



CO·AS·IT

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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: *Eighteen thousand Italian migrants left from the Port of Trieste for Australia and the Americas during 1955 with suitcases full of hope and high expectations. This photo was taken on 1st July 1955, when the 'Fairsea' sailed for Australia.* (Foto OMNIA-Ugo Borsatti)

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REPORT No 2 - 31st December 1862

from Consul James Graham, Italian Consulate in Melbourne

James Graham (1818-1898), described by Governor LaTrobe as 'strong in talent, industrious and honest', was born in Ireland and educated in Scotland. After arriving in Sydney in 1839, he overlanded three months later to Melbourne where he became a successful businessman and merchant. Throughout his life he held directorships, appointments and interests in shipping, railways, banking, insurance, wool and commodities trading and landed properties. He was also a founding member of the Melbourne Club where a portrait still hangs.

In 1859 James Graham was appointed on an honorary basis Consul of the Kingdom of Sardinia in Melbourne by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Camillo Benso di Cavour. Melbourne was a Consular Delegation of the Italian Consulate in Sydney which was opened in 1855. A few months before the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy in March 1861, Melbourne was elevated to the position of an independent Consulate, with jurisdiction over South Australia and Tasmania. Among his duties, Consul Graham was to compile six-monthly reports on the economy, internal affairs and population of the Colony of Victoria. Other duties included the keeping of records on Italian subjects residing and arriving in the Colony, transmission of death certificates and assisting with enquiries as to the whereabouts of Italian subjects in the Colony. Consul Graham was replaced in 1864 by Consul Biagi, who was the first Italian diplomat to be posted to Melbourne.

PREPATORY [sic] REMARKS

In preparing the periodical Reports from this Consulate, it will be my study to furnish a consecutive statistical account of the Populations, Imports, Exports, Revenue [etc.] of this Colony, together with any other remarks on its progress, production, and resources, as I may think may prove of interest to the people of Italy.

POPULATION

1. Since the date of my last Report, a period of six months, the population of Victoria, judging by the arrivals, and departures by sea, has decreased by an excess of the latter, over the former, of 2121, - the arrivals by sea having been 17,498, and the departures, 19,614. This is solely to be attributed to the great attractions of

Report No. 2.

Italian Consulate,
Melbourne Victoria,
31st December 1862.

Preparatory Remarks

In preparing the periodical Reports from this Consulate, it will be my study to furnish a consecutive statistical account of the Population, Imports, Exports, Revenue & of this Colony, together with any other Remarks on its progress, production, and resources, as I may think may prove of interest to the people of Italy.

the Gold Fields, in the neighbouring Colony of New Zealand, but as these Gold Fields are essentially summer ones, the winter of New Zealand being in general so very severe as to render it impossible for Miners to follow their avocations, in the greater part of the Country, where the Gold has been discovered, we may reasonably look, very shortly, for the return to our genial climate, of the larger proportion of those who have left these shores only for a time. There is no doubt whatever, that the Gold Fields of New Zealand are remunerative, and I trust also may prove sufficiently attractive to draw to its shores a large population from the older countries of the world, for the great want of all these Colonies is population, and if New Zealand is only successful in bringing people out, all its neighbours, in course of time, will participate in the benefit and especially this Colony of Victoria, which must always be a place of great attraction from its great mineral wealth, and unbounded natural resources.

I regret much, from the Registrar Generals' Statistical Report of the Births and Deaths of the Colony during the year 1862, not being yet published, that I cannot give these returns in this Report, but I feel confident that when they are published, they will show a large increase in the population, during the last six months.

IMPORTS & EXPORTS

2. The Imports of the Colony, from the 1st July to this date, amount in value to the sum of £6.613.047, and the Exports, for the same period, to £6.247.120, of which from the 3rd July to the 26th of December, there has been actually shipped of Gold, from Victoria, 1,027,116 ounces, of the value say £4,108,464.

GOLD PRODUCTION

The total shipment of Gold from Victoria, during 1862 was 2,019,839 ounces, of the value of £8,079,356 and during the previous year (1861) the total shipment was 2,072,359 ounces, so notwithstanding the great exodus from this Country to the newer Gold Fields of New Zealand, our export of the precious metal has not fallen off much - indeed, I believe, instead of a falling off, it would have shown an increase, had it not been for the fact, that during the latter part of this year, and particularly this month, there has been very little Gold shipped, in consequence of its having been kept back, for the month of January, on the first day of which the export duty on gold, is to be reduced from two shillings (2/-) to one shilling and sixpence (1/6^d)

per ounce. The month of January will therefore show very large shipments.

WOOL

The export of wool, to this date, amounts to 45,797 bales, of the declared value of £710,413, but as the wool shipping season continues up to the end of March, and very often later, it will not be in my power to give the production of wool, for 1862, until my next Report. The same remark will also apply to the export of tallow, hides, etc.

REVENUE

3. For the year 1862, the Revenue of the colony amounted to £3,131,420..7..4 against £2,886,091..13..10 for 1861 showing an increase of £245,328..13..6 in favor of this year.

VINTAGE

From all the wine producing Districts, the accounts of the Grape crop are most favorable. Thus far, we have had a fine warm summer, not too hot, so that everything, as yet, has been in favor of the prospect of a large production of Wine this year. One Grower, I hear, hopes to make on his farm alone 250 pipes, another 150, and so on. These quantities may appear small on the old wine producing countries of Europe, but in the new Country, still quite in its infancy, such results must be considered satisfactory. All Growers agree in the expectation, that the Victorian Wines of 1863, will rank very high in the estimation of good Judges.

AGRICULTURE

The weather, that has been hitherto so favorable to the Grape, has not been so equally so for Grain crops - being too dry consequently, they will be light this year, on the whole - a great increase of land however has been brought under cultivation, and when the Statistical Reports for the year are published, they will doubtless show a great increase in the production throughout the Colony. The Returns also of the Tobacco Crop will show a large tract of land, on the whole, under cultivation. The great extension of the use of steam and other improved machinery has been of vast benefit to the Farmers in the one item alone of saving in the cost of labour.

RAILWAY EXTENSION

It will be very gratifying to all interested in the Colony, to learn, that the Government have commenced the extension of the Main Trunk

Railway Extension

It will be very gratifying to all interested in the Colony, to learn, that the Government have commenced the extension of the Main Trunk line of Railway, from Sandhurst, the present Terminus, to Echuca, which, when completed, will be the means of connecting the River Murray with the Sea Coast, and will doubtless bring the greater

Line of Railway, from Sandhurst, the present Terminus, to Echuca, which, when completed, will be the means of connecting the River Murray, with the sea coast, and will doubtless bring the greater part of the produce and traffic to Melbourne, not only from the interior of our own Colony, but also from the neighbouring ones of New South Wales, and South Australia. The cost of forming these Railways has been hitherto very heavy, but the works are of a most substantial and permanent character, and they have already proved of vast benefit to the Colony, in opening up the Country. The total cost of the Colony of the main lines, when completed, is estimated at £8,368,000 for about 260 Miles. This of course includes Rolling Stock and every expense. The Returns, for the portions completed, show that 47½ per cent of the earnings of the lines, will cover all making expenses. The passenger fares are threepence three farthings, (3 ¾^d) per Mile, 1st Class, and Twopence three farthings (2 ¾^d) 2nd class. Already many branch lines from the Main Trunk one, are contemplated by private enterprise, which will afford work for years to our Railway Laborers, and, at the same time, benefit the whole Colony in a great degree.

MORE FREQUENT POSTAL COMMUNICATION WITH EUROPE

Another great benefit in prospect for the Colony is the expectation of steam postal communication, twice a Month, with Europe, instead of once a Month, as at present. Already has the Peninsular and Oriental Company offered to carry the Mail twice a Month, for an annual subsidy of £60,000, in addition to their present contract, an offer, which, I have no doubt will be accepted when England, and the several Colonies, can agree, as to the amounts each should contribute to make up this sum. The advantages of bringing these colonies into more frequent communication with the Mother Country, and Europe generally, need scarcely to

be discussed, as they must be apparent to everyone.

FOREIGN SHIPS VISITING MELBOURNE

During the past year many foreign ships have visited this port, including Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, French, American, and among others the Russian Corvette, "Bogatyr", carrying the Flag of Rear Admiral Topoff, but I regret not being able to announce the arrival of any vessel, in these waters, bearing the flag, of the country, I have the honour to represent.

J W Graham
Consul

This Report is from the Collection of Italian Diplomatic Archives 1855-1940, which the Society holds on microfilm.

THE GARIBALDI CLUB

Home to the Italian settlers in Wellington

This edited extract is taken from pages 71 to 85 of the book Alla Fine Del Mondo - To The Ends of The Earth by Paul Elenio, published by the Petone Settlers Museum and the Club Garibaldi in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1995 to commemorate the centenary of the founding of the Club Garibaldi in 1882 and to tell the history of Italian migration to the Wellington region. All the illustrations used in this article have been taken from the book.

Giuseppe Garibaldi is the most popular hero of the Unification of Italy during the 19th century. This period is also known as the "Risorgimento". He was named "The hero of two worlds" for his involvement in uprisings for the unification of some South American countries. News of his courageous battles and of his ideals of unity and freedom crossed the world and gained him many admirers and supporters, especially in the English speaking world. In 1861 the Italian and Australian communities of Melbourne expressed their admiration for Garibaldi by sending him a gift of a Sword of Honour. It was with the financial assistance of his friends in the British nobility that Garibaldi bought the island of Caprera, off the coast of Sardinia, where he retired and died on June 2, 1882.

A month after Garibaldi's death, a group of Italian settlers living in Wellington met to form a club, which they named in his honour. The founders of the club included several anti-clerical and republican followers of Garibaldi who had preferred to live in exile rather than be subservient to the King of Italy.

One of Wellington's leading newspapers of the time, the *New Zealand Mail*, reported on July 8 1882:

Some of the Italian residents in this city have taken preliminary steps towards the formation of a club on a similiar basis to the Working Men's Club already existing in this city. They propose occupying premises in Courtenay Place suitable for the purpose, and to adopt the title of 'The Garibaldi Club'. At a meeting held on Saturday last the following officers were elected for the first six months: Signor Cenci, President; Signor Innocenti, Vice-President; Mr George Robertson, Secretary; Signor Calcinai, Treasurer; Messrs Agorio and Cimino, Councillors. On the motion of Signor Frandi, Dr Diver was unanimously elected Honorary President, and a deputation was appointed to wait on him to ask his acceptance of the office.

Membership was not limited to Italians. George Robertson, the Secretary, was of Scottish origin.

He was born in Livorno, where his engineer father was engaged in building a railway, and came to New Zealand in the 1870s. He was a fluent speaker of Italian and assisted the Italian community for many years, being rewarded by the Italian Government with the title of Cavaliere for his efforts.

