o-war across the Piazza del Duomo, where appropriately, the Palace of Reason and the Palace of Clocks were hidden by a huge advertising hoarding. On it, the United Family of Bennetton - a black father, a white madonna-like mother and a yellow baby - confronted, at the other end of the square, the golden madonnina on the Duomo's highest spire. A parallel picture could be drawn of Melbourne as a post-Enlightenment city whose serious history has been forgotten in a decade of greed and unprecedented consumerism.

The Milan socialists were followers of the German Karl Kautsky, who put the case for moderation to the International. If there was a

natural conflict of interest between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the moderates were of the opinion that it could be negotiated without need of a revolution. They were pacifists and anti-interventionists when it came to the First World War.

The Italian socialists had adopted a compromise position which said their proletariat should only fight a defensive war on Italian soil, not an offensive one against the proletariat of another country. When hostilities broke out, however, the German and Austrian proletariat did not oblige the Italians by expressing their solidarity and kindly keeping to their own side of the border. The defeat at Caporetto [in the Friuli region, 24 October 1917 ed.] meant the Italians lost any standing they might have had as non-interventionists in the International.

After the war, the Italian socialists remained split between those who believed in proletarian revolution and those who did not. For those who did not believe in it, there were historical precedents in the Risorgimento. While Mussolini was acceding to power, the non-revolutionary socialists were developing their own brand of opposition to fascism, which had more to do with Mazzini than it did with Marx, though it repudiated Mazzini's religious agenda.

While in my novel my socialist characters decamped to Paris, along with Modigliani, Treves and eventually Turati, my research led me to the historian Gaetano Salvemini and his group of young Florentines who began to publish the clandestine *Non Mollare!* Among this group were the Rosselli brothers, Carlo and Nello, who were to figure prominently in the antifascist fight. First of all, however, I examined the situation in Paris through Turati's biography and constructed a feasible set of activities for my characters to be involved in.

My character, Henry Coretti was only a boy at the time his family fled to Paris, but this did not prevent him from being a messenger liaising between his home base and the places where the antifascists lived and where their activities took place. Once again, it was due to the excellent documentation of the Turati biography, that I was able to track down relevant places in Paris in 1990.

I do not know how much work has been done on the Italian refugees in Paris, but the Turati biography provides solid implications of what it must have been like, from both the point of view

of the refugees and the point of view of the French. It suggests that the Parisians were tolerant and sympathetic hosts. This aspect of the situation interested me as it is very evident that France was in an economic shambles at the time and governments were only lasting a matter of months in power.³ Though the French Left were popularly elected time after time, they could not get a grasp on power because they were continually being brought down by the Bank of France not allowing them their money bills. Whatever the privations of the refugees - crowding, poor food and outbreaks of vermin, as well as infirmity, disease and insecurity - there is no mention of French hostility to them.



Filippo Turati (centre) with (from left to right): Alberto Tarchiani, Claudio Treves and Carlo Rosselli. (Source: 1870/1945 *Scrivere Libero Fuori d'Italia*, Ediesse, Rome: June 1985.

The leadership of the refugees was able to carry on a program of activities, both social and political, right up to the outbreak of war in Spain in 1936. The writing and dissemination of anti-fascist propaganda was essential to them to maintain their focus and justify their position as refugees, but while they developed a large

network of sympathisers, there was hardly any return for effort. It was often reported back to the refugees that reaction in other countries was apathetic. Other nations were too preoccupied with their own problems, the Depression being paramount among these.

When Turati died in 1932, Carlo Rosselli, who had made a flamboyant escape from imprisonment on Lipari in 1929, had established himself as his natural successor. Although he respected Turati - indeed, had "rescued" him in 1926 so the exiles would have a tireless and literate socialist to represent them - his style was quite different. In place of Turati's pacifistic, legalistic Antifascist Concentration, he formed a group called Giustizia e Libertà, which held that should the internal defeat of the fascists in Italy demand illegal action, then such action would be taken. Furthermore, if it were necessary for civilians to carry arms, then arms would be carried.



Giustizia e Libertà (Justice and Freedom) was the "voice" of the anti-fascist group formed by Carlo Rosselli after Turati's death in 1932. (Source: 1870/1945 Scrivere Libero Fuori d'Italia, Ediesse, Rome: June 1985.)

