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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:

*In post-war Italy sewing classes were an important part of a young woman's training for her future as a wife and mother. Here a group of young women from Varapodio, Calabria, are shown with their sewing teacher and some examples of their work. This and other images and objects will feature in the forthcoming exhibition **A Box Full of Promises: Preparing for a Family**. Turn to page 30 for further details on this project.*

CONTENTS

Count Giovanni Pullè: A Legacy of Italian Immigration in Australian History	Page 4
Paolo Dattari, Jewellery and the Italian Court at the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880-81	13
The De Bolfo Brothers	16
Emigrant Ships	28
News	
• A Box Full of Promises: Preparing for a Family	30
• Santospirito Collection: A multi-disciplinary research project	30
• Agreement with Melbourne University	31
Family History	32
• Giuseppe and Maria Scala, Angelo and Caterina Cereseto	
• Dominiko Sonsee	
• Antonio Quadri	
• Augustine Salvatoria Zanoni	
• Giacomo Antonio Pedrazzi	
• Edgar Raffaele Arpante	
• Cesare Vagarini	
Publications Received	34

Count Giovanni Pullè: A Legacy of Italian Immigration in Australian History¹

by Catherine Dewhirst

Catherine Dewhirst is a PhD student at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and a recipient of a postgraduate scholarship from the School of Humanities, QUT. Her thesis explores the maintenance, transformation and transferral of symbolic and cultural identity intergenerationally within a family of Italian migrant background. It also traces how family histories orient the views and approaches of people to their worlds and realities, reflecting the development of ethnic identity and migration history in Australia. She has recently been awarded a scholarship by the Italian Government, Ministero Affari Esteri, to fund part of her research project in Italy in 1998.

Italian migration to Australia during the late nineteenth century brought men of great distinction, vision and talent, with a particular energy and inspiration inclined towards the formation of the Australian nation.² However, one man, whose name and contribution seems to remain lost in Italian-Australian history, is that of count Giovanni Pullè.³



Count Giovanni Pullè

Count Giovanni Pullè's life reflected that of a man who would be termed an ethnic 'elite'⁴ today. He was in close contact with the Italian community and general community issues, and an immigrant who, like many others of his time, took pride in contributing to the development of Australia.⁵ His belief in the prosperous future of the Australian nation went hand in hand with

his devotion to his Italian heritage. This is apparent through the many ventures he managed and financed, the risks he took and what we have left of his 'voice' through his editorial work and his descendants' memories. His unshakable, bi-cultural approach to work, community and family life may also be interpreted as being influenced by his own particular family heritage.

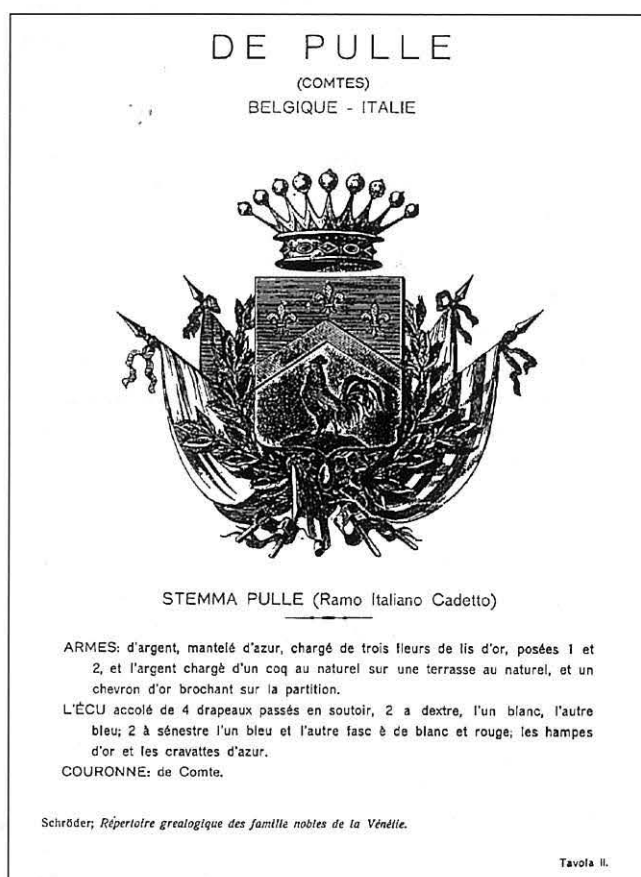
The Pullè Family Ancestry

Rudolph Bell⁶ has suggested that the continuity of the family is historically a critical theme for Italian families and that survival of the family was assured by continuance of the family name, generation after generation. Count Giovanni Pullè's emigration from Modena to Brisbane in 1876 was no exception in his family's recorded history. The Pullè family tree⁷ not only reveals that count Giovanni Pullè was born into a family of centuries-old distinction with a history of migration, but that he personally bore the particular tradition of the Pullè's ancestral achievements through his name, 'Giovanni': 'in the successive appearance of [Pullè's], the name Giacomo and those of Giovanni, Felice and Lorenzo, are frequently repeated from grandfather to grandson, showing the line of descent and uniqueness of the Pullè family in Belgium'.⁸

The Pullè family tree provides an elaborate collection of memories of the Pullè's in documents and chronicles in the Low Lands region [Belgium] from 1210 to 1600. The Pullè's owned castles and held jurisdiction during this period, and today there are two villages, situated in the Santhoven district, named after the Pullè's and dating back to the remotest period of antiquity. The year 1280 features a 'Giovanni Pullè' as proctor to Handcourt College in Paris, where he commemorated the foundation of the college, and it is from this Pullè ancestor that the tradition

of repeated names from grandfather to grandson seems first to occur.

The Pullè family's noble status is mirrored from the family crest. The rooster is a 'bird of battle' and a 'symbol of soldierly courage and religious aspirations'.⁹ The Pullè motto states: 'Pol en vaillance est lion' – the courageous cock is as fierce as the lion. Where the symbol of the lion is representative of England, the rooster is traceable back to the Gauls.¹⁰ In medieval times, two Pullè brothers were noted in a letter from St Joan of Arc for their valiant efforts in defending France from invasions during the Loire battle of 1429. This appears to have resulted in the cloaking of the Pullè family crest by King Charles of France with the colour of dark blue and the three golden lilies. The crest is topped with the crown of the count.



Pullè Family Crest

In 1567, during the Spanish wars and the Inquisition under Philip II of Spain, Andrea Poullè¹¹, Magistrate of Valenciennes, was beheaded – an act generally reserved only for nobility¹² – for his Calvinist beliefs. Andrea's sons, Giovanni and Nicola fled to Verona in 1580, bringing with them silk worms and mulberry trees and becoming successful entrepreneurs:

they were noted amongst the Veronese patriicians. It was sometime after their immigration that the family converted to Catholicism. This 'Giovanni Pullè' was given the title of count 'with rights of descent' in 1660 by Carlo II, Duke of Mantua; the noble title was again confirmed in 1787 by the superintendents of the City of Verona and the Doge Alvise Mocenigo II; and again in 1821 by the Sovereign Resolution in the Lombardo-Veneto Kingdom. The Pullè family's involvement with the court of the Dukes of Modena in the 1700s and 1800s is marked by their participation in various roles as pages, cadets, guards of honour and captains serving under Francesco III, Ercole III, Francesco IV and Francesco V, and including Carlo Augusto Pullè – father of count Giovanni Pullè.