The new club adopted the motto '*Fratellanza, Educazione, Lavoro*' - Brotherhood, Education, Work. It was registered as a friendly society in 1883.

The fledgling club seems to have done well in the first few years. George Robertson was to write a letter to the Registrar of Friendly Societies in March 1884: "*The institution is still steadily progressing both financially and otherwise.*" That year's income totalled £366 13s 6d, £153 being members' contributions and £213 13s 6d received from bar sales. By 1888 the club had dwindled to a few members and had no assets. The President, J.H. Pagni, explained to the Registrar of Friendly Societies:

The few members that are left now, have bound themselves together in order to keep the name of the institution alive, with the hope that we will be able to restore it to its former condition.

The club struggled on through the 1890s, with membership reaching a high of 43 in 1892 and a low of 13 in 1894. Funds remained at about £5

throughout this period. In 1899 the club moved to Vivian Street, and refurnished rooms there at some expense.

With the beginning of the new century, the club entered a period of growth. In the first five months of 1900, membership doubled to 54. By the end of the year there were 78 members. Clubrooms were established in Ghuznee Street from 1903, first at No 3 and then at No 1. Over the next few years alterations were made to the clubrooms and more furniture was bought.

A syndicate for importing Italian food was formed on 3 August 1901 and named *La Previdente*. The goods imported included oil, wine and cheeses, staples of Italian cooking which the community couldn't buy in shops in Wellington. The activities of this syndicate continued for many years.

Ladies			
23	Garquille	Giovanni	16
24	Pulferri	Luigi	16
25	Leoni	Francesco	16
26	Luchesi	Fortunato	16
27	Landi	Giulio	16
28	Capocelli	Orlando	16
29	Marchetti	Antonio	17
30	Mertino	Emilio	18
31	Mertino	Francesco	18
32	Milesi	Giovanni	18
33	Milesi	Luca	18
34	Norri	Luigi	20
35	Norri	Luigi	19
36	O'Connell		18
37	Pagn	Giovanni	20
38	Paino	Antonio	21
39	Paino	Angela	22
40	Paino	Bartolo	23
41	Paladini	Raffaele	23
42	Pasico	Francesco	23
43	Pis	Luigi	23
44	Robertson	Geo. Giorgio	23

Some of the shareholders of the food importing syndicate, 1917. (Private collection)

The club's income came from memberships, entrance fees and socials. It provided facilities such as a bar and library, with books and newspapers. A billiard cloth was bought in 1916 at a cost of £8. In the first year receipts from billiards were £19 1s 6d. Steadily growing

receipts from billiards in subsequent years indicated that it was a popular activity.

Charitable collections were part of the club's work. Throughout the First World War regular donations were made to the Italian Red Cross. There were special collections for local needy as well as for the Italian earthquake in 1915. Money was collected not only from members, but also from the wider Italian community in Wellington.

By the end of 1918 membership stood at 111, the first time it had reached over 100. The following year the club moved to 93 Taranaki Street, where it remained until 1929 when it moved to 270 Wakefield Street. The 1920s and 30s was a period of growth, although membership fluctuated from year to year. By 1939 there were 220 members.

Men aged 21 or more were eligible for membership. The procedure was for the name of a prospective member to be put on the noticeboard for one month, and if there were no objections from members, the applicant was able to join.

The clubrooms were open every day, providing members and friends with a place to meet, have a drink, and play cards, bowls or billiards. The visitors' book at this time shows many people of non-Italian origin visited the club. There were two full-time barmen who, in addition to serving drinks, sold supplies of imported Italian food and wine. Meals were available too, and some single men ate most of their meals there.

Dances and social evenings were a regular feature of club activities, and were well attended. In 1932 the 50th Jubilee was celebrated with a musical evening followed by supper and dancing. A party was also held for the children of members. Other popular events were the annual picnic, held at Hutt Park, and the Christmas party, attended by the whole family. Fred Ferretti recalls how as a child he enjoyed these events because the children were all given lollies and balloons.

The club also provided assistance and support members. Help was given to recent immigrants to New Zealand and men in need of a job would frequently find work with another club member. When there was a funeral, the club paid for taxis for the mourners because so few people had cars.

These activities came to a halt in the 1940s, after Italy entered the Second World War. The



A children's party to celebrate the club's 50th jubilee in 1932. (Private collection)

club went into recess over the war years, when there was strong public feeling about Italians, particularly when being seen to enjoy themselves while Kiwi soldiers were fighting in North Africa.

The club started up again after the war. A leading figure in the reopening was Joe Milano, a fish worker and restaurateur who had previously been President. The members of the first committee after the war were Darby De Menech, Frank Ferretti, Primo Menara and Alfredo Mitri.

To build the club funds, members were asked to pay £15 to rejoin, with the subscription being £5 a year after that. The club's activities were similar to those before the war. However the clubrooms were open only from Friday to Sunday evening. It was still a major meeting place for the Italian community. A migrant of the 1950s recalls he went there often to talk to other people because Italian was spoken, and he hadn't yet learnt good English. The full-time barman and custodian continued to sell the food and wine imported from Italy by the club. The stocks included vermouth, wine, pasta, tinned fish such as herring, anchovies, sardines and tuna, as well as large quantities of olive oil and cheese.

During the 1950s dances at the club were held fortnightly on a Saturday, with a band from Lower Hutt being the regular performers. Drinking was not permitted while dancing, so at 8.30pm a slide was lowered on the bar for the duration of the dance.

The club had been in existence virtually without incident for 75 years when one event suddenly brought its name to everyone's lips and even today mention of the club sparks memories. In September 1957 the club's custodian, Angelo Odorico, was murdered. Late one evening, when all the members had gone home, Angelo La Mattina remained and asked Odorico if he could take the club's cash float for a loan he needed. Odorico declined. When La Mattina then asked to purchase something, Odorico bent down to get it and La Mattina hit him over the head with a jar of olives. La Mattina stole the day's takings, £97. Odorico was later found dead. The murder investigation included interviews of those members who had been the last to see the custodian alive. The Wellington newspapers were full of the story. The stolen money was found in a drain at the house La Mattina was staying at. For the police the case was notable because it was the first time fingerprinting was used as evidence. The trial grabbed headlines

for days. There were claims that the killing was an affair of the heart, that the two men vied for the attentions of the same woman. This was not correct. La Mattina was sentenced to death but had a stroke of luck. The Labour Government of Walter Nash abolished the death penalty and La Mattina was sentenced to life in prison. He became notorious as a frequent escapee from prison and there were suspicions that he was harboured by Italians. He was deported to Italy in 1974, apparently to serve yet another jail term there.

The killing had even greater repercussions for the club. The police who investigated the murder had done a stocktake of the club's bar immediately afterwards. A few months later, the club was raided by police investigating breaches of the licensing laws. Bert Monastra, who was on the door that day, initially refused to let them in but when the police threatened to break the door down with an axe, he opened the door. The club's stocks of liquor were confiscated. The police took two hours to take the liquor away, using six jeeps as transport.

Eventually the liquor was returned. The club's legal representative argued in court that the alcohol was the individual property of members, so the committee set about dividing up the alcohol among individual members. Parcels were made up containing about £5 worth of liquor which were then given to members who were asked to pay £5 for them.

Membership had been high in the 1950s, reaching a peak of 242 in 1956. It fell below 200 in the late 1950s, and by 1960 there were only 102 members. There was modest growth in numbers during the 1960s, but membership never approached the heights of the previous decade.



A typical club afternoon where members met and played cards or bowls in the 1950s. (Private collection)

After some time at 270 Wakefield Street and in Kent Terrace, the club bought its first property at 230 Wakefield Street in 1961. The purchase was financed by debentures taken out by many members. Some lent particularly large sums of money, most notably a huge contribution from the Zandi family who lent £11,400 and one from Frank Ferretti who lent £6000. The club was located on the top floor, whilst the first and ground floors were rented out to businesses.

The club continued to be active in the 1960s and was still a popular meeting place for Italians with about 80 people attending on a Sunday. They spent their time playing cards and bowls. The card games were old Italian ones - scopa, sette bello, bestia, cinquilio, quartilio - played with a traditional Italian pack of cards, the suits being coins, cups, clubs and spades. The club wasn't licensed, so each member had a locker with his name on it in which he kept his preferred drink, be it wine, spirits or whatever. Each member had a key to their own locker with the custodian having a key to all lockers. The loser in a card game would shout the other players a drink from his private supply. Social games of bowls were played on Sundays, while on Wednesday nights there were bowling competitions. There was a cup the Club Garibaldi and the Yugoslav Club would compete for about twice a year, the competition being held on the premises of whichever club currently held the cup. There were also competitions within the club itself to find the club's bowling champion. These bowling competitions continued until the mid-1980s. The club also had representatives in interclub bowls and some players became known as excellent bowlers.

For years the major social event for other ethnic clubs had been their annual ball. The Club Garibaldi held its first ball in 1961 and continued to do so until the 1980s when balls went out of fashion and were regarded as too expensive to run. During the early 1970s the club's appeal as a social gathering point dwindled. Like other clubs, it was affected by the abolition of 6 o'clock closing, which gave people a greater choice of places to meet for a drink. The younger generation also liked to socialise in a variety of places and did not come to the club as often as their parents had. In the 1960s the club was open on both Saturdays and Sundays but, because of the changing times, the club gradually reduced its opening hours to Sundays only in the 1970s.

In 1982 the Club celebrated its 100th jubilee



A club ball in 1961. From left: Dominic Di Mattina, Vince Criscillo, Tony Paino, Vince Barnao, Betti Barnao, Stella Criscillo, Janie Di Mattina, x, Giuseppina Paino. (Private collection)

with a lavish Centennial Ball held at the Majestic Cabaret, attended by 500 people from the Italian community. The warmth generated by the great night only served to mask a painful fact: membership of the club was declining and the club's building was in a severe state of decay. Although the Club was financially healthy, its membership was down to 40. No one was prepared to make the financial commitment to refurbish the building, which was sold in the late years of 1980 for NZ\$ 800,000.

After a short period in temporary rooms, the club bought the former Cricketer's Arms Tavern complex on the corner of Vivian and Tory Streets. Renovations were carried out to the top floor of the property and the new club opened in March 1992.

Even before the new clubrooms were contemplated, members agreed something needed to be done to increase the club's membership. A special committee was set up to review the constitution which had last been updated by a member of the executive in the early 1960s. The new approved document provided for women of Italian extraction to become members and spouses of Italians to be

eligible for membership. For the first time women could serve on the executive committee and in 1994 there was a further milestone when members voted in the first woman office holder, Nina Cuccurello, taking over as secretary from Armando Gilmoni who stepped down after more than 20 years in the position.