Still inside Italy was Carlo Rosselli's younger brother, Nello, an historian who had studied under Salvemini. Salvemini had fled Italy in 1925, after he was dobbled in by a type-setter, and tried for his part in *Non Mollare!* He went eventually to Harvard, where he was offered a permanent chair. Salvemini's *The Origins of Fascism in Italy*⁴ argues that the proletariat in Italy was never inclined to revolution and that the Catholic Church and the Crown had more to answer for in the rise of fascism than did the economy, which was buoyant at the time, in spite of the continuing chaos in the House of Deputies. Salvemini's work is scholarly when compared with the official version of Italian History that was being churned out

contemporaneously in Italy. I came across some of Nello Rosselli's writings in the library of La Trobe University⁵ and found them lucid and free from the influence of Hegel, whose ideas of "immanence" and "actualisation" were made much of by fascist historians when they claimed that Italy was destined to become the self-perfecting state, embodied in Mussolini, the ideal leader.

Salvemini and Nello Rosselli were quite clear about democratic philosophy and how it clashed with the idea of political predestination. In addition, Nello wrote that the idea that fascism was the final expression of the reactionary bourgeoisie was nonsense. To the contrary, he advocated that the best defence against fascist dictatorship was a united and articulate bourgeoisie. This attitude made an anti-Marxist of him and earned him criticism from the exiles in Paris, who claimed he was setting himself up to be used as an apologist for fascism within Italy. Nello Rosselli's fight, however, was more intelligent than that criticism implied.

Imprisoned when Carlo had himself publicly thrown into prison for rescuing Turati, and again when Carlo escaped to Paris, Nello Rosselli did his best to make use of the few intelligent channels that remained within Italy to open an internal critique on fascism and to found an international journal on the same topic, to be published in Switzerland. Though his efforts were unsuccessful, the record of them remains and serves as a reminder that the youth of the day, though the generation before them had lived in a liberal democracy, knew of no system of government other than fascism. Since fascism was supposed to be self-perfecting, they had no need to learn anything else. Throughout his life, Nello championed the idea that history does not write itself according to the views of one or another political group. Events always transcend philosophy, irrespective of its aims. That is not to say that philosophy is useless, only that history cannot be foretold, and politics should never pretend that it can. If there are lessons to be learned from the past, then the most outstanding lesson is that our control over the future is limited by the unforeseen and we must reject the idea that we live in the best of all possible worlds, or the only possible world.

I thought the story of the Rossellis was too rich in scholarship, not to mention drama, to let it pass without telling, and so I involved Henry Coretti in the activities of *Giustizia e Libertà*. I had him take the train to Bagnoles de l'Orne in

Normandy on business for the Rossellis on the day before the brothers were murdered there in June, 1937, and I was rewarded for going there myself in 1992, by discovering that Nello Rosselli's grandson had visited the week before to lay wreaths on the monument at the site of the assassination. The whole story was written up in the local paper.

In 1936, Carlo was furious with Leon Blum, then the premier of France, for not sending aid to the Spanish government in Madrid, when they faced the right-wing insurrection that brought Franco to power. Accordingly, Giustizia e Libertà organised a column to go to Madrid with Carlo at its head. He was in the trenches for about nine months and had had leg ulcers for quite some time when it became necessary for him to go back to France to have treatment. The ulcers were due to a disorder of the veins, for which the cure was the taking of thermal baths. Bagnoles, as I learnt to my own amazement, was a spa - a bizarre place to visit in winter as I did, because it was all boarded up.

Nello Rosselli had already been granted two passports by Mussolini, one to study in England and the other for an international conference in Warsaw. In spite of periods of imprisonment, the fascist authorities were sometimes surprisingly lenient with him (unless, through their lenience they were able to keep tabs on Carlo and other anti-fascists in Italy, such as Giorgio Amendola). Seemingly on a whim, when Carlo's mother found herself unable to go to Bagnoles to look after him, Mussolini allowed Nello to go.

In a hotel opposite the one the Rossellis were staying in was a group of fascist French who had them under surveillance with the understanding that if they assassinated the brothers, Mussolini would reward them with a cache of arms to stage their own coup in Paris.

On June 9th, 1937, the Rossellis went to visit a neighbouring town to have morning coffee, and were on their way back when they came across a Peugeot blocking the road with its bonnet up. They got out to see if they could help and were gunned down. It took two of three days for the police of Bagnoles to learn what had happened. A hairdresser, who had been riding her bike past the spot soon after the murder, reported seeing a pool of blood on the road by a parked car. Then a man stumbled on the bodies when he took to the side of the road to answer a call of nature.