Count Giovanni Pullè

Count Giovanni Battista Attanasio Pullè was born in Modena in 1854 and left Italy, at the age of 22, during a revolutionary period in Italy's modern history. He had grown up during the tumultuous years of the Risorgimento, the Austro-Prussian-Italian war, the Franco-Prussian war, debate on Church and State, the Paris Commune, and enormous political, economic and social upheaval. The effects of these events would have surrounded him in his family life. He inherited the 'Pullè family identity' – an identity fuelled by the family's distinguished past¹³ – and was a contributor to its future interpretation in Australia over a century later among his descendants.

Poverty and high unemployment were the major factors contributing to consistent waves of emigration from Modena and the surrounding region in the late 1800s and early 1900s.¹⁴ However, Modena was also a city renowned for its political volatility during the Risorgimento and was influenced by the socialist and anarchist movements of the 1860s and 1870s¹⁵. Many fled as political refugees¹⁶. About 285 Modenese are recorded as having emigrated between 1876 and 1878.¹⁷

From the Australian colonial perspective, from about 1873, John Glyn, the then emigration agent appointed for Italy, advertised the benefits of emigration to New Zealand and Queensland.¹⁸ Emigration was also encouraged in Italy by both the Melbourne Italian Consulate and a 'long term Italian resident of Queensland'.¹⁹ Bishop Quinn's vision for Queensland's progress also made an impact on the lives of certain Italian

men who migrated to Australia during this period.²⁰ Quinn's evident 'love for things Italian' and his inclusion of tolerance and cultural pluralism as a part of his outlook for his role in Brisbane²¹ manifested in his inviting notable Italians to Queensland in the early 1870s. In 1876, William Kirchner resumed his role as the official emigration agent for Queensland on the European continent and supervised the dispatch of two German ships, the *Reichstag* and the *Lammerschlagen* from Hamburg to Australia, also in that year.²²

Count Giovanni Pullè was one of the many emigrants selectively recruited by Queensland's emigration agent for Germany and Southern Europe.²³ Among 28 compatriots and 213 other passengers, he sailed a 115 day journey on the *Reichstag* from Hamburg on 13 June 1876 and arrived in Brisbane on 6 October 1876.²⁴ At this time there were somewhere between 88 (1871) and 250 (1881) Italians in Queensland.²⁵

Colonial Queensland

It is important to note the somewhat resistant attitude of the British-Australian colonial officials towards Continental European immigration during this period. The preference tended to be reserved for British migration. For instance, Yvonne McLay states that in the 1860s Bishop Quinn had hoped to secure the inclusion of Italy in his Queensland Immigration Society because, up until then, 'the hostility of the government had precluded much encouragement of Italian migrants'.²⁶ There had also been a lull in foreign emigration to Queensland after 1874 in spite of an arrangement for a remaining 1,625 adult emigrants made between the then Agent General, Mr Daintree, and the German shipping company of Mr Sloman, as pointed out by Mr Kirchner in a letter on 13 April 1876 to the Colonial Secretary.²⁷ On 15 September 1876, the Agent General, Mr Macalister, wrote to the Colonial Secretary about the matter of resuming migration from Europe, stating that:

... if the Government of Queensland are prepared to do so, a very large number of persons and families consisting of French, Germans, Danes and others may be obtained. I cannot see, however, that I should be certified in extending Emigration of a continental character beyond that which for many years has had existed [in] the sending out of approved German Emigrants... I would, however, express an opinion that in no case should

Continental Emigrants be placed in a better position than those forwarded from Great Britain and Ireland.²⁸

The main concern with Italian migrants seems to have been the capacity for them to find work, a difficulty not presumed likely for British emigrants, as clearly stated in the 1874 Annual Report of the Agent General for Emigration to Queensland.²⁹ However, one area where much growth was needed was the Survey Office of the Queensland Lands Department. As Mary Woolcock remarks: 'Queenslanders were primarily concerned with material progress. The land waited to be explored and exploited'.³⁰ Before Queensland came into its own as a separate colony, the Survey Department of New South Wales had been responsible for the effective development of the Crown Lands right along the east coast. In a letter to Sir John S. Pakington, Duke of Newcastle in London, the New South Wales Governor General, Sir Charles Fitzroy, describes the 'insurmountable difficulties' and the need for men to assist in the field operation of the colony's Survey Department.³¹ He goes on to suggest that:

the Land and Emigration Commissioners should be requested to send out such numbers of young unmarried men as will supply the deficiency, and that these men should come out under and engagement to survive in the Survey Department for a period of not less than two years after their arrival in the colony.³²

In all, thirty men were requested, but only twenty-three responded to the Colonial Land and Emigration Office advertisements in Britain several months later. In an enclosure with the Duke's dispatch, Britain's Land and Emigration Commissioners, Messrs Murdoch and Wood, indicated that the numbers required for the colony were low 'owing partly to the improved rates of wages in this country, and partly to their expectation that they would obtain in Australia better remuneration than that which has been offered them for the present service'.³³ It is likely, then, that this predicament may have instigated action in seeking strong and skilled labour further abroad than Britain in the ensuing years.

Taking over from the explorers, the surveyors and staff of the Survey Office in Queensland had a multitude of functions.³⁴ 'Pressure of settlement in the 1860s and 1870s had involved the

Lands Department in a heavy program of surveying new land, arranging for the sale of Crown lands, particularly in the towns and cities, and managing all the business connected with selections'.³⁵ Inherent in the successful progress of Queensland's free settlement was the sale of Crown Lands, in which the talents of Lithographic Draftsmen were instrumental.

Pullè and Queensland's Survey Office

Count Giovanni Pullè commenced work as a Lithographic Draftsman for the Survey Office of the Queensland Lands Department on the 1 January 1877, two months after his arrival in Brisbane. His employment lasted for a period of five years and nine months before his resignation on the 1 October 1882. His initial annual salary was £100, but this increased to £150 after his application for a salary rise eleven months later. While Pullè's commitment and expertise in this

line of work were no doubt unquestionable³⁶, and although his annual salary was healthy, he was to be confronted with resistance to his acceptance as an 'equal'. His letter of the 27 February 1882 to the Acting Surveyor General, William Alcock Tully, in which he requested a review of his proposal for a salary increase, indicates an injustice occurring at his expense:

... what I more feelingly and regretfully observed, it was to see my name on the Staff List gradually [sic] sink to the bottom, and several Gentlemen that came after me, appointed above me, and two junior officers actually passed over my head. Not that I in any way wish to depreciate their claims, but that I consider mine to be equal.³⁷

Regarding Pullè's salary, Queensland's Blue Books detail the oversight that Pullè had both encountered and requested to be reviewed, through a line of staff members from 1878 to 1882:

SALARIES PER ANNUM

Staff Member	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882
A. Westbrook Ham	£125	£150	£150	£175	£200
J. William Brown	£125	£150	£150	£175	£200
Arnold Vivian Thomas	£150	£150	£150	£150	£175
G. Pullè	£150	£150	£150	£150	£150
William Munro	—	—	—	—	£150
Charles F. Parkinson	—	—	—	—	£150
James R.L. Zillman	—	—	—	—	£175

Table 1: Queensland Blue Books 1878-1882: Queensland State Archives

The above table shows that Pullè's salary had not been revised between 1878 and 1882, unlike those of his colleagues. Indeed, while no mention of racial discord is made in this correspondence between him and Mr Tully, no other reasons were given to sufficiently meet any appreciation of the situation, therefore urging Pullè to submit his resignation in 1882 'to enable me [Giovanni Pullè] to better my position otherwise'.³⁸

It is important to bear in mind that count Giovanni Pullè was a man who saw himself as a British Subject, having sworn his allegiance on the 1 July 1878, and having married a local born woman of Irish/Scottish heritage, Eliza Sarah McFarlane, on 19 November 1879, fathering two daughters by the time of his resignation from the

Survey Office. In fact, his second application for promotion in February 1882, came at a time when his wife was pregnant with their second child. This letter reveals his concern as being the sole income earner of the family, by his stating: 'I may not have the right to state that I have a family to support'.³⁹ It would appear that he saw no difference in himself, his skills and his loyalty to the Survey Office of the Lands Department, as to those of his colleagues.