The club has branched out into other activities of a cultural nature, such as the formation of children's tarantella groups and an Italian ladies' choir. The club has become the venue for a number of music nights and variety shows, from opera to comedy. In 1992 the club established two soccer teams and some young members formed the "Garibaldini" group to organise functions and get-togethers. Support was given for an oral history project to record and preserve the precious memories of some 30 older Italian migrants. In 1995 the club also moved to install a memorial on Somes Island to mark the years of internment on the island of Italians during the Second World War.

Whilst new ways are constantly sought to promote Italian language, culture and traditions, the history of the club's earlier members will be always remembered.

ALLA FINE DEL MONDO
To The Ends of The Earth
by Paul Elenio

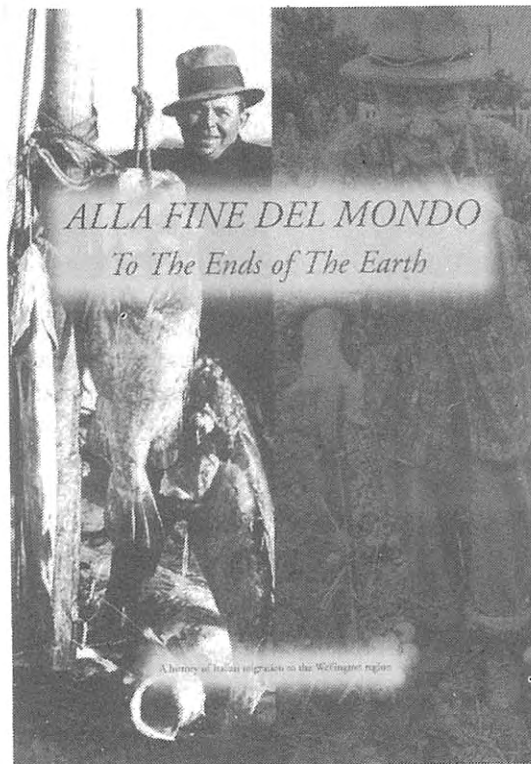
A photographic and historical record of Italian migration and settlement in Wellington and the Hutt Valley.

Contents: 1. All in a Name; 2. Origins; 3. Fishermen (Eastbourne, Island Bay, Makara); 4. Market Gardens (Hutt Valley); 5. Business People; 6. Enemy Aliens (Internment of Italians on Somes Island during the Second World War); 7. Club Garibaldi.

Available from:

The Petone Settlers Museum
c/- The Hutt City Council
Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt - New Zealand

at NZ\$ 25.00 all inclusive



BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITALIAN CUISINE IN AUSTRALIA

by Vicki Swinbank

Part Two of an edited talk given at the Italian Cuisine Expo held in Melbourne in 1994. Part One was published in the March 1995 issue of this Journal.

It is not only via restaurants that the Italian community has had a significant impact on food and eating in this country. The Italian influence in Australia has extended to everything to do with food, from the growing of it, the marketing of it, the processing of it, and as we have seen, the final end-product of that chain, the creation of a highly distinctive, healthy, imaginative and delicious cuisine. This influence is perhaps inevitable when one considers the central role that food plays in Italian culture. Of course, food and all those habits and customs associated with it, are important to all societies and cultures but it is perhaps in Italy and other countries bordering the Mediterranean that a particularly harmonious synthesis has been achieved between regarding food as a subject worthy of both serious and pleasurable consideration. (Another culture that comes to mind here is that of China, where they definitely have their priorities right, describing food as the "first happiness").

Actually, it's interesting to consider the cuisines of Italy and China - whilst this is not the object of this paper - I have long thought that the cuisines of these two cultures have much in common, with their emphasis on fresh seasonal vegetables where the clean, natural flavour of the produce predominates; with the innumerable ways in which the pasta and noodles can be prepared (after all, isn't Marco Polo reputed to have brought spaghetti back from China, although that is a disputed point in food history); with the way meat and fish are often used as complements and adjuncts to dishes rather than as mainstays; and with the imaginative and ingenious use of colours, textures and contrasts.

Interestingly, what these two cultures have in common is that they are traditionally peasant-based societies. Although both have also had upper class cuisines, such as the Medicis in Italy and the dynasties of China, much aristocratic and haute cuisine is derived from the original peasant cooking of the countryside. Peasant cooking evolves from a close connection to the land, an intimate day-to-day knowledge of the

soil, the weather, and the seasons upon which the harvests, and in turn the producer are dependant. There is a real earthiness, a wholesomeness, an immediacy about such cooking that appeals to all our senses - it is truly a celebration of the fruits of the earth. It is this integrated attitude to food that Italian migrants have brought with them to this country. In the post-war years many migrants came from rural southern Italy; many were peasant farmers, uprooted from the soil that they had tilled and cultivated from one generation to the next over the centuries, and were transplanted to a usually urban Australian environment. But they brought with them those aspects of their culture that would enable them to at least survive, if not actually feel at home in a very different, often culturally unsympathetic, even hostile, new environment. Food and cooking along with language and music, are things that bind people together, giving and reinforcing a strong sense of cultural identity and a sense of belonging. And so in the backyards of Melbourne, and other Australian cities, peasant farmers, or to use the Italian word 'contadini', from Veneto to Sicily recreated a largely self-sufficient way of life, growing much of their own food, bottling, drying and preserving the surplus, making their own wine, curing their own hams and salami, even baking bread in backyard ovens. I find it fascinating to wander through Melbourne's inner-suburbs where I live and see orchards and vegetable gardens flourishing in the small backyards of Italian and other migrants' homes - tomatoes, fennel, beans, peppers, apricots, figs, lemons, grapes, olives, plums, apples, and pears etc.- the occupants determined to recreate some of the self-sufficiency in food production that they left behind in their rural communities. I think in this way Melbourne is very special, if not unique as a city; how many other places have this kind of intensive cultivation going on in such an urban setting?

This traditional close connection with the soil that Italians tend to have is also reflected in their involvement in the wholesale and retail



Wartime shortages of fruit and vegetables were relieved at the Cafe Latin by produce grown by Camillo Triaca in his garden.

fruit and vegetable markets. We cannot talk about Italian cuisine in Australia without acknowledging the role that Italians have had and continue to have in our fruit and vegetable markets. Here in Melbourne we are particularly well endowed with markets, the most famous and glorious of course being the Queen Victoria Market. Melbourne's markets are a reflection of Australia's rich and diverse multicultural heritage. Foods representing the cuisine of many cultures are on display, Italian, Greek, Polish, Hungarian, Spanish, Turkish, Lebanese, Middle Eastern, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian etc. - all of them contributing to and enriching a thriving food culture, and serving a public increasingly interested in and better informed about food. But of course, the major influence has long been, and continues to be Italian, simply by virtue of the fact that people of Italian origin are such a large group in Australia, and have a relatively long presence here.

Certainly since the 1950s, and probably well before, Italian market-gardeners and green-grocers were the dominant presence in the fruit and vegetable markets (the other important group being the Chinese, although their numbers were small due to the existence of the notorious White Australian Policy). It is largely due to

these people, and other migrants, that we now have access to such a vast and exciting range of vegetables. It is hard to believe that vegetables that we now take for granted, such as eggplants and zucchini, not to mention artichokes and fennel, were virtually unknown to the Australian public 30 or 40 years ago. It must have been a real culture shock for Italians coming to Australia in the early days and being confronted with the typical Australian way of eating at the time, a diet consisting largely of meat, often three times a day, a very limited range of vegetables, all washed down with gallons of tea.

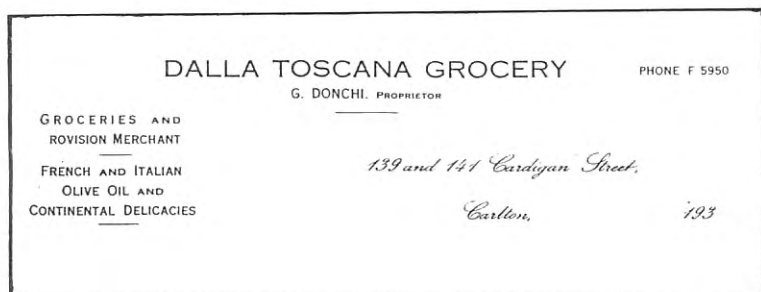


A truck load of cauliflowers grown by Sicilian market gardeners in Weerribee heading for the Victoria Market in the 1940s.

The typical Anglo-Celtic Australian diet of 100 years ago has been brilliantly and scathingly described by Dr. Philip Muskett in his witty and informative little book *The Art of Living in Australia* published in 1893. In this book, so ahead of its time in many ways, he was highly critical of the traditional meat-based Australian diet, and passionately advocated what would now be called the Mediterranean diet. Philip Muskett would have heartily approved of the impact Italian migration has had on food culture in this country, especially the greater availability of vegetables and fruit, with more fish and less meat in the diet, the use of olive oil, and the

accompanying of food with wine as a healthy and civilised way of eating.

For those of us fortunate enough to live in Melbourne, we not only have a vast choice of Italian restaurants, bistros, trattoria and cafés to eat out in, but also an abundance of Italian food stores, many of them outstanding and stocking every kind of Italian produce, both Australian and imported. In short we have here everything at our disposal to create authentic Italian cooking which is as close as possible to the actual country of origin. The first Italian grocery shops in Melbourne were in Carlton, and they, like the early Italian restaurants, are strongly associated with certain family names - Donchi, Varrenti, Agostino, and Valmorbida, for instance.



King & Godfree which has been a grocery store and a Carlton landmark since 1884, in spite of its un-Italian name, is in fact a very Italian food and wine store, having specialised in Italian food and wine since the 1950s when it was bought by the Valmorbida family.

In 1956 the Valmorbida family also bought a spirits and grocery store in Swanston Street, Carlton, which Frank Agostino and his wife Florence had established in 1937 as Frank Agostino and Coy. Pty. Ltd. This trade name was used by the Valmorbida family to open a chain of stores throughout Melbourne. The first to be opened was located in Lygon Street - it is now Lygon Food Store, continuing the tradition of selling high quality Italian and Australian produce.

Also in Carlton is Enoteca Sileno, started by Gino Di Santo 40 years ago, now run by his son-in-law, John Portelli, and described as a "temple of Italian gastronomy".

Away from Carlton are other bastions of fine Italian produce, such as the enormous and wonderfully stocked Mediterranean Supermarket in Brunswick, Piedimonte's in Fitzroy, Cardamone's in Fairfield and the list goes on. But you don't have to go to specialist Italian food

shops to get Italian food for the Italian influence is now such a part of the general Australian scene that many Italian food items are readily available in supermarkets: cheeses such as ricotta, mozzarella and parmesan, a wide range of pasta, fresh and dried, risotto rice, polenta, salami and Italian other smallgoods, various kinds of pesto together with a huge variety of olive oils. In addition there are the myriad so-called continental delicatessens throughout Melbourne stocking Italian food.