In reporting the arrest of the assassins of the Rosselli brothers, *Giustizia e Libertà* (14/1/1938) also denounces Mussolini's responsibility for their death. (Source: 1870/1945 Scrivere Libero Fuori d'Italia, Ediesse, Rome: June 1985.

Although the arms cache was delivered, the fascist coup planned for Paris fell through because there was insufficient support for it within the French army. The assassins were caught and sentenced to gaol terms, but they were free men not long after the outbreak of the war, because they volunteered. After the invasion of France, some of the assassins fought on the side of Vichy, and at least one went to Spain, where he set up a famous cosmetics company which would serve as a bolt hole for those who had to escape once the Germans were defeated.

One may ask what relevance this story has to Australia. Salvemini and his group were serious students of democracy and the cause for a republic in Italy. Their ideas demonstrate the type of freedom it is possible to have in a democratic country; historically, they constantly encountered the boundaries of democracy, and thus helped to define them.

ENDNOTES

1. Gianfranco Cresciani *Fascism, Antifascism and Italians in Australia, 1922-1945*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1980.
2. Renato Monteleone, *Filippo Turati*, Utet, Torino, 1987.
3. William L. Shirer, *The collapse of the Third Republic*, Heinemann/Secker and Warburg, 1969.
4. Gaetano Salvemini, *The Origin of Fascism in Italy*, Harper and Row, New York. First published in 1972 from a lecture course prepared in 1942 at Harvard.
5. Giovanni Belardelli, *Nello Rosselli - uno storico antifascista*, Passigli, Firenze, 1982.

FAMILY HISTORY

PIONEERS FROM MONNO

We publish thus request for assistance received from Mrs Lorraine O'Mara from Drummoyne, New South Wales.

My grandfather Eugenio Passeri came to Australia on the ship "Potosi" which arrived in Sydney on 1st January 1884. Last year I was able to visit Italy and the small village of Monno where my grandfather was born. It was a wonderful adventure as you would understand from your own experience.

Monno is in the Lombardy region in the province of Brescia. It is a very small village (population between 500 and 600 people) the nearest town being Edolo. It is situated high in the mountains not far from the Swiss border, and is a very beautiful place. The village has wonderful church records going back to the 1700's and I was able to discover such a lot about my ancestor.

The people of the village are lovely and I found many relatives (distant cousins). They had a village meeting after my visit and are now involved in a project to trace all the emigrants from Monno to Australia. They have written and asked for my help and I am delighted to be part of the project. I have a list of 52 people who left the village in 1883 at the same time as my grandfather.

In collaboration with the Sydney Italian Historical Society, we intend to examine the Sydney Shipping Records (from 1880 to 1890 to start) and extract all the Italian names from the passenger lists. It is more than likely that many of the people from Monno arrived in Melbourne (and other Australian ports) rather than Sydney.

The list of names was given to me by my relatives in Monno. It is a copy of their original hand written records and some of the names are difficult to decipher, especially for me, as unfortunately I don't understand Italian. The date of arrival of Eugenio Passeri was supplied by me. I have the names of two families named Passeri, one in Melbourne and one in Albury. They are descendants of John Passeri (originally Giacomo or Giovanni I suppose) of Rutherglen

who was born in Monno and came to Australia at approximately the same time as my grandfather.