While Pullè was already a member of the *Società dei Naturalisti* before arriving in Queensland – thus suggesting he had at least begun the study of surveying in Italy – the non-recognition he received for promotion may in part be due to the changes in surveyor regulations.⁴⁰ The history of

the procurement of surveyors through immigration and their conditions of employment being required for at least two years, may have also contributed to the lack of support for Pullè's promotion. However, Pullè may have not hidden the fact that he was interested in his fellow Italians. Not long after arriving, and during his employment with the Survey Office, he took an active role in the improvement of conditions for Italian emigrants – a theme to be reflected throughout his life – as the treasurer for the *Società di Patronato e Mutuo Soccorso tra gli Italiani nel Queensland*.⁴¹

Pullè's Entrepreneurial Pursuits

After resigning from the Survey Office, count Giovanni Pullè then did what many Italian immigrants did as soon as possible after arrival due to this 'blocked mobility'⁴²: he moved into small business, launching his new career by a return to Modena in 1883 to invite investment in an import-export proposal.⁴³ This move is a recognised phenomenon of Italian migrants during this period of history. For example, in Canada between 1885 and 1915, many Italian migrants were regarded as 'ethnic entrepreneurs'⁴⁴; and in Argentina, from about 1898 to 1911, they were seen as the 'self-made men'.⁴⁵ They were successful because they 'formed part of the elite of the colony by virtue of the trust they commanded from the grass roots, and of the intermediary role they played between the immigrants and the goods and services they purveyed'⁴⁶. In Australia, many Italian migrants also reacted to what some studies have found to have been an environment 'characterised by friction and distrust'⁴⁷. As Jock Collins suggests: 'Italians move into small business because of discrimination, downward social mobility or unacceptable experiences in the Australian labour market as wage labourers'⁴⁸.

In 1885 count Giovanni Pullè established an Italian-Australian commercial company, G. Pullè & Co, managing the importation of Italian commodities, such as small goods and furniture, and the exportation of wool, tallow and hides⁴⁹. In 1887 he branched out as a coffee shop proprietor of the Coffee Palace Restaurant in Brisbane city⁵⁰. Two years later he moved into the new industry of wine and brandy distilling with the opening of the Fairfield Wine and Distillery Co. for a period of seven years, having gained a special amendment bill to the Distilleries Act of 1849 to allow more flexibility in licensing⁵¹. He

also specialised in rope manufacturing in 1892.⁵² In 1896, count Giovanni Pullè became the manager of both the Southern Queensland Meat Exports Co. Ltd. in Bulimba and of the Acme Meat Preserving Company in South Brisbane until the turn of the century, when he moved his family and his company (producing tinned fruit and meat preserves⁵³) to Sydney. Five years later, Pullè changed the name of his company to the Excelsior Macaroni Company, specialising in spaghetti-making, as a family business⁵⁴. The company was managed by his children after his death on 4 November 1920, eventually closing in the 1950s when still under the management of his youngest son, count Guido Pullè. Count Guido Pullè managed the factory towards the end under the name of Roma Spaghetti.



Excelsior Macaroni Company

In Sydney, count Giovanni Pullè continued his interest in the affairs of Italian immigrants⁵⁵. He and Dr Quinto Ercole (an Italian doctor and socialist from Teramo) established Australia's first bi-lingual Italian newspaper, *L'Italo-Australiano* (1905-1909)⁵⁶, as co-editors. The purpose of the newspaper was to promote the 'furtherance of friendly commercial reunions to the Commonwealth of Australia and the kingdom of Italy'⁵⁷, but Pullè and Ercole also reported widely on issues of immigration. For example, one of the ventures they researched and campaigned for was the establishment of an Italian agricultural immigration project to assist in the development of Australia's resources and population increase⁵⁸. Four years after the folding of *L'Italo-Australiano*, Pullè set up *Oceania* (1913-1915), along with his son-in-law, Antonio Folli, and with A.P. Rinoldi⁵⁹. The aim of this second bi-lingual Italian newspaper was both educational and a

erence relevant to this family's self perception and identity, as well as the symbolic scope that is present among the descendants of count Giovanni Pullè in Australia today. Many of the memories of Pullè's Gordon Street home at Brighton-le-Sands, where he and his family lived and ran the Excelsior Macaroni Company, are still clear for both third and fourth generation descendants. They frequently visited Pullè's children (their aunts and uncles) during their own years growing up, from the 1920s to the 1950s. There were also voyages back to the family in Italy by some second and third generations. (This continued to be a practice by some fourth and fifth generations). The way of life that was

embraced during count Giovanni Pullè's lifetime also appears to have been reflected decades later in the lives of his grandchildren, and their children and grandchildren, whom he knew only too briefly or never met at all. Although of mixed ancestry, today, many Pullè descendants feel more of an 'Italian' heritage than anything else. An inquiry into the perceptions of 'Italianness' and the family identity, as transmitted through the stories, memories and relationships of Pullè's descendants, as a possible legacy of his life, identity, influence and family history, today provides us with new insights into Australia's migration history and Italo relations⁶⁸.

Son/Daughter	Date Of Birth	Place of Birth
Ethel Virginia Maria	12 May 1881	Goodna, Qld
Margarita	1 August 1882	Bellavista Terrace, Toowonga, Qld
Leopoldo Charles Albert	27 December 1884	Florence Cottage, Breakfast Creek, Qld
Ivy Muriel Augusta	12 January 1887	Kent Street, The Valley, Qld
Irene Antoinetta	29 April 1889	Victoria Street, Fairfield (Distillery) Qld
Mario Livingstone Clemente	1 July 1891	Victoria Street, Fairfield (Distillery) Qld
Guido Giovanni Battista	19 June 1895	Brisbane, Qld

Table 2: By 1895 Giovanni and Sarah Pullè had had seven children.

Notes

¹ I am thankful for the generous assistance of Professor Cameron Hazlehurst in preparing this article. I am also grateful to Yvonne Pullè, Yolanda Pullè-Sampson, Italia (Pullè) Dewhirst and John Charker Pullè for background information and oral history on the Pullès.

² See Cecilia, T. (1987), *We Didn't Arrive Yesterday*, Furey, M. (trans), Scalabrians, Red Cliff: The Sunnyland Press, (2nd edn); Cresciani, G. (1985), *The Italians*, ABC; Marletta, C. (1994), *Pionieri Italiani: Presenza Italiana nel Queensland nell'800*, Brisbane: Eureka Publications; Pascoe, R. (1987), *Buongiorno Australia: Our Italian Heritage*, Melbourne: Greenhouse Publications.

³ Pullè is mentioned for his editorial work on *L'Italo Australiano and Oceania* by Bosi, P. (1985), 'La Stampa Italo-Australiano', *Australia ieri, oggi, domani, Annuario*, Vol.1, pp.277-292; Cecilia op. cit.; Gilson, M. and Zubrzycki, J. (1967), *The Foreign-Language Press in Australia 1848-1964*, Canberra: Australian National University Press; Cecilia op.cit. has noted him for his work in the food industry.