To sum up, it would be hard to over-estimate the positive impact of Italian food and cuisine on this country. Italians have helped introduce a sophistication, plus a spirit of generosity in food, so often lacking in the traditional Anglo-Australian approach to the subject. They have been major contributors to a shift in the traditional Anglo-Celtic Australian attitude to food, in which it was viewed largely as fuel, to a recognition of the importance of good food and cooking being central to a happy and healthy life.

Of course it would be naive to assume that all Australians embraced Italian cuisine wholeheartedly in the early days. Like the non-Anglo migrants, Italians suffered varying degrees of discrimination and prejudice from the dominant culture, and of course, as is often the case, their food and eating habits were often the target of such bigotry. However, we have come a long way since such food was considered foreign and alien, when garlic and olive oil were viewed with hostility and suspicion. Australians are now very open to enjoying the cuisines of the many diverse cultures living in this country, where this openness and interest was paved largely by the new foods and cooking introduced by Italian migrants.

There is much discussion these days on whether there is such a thing as a distinctly Australian cuisine. Whatever the conclusions of that debate, one thing is certain, Italian cuisine continues to evolve and develop in a new environment, inspired by the ingenuity and passion Italians have always brought to cooking, and in addition, continues to have a major influence on shaping the way Australians, both of Italian and non-Italian background, prepare their food.

NEW MATERIAL

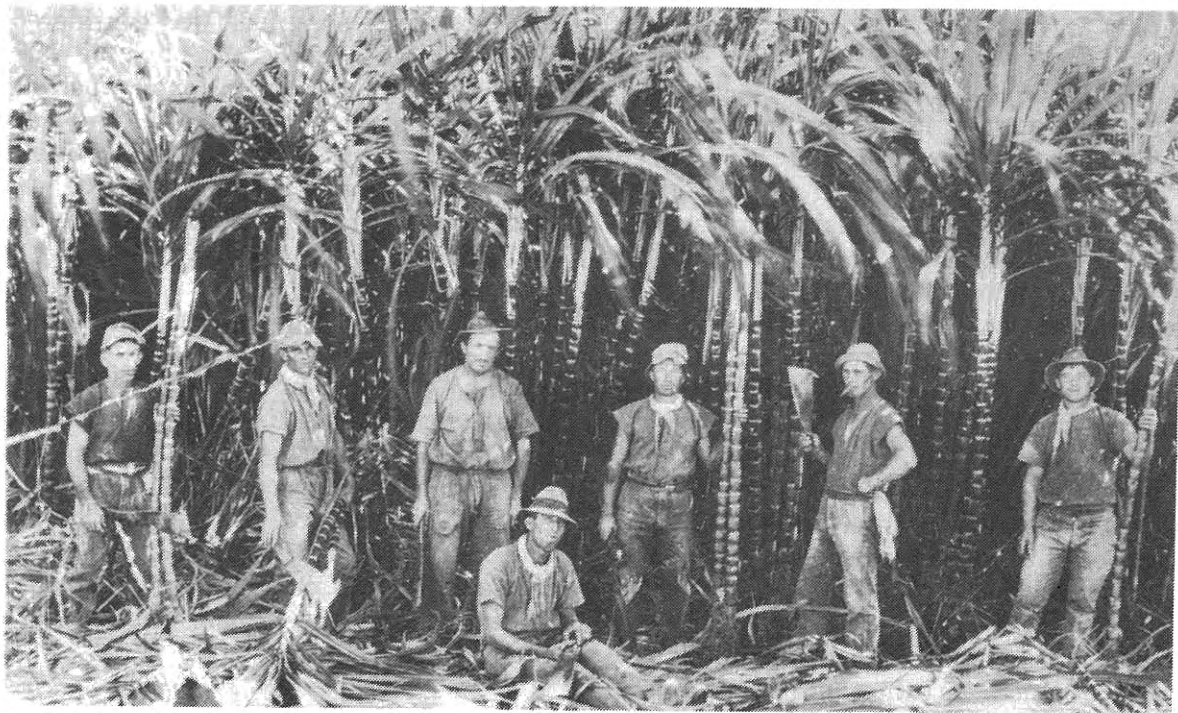
The following is a selection of photographic material donated to the Italian Historical Society in the last three months. Each image depicts and important moment in the life of an Italian migrant. They add another chapter to the never ending story of the contribution and settlement

of Italian migration to Australia.

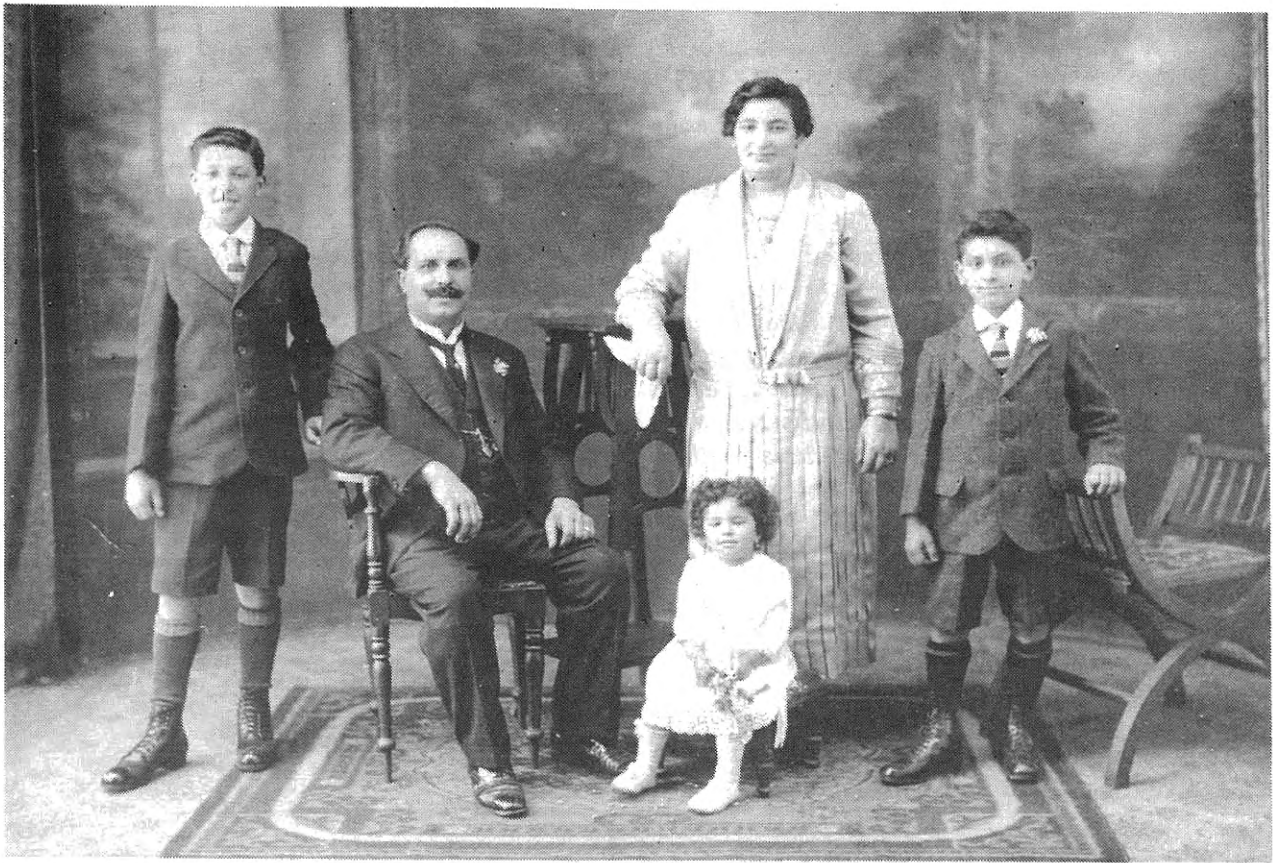
If you wish to deposit originals or copies of photographs and documents of your family in the Collection* of the Society, please contact Laura Mecca during office hours on (03) 9349 1144.



From left: Ivo Fabbris, Leo Giudice, Charlie Bongiovanni and Giuseppe Giudice at Young's Meat Emporium in North Melbourne in c.1954.



From left: Gaetano Panizzon and Francesco Fantin with other Italian cane cutters in North Queensland in the 1920s. Panizzon and Fantin were fellow workers in a textile mill in Schio, Vicenza and had migrated to escape persecution for their anti-Fascist political activities. During his internment at Loveday in South Australia, Fantin was killed by Fascist sympathisers in 1942.



Giuseppe and Angela Natoli with their Australian born children Angelo, Giuseppe and Maria, c.1927. Giuseppe came to Melbourne from Lipari, Aeolian Islands in 1904. In 1911 he went back to look for a wife and returned to Australia with Angela in 1912.



In 1930 in La Maddalena, an island north of Sardinia, Carnival was celebrated with a parade of the town's young people in traditional Sardinian costumes.

SEARCHING FOR . . .

by Josephine Toscano

I was born in Santa Cristina D'Aspromonte in Reggio Calabria. S. Cristina was last re-built in 1783 after an earthquake destroyed 'il paese vecchio'. My father, Stefano came to Melbourne in 1952 and began to work at Robinvale. He joined three of his brothers. I followed with my mother, Francesca, in 1956. This was a fairly common pattern of family migration in the 1950s. I am currently working as a teacher in the Department of Information studies at Swinburne University. My husband, Bryan Murphy, has a fairly extensive family tree and I originally began work on my 'family tree' to balance the work done by the 'Murphy side'. My two children, Anna-Maria and Cristina are still in primary school.

I was very lucky when it came to a search for my ancestors. First of all my parents were from the same town of Santa Cristina D'Aspromonte, [80kms from the city of Reggio Calabria] and secondly, all of my ancestors had very considerably not wandered from the town between the years of 1806 and 1863.