AUSTRALIA 1883

1. ANDRICI Battista
2. CALDINELLI Giovanni Maria (casoli)
3. CALDINELLI Giacomo di Pietro (gambi)
4. CALDINELLI Martino fu Andrea
5. CALDINELLI Pietro di Angelo
6. CICCIO Giovanni (della Carolina)
7. GHENSI Luigi (boreli)
8. GHENSI Francesco di Pietro (bibicio)
9. GHENSI Giovanni Cavallari
10. GHENSI Francesco di Giacomo (gaspari)
11. GHENSI Giacomo di Francesco (gaspari pondino)
12. GHENSI Bortolo (gaspari)
13. GHENSI Giacomo fu Giambattista (gaspari)
14. GNAVITTI (?) Santo di pancio
15. GRAVITTI Giovanni - fratello (brother)
16. GNAVITTI Francesco fu Faustino
17. GNAVITTI Faustino di Andrea
18. LAZZARINI Battista (del gusli)
19. LAZZARINI Giacomo
20. LAZZARINI Brizio
21. LAZZARINI Agostino
22. LAZZARINI Paolo
23. LAZZARINI Angelo
24. LAZZARINI Giovanni della Santa (melotel)
25. MELOTTI Brizio (palet)
26. MELOTTI Matteo - nipote (nephew)
27. MOSSINI Pietro di Antonio (matie) (?)
28. MOSSINI Luigi di Bortolomeo (troti) (?)
29. PASSERI Bortolomeo della Binotti
30. PASSERI Giacomo (della todesca)
31. PASSERI Arcangelo
32. PASSERI Giacomo di Luigi
33. PASSERI (?) Bavisa
34. PASSERI Eugenio
35. PASSERI Geremia fu Giacomo
36. PASSERI Lorenzo di Pietro
37. PASSERI Giovanni Maria - fratello (brother)
38. PASSERI Pietro Ligner
39. PIETROBONI Felice (vedovo = widower) fu Brizio
40. PIETROBONI Andrea fu Pietro - vedovo (widower)
41. PIETROBONI Giambattista - fratello (brother)
42. PIETROBONI Giacomo (impresare)
43. PIETROBONI Brizio (omi)
44. PIETROBONI Bortolo pederbù
45. PIETROBONI Pietro - fratello (brother)
46. PIETROBONI Luigi (braghi)
47. PIETROBONI Francesco fu Paolo

- CALIFORNIA

- This list is of particular interest to family history researchers. Some names also have the nickname in brackets. This practice is still quite common in many Italian villages where there are members of the same family with the same christian name or families with the same surname but not related to each other.

In the handwritten original document, some christian names are abbreviated (eg.: Batt^a (Battista), Fran^o (Francesco), Gio. M^a (Giovanni Maria) which contributes to the difficulty of deciphering old documents, especially for people unfamiliar with the language.

The words "fu" or "di" after the name followed by another christian name, is used to indicate the

paternity, but it has different meanings. "Fu" (son/daughter of the late..) indicates that when the records were entered, the father was dead, while "di" means that the father was alive.

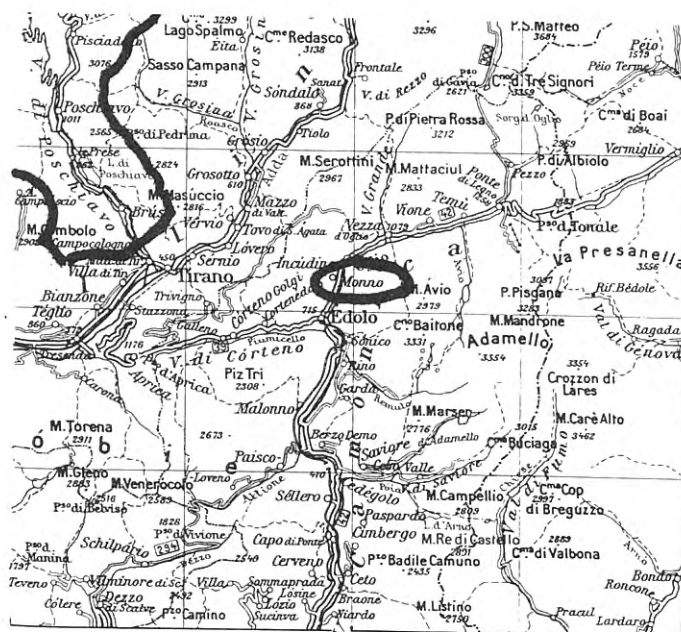
If the entire population of Italy in 1883 was less than 20 million people (today 57 million), it can be proportionally estimated that the population of Monno was not more than 200. The departure of 52 men for Australia and 5 for Canada must have depleted the village of most of its young male population and left the village in the hands of their old parents, the women and the children.

Most likely the discovery of gold in 1893 at Kalgoorlie and Boulder, Western Australia, was the reason for this early "mass" migration to Australia from such an isolated small mountain community.

The town of Edolo and neighbouring villages are today popular ski resorts in Lombardy.

If you have any information, no matter how small, it will be of interest to the researchers.

Lorraine O'Mara can be contacted by writing to:
7/28 Alexandra Street,
Drummoyne NSW 2047.



NEWS

MICROFILMS OF ITALIAN DIPLOMATIC ARCHIVES

The microfilms of the Diplomatic Archives of Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs have at last arrived!