⁴ Jupp, J. (1989), 'The Ethnic Composition of Australian Elites', in Jupp, J. (ed), *The Challenge of Diversity*, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services Press, pp.33-43

⁵ Birrell, R. (1995), *A Nation of Our Own*, Melbourne: Longman, pp.84-85; Price, C. (1991), 'Environment, Aborigines, Nationalism, Ethnic Origins and Intermixture', in Price, C.A. (ed), *Australian National*

Identity, Canberra: ANU Printing Service for the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, p.4

⁶ Bell, R. (1979), *Fate and Honor, Family and Village*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp.67-68

⁷ The history of the Pullè family in Europe is contained in the Italian Pullè family tree, which was compiled by count Giovanni Pullè's youngest brother count Felice Pullè: Pullè, count Felice (1931), *Pullè (1210-1931)*, Riccione: Topografia Moderna. It was a gift from count Felice Pullè to Yolanda Pullè Sampson when she visited Italy with her husband after World War II. Yolanda is count Giovanni Pullè's granddaughter. This publication draws on a number of diverse investigations and historical documents, including two genealogies of the Pullè family: Carinelli, Carlo, Can.co Veronese, (1854), *La Verità ecc.*, Verona: Biblioteca Com. di Verona; as well as Eleanora Selmi di Bologna's work with the *Annuario della Nobiltà Italiana 1879* (1978), Pisa: Edizione S. Maccario and the *Calendario d'Oro* (1899), Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto Araldico Italiano, Anno XI. Generally the pursuit of genealogies amongst the nobility in Europe was seen as an ancient tradition (see Dewald, J. (1996), *The European Nobility, 1400-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.21). Chronicles of families were often made by subscription, being sold to family members, keeping both the genealogists employed and the families entertained. Availability of documentation provides a greater amount of research of noble families. The Pullè family is one of the families listed as included in the Litta series on the Italian nobility (see Litta, P.

- (1876), *Famiglie Celebri Italiane*, Vol.11, Presso Paolo Emilio Giusti, Stampatore, Librajo e Fonditore). However, there is no section devoted to the Pullè family in volume 11 or any of the previous volumes. It can only be assumed that the Pullès were in the process of having their genealogy submitted.
- ⁸ Pullè op.cit., p.13 (my translation)
- ⁹ Cadogan Rothery, G. ([1915] 1995), *Concise Encyclopedia of Heraldry*, London: Senate, p.54.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.: pp.35 and 54.
- ¹¹ Derivation of the Pullè name had occurred in many instances since 1210.
- ¹² Dewald op.cit., p.29
- ¹³ Pullè's father had lead a distinguished military career, commencing with the army of Francesco IV and later in the Great Italian Army, as a major, as well as in many regional battles for independence. On his retirement, he founded two societies for the assistance of war veterans and released prisoners. Pullè's two elder brothers (Guilo and Francesco) joined the Garibaldini and went on to take up senior roles in civic and intellectual life.
- ¹⁴ Azzi, G. (1970), *Modena 1859-1898*, Modena: S.T.E.M. Mucchi, p.99; Muzzioli, G. (1993), *Storia delle Città Italiane*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, p.126
- ¹⁵ Azzi op.cit.
- ¹⁶ Clark, M. (1986), *Modern Italy: 1871-1982*, London: Longman, (2nd edn), p.75
- ¹⁷ Muzzioli op.cit., p.130
- ¹⁸ Cecilia op.cit., pp.59-60
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Bishop Quinn was the instrumental force behind the migrations of the Antonio Benvenuti and his family, Ferdinando Papi and several other famous Italians, as indicated in the publication, *Presenza Italiana nel Queensland nell'800*.
- ²¹ McLay, Y.M. (1979), *James Quinn: First Catholic Bishop of Brisbane*, Armadale, Vic.: National library of Australia, pp.115, 121, 158-160.
- ²² Queensland State Archives (QSA): COL/79A (1876): 1248 and 1443.
- ²³ Careful selection was one of the official criteria in the dispatching of German ships in 1876; QSA: COL/79A (1876): 997.
- ²⁴ QSA: COL/79A (1876): 2008.
- ²⁵ Borrie, W.D. (1954), *Italians and Germans in Australia*, Melbourne: Angus and Robertson, p.51. Also Charles Price records that between 1880 and 1940 in Australia there were 55 Italian male settlers from the region of Emilia Romagna, in a total of 19,530 settlers: see Price, C. (1963), *Southern Europeans in Australia*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p.18.
- ²⁶ McLay op.cit.: 161.
- ²⁷ This is made clear by Mr Kirchner, the former 'Emigration Agent for Queensland on the Continent of Europe', in his letter; QSA: COL/79; 48/346 (1876): 1443.
- ²⁸ QSA: COL/79A; 48/346A (1876): 2853.
- ²⁹ QSA: COL/78A; 48/345A (1876): 2300.
- ³⁰ Woolcock, H. (1986), *Rights of Passage: Emigration to Australia in the Nineteenth Century*, London and New York: Tavistock, p.xiv.
- ³¹ John Oxley Library Archives (JOLA), Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) (1854), *Further Papers Relative to Crown Lands in the Australian Colonies*, Despatch Letters, 5 April 1853, No.55, p.7.
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ JOLA, HMSO (1854), *Further Papers Relative to Crown Lands in the Australian Colonies*, Despatch Letters, 29 December 1853, No.152, p.20.
- ³⁴ Reilly, S.E. (1970), *The Profession of Surveying in Queensland*, Queensland Division: Institution of Surveyors, p.14.
- ³⁵ QSA (1981), *Guide to the Records of the Crown Lands Office 1842-1875 and the Crown Lands Commissioners' Offices 1842-ca. 1900*, p.5
- ³⁶ Letters written by count Giovanni Pullè to the Surveyor General for a second promotion in 1882, indicate that he had been led to believe that his service to the Survey Office had always met with the approval of his superiors and of the department. When Pullè initially wrote to the Surveyor General requesting a raise in salary and an enquiry into the matter of his being overlooked for promotion, the response noted on his letter as 'When I have the opportunity I shall recognise Mr Pullè's claims' (dated 2/3/1882): see QSA: SUR/A (1882): 1316. Pullè wrote another two letters that year, in May and in August, to remind the Surveyor General of his request with no response recorded on his letters, as was usually the case in such employment matters: see QSA : SUR/A (1882): 2990 and 6032, respectively. Finally, when Pullè handed in his resignation in a letter dated 15 September 1882, the Surveyor General's response, as noted on his letter, was: 'I am sorry to lose the services of Mr Pullè and should like to see him receive a higher recompense for his services I can do no more than I have done on his behalf' (dated 27/9/1882): see QSA: SUR/A (1882): 6822.
- ³⁶ QSA: SUR/A (1882): 1316.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ QSA: SUR/A (1882): 6822.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ In 1876 the Surveyor General, William Alcock Tully, introduced the new rules of a two year pre-examination experience and original field book and plan. These rules replaced the previous 1868 Act of Parliament which allowed for a Licensed Surveyor to be 'any person certified as competent by the Surveyor General' under the guidelines of the Crown Lands Alienation Act's Surveyors' qualifications (see Reilly op.cit., pp.111-112).
- ⁴¹ Pullè attended a meeting at the School of Arts hotel in Brisbane on 27 July 1877, along with 36 other Italian 'nationals' to establish the society for the protection and assistance of Italian immigrants (*The Queenslander*, 4 August 1877, p.7). Research by historian Dr Don Dignan shows that the purpose of this society was 'to aid all desiring persons of Italian nationality by giving advice, procuring occupation, making loans or giving monetary assistance (unpublished work by Dr Dignan). Dr Dignan states that the society met once a month and lasted just less than four years. In addition, according to Dr Dignan's research, Pullè also founded a 'short-lived Italian fraternal society', the 'Lega Stella d'Italiani' (unpublished work by Dr Dignan).
- ⁴² Collins, J. (1992), 'Cappuccino capitalism: Italian immigrations and Australian businesses', in Castles, S. et al. (eds), *Australia's Italians*, North Sydney: Allen and Unwin, p.84; cf Borrie op.cit., pp.62-63.
- ⁴³ Pullè published a booklet entitled *L'Australia: Cenni Storico Statistico*, Modena, Moneti e Namias 1883. This booklet is held by certain members of the family as well as the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Biblioteca Universitaria Bologna (A.III.Caps.CXLII.43).
- ⁴⁴ Zucchi, J. (1988), *Italians in Toronto*, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, p.101.
- ⁴⁵ Scarzanella, E. (1983), 'L'Industria Argentina e gli