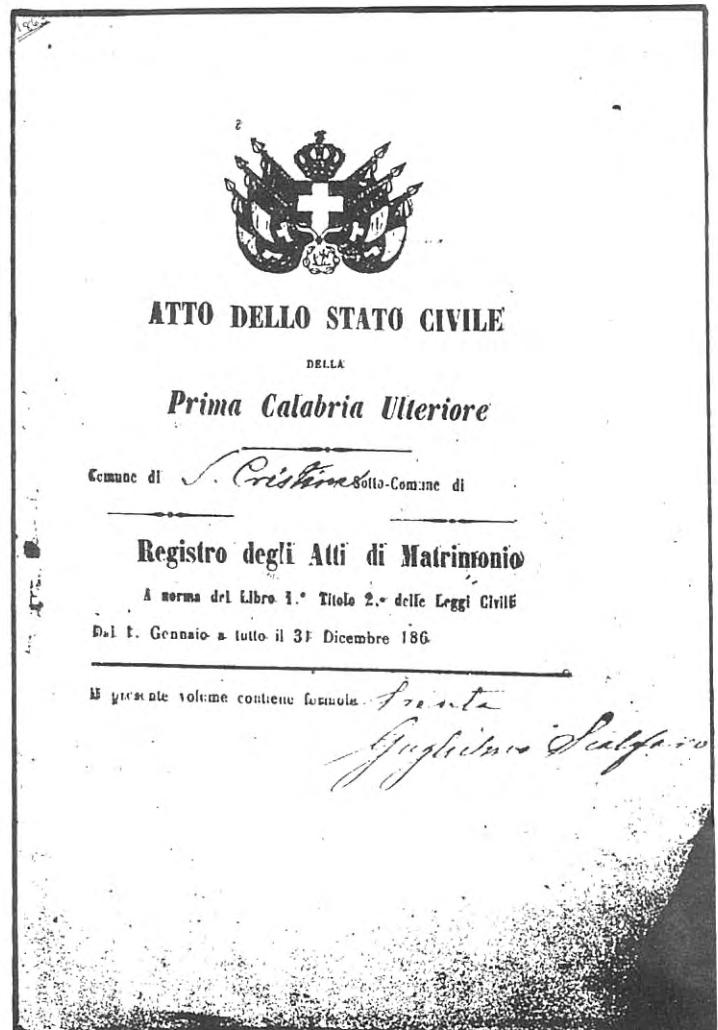
Betty Maiuto's book, *How to trace your Italian ancestors*, was an excellent first step for my research. It directed me to a Family History Centre (FHC) run by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints - commonly known as the Mormons. The volunteers at the FHC pointed me towards the International Locality Index and there I found that a very large part of the State Archives of Italy had actually been microfilmed by the Mormons. Once armed with the appropriate film roll number, these films can be ordered and then viewed at the FHC.

The records of Santa Cristina D'Aspromonte consist of the "Registro dello Stato Civile" from the State Archives in Reggio. The microfilms contain the Births, Deaths, Marriages and "Atti Diversi" records for the period 1806 - 1863.

The significance of 1806? In this year Napoleon Bonaparte ordered that these records be kept by the state. The significance of 1863? This is still a mystery - but it has been suggested that Italy has a 100 year "freeze" on the release of state records and the microfilming was done in 1963.

Using only these records I was able to get back to 1730. For example, in the Registry of Death for one ancestor in 1823, it gives the names and occupations of his parents and from this I was able to calculate their dates of birth in 1730.

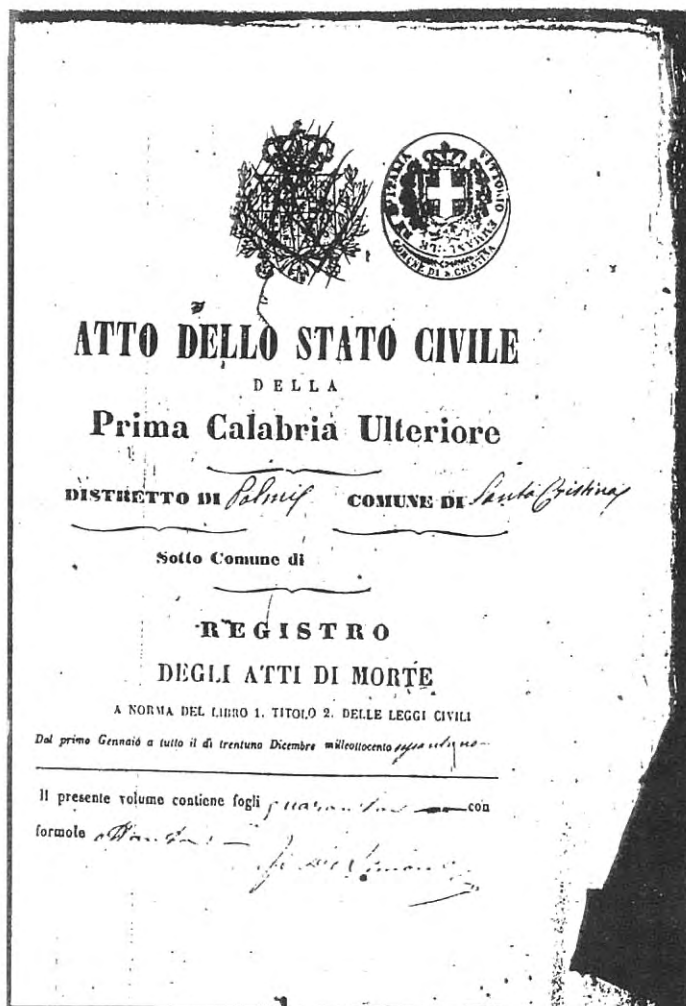
Given that the actual search for the names was very easy in my case, why am I still working at



Register of Marriages of the Comune of Santa Cristina. (From FHC microfilms)

it? Certainly not just for a list of who begat whom and when.

First it is interesting for me to understand the historical context in which my ancestors lived. I would like to be able to understand, for example,



Register of Deaths of the Comune of Santa Cristina for 1861. (From FHC microfilms)

1861 one emblem is crossed out and the new emblem is imposed of VITTORIO EMMANUELE RE D'ITALIA. Then in 1863 it changes again. What happened in 1863? Wasn't unification in 1861? When was Calabria part of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies?

Secondly, the search has enabled me to appreciate the Italian language. The occupations listed for my ancestors range from: *bracciale*, *bracciante*, *contadina*, *contadino*, *lavoratore*, *filatrice*, to *"vaticale"*. Some terms are easy to translate, while some like *"vaticale"* are still being hotly debated on PIE - an electronic bulletin board on the Internet. One question springs to mind though. What is the difference between a *"contadino"* and a *"lavoratore"*?

Thirdly, although on the face of it, my grandparents lived and died in the same town as they were born, they were actually part of the flood of Italian immigrants to Ellis Island in New York in the early part of the twentieth

century. I have now found records of both of my grandfathers who disembarked in New York and the changing coat-of-arms on the Registers. Ingave as their address Hester Street - a street known as part of Little Italy in New York. They list their ultimate destination as Marlinton, West Virginia. Looking at the ship's manifests my grandparents were not the only young men from Santa Cristina to go off to America as at least 20% of the ship's steerage passengers were also from Santa Cristina.

Another reason that I am still "at it" is that I have discovered PIE (Pursuing Italians Electronically), a bulletin board where people interested in Italian genealogy hold discussions on topics as diverse as: What is the significance of "la zona greca"? Which towns have an Albanian (Albaresh) heritage? Which towns are likely to reply to genealogical queries? What was the recipe for "Bagna Cauda"? Has anyone seen the journal BRUTTIUM?

In America there is also an organisation called POINT. (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together). This organisation produces a regular newsletter with interesting genealogical articles. It also includes a listing of the names and towns the members of the organisation are researching. This can save literally days of work. In my case the name TEDESCO was being researched, but unfortunately not from the region of Reggio. Someone on PIE wanted to know if anybody knew of anyone who would like back copies of their magazine. Does anybody want to go halves? The fact that the magazine is American-based is not really a problem. After all the Italo-Americans' roots are exactly the same as ours - they end up in places like Santa Cristina, Viggiano etc.. My theory is that *our* parents came to Australia in search of "L'America" that *their* parents had told them about. They are the product of a generation that had either been to America themselves or had friends and relations that had done so.

FAIRFIELD FAMILY HISTORY CENTRE

Carpark Entrance Via
198 Westgarth Street, Ph. (03) 9482 2244
Post Office Box 135, Fairfield Vic 3078

LIBRARY HOURS

Tuesday	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Wednesday	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Thursday	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Friday	7:00 PM - 9:30 PM
Saturday	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

FAMILY HISTORY

WHY I AM WHO I AM

by Carmel Szalay

Prior to the 1880s, northern Italy was in political turmoil - no work, very little food and not much prospect for the future. Men gathered together in their villages and discussed their future and the future of their children.

In 1881 four young men aged between 19 - 24 years decided to travel to Australia. One of them was called Andrea (Andrew) Rizzi - my grandfather. They left Genova for Australia via Gravesend, London on the *North Cumberland* and arrived in Melbourne, January, 1882. The journey from Gravesend took 90 days. Their profession was "Grapeclasser".

I can only imagine what it was like for Andrea and his friends leaving homes and enduring the voyage out here. Melbourne would have been completely different from their home town in Northern Italy. The contrast in housing, society, and the weather alone must have made them wonder whether they had made the right decision to migrate.

I do not know what Andrea (my Grandfather) did on arrival in Melbourne or where he went. I do know that towards the late 1880s he had found his way to Gippsland where he worked as a labourer on a farm. There he met Mary (my Grandmother) who was of Irish descent. It was her brother's farm where she worked in season as a domestic. The family lived most of the time in Kensington.

My grandparents had four children, a girl and three boys. The girl died from an epidemic of diphtheria aged 18 months. The third boy was my father.

The hardships and sorrow were too much for my grandfather, he had a nervous breakdown. My father was only six years old, but he remembered a trooper coming to take him away. He spent the rest of his years in a Mental Hospital at Sunbury, then later Castlemaine.

Two years ago, I bought a bunch of flowers and travelled to Castlemaine, positive that I would find his grave. I was lucky, the Curator was very helpful. I cannot explain the feeling I felt

when I looked through the registry and saw my grandfather's name "RIZZI" written down.

As I stood and looked at his tombstone I felt I was a part of history, because I would have been the first member of his family to visit his grave in fifty years. Andrea Rizzi was not a name anymore, he really existed and I had found his resting place. Now all I have to do is find his beginnings. Also, I had a warm feeling in my heart for my grandmother. She had put aside enough money for a tombstone. The inscription read:

ANDREA RIZZI
A pioneer at Rest

I felt it was so fitting.

I only hope that before he really became sick he did not regret his decision to migrate to Australia. His children, and his children's children have benefited greatly by him making that decision.

REUNION OF THE PEDRETTI FAMILY

by Glenn W Sweet

The reunion, held at Hepburn in March, was organised for the descendants of Martino Pedretti and Sarah Ind. Martino emigrated to Australia in 1862 from Brusio in the Swiss Poschiavo Valley, close to the Italian border. He settled at Elevated Plains near Hepburn Springs, Victoria in an area where there were many other Italian speaking immigrants, and worked as a labourer, a timbe-splitter and farmer. He married Sarah Ind at Daylesford in 1870 and the couple had 11 children. Three of those children married Gervasonis, two married Rossettis and another married a Tori (later spelled Torey), retaining a strong Swiss-Italian culture in the family.

There were about 150 people from various parts of Victoria who attended the reunion. In addition to the descendants of Martino Pedretti, some more recent arrivals to Australia showed up. Several families of Pedretti who emigrated to Australia in the 1950s also arrived for the reunion. Silvestro Pedretti was the forebear of

these families who came from Fiave, near Lake Garda in Northern Italy.