Grouped in 17 reels, the microfilms include more than 20,000 documents of political and economic reports and of correspondence between the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Italian Consular agents and Consulates based in Australia from 1855 to 1945.

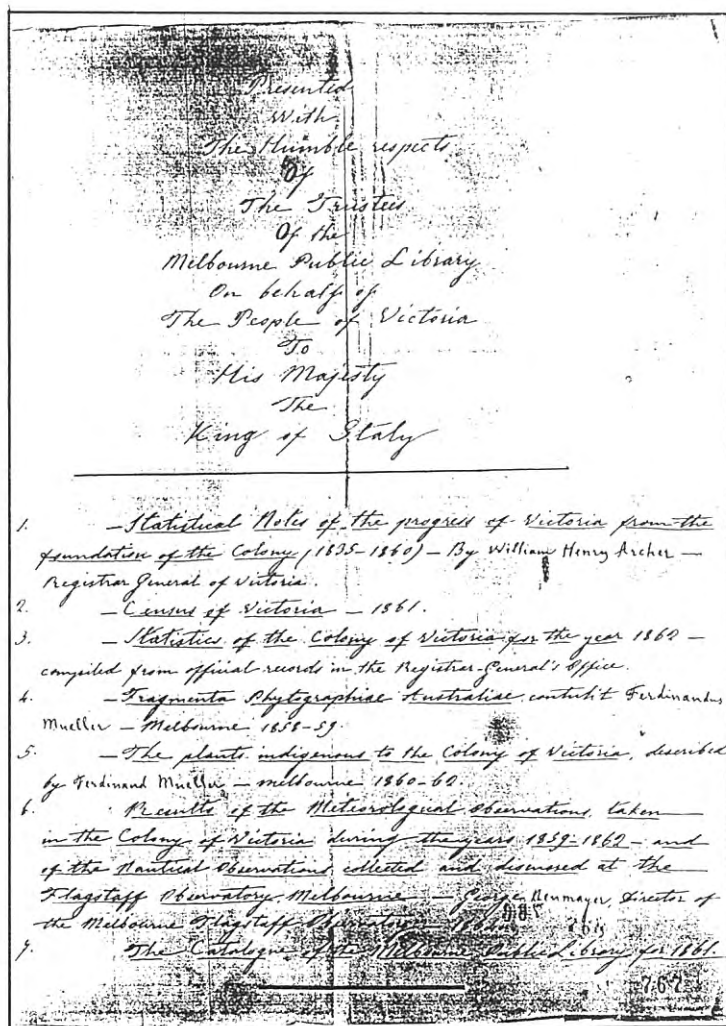
The records are not indexed. For information as to the conditions of access, please contact Laura on 349 1144.

FUNDING FROM ARTS VICTORIA

The Society has been awarded a grant of \$1,000 under the Arts Victoria Program of Assistance to cultural activities. The money will go towards the purchase of archival material for the conservation and storage of its large collection of negatives.

The Society acknowledges the valuable financial support of Arts Victoria. It comes as an encouraging recognition of the Society's work in the recording and preservation of the history of the Italian community in Australia.

Arts Victoria is a Division of the Victorian Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism.



COMMUNITY HERITAGE GRANT

The Society was given a special gift of \$500 worth of microfilming under the Community Heritage Grants program administered by the National Library of Australia. The prize, donated by the company Gosford Micrographics of Sydney, will be used to microfilm the records of the Cavour Club, which was founded in Melbourne in 1917.



NATIONAL
LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

1995 SWISS/ITALIAN FESTA AT HEPBURN SPRINGS

The Festa will be celebrated during the weekend of 27-28 May 1995. The events organised by the community of Hepburn Springs (Daylesford, Victoria) are quite interesting. They include a masked ball, historical exhibitions and tours, family history and reunions, dances and concerts and much more. The Festa is an ideal opportunity for the descendants of Italian and Swiss-Italian pioneers of the goldrush period to visit the area where many of their ancestors sought fortune. Be early with your accommodation booking, as the Festa is very popular!

For further information and a programme contact Bonnie Howell, phone (053) 48 3640.