Immigrati Italiani' in Bezza, B. (ed), *Gli Italiani Fuori d'Italia*, Roma-Bari: Fanco Angeli Editore, p.590

⁴⁶ Zucchi op.cit.

⁴⁷ Collins op.cit., p.74.

⁴⁸ ibid, p.84.

⁴⁹ See the Queensland Post Office Directory (QPOD) 1885-1886, p.275, and the advertisements in this directory.

⁵⁰ See the QPOD 1886-1887, p.267.

⁵¹ On the company, see the QPOD 1889, p.526. On the special act of parliament, see the *Gazette*, 27 October 1887, pp.1272-1273, 28 October, p.1297, and 1 November 1887, p.1325, documenting the parliamentary debate on this issue, as well as *The Queenslander*, 15 October 1887, p. 631, and 4 February 1888, p. 191.

⁵² See the QPOD 1892-1893, p.645.

⁵³ Cecilia op. cit., p. 132.

⁵⁴ During the late 1800s we can speculate that count Giovanni Pullè's move into the food industry may have been influenced by his father-in-law, Daniel MacFarlane, who was a butcher in Goodna, and his friend Giovacomo Maccheroni who established a spaghetti factory at Indooroopilly in about 1884 – see Marletta op. cit.; Dr Dignan has also confirmed that Maccheroni subscribed to Pullè's *L'Italo Australiano* and was also a foundation member of Pullè's *Lega Stella d'Italia*, so were probably friends (unpublished work by Don Dignan).

⁵⁵ In approximately 1909, for example, Pullè was also a delegate among other notable Italians, including Dr Marano, the Consul in Sydney, and Dr Fiaschi, in welcoming the Melbourne Consul-General, Commendatore Mercatelli, to Sydney. This is made apparent in an article attached to a marketing report from the Sydney Consul to the Ministero Affari Esteri in Genoa, dated 29 November 1909: see Italian Historical Society Consular Archives, Melbourne.

⁵⁶ No doubt Pullè and Ercole had been influenced by the preceding attempts of fervent Italians to connect the Italian community through the media – in particular, the original *L'Italo-Australiano*, edited by Francesco Sceusa in 1885, but also *Uniamoci*, by Giuseppe Prampolini in 1903.

⁵⁷ *L'Italo Australiano* 11 March 1905.

⁵⁸ *L'talo Australiano* 5 August 1905.

⁵⁹ It would appear from photographs in both papers that count Giovanni Pullè was the chief editor. See *L'Italo Australiano* 21 December 1907 and *Oceania* 15 August 1914.

⁶⁰ *Oceania* 12 July 1913.

⁶¹ Yvonne Pullè (great granddaughter of count Giovanni Pullè) has stated that one of the main aims of *Oceania* was: 'to oppose the Bill before the W.A. Parliament, pushed by those unions seeking to exclude foreign labour' (unpublished dissertation by Yvonne Pullè).

⁶² Segalen, M. (1996), *Historical Anthropology of the Family*, Whitehouse, J.C. and Mathews, S. (trans), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.412

⁶³ Bell op.cit., p.191

⁶⁴ ibid, p.193

⁶⁵ ibid, p.197

⁶⁶ I am grateful for the information, oral histories and memories expressed in my interviews with Gilda Benvenuti, Kate Maccheroni Collins, Adrian and Susan Papi, Greg Tenni and Dr Max Quanchi. Their ancestors and years of arrival are as follows: Antonio Benvenuti (1820-1896) arrived in Queensland in 1871 with his wife, Catherine Barnet and three sons, Luigi, Victor and Italo; Giovacchino Maccheroni (1855-1929) arrived in Queensland in 1877; Ferdinando Papi (1851-1923) arrived

in Queensland in 1871; Giacomo Tenni (1840-1932) arrived in Queensland in 1889 with his son Martin; and Alessandro Quanchi (1841-1905) arrived in Victoria in 1855 with family members Lorenzo and Abbondio.

⁶⁷ Antonio Benvenuti and his sons, count Ferdinando Papi, Giovacchino Maccheroni, Giacomo Tenni and Alessandro Quanchi.

⁶⁸ Margaret Ryan's compilation of the genealogy of and other documentation on the Pullès and their descendants in Australia is of particular assistance in arranging my field-work. Margaret Ryan is married to Boyd Ryan, count Giovanni Pullè's grandson. Her compilation is available in the Mitchell Library in Sydney: see Andrighetti, J. (1995), *Italians in New South Wales: A Guide to the Mitchell Library*, Sydney: State Library of New South Wales.

Paolo Dattari, Jewellery and the Italian Court at the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880-81

by Ruth Dwyer

Ruth Dwyer is a freelance researcher. She has contributed to a number of publications, notably A History of Hawthorn, the suburb in which she lives. The areas of research generally undertaken include work on the non-British in nineteenth century Victoria, and the documentation of silver, jewellery, furniture and dwellings of that period. She also has a particular interest in agricultural and viticultural research using early Victorian records, including material pertaining to the various sections of the Land Acts of the 1860s.

'Almost all Melbourne', not less than ten thousand of them under umbrellas, gathered in anticipation of the laying of the foundation stone of the Royal Exhibition Building in the Carlton Gardens on 19 February 1879. Here would be held Victoria's first International Exhibition. The sun emerged and a fine steamy afternoon set in for the ceremony, performed by His Excellency the Governor, Sir George Bowen. The magnificent Italianate building was to be erected by David Mitchell to the design of the architects Messrs. Reed and Barnes. By the opening of the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880-81 on 1 October 1880 it would be in the full flight of business.¹

Harvest tool and husbandry,
Loom and wheel engin'ry,
Secrets of the sullen mine,
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or fairy fine,
Sunny tokens of the Line,
Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonders out of west and east,
And shapes and hues of Art divine!
All of beauty, all of use,
That one fair planet can produce,
Brought from under every star,
Blown from over every main...²

Countries represented in the various courts [exhibition spaces] were Australia, of which the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland and South Australia exhibited, Great Britain, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Ceylon, Jamaica, Mauritius, Fiji, the Straits Settlements, Japan, the United States of America, other minor exhibitors, and the European nations, Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Italy.³

[To] *The Honorable The Commissioner of Crown Lands Melbourne*

[From] *Italian Consulate* [Ref] No. 1028.
Melbourne 15 November 1880

Sir, I have the honor to inform you that I took the liberty of appointing as Italian Jurors at your splendid International Exhibition four distinguished gentlemen of your Department, i.e. Messieurs Carlo Catani, Ettore Checchi, Paolo Dattari and Pietro Baracchi.