Some long lost and even unknown relatives were discovered on the day: one of Martino's grandsons left the area early this century to work interstate and only had one child (or so we thought) - three of the eight previously unknown children arrived on the day to meet their cousins for the first time. Another grandson married twice - the children from the first marriage were not aware of the second; his 65 year old son met for the first time the two sisters he never knew he had. Writing to every Pedretti in the Australian phone directory was time consuming, but certainly had its rewards.

The oldest person at the reunion was aged 89 years and the youngest was two weeks - prizes were awarded to these people. A raffle was held in the afternoon, but some thought the results were fixed, because all the prizes were won by Pedrettis! Many memories were recalled of making bullboars (an Italian sausage made from pork and beef), and always a lively social occasion for the Swiss-Italians, of drinking home-made wines and of playing bocce at Uncle Joe's home at Yandoit.



Martino and Sarah Pedretti

FAMILY HISTORY OF THE D'ABBONDI FAMILY

Thank you to Kathy Smith of Albany, Western Australia, for depositing a copy of her family history on the D'Abbondi Family in the Library of the Italian Historical Society. Lorenzo and Margherita D'Abbondi migrated to Australia with five children in 1889. They settled in the mining town of Walhalla, in the Gippsland area of Victoria, where three more children were born. Many other Swiss-Italians and Italians from the same area of Lorenzo came to Walhalla at that time to cut wood for the gold mine.

This publication is the result of 10 years of research, made difficult by the variation in the spelling of the D'Abbondi surname in the Australian records: D'Abbondio, Dibundi, Dabondi, DeBonde and DeBondi! It is well compiled and illustrated and it contains copies of marriage and birth certificates obtained *by mail* from the Comune of Tirano in 1993.

REQUESTS OF ASSISTANCE

We have received requests of assistance from all over the world: Canada, Italy, New Zealand, Australia. Whilst it is impossible to publish all the letters received, we endeavour to publish those which we believe may be of interest to a broad number of readers. For the others, we publish a summary of their research.

From: Nerida Roberts
44 Almond Street, Northgate Qld 4013.
Grand-daughter of Louisa Jane COCCHIARDI
Morkham, nee Cocciardi-Milne.

"My grandmother carried the name of Cocciardi, but grew up with the Milne family in Queensland not knowing that she was not a Milne until after her marriage to my grandfather.

I have traced the Cocciardi family back to the time they were living in Blackwood, Victoria. However, I have no idea where to go from here.

The following is the family tree as far as I have researched: Vincenzo Charles Cocciardi born Sicily, Italy in 1837c. Married to Jane Roach on 27 December 1866 in the Blackwood Catholic Chapel. Died 24 April 1918 and buried 27 April 1918 in R.C. Section No. 10 Blackwood Cemetery. His occupation was a miner in Blackwood. His father was Antonio Cocciardi a farmer and his mother was Francesca Dieta.

There were nine (9) children that I am aware

of:

- Frances Cocciardi, b. 10 October 1867 Sebastopol Hill Blackwood, never married, d. 18 December 1937 Alfred Hospital Prahran.
- Rose Ann (Rosie/Annie) Cocciardi, b. 1869 Blackwood, m. 1890 Jos Jas. A. Hilla.
- Josephine Cocciardi, b. 1871, Blackwood, m. 1888 George Gale, d. 1918c.
- Jane Cocciardi, b. 1873 Blackwood, d. 1875 (1 year old).
- Mary Cocciardi, b. 1875 Blackwood, m. 1890 Arthur Sullivan.
- Antonio Cocciardi, b. 1877 Blackwood, m. 1918 Jessie Macallister, d. 1964c.
- Micheal Cocciardi, b. 1879 Blackwood, d. 1960c.
- No Name: male still born b. 28 Sep. 1881 Blackwood, d. 1 day old.
- Vincenzo John Roach Cocciardi, b. 31 Oct. 1885 Blackwood, d. 2 months old.

I believe the eldest member of the family Frances Cocciardi was my grandmother's mother. It appears that Frances had 2 girls, Mary Jane Cocciardi born 30 November 1890, died 9 February 1891 at Plant St Malvern, and Louisa Jane Cocciardi (my grand-mother) who was born 12 May 1894 and died 22 January 1925 in Toowoomba, Queensland. Louisa Jane married Roland Amery Morkham on 4th of September 1915 in Queensland and settled in a district west of Toowoomba called Hannaford.

The birth certificate of Mary Jane Cocciardi shows the mother as Franny Cocciardi 23 years of age and born in Blackwood and no father has been named. No father was named on Mary Jane's death certificate, the mother's name was Frances Cocciardi. However on Louisa Jane's birth certificate the father's name was listed as Rudolf Cocciardi, 32 years old and born in Inglewood, Victoria. The mother's name is Frances Cocciardi formerly Roach aged 26, born in Blackwood. Their marriage is listed as occurring on 14th of October 1890, at Port Melbourne, Victoria. From my research there is no record of Rudolf Cocciardi or of their marriage.

However, I have been trying to find which ship the Cocciardi family came out to Australia on, with the thought that there was more than one Cocciardi who came to Australia.

I have not been successful with my search in identifying the ship they migrated on and I am hoping that your organisation may be able to shed some light on this. According to Vincenzo Cocciardi's death certificate he was a resident of Victoria for 60 years at the time of his death which makes the approximate year of arrival 1858.

How my grandmother, Louisa Jane Cocciardi became a member of the Milne family is a mystery. However I do know that the Milne's lived at 4 York Street, St. Kilda, Melbourne before coming to Queensland to settle. I believe that in 1923 Antonio Cocciardi was living at 4 Alfred Street, St. Kilda and may have known the Milne family.

I have listed all this information with the hope that it will be useful to your organisation and that another Cocciardi descendant may be researching

the family tree. I would be grateful for any information about that time in our history with regard to the Italian settlers of the time and particularly the Cocciardi family if it is available".

From: Rod Smith

40 Baroda Street, Khandallas, Wellington NZ 6004.

"Whilst my questions involve family history, they are slightly wider than just the usual genealogical enquiry. I hope I can show you that this enquiry is something a little different.

My wife's mother had two aunts - Mary Ann Minchin and Ellen Minchin - living with their family near Dargaville, North Auckland about 1890. Into their lives at that time came a young man working as a rabbit hunter calling himself Arthur James Bertie. It seems at first he did not disclose his true identity, but eventually let it be known that he was in fact the son of heir of the Marquis of TALIACARNE, of San Caterina, Levanto, near Genoa. The Marquis was at one time plenipotentiary to the Court of Lisbon, Portugal on behalf of King Victor Emmanuel of Italy.

Arthur married Mary Ann Minchin in 1890 and they had one daughter Vincenzia the following year. In 1892 Arthur died of heart disease, and soon after Mary Ann and Vincenzia accepted the Taliacarne family's invitation to come to Italy.

In 1899 she married again, an Englishman Charles de Grave Sells who was an engineer and held a post in the Italian navy or civil service work associated with the navy. They had four daughters and lived at Casa San Giorgio, Quinto al Mare which I presume is near Genoa.

The first daughter Vincenzia later married Baron Cencio MASSOLA of Levanto. They had at least one son Giuseppe.

The second Minchin sister Ellen later wrote that she married the King of Barataria, though she returned to New Zealand in 1931 a single woman. The family are not aware of a marriage.

The family in New Zealand has lost contact with the family in Italy. The English aristocracy have their records published in Burkes and DeBretts Peerage. Is there a similar volume published in Italy that might have detail on the Taliacarnes or the Massolas? Could you tell me the name of such a publication?

Could you suggest any other person I should write to? I cannot find Barataria on any maps of Italy. "The King of Barataria" was the alternative name to "The Gondoliers" by Gilbert and Sullivan, Barataria being an island near Venice. Was there ever such a kingdom in reality?"

The names of extinct and current Italian noble families are published in the volume "Dizionario Storico Blasonico delle Famiglie Nobili e Notabili Italiane Estinte e Fiorenti" by G.B. Cirollanza. We were not able to locate this expensive publication in

Australia, which is out of print. However, copies may be available from: Heraldry Today, Parliament Place, Ramsbury, Nr. Marlborough, Wiltshire SNB 2QH, Great Britain. Other similar publications are available from: Istituto Genealogico Italiano, Via Santo Spirito, 17, 50125 Florence, Italy. Fax. 0011 39 55 213 090. Enquiries can be made in English. A warning to our readers: Beware of expensive offers of family crests or family history research by any overseas Genealogical or Heraldic Societies. There are many stories of people made noble overnight, with impressive (and expensive) family crests!

GIAMMATTOLO

Seeking descendants and information on: Luigi Saverio Giammattolo b. 10 Nov. 1822; Andrea Saverio Giammattolo b. 2 Feb. 1825; Saverio Giammattolo b. 9 June 1832. Migrated to Australia in 1880s from Montalto Uffugo, Province of Cosenza.
From: Mr David Giammattolo, 6 Ravenscroft Circle, Brampton, Ontario, Canada L6Z 4p2

COMETTI

Martino Cometti fu Bernardo, b. 1858c in Lovero (Sondrio). Migrated to Australia in 1892. His son Silvio, b. 1892, followed him in 1909.
Their Italian descendants believe they came to Victoria.
From: Luigi Fumagalli, Via Artigiani 18, Olginate (Como), Italy. Fax. 0011 39 341 682 2739.

AMENDOLA, NAPOLI, ORSINO, PORTA, SENO, SPOSITO, VIMPANI, ZOPPO

Mrs Patricia Draper, genealogist and historian at Frankston Historical Society, informs that these Italian names appear in the church records of St. Peter's Anglican Parish, Mornington (from 1860 to 1920). The records are now available on microfiche. Details of entries can be obtained with a \$5 donation made out to The Frankston Historical Society Inc., 65 Hillcrest Rd., Frankston 3199.

SWISS & ITALIAN PIONEERS

The following is a list of names of Swiss and Italian pioneers being researched by Australian descendants. The names were collected during the Hepburn Springs Swiss Italian Festa (May 1995). Names and addresses of respective researchers are available from the Italian Historical Society (ph (03) 9349 1144):

BARTALLI
BONETTI
BONETTI (from Giumaglio)

CABASSI
CALIGARI
CERESA
CORTES [Cortesi?]
DE CARLI/DE CARLO
FOLETTI
GERVASONI
GIACOMETTI Giacomo
MENOTTI/MINOTTI
PEDRETTI
QUANCHI Family and QUANCHI Maddalena
REBECCHI
SARTORI Giacoma
SARTORI Guioiffa [Genoveffa?]
TINE 2TTI
TOGNI John Anthony
TRAVERSI
RITZAU
SARTORI, Maurice
VITALY
YOLI [Jola?]