***The community of
Hepburn Springs
celebrates its third annual
Swiss-Italian Festa with***

Masked Ball

Historical Exhibitions and Tours

*The Pasta Sauce Tasting
and Competition*

Exhibitions and Displays

Fine Food Fair

Dances and Concerts

Street Theatre

Bocce, Unspunnen and Bicycle Race

Family History and Reunions

AUSTRALIAN-ITALIAN FESTIVAL IN NORTH QUEENSLAND

The festival will run for nine days, from 6 to 14 May 1995, at Ingham. The rich and diversified programme is a true celebration of a typical Italian town festa with a local flavour. It includes bocce championships, mortadella throwing and catching competition, spaghetti eating competition, canecutters pub crawl, traditional sugar locomotive tours, soccer challenge, singing competition and a Pavarotti Look-a-Like competition!

The main event is the **Canecutters Reunion** which is scheduled for 6 May, 1995.

Seven nights accommodation packages are available for interstate visitors.

For further information and a detailed programme of the Festival, contact the Australian-Italian Festival Association, P.O. Box 888, Ingham, Qld. 4850. In Victoria, travel bookings and a copy of the programme is available from World Travel Service, 1st Fl. 220 Faraday St. Carlton 3053 - Ph. (03) 347 3699 - Fax. (03) 347 8070.

YOUR PERSONAL INVITATION TO THE
AUSTRALIAN-ITALIAN
FESTIVAL'S

CANECUTTERS REUNION



6 MAY, 1995
INGHAM, NORTH QUEENSLAND



FOR MORE INFORMATION PHONE (077) 76 5288

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

This list records the books received by the Society in the last six months by gift or purchase.

Family Pictures. Edited by Beth Yahp, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1994. \$ 17.95

A collection of eleven original pieces by some of Australia's best writers and artists who explore the notion of the Australian family and pay tribute to its diversity. Anna Maria Dell'oso recalls her experiences of growing up in an Italian migrant family.

Voicing the Difference. Compiled by Peter Moss, Multicultural Writers' Association, Kent Town S.A., 1994. \$14.95

An interesting anthology of short stories and poems by South Australian writers of diverse cultural backgrounds. Many of them are of Italian origin.

Who Do You Think You Are? Edited by Karen Herne, Joanne Travaglia, Elizabeth Weiss, Women's Redress Press, Broadway NSW, 1992. Reprinted 1994. \$14.95

Through stories, poems, non-fiction and drawings, daughters of immigrant families in Australia from Italian, Greek, Malaysian, German, Chinese, Indian, Dutch and Irish backgrounds, tell what it was like to grow up living two cultures and creating a third.

From Goldrush to Federation - Italian Pioneers in Victoria: 1850-1900. By Charles D'Aprano, INT Press, Pascoe Vale South Vic., 1995. \$29.95

The story of the first wave of Italian and Swiss-Italian migration to Australia. The book details the lives of many of these early pioneers. A good resource for family historians and students undertaking Australian history studies.

Neither Hypocrite nor Saint - A Biography of Alfred John Trinca 1884-1981. By John C. Trinca, John-Collier Trinca, Canterbury Vic., 1994. \$29.95

Available from the author. Address on request by contacting the Italian Historical Society.

To be reviewed in the next issue of the *Journal*.

Correggio Jones and the Runaways. By Desmond O'Grady, CIS Cardigan Street Publishers, Carlton Australia 3053, 1995. \$19.95

An interesting book about Australians attracted by Italy, Italians drawn to Australia and those caught in between the two countries.

Buon Appetito: Regional Italian recipes: Ricette regionali italiane. By The National Italian-Australian Women's Association, State Library of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 1994. RRP \$29.95

(In Victoria also available from the Italian Historical Society, 175 Faraday Street, Carlton 3053)

Most probably the best cookery book of the year. A tour of Italian regional cookery, with recipes which have been passed down from mother to daughter, without "adaptation" to foreign palates. Bilingual text, superb printing with many colour photographs of regional sceneries.

FOR SALE AT THE SOCIETY

BOOKS

Australia's Italians 1788-1988. Second Edition. By Ilma Martinuzzi O'Brien. Melbourne: Italian Historical Society & State Library of Victoria, 1989. \$10.00 (plus postage).

An illustrated history of the Italian contribution to the development of Australian Society over a period of 200 years. Bilingual text.

Bridging Two Worlds : Jews, Italians and Carlton - Arnold Zable ... [et al]. Melbourne: Jewish Museum of Australia, Italian Historical Society and the Museum of Victoria, 1992. \$10.00 (plus postage)

A guide to the exhibition by the same title which was held at the Museum of Victoria in 1992.