I hope no rule or regulation might prevent them from acting in the above capacity, and I shall feel extremely obliged to you by your causing the same gentlemen to be kindly favoured by your Department with all the facilities that might help them in rendering the Colony their services also in the said capacity and in complying of their best with all the very delicate duties which are attached to.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant

C A de Goyzueta

*Consul and Commissioner General for Italy.*⁴

At this time, Paolo Dattari⁵, an architect and a talented gentleman of many parts, was employed as a draftsman in the office of the Engineer in Chief of The Department of Crown Lands and Survey.⁶ James Cosmo Newbery, Superintendent of Juries and Awards, notified Dattari that he had been nominated as an International Juror for Section XI, Class 24, Goldsmiths' and Silversmiths' Work, and Class 39, Jewellery and Precious Stones.⁷ Dattari was given leave to act in this capacity.⁸ Jurors were selected for their character and known expertise pertinent to the particular Section to be adjudicated.⁹ Surely this was an acknowledgement of his craftsmanship in carrying out the manufacture of the fine silver and gold Italianate casket presented to the Chief Commissioner of Police in Victoria, Captain Frederick Standish, in 1880.¹⁰ His fellow jurors were drawn mostly from the Victorian community, and otherwise were representative of the European countries, Great Britain and the United States of America.¹¹

Undoubtedly one of the courts of major interest to Dattari would have been that of his native Italy. The Italian court contained a display of magnificent Venetian glassware, and delicate mosaics exhibited by the Compagnia Venesia-Murano, majolica and antique porcelain, jewellery, bronzes and other castings, works in alabaster, marble, terra cotta and more. Another section of it exhibited furniture, such as the two carved bookcases from G.B. de Lotto of Venice. Marco dal Todesco sent a suite of inlaid bedroom furniture, and Lenera Brothers, of Turin, showed several cases of silks and damasks for furnishings. The wines and liqueurs of Italy were represented. A large kiosk was erected in the centre of this stand, with wine bottles forming the pillars and roof. Bacchus, sitting astride a cask, quaffing a goblet of wine, crowned the exhibit. The alimentary products such as confectionery, Bologna sausages, hams and cheeses, olive oil and pasta occupied a large area. Perfumery, silks in various stages of manufacture, Venetian laces, and textiles, hosiery, articles of fine straw, and clothing were on display. Cigars, ink, carriage lamps, musical instruments, photographs, even a gondola . . .¹²

Medals and certificates were awarded for exhibits. The prize in the competition for the design of these 1880 medals for the Exhibition was won by Ernst August Altmann, but it was not found possible to carry out their manufacture in Victoria. Instead a form partly taken from the recent Ashantee war medal showing the head of Queen Victoria in profile was used with the words *Melbourne International Exhibition, 1880*. The reverse was a simple design by Harry Stokes, also entered in the competition. The dies were cut by Stokes and Martin of Melbourne. The Melbourne Mint struck the medals, gold, 1 1/2 inches in diameter and to be of the value of £6-10 worth of the metal, silver medals, 2 inches, and bronze, coated over copper, 3 inches. The metals were melted in the improved furnaces with the new fronts made of sand, cement and brickdust. The process of striking the blanks was carried out with the new hydraulic press designed by Mr. George Dint, foreman of machinery at the Mint. Four applications of pressure applied by one man sufficed, with the annealing process being carried out between each application.¹³

The jury of which Dattari was a member would have awarded medals and certificates for the courts of all countries exhibiting in Section XI, Classes 24 and 39. Here we deal only with that of Italy. Those represented in Classes 24 and 39 in

this court, Goldsmiths' and Silversmiths' Work, Jewellery and Precious Stones, were Cavaliere Bendendo and Cavaliere Olivieri of Venice; Stefano Beretta, Francesco Ciapponi & Co., A. Fasoli, Francati & Santamaria, A. Rey, and Pio Siotto of Rome; S. Beretta & Fransone, F.R. Costa, and E. Sivelli of Genoa; T. Bianchini, Giovanni Boncinelli and Sons, A. Folcini, L. Fossi, Mariotti & Fantoni, Arturo Meyer, Oscar Meyer and Eredi Taddei of Florence; A. De Caro, P. Donadio, M. Palomba and R. Petrucci of Naples; Galbiati Brothers of Vercelli; Giojuzza & Giobertini of Palermo; Martino Mayer of Turin; L. Radi, Murano, and Pietro Venturini of Ascoli Piceno. The goldsmiths of Italy have indeed been celebrated for many centuries. At this time they numbered some ninety manufacturies in Milan alone, five hundred goldsmiths with four hundred women and children being engaged in polishing. Of goldsmiths in other areas, Naples recorded eight hundred workers, Genoa had fifty manufacturies, and in the Venetian and Florentine areas a great percentage of the workforce was thus employed.¹⁴ This period of the late nineteenth century heralded the beginning of industrialisation as opposed to the artisan, and a revival of earlier styles, such as Gothic, Renaissance and Etruscan.¹⁵

The Chairman of the Jury, the Rev. Walter Fellows, M. A., reported on behalf of all members indicating that they had taken into account the skill displayed by the goldsmiths, the quality of the materials used, and most importantly, the innovative designs. Also mentioned were the utility of objects and costs involved.¹⁶

No gold medals of the first order of merit were awarded to the Italian artisans exhibiting in these Sections. However two silver of the second order of merit were awarded, one of them to Francati and Santamaria of Rome, [and Paris and Florence], for their gold and silver jewellery. Fronting the avenue [aisle] was a row of show-cases from Francati and Santamaria. One or two of these contained very beautiful filigree work, in imitation of the old Etruscan. In years past, Castellani, 1793-1865, after years of unsuccessful experimentation, had found craftsmen in some of the most sequestered recesses of the Apennines believed to be still practising these ancient techniques, and had brought them out to impart their knowledge to other Italian goldsmiths, particularly in regard to their methods of melting, soldering and wire drawing, as well as enamelling. Still the technique of producing

granulated gold eluded him, but the further research of his sons Alessandro and Augusto enabled the simulation of the process. Of the necklaces, bracelets, brooches and earrings of Francati and Santamaria some claimed special attention. Severely pure in design and very delicate in workmanship, the overlay resembled pollen-dust in its fineness. They also showed cameos. A tiara, necklace, brooch, earrings and bracelets of shell cameo were indeed works of art, the design and materials being in perfect harmony. In one section of the court, a small case was devoted to showing the entire process of cutting a cameo, from the first sketch on the bare piece of shell mounted on a small wooden block so as to steady it. The Queen's Conch shell was the one most favoured by this firm. The outline was then scratched in to be followed by the removal of the outer layers surrounding it. The artist then proceeded using very fine tools, some little larger than an ordinary needle, to work the cameo, using the lowest strata of colour for the ground, the next for the figures and the last for any superficial decoration. The place of honour on a revolving pedestal on their stand was occupied by a cameo representing the triumph of Neptune, the subsidiary decoration being pure white on a delicate pink ground.¹⁷