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

The new client services introduced by the Public Record Office of Victoria last year will be continued for 1995. They are:

Laverton Search Room:

- Opening on the last Saturday of each month will continue until November, from 9.30am to 4.00pm. Opening hours: 9.30am to 4.00pm.
- Toll Free Number (1800 657 452) from 1 July extended to callers from any part of Australia outside Melbourne metropolitan (03) area. Melbourne residents should ring 360 9665.

Priority Record Delivery:

Same day or overnight delivery of records from Laverton to the City Search Room will continue to operate from Monday to Friday. A search fee of \$3.50 is charged for each item requested.

NEWS

EXHIBITION OF TOYS AND GAMES

From 18th September to 17th November 1995, the Society, in collaboration with the Italian Resource Centre - Co.As.It., will present the travelling exhibition from the Lillydale Museum **"Childsplay: Toys and Games 1920s-1950s"**. The Society will integrate into the core exhibition a "migration" component titled **"Giocavamo così"**. Photographs from the Society's collection and toys and games of pre-war and post-war migrants children of Italian origin collected in the community will be on display.

Schools are encouraged to visit the exhibition in groups. Educational material and activities for primary and secondary students (yrs 7 & 8) will be developed by the Italian Resource Centre. For further information and bookings contact Marisa Cortese or Claudia McLean on 9349 1144

The exhibition will be on display on the first floor at 185 Faraday Street, Carlton from 10am

to 4pm, Monday to Friday and during the weekend of the Lygon Street Festa (28-29 October). An entry fee per adult of \$2.00 will be charged. For school groups and children under 12 admission will be free.

The Society wishes to borrow old toys and games, including teddy bears, mechanical toys, musical instruments, dolls, doll's tea sets and houses, board games, rocking horses, pedal cars, billy carts, dress-up costumes, etc. which the Italian migrants or their descendants may still have in their homes. Of particular interest are toys hand-made by Italian parents or grandparents for their children and grand-children. The items, to be displayed safely and out of reach, would be on loan from 1st September to the end of the exhibition, in November 1995.

If you are able to assist, please contact Laura Mecca as soon as possible, telephone (03) 9349 1144.



Percy Rigoni gained courage to pose for this photo by hugging his koala bear. St. Martin's Kindergarten was located in Queensberry Street, Carlton.

70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MELBOURNE "SOCIETA' ISOLE EOLIE"

The Aeolian Islands' community in Melbourne has celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the founding of their *Societa' Isole Eolie* (Aeolian Islands Society) with an exhibition of photographs and memorabilia and a dinner dance, attended by nearly 500 Australians of Aeolian origins.

The *Societa'* was founded in August 1925 by three Aeolians: brothers Stefano and Giuseppe Tesoriero and Stefano Dimattina. It was Giuseppe Tesoriero's idea to open in Melbourne a benevolent society that would assist the many Aeolian migrants living in Melbourne, on the model of a similar society created in New York, USA, where Tesoriero had migrated before coming to Melbourne. Stefano Tesoriero was the first president of the *Societa'*.

During the first years of operation, the Society's members held their meetings in private homes and in various halls. Many of these meetings and monthly fund-raising balls were held at St. Ignatius Church in Richmond. From 1949 the Society was temporarily located at the

Capuchin Order's premises in Hawthorn and later, at the Cavour Club in South Melbourne.

In 1937 the Society made a substantial donation of £330 to a fund-raising Appeal for the construction of the *Casa d'Italia*, where the Society was promised space for a permanent home. However, the *Casa d'Italia* project never eventuated and the Society's original donation was later transferred into the funds for the purchase of the land on which the Villaggio Vaccari Hostel in South Morang was built.

The present venue, the Eolian Hall, at 836 Lygon Street, North Carlton, was purchased in 1969 from the Carlton Jewish community with a considerable financial commitment from all the members, many of whom were personally involved in the renovations to the interiors, which were done over the years.

The Hall is now regularly used for social and cultural reunions and community functions. It is also leased out for private social activities.



Wedding of Angelo Virgona and Felicia Santamaria celebrated in Melbourne in 1946. The Virgona and Santamaria were two of the most well known families from the Aeolian Islands in Melbourne.

BOOK REVIEWS

NEITHER HYPOCRITE NOR SAINT

A Biography of Alfred John Trinca 1884-1981

By John C. Trinca. Published by J.C. Trinca, Canterbury Vic., 1994. Available from author: address on request from Italian Historical Society, ph. (03) 9349 1144. Price \$39.95 plus p&p.

Reviewer: Dr. Joan Campbell

The writing of biography is as demanding a literary endeavour as any other, especially when the research base is detailed and exacting. When the subject has a life span of 97 years, a distinguished medical career, an unusually wide range of skills and interests, family connections and a complex personality, the task becomes even more challenging. John Trinca has chosen to present this 'journey round his father' by using a comprehensive approach to define the many facets of the man. The rewards for the reader's persistence are considerable as this rich mosaic contains much to enjoy and often amuse.

Born in Warragul Victoria, to an Italian father, John Andrea Trinca from Grosotto in the Valtellina, and an Australian mother, Eliza Maria Moorman, whose Protestant parents were both from the Plymouth area of Devon, Alfred John Trinca spent the greater part of his life as a distinguished Melbourne surgeon based at the Alfred Hospital and with rooms in Collins Street. His professional career extended from the first decade of the twentieth century until 1963 when he reluctantly retired, aged 79.

As one reads of his life, the impression quickly forms of a man of boundless energy, drive and intelligence. And as John Trinca points out, 'he had a quick, impatient and often fiery temperament' which it seems was more likely to have been inherited from his vivacious Australian mother than his placid Italian father. At the same time, H.D. Attwood, Professor Emeritus, Pathology, and Curator of Medical History, University of Melbourne, in his foreword to the book, comments on A.J. Trinca's modesty, pointing out that the title of this book is the man's summary of himself. He also regards this book as an important contribution to the medical history of Australia.

The Trinca family moved from Warragul to Fitzroy when Alfred was two and a half years

old, and they subsequently settled in Lisson Grove, Hawthorn, where the family home was built in 1892. Secondary schooling at University High School led on to Melbourne University in 1902. His academic and student life are detailed in chapter 3. A.J. Trinca was registered as a medical practitioner in December 1907. The next year saw his appointment to an internship at the Melbourne Hospital, then in Swanston St. By 1910 he was holding appointments to assistant honorary positions as Anaesthetist, Pathologist, and Surgeon, which he held simultaneously. He continued to hold all these positions after his appointment as Clinical Pathologist at the Alfred Hospital in 1911 until the outbreak of World War I. In England after his discharge in 1918, he took the position of Surgical Registrar at Middlesex Hospital and on his return to Melbourne in 1920 resumed his post as Clinical Pathologist at the Alfred Hospital. Numerous other positions were to follow.

A.J. Trinca's early military experience, his highly regarded clinical teaching, expertise in pathology, honorary positions and private practice, all contributed to his development as an outstanding surgeon. He also combined his medical and surgical expertise with research and the publication of a number of scientific papers. Some of his views were not without controversy as for example in the early 1930s, his advocacy of what were then innovative methods for the management of peritonitis prompted criticism from fellow surgeons at other hospitals. In time, his views would be vindicated. However, his rise to eminence was in no way compromised by these differences within the Melbourne medical community. A reading of chapters four and five which describe the medical and surgical practices of the early part of this century will leave the reader with reassurance on the advances of modern medicine.

Several incidents recorded from his time in France during World War I as a medical officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps can serve as examples of his approach to life. As with many other events described in this book, these reveal various aspects of his character - his common sense, tenacity of purpose and courage, as well as his professional expertise and compassion. On page 78 we learn that he was so furious when one of his men was killed by a sniper's

bullet that he overlooked his non-combatant status and did some sniping himself. Not surprisingly he was caught in the act by a senior officer and severely reprimanded. (Elsewhere we learn that he was an excellent shot, arising from a childhood fascination with firearms which developed when he joined the Army Reserve and practised at Williamstown rifle range. There his gun skills were demonstrated as equal to the best of the police force.)

On the same page the development of a more serious situation concerning wounded men on the battlefield is described. In charge of a casualty clearing station, and realising that seriously wounded soldiers required immediate treatment, A.J. Trinca drew on his first class surgical skills and began to operate to save their lives. The rules applying to the station stated he was only permitted to dress wounds and dispatch the wounded to Field Hospitals. This procedure could take hours or even days before the men received essential treatment so that many died or were severely affected by the delays. When he began to operate in the station, this resulted not only in a much higher survival rate but also a court martial where he was charged with disobedience.

The British army could not accept his presumption. He was arraigned before a very high-ranking board which included the head of the R.A.M.C. whom A.J. Trinca regarded as the

worst of the bunch, but who, on hearing the story, demanded that the proceedings be stopped and that A.J. Trinca be decorated, not castigated.

By contrast, on page 81, A.J. Trinca's forthright sense of the practicalities is illustrated in an extract from an article he wrote for the *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps* which describes his clever invention of a self-fuelling incinerator for the efficient disposal of the refuse from the Field Ambulance Hospital, as well as the manure from fifty-six horses.

While telling us much about the man, incidents such as these also give some notion of the detailed approach to his life taken in this book. The 29 chapters range over a wide area of issues which at times could perhaps have been more closely highlighted to enhance the narrative flow. Yet in such a long and busy life, and from the position of an eminent surgeon, A.J. Trinca met an immense number of people and was able to pursue an extraordinary array of interests. It is hardly surprising then that threaded through the story, where the medical history is understandably paramount, there are also fascinating insights into the life of early twentieth century Melbourne and a very considerable family history. The well-illustrated text is supported by forty pages of end notes, has three appendices, a Select Bibliography and an excellent index.