Victoria's Italians. Compiled by Ivano Ercole and Maria Tence. Melbourne: CO.AS.IT., 1985. \$6.50 (plus postage)

Illustrated catalogue of the Exhibition by the same title held at the State Library of Victoria in 1985. Bilingual text.

Now and Then : The Sicilian Farming Community at Werribee Park 1929-49. By Maria Mantello. Melbourne: Il Globo, 1986. \$6.50 (plus postage)

An account of the settlement of Sicilian migrants in the Werribee district and their contribution to the development of market-gardening.

Quadretti di un Italiano in Australia. By Alessandro Faini. Melbourne: CO.AS.IT., 1984. \$5.00 (plus postage)

Humorous short stories based on the author's every-day experiences as a migrant in Australia.

Swiss-Italian Family History Research. Compiled and published by the Italian Historical Society, 1994. \$3.00 (plus postage)

A family history kit for tracing archival material in the Tessin and Grisons Cantons of Switzerland.

Tracing Your Italian Ancestors For Victorians. By Bette Maiuto. Melbourne: Italian Historical Society-CO.AS.IT., 1993. \$6.50 (plus postage)

A guide for people intending to research their

family history.

Victoria Market. By Nino Randazzo. CO.AS.IT. Italian Historical Society, Melbourne, 1992. \$14.95 (plus postage)

A drama based on events that took place at Melbourne's Victoria Market in the 1960s and the invention of the Mafia myth in Australia. Bilingual text.

Buon Appetito: Regional Italian recipes: Ricette regionali italiane. By The National Italian-Australian Women's Association, State Library of NSW, Sydney, 1995. \$20.00

Growing Up Italian in Australia. State Library of New South Wales Press, 1993. \$16.95 (plus postage)

Eleven young Australian women talk about their experiences of growing up within two cultures.

AUDIO-VISUAL

Hard Work & Hope [video-recording] Australia's Italians - Prahran, Vic.: Equality Press, 1989. (23 minutes). VHS. \$65.00

An educational video on the contribution of Italian migrants to the development of Australia. An excellent resource for students of Australian Studies and History. Teacher's Notes with suggested activities accompany the video.

New Heroes, New Myths [video-recording] : Australia's Italians - Melbourne: Arthur D'Aprano and Elvira Vacirca for the Italian Historical Society, 1993. (60 minutes). VHS. \$65

Six families tell the story of their migration and settlement, in six self-contained segments of approximately 10 minutes each. The video provides an insight into the values and beliefs which are passed on from one generation to another, and the way they develop and change over time. Suitable for secondary school teachers and students of History, Australian Studies, Social Studies and Italian Language classes. Teacher's Notes in English and in Italian with suggested activities accompany the video.

I.H.S. Journal - Guidelines for Contributors

1. The Journal of the Society is produced for a general readership and preference will be given to articles which increase an understanding of the history of Italians in Australia and the Italian Community.
2. The Italian Historical Society Journal is published twice yearly. The deadline dates for articles for each issue are:
 - June issue - 30th April.
 - December issue - 30th October.
3. The Italian Historical Society 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 Journal does not pay for contributions.
5. All materials submitted may be subject to editing.
6. Articles should normally be submitted on white A4 paper, typed with double spacing on one side. Alternatively, work may be submitted on disk on WordPerfect 5.1. In general articles should not exceed 3000 words and should ideally be 1500-2000 words.
7. Articles should be accompanied by appropriate and clearly captioned illustrative material wherever possible. This may include clear photographs, maps, diagrams, drawings, or other materials such as advertisements, programs, tickets etc.
8. All material submitted for publication must be accompanied by permission to publish and must meet copyright requirements. This includes both textual and illustrative materials. Unless otherwise stated, the author/s of the material provided will be credited with copyright.
9. All articles should give sources and references and this additional material will be published where appropriate. These footnotes/endnotes should be grouped at the end of the article and may refer to sources or amplify material in the main body of the article. The reference numbers for endnotes should appear in the text at the end of sentences.
10. The bibliographic style favoured for citing books, based on the *Style Manual* of the AGPS is: (name of author), (name of book in italics or underlined), (name of publisher), (place of publication), (year of publication).
For citing journals: (name of author), (title of article), (name of journal in italics or underlined), (volume number and year), (page number/s).
11. Contributors should retain copies of all materials submitted. Illustrative material will be returned if requested.
12. Contributors should provide a very short personal description outlining current interests.