A silver medal was also awarded to Mariotti and Fantoni for their exquisite mosaic jewellery and the collection of different kinds of stones used in Florentine mosaic, such as malachite, coral, chalcedon, agate, jasper, turquoise, and lapis lazuli. The *Official Record* stated: *None but the hardest stones are used. Every separate piece must be backed by thicker slices of slate or marble to obtain additional strength, and every minute portion must be ground until it exactly corresponds with the pattern previously cut.* They also displayed old Etruscan necklaces, with fine cameos or mosaics inlaid, turquoise ornaments, and specialties in gold and silver including narrow wrought-gold bracelets.¹⁸

No less than eighteen certificates of merit in various orders of achievement were awarded to the exhibitors in these Sections. To name but some, Boncinelli and Figli for their fine work in Florentine mosaic and the specialties in turquoise jewellery, Giojuzza and Giobertini, Petrucci, and Palomba from Torre del Greco, Naples, the centre for the engraving of corals and cameos, for their exhibits of coral, A. De Caro of Naples for his cameos in shells and parure in lava, &c, Martino Mayer of Turin, who exhibited

corals, filigree of Genoa and jewellery in silver, and Sivelli of Genoa for his filigree work were awarded certificates.¹⁹ To quote from a recent catalogue, *Vicenzaoro Australis '90*, an Exhibition of the Finest Italian Gold Jewellery at Georges of Collins Street, Melbourne,

The image of Italy in the world has been always associated with an instinctive love of beauty and with refined taste.

Notes

- ¹ *Argus* 20 Feb. 1879 p.5.
- ² *Argus* 17 Feb. 1879 p.6.
- ³ *Official Record, Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-81*, Mason, Firth & McCutcheon, Melbourne, 1882.
- ⁴ P.R.O.V. V.P.R.S. 619 Unit 13 File 25594 Crown Lands and Survey.
- ⁵ For Dattari, see Ruth Dwyer, 'To Honour a Noted Botanist' in *The Victorian Naturalist*, Vol. 113(4) 1996, Mueller Issue, reprinted in the *Italian Historical Society Journal*, July – December 1996, Volume 4, No. 2, p. 11. Later Dattari was to be transferred to the Victorian Railways Department, commencing on 4 October 1882, again to be employed as a draftsman. He remained here until his services were dispensed with on 11 October 1887. See Public Record Office of Victoria, V.P.R.S. 619 Unit 17 File D15070 for Lands Department material, and Railway Employees C19 Victoria p. 85, State Library of Victoria, also available at the P. R. O. Victoria.
- ⁶ P.R.O.V. V.P.R.S. 619 Unit 19.
- ⁷ P.R.O.V. V.P.R.S. 619 Unit 17.
- ⁸ P.R.O.V. V.P.R.S. 619 Unit 17.
- ⁹ *Official Record*, op. cit., p.3.
- ¹⁰ *The Australian Sketcher*, 28 May 1881, in J. B. Hawkins, *Nineteenth Century Australian Silver*, Antique Collectors' Club, Suffolk, England, 1990, Vol. 1, p. 258.
- ¹¹ *Official Record*, op.cit., p. 83.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. cxix-cxxi.
- ¹³ John P. Sharples, *Medals as Art, Australia and the Meszaros Tradition*, Museum of Victoria and the Royal Australian Mint, 1990; *Argus* 2 April 1881 p.8.
- ¹⁴ *Official Record*, op.cit., pp. 266-267; *Argus* 23 Oct. 1880 p.58.
- ¹⁵ Guido Gregoriotti, *Italian Gold Silver and Jewelry their history and centres*, Alfieri & Lacroix, Milan, 1971, p.8.
- ¹⁶ *Official Record*, op. cit., p. 83.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.266; Harold Newman, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewelry*, Thames and Hudson, New York, 1987, p. 59; Gregoriotti, op. cit., p.8; *Argus* 15 October 1880 p.29; 28 October 1880 p. 35.
- ¹⁸ *Official Record*, op. cit., p. 266; *Argus* 28 October 1880, p. 35.
- ¹⁹ *Official Record*, op. cit., pp. 266-267.

Acknowledgement: I am grateful to Dr. Thomas A. Darragh for drawing to my attention the letter of C.A. de Goyzueta.

The De Bolfo Brothers

The Italian Historical Society recognises the importance of family history as part of its Collections Policy and that the publication of accounts based on documentary and oral history sources are of great interest to many readers of the Journal. This account, written by members of the De Bolfo family, increases our understanding of the post WW1 migration period and clearly illustrates the important role that the family can play in the migrant experience. There are many interesting contrasts and comparisons to be made with the much earlier Pullè family history which is also published in this issue. Tony De Bolfo, grandson of Silvio De Bolfo, is the originator of this history. He is a Sports Journalist with The Herald Sun.

Introduction

by Tony De Bolfo.

Seventy years ago, with The Great Depression looming and the fascist movement steadily gathering momentum, three young men embarked on a long and arduous journey from Italy to the other side of the world. They were the brothers Silvio, Francesco and Iginio De Bolfo, aged 25, 24 and 16 years respectively. They had each resolved that the best course of action was to follow in the footsteps of their oldest brother, Benedetto, who had left for Melbourne six months earlier.

On Friday, 24 November, 1927, the three brothers found themselves standing on Victoria Dock, Melbourne. On the day they were to leave their home, their belongings had been packed into three pine trunks, all hand-made by Silvio, a qualified cabinet maker. A fourth trunk had to be left at home, as it exceeded the ship's size regulations. It still sits in the attic of the old family home in San Nicolò di Comelico, a village in the Alps, not far from the border with Austria, 60km north of Belluno, in the Veneto region.

The day they left home for the port of Genova, their mother Giovanna – who had to fend for the remaining four De Bolfo children – cried as she watched them walk down the road, rightly sensing she would never see her three sons again. *Mum broke down very badly. It was tough, very tough* said Iginio, affectionately known as Nino, now 87 and the only surviving journeyman. *I was like that [crosses fingers] with my Dad and Mum, and I broke down very badly too. The first thing you do when you leave home is say 'I'll see you in 12 months' . . . (but) it was tough, very tough. I was 16 at the time and I cried. I suppose I got to Belluno before I stopped.* At Genoa, the brothers boarded a crude twin screw steamer, the *Re d'Italia*. Five hundred and twenty three pas-



The four brothers De Bolfo. Standing (l. to r.) Iginio and Benedetto. Seated Francesco and Silvio. This photograph, c. 1930-31, was taken with the express purpose of sending back to Nonna De Bolfo as visible proof that her four sons had comfortably settled. It was taken at the back of the local barber shop near the De Bolfo brothers' fish shop at 64 Koornang Road, Carnegie (now a bakery).

sengers, mostly migrants, boarded the ship at the first of the three key Italian ports – Genoa, Naples and Messina: 506 Italians, one Austrian and 16 Greeks. The sea voyage was long and living conditions on board were far from satisfactory. The vessel lumbered its way through the Tyrrhenian and Mediterranean Seas, the Suez Canal, the Red and Arabian Seas, and the Indian

Ocean. It pulled in at the ports of Port Said, Colombo, Fremantle, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney, the final port before the return trip. Only card games on deck helped pass the time of day for passengers, who also had to contend with warm to hot drinking water and rancid food. Little wonder Nino, to this day, regards the whole experience as 'a terrible blot'. *We were lucky because Dad gave Silvio a little bit of money in case of need, which we put to a cabin for four on the ship. But others slept on a floor, about 50 or 60 in each area . . . and they'd sit there all day and play cards. Nothing to do, nothing to do.*

The Herald of 24 November, 1927 reported the arrival of the ship as follows: *Re d'Italia (W. Heale), is due to berth at 19 North Wharf at 4pm today with passengers, including migrants, and general cargo from Southern European ports. She will continue her voyage to Sydney on Monday.*