The Trinca Family at their home 'Intra' in Hawthorn, c.1914. (Courtesy Dr John C. Trinca)

THE GREATEST JOY OF ALL

The story of Dr Cyril Checchi

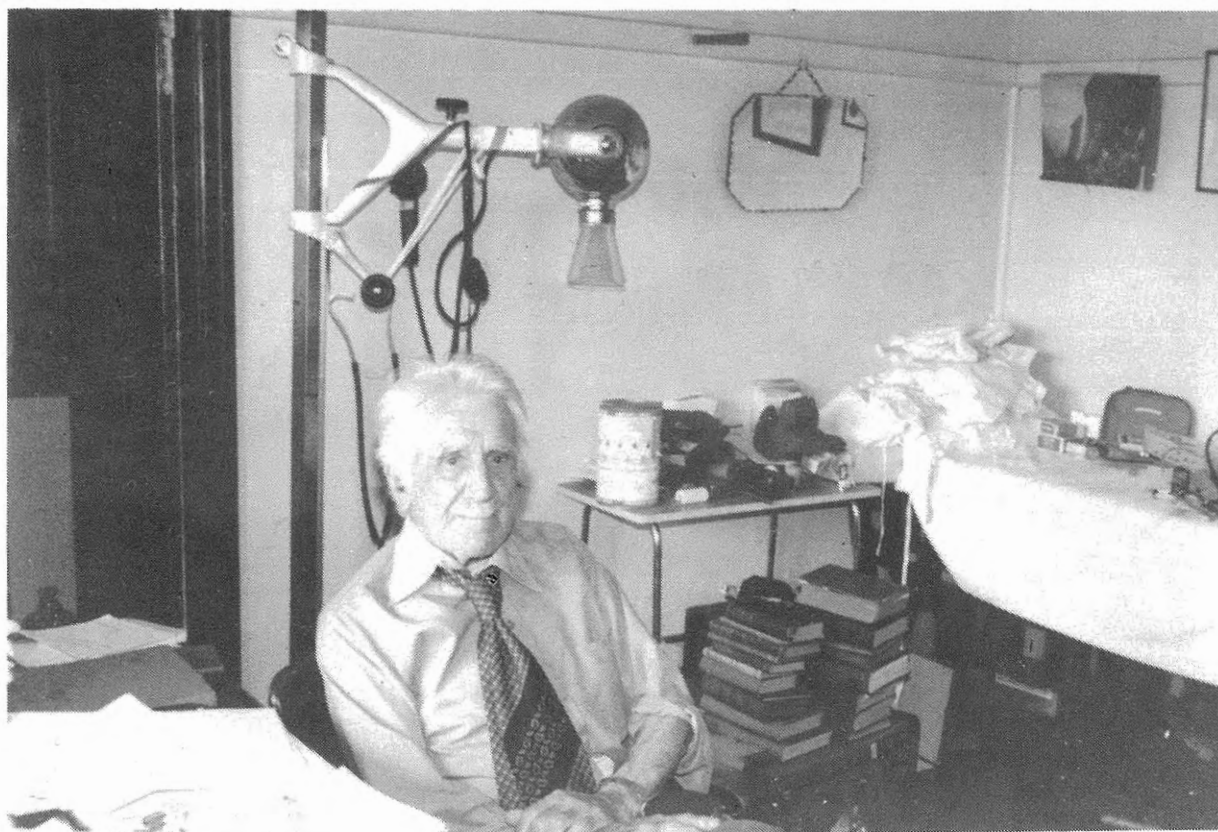
by Paul McLoughlin, Published by Bob Meredith, Willaura, Vic. 1995. Limited edition of 1000. Available from publisher, 43 Commercial Street, Willaura, 3379. Price \$20.00 including p&p. Cheques to be made out to "C.Checchi".

Reviewer: Doug Campbell

The Western District of Victoria is dotted with small townships, most of which are an outcome of the rich soils of the region, watered by a myriad of river and creek systems. Willaura is one such place close by the south-eastern face of the Grampian Ranges. I mention this because apart from references to nearby towns such as Ararat and Hamilton, there is virtually no indication of the topographical setting for this fascinating story. It is also worth noting that very little mention of the family background is included. More information on Dr Checchi's family and his Italian connection which is alluded to only once on page 19 would have answered some questions which arise in the mind of the reader. He mentions using a leave entitlement taken towards the end of World War I 'to spend some time in Italy and I used this time to look up relatives, some of whom I had never met before.'

As a biography and narrative of the career of Dr Cyril Checchi, this book also provides a perspective view of life in a small rural community as seen through the eyes of its sole resident medical practitioner. Based on a series of taped oral history interviews recorded 1987-88 by Bob Meredith, and edited by Paul McLoughlin, the book came about as a way of giving recognition to the significant role which Dr Checchi had played in the life of the Willaura community. As such it clearly shows how a lively and informed oral account of war service, medical practice and community involvement can be blended to produce a multi-dimensional record of almost a century of living. It is also a good example of the value of informed oral testimony especially in the area of societal values and the way of life in a small rural community. By 1988, Dr Checchi had completed 66 years of practice in the township. He was by then 95 years of age and in this regard the chronological span of the book is exceptional. At the time of publication in January 1995 he was resident at the Willaura and District Hospital, aged 103 years.

The early chapters cover his graduation as MBBS from the University of Melbourne in 1914 which was followed by a term of residency at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. As a young doctor 'with the world at my feet', his plans for a post-graduate course in surgery were suddenly



Dr Cyril Checchi in his Surgery in 1988. (Courtesy Dr John C Trinca)

changed by the advent of World War I. The doctor enlisted at once in the Royal Medical Corps of the British Government. No other avenue was open as an Australian Medical Corps did not exist at that time. His initial sense of frustration at bureaucratic procedures comes through clearly: drills and exercises in the British countryside he found 'nothing more than a waste of time and resources. I know the soldiers at the front could well have done with our expertise rather than have us sitting ... learning about the right way to dress and the correct way to march. I guess the English command thought that as we were only 'colonials' we needed to be shown the proper way to do things ... the disorganisation of the war effort was also something that surprised me ... at no stage did we actually engage in medical training of any sort - it was all army drills and practice.'

The reality of war came quickly in the Turkish campaign at Cape Helles 'where the idea of war as a glamorous and chivalrous activity disappeared very quickly'. Disillusionment also set in while observing the activities of the senior military personnel who mostly remained in relative safety on board the command ships located off-shore. After serving his twelve months' commission with the Royal Army Medical Corps, and finding himself replaced by an English doctor, he thereupon asked for a transfer to an Australian unit. This necessitated a return voyage to Australia for an official discharge and re-enlistment in the Australian Army Medical Corps. For modern readers attuned to 24 hour flights between England and Australia, the time lines seem incredibly long. During his short stay in Australia Dr Checchi married 'the woman to whom I would devote my life for the next 68 years.' On returning to the battlefields of Europe he continued to experience the conflict of military and medical priorities when men he assessed as unfit to fight were thought by the commanding officers to be necessary to keep fighting numbers up. He records that 'this continually frustrated us because all of our training had been in the preservation of human life ... even now I find it hard to grasp what motivates people to go to war.'

At war's end Dr Checchi returned to Australia and took the position of town doctor at Willaura in 1920. He was to remain there for the rest of his life for as he says, 'Since arriving in 1920, it had been my intention to one day move on, but the problem was that the people tended not just

to grow on you, but rather in you.' The subsequent chapters in the book cover the main issues which arose during his professional career - his relationship with doctors in the larger town of Ararat; the versatility of his skills involving anaesthesia, obstetrics, (over 2000 deliveries), pharmacology, dentistry and even on occasions veterinary practice, 'as well as interesting insights into the everyday life of the district. Numerous examples are given of the need for improvisation in dealing with the many situations involving accidents and other mishaps. He was also actively and continuously involved in the provision of a reticulated water supply and later a sewerage facility for the town, the eventual installation of both being in no small part due to his persistence and advocacy.

Throughout the book, Dr Checchi emphasises the advantages of living in a small community; the readily available practical help and advice from its members and the 'great sense of community which must be lived to be understood.' These are offset against the entrenched attitudes and gossip of a relatively isolated group (especially before the widespread ownership of motor vehicles), a slowness to accept strangers and quickness to ostracise those who departed from overt standards of conduct. In the early years for example this resulted in unwed pregnant women having to relocate to Melbourne for the main period of their pregnancy and birth of their child. Dr Checchi's humane approach to such problems is revealed in several incidents he describes.

There are also interesting occasional glimpses into the social stratification of the district with a few 'great estate families' and wealthy individuals, some of whom were benefactors and philanthropists and a few of less generous disposition. As a doctor he could have made more money in a bigger town practice elsewhere but chose to stay in an environment where he was respected and valued both for his professional and human qualities. This slim volume of 130 pages provides in his own modest words, an impressive record of an outstanding man's lifetime. The rich mixture of personal achievements, social insights and a history of the practice of medicine prior to the advent of sophisticated medication and high technology support only adds to its value.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

This list outlines the books received by the Society in the last six months by gift or purchase. The books may not necessarily be recent releases.

Power of the Land A Social History of Italian Settlement in Lismore. By Lesley Jenkins, Northern Star Printery, Lismore NSW, 1993.

An interesting anthology of migrants of Italian origin in the Lismore region, from 1920s to 1970s. The book is bilingual, indexed and well illustrated, with lists of past and present family names and of Italian banana and fruit growers in 1934.

Sugar, Tears & Eyeties. By Peter Dalseno, Boolarong Publications, 12 Brookes Street, Bowen Hills, Brisbane 4006, 1994. \$22.95 plus p&p.

An account of the life and migration experiences of Irma and Pietro who arrived in Australia in 1923 and settled in the sugar cane region of northern Queensland. Although written in a narrative style, the book reflects real life events. Interesting and entertaining.

From Many Places The History and Cultural Traditions of South Australian People. By Migration Museum (History Trust of S.A.) in association with Wakefield Press, Kent Town, S.A., 1995.

This book provides information about the geographic origins, history, cultural traditions and community activities of 97 groups who identify themselves by their ethnic origins.

The Greatest Joy of All The Story of Dr. Cyril Checchi.
By Paul McLoughlin, publ. Bob Meredith, Willaura, Victoria, 1995. \$20.00 incl. p&p.

See Book Review on page 28.

Societa' Isole Eolie Melbourne 1925-1995
Commemorative report of the history and activities of the *Societa' Mutuo Soccorso Isole Eolie* during its 70 years of operation.

Italians in New South Wales: Manuscript Guide No.17.
Compiled by James Andrighetti, State Library of

NSW Press, Sydney, 1995. \$20 including p&p.
A guide to the private archives collected through The Italians in NSW Project, a joint venture of the State Library of NSW and the Italian Historical Society (NSW).

Coming South: Victorian Archives of Immigration 1839-1923. A Guide.
Published by the Public Record Office, Arts Victoria, Melbourne, 1995. \$9.00 plus p&p.

Primarily designed for the family historian, this guide is also useful for those researching other aspects of immigration. The guide describes records between 1839 and 1923. It outlines the government's role in immigration and explains the records needed to be kept to document these activities.

Eaglehawk and District Pioneer Register 1850-1880, Vol. 1 - A, B, & C.
By Annette O'Donohue and Bev Hanson.
Published by the authors, 1995. \$37.00 plus p&p.

The register, in alphabetical surname order of the pioneer, contains information on over 1800 families who were resident in Eaglehawk and district between 1850 and 1880.

Congratulations to Sally Morrison for winning the prestigious National Book Council "Banjo" Award for Fiction for her novel *Mad Meg*.

An article on this book written by the author was published in the March 1995 issue of this *Journal*.

I.H.S. Journal - Guidelines for Contributors

1. The Journal of the Italian Historical 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 IHS Journal is published twice yearly. The deadline dates for articles for each issue are:
 - June issue - 30th April.
 - December issue - 30th 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 IHS 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.