The circumstances of disembarkation of the three brothers in Melbourne and their making their way out to Bridge Road, Richmond remained clearly etched in the minds of all three. There was no-one to welcome Silvio, Francesco and Nino at their arrival in Melbourne, not even their brother Ben, who was working day and night in a North Melbourne bakery. This was a real worry for the three De Bolfos, who had to contend with the vitriol heaped on them from striking members of the Waterside Workers Union 'Welcoming Committee'. Unbeknown to the brothers, the workers had been out as a result of a long-running dispute with the Commonwealth Steamship Owners' Association, and so they treated incoming migrants as 'scabs', with unbridled scorn. Thankfully a fellow passenger, Giuseppe Bosa, who had previously spent some time in the United States, was on hand. *We came to know Bosa through Silvio, who was in the Italian Grenadier Corps with this fellow and who stuck together with him all the time,* Nino said. *When we got to Victoria Dock they put our three chests out on the wharf. Bosa had been to America and knew a bit of English, so he arranged the hire of a horse and cart, which took us up Flinders Street, along Bridge Road and out to Ozzie's Place. Ozzie's Place was a fish shop and dwelling at 257 Bridge Road, Richmond. It belonged to Osvaldo Mattea, a friend of their brother Ben.*

The story of the life experiences in Australia of

the De Bolfo brothers are here told by their descendants.

Benedetto 'Ben' De Bolfo

written by Joan Miskin, based on the recollections of her father, Nino De Bolfo and added to by Tony De Bolfo.

Ben was the first child of Giovanni Battista De Bolfo and Giovanna (nee Zandonella). After four years of schooling in San Nicolo Ben continued his education with a further two years of private schooling at Dosoleto with signor Massimiliano. During this additional schooling he lived with his maternal grandparents who lived in a house behind the church in Dosoleto. At home, as a young child he delivered bread baked by his mother, who was the town's baker, and assisted his father with the cows, the family's pine trees and pasture. The family was well off compared to most in the valley, having four or five cows. Cows were milked and surplus milk was taken to the co-operative and made into butter, cheese and ricotta with the produce and costs shared amongst those involved in the co-operative. After completing his schooling Ben joined his mother in the bakery. The dough would be prepared in the evening and, at 1 o'clock in the morning, the breadmaking would start. Ben would roll the dough and his mother would portion the dough, weigh the portion rarely would she have to add or remove dough to make the required weight for the bread loaf or roll. The bread was left to rise and then baked in a wood-fired stove.

During the First World War the bakery was taken over by the Italian army and was used day and night to bake bread for the soldiers' barracks set up nearby. The family's front room was used as an officer's mess and the family kitchen was used to prepare meals for the officers. During this time food was scarce, because not much food was grown in the valley. Ben would be handed items from his mother's dowry, such as sheets, and, at great risk, he would travel by night and sleep by day in stables or barns, to barter these goods for maize or beans in an adjoining valley. Originally, there were fifty or sixty pairs of sheets in the dowry – by the end of the war virtually all the sheets were gone. Ben would return home carrying heavy sacks of maize or beans, weighing up to 70 kilograms. By the end of the war all the family's cows had been commandeered and the family obtained milk from another family's cow.

At twenty years of age Ben was conscripted into the army. He and his first cousin Andrea Mattea were assigned to the artillery corp at Belluno. Ben excelled in the army, passing exams and rising to the rank of corporal. He would get his cousin Andrea to test him in preparation for the exams. After spending twelve to fifteen months in the army Ben was offered a career in the army. If he would not consider a career in the army he was offered 1000 Lire to complete another six months' training. At that time, 1000 Lire was a large sum of money – about one-third of the cost of a fare to Australia at the time. He did not pursue the army career. In discussion with his parents it was felt that he was needed to help with the family but the additional money for the extra six months would be of great benefit to the family – so he did the extra training. After his time in the army Ben returned and worked once again in the bakery. He took over the responsibilities from his father for the selection and ordering of the maize and materials required for baking.

With so many family members and only limited resources available, Ben considered migrating to another country. America would have been his first choice but entry was restricted. It was possible to enter Australia if a person could obtain a sponsor. With the sponsorship of someone from Dosoledo who had migrated to Australia, Ben left San Nicolò never to return. Ben arrived in Melbourne on 19 April 1927 on the *Palermo*. When Ben arrived in Australia there was no difficulty in finding work and he was soon working in a bakery in North Melbourne. Ben lived in rented accommodation in different parts of Carlton, mainly around Cardigan Street. He continued to work as a baker until the depression hit and then worked on the wharves for a few years. An injury at work resulted in back surgery and an end to his career on the wharves.

For a short while Ben and his cousin Andrea Mattea, who had migrated ahead of Ben, jointly owned a fish shop in Malvern. It was not well placed so the cousins sold the business and Ben bought his brother Silvio's fish shop in Carnegie. Ben would buy the fish at the market and later bought fish directly from Italian fishermen who fished around Brighton and later at Stony Point. The shop sold fresh and cooked fish as well as potato chips. Initially Ben was assisted by his brother Nino who cooked and served in the shop along with a part-time worker, Mrs Georges, who helped on the busy days – Friday and Saturday.

In 1938 another brother Berto, who arrived in 1934, started working in the shop. The business went from strength to strength with Ben's policy of always having a plentiful supply of good, fresh and reasonably priced fish. During the war years Ben and his brothers were concerned that the business would suffer because of the owners' Italian heritage. This was not the case. Ben became an Australian citizen in July 1949. The shop meant six long days of work for Ben. On Sundays he would go to a private Italian club and play cards. Being a very skilful player, he often won. In 1952 the business was sold and Ben stayed for a few months with his cousin Andrea in Murrumbidgee. He then bought a small property at Werribee. Ben had a house that was as neat as a pin, with a flourishing garden. With a small boat he fished and sent parcels of fish – mainly flounder and flathead – to his brothers by rail. In the late 1950s Ben decided he wanted to work more land so his brothers, Frank and Nino, bought about 110 acres of bushland at Toolangi. Family members in Italy, hearing that he had moved to the 'mountains', sent out thick hand knitted woollen socks, clothing and snow boots to keep him warm during the snow season!

Ben lived simply but never lost his enjoyment of a good thick slice of toast. He would purchase a large high-tin white loaf and bake the bread again as he always maintained that bread in Australia was always undercooked. The toast would always be topped by Amelia's (Nino's wife) with homemade apricot jam. He would make his own Italian-style cheese – small rounds of soft mild cheese – wonderful to eat fresh but even better pan-fried when the cheese was a few days old. Throughout this time Ben was a passionate reader and would attend auctions, buying boxes of books. His favourite book was *East Lynne* written by Mrs Henry Wood.

Although he never had a television he would listen to the radio to keep abreast of the world and farming news. Ben was a man with strong views and opinions who listened to others but rarely took advice. It was rare in a conversation with Ben to get the last word.

Ben never forgot his birthplace. In the late 1960s a chapel was built near Dosoledo commemorating the death of soldiers recently killed by Austrians – the dispute about the Italian-Austrian border did not finish with the World

Wars. Money Ben sent across to Italy was used to pay for the bell in the commemorative chapel. At Toolangi he lived alone and worked tirelessly clearing the land and putting in a simple irrigation system. There were always a few cattle that he fattened and took to market. Ben injured his hand with a chainsaw and the work load was becoming too great. Toolangi was sold and Ben moved to a small property at Newstead in the late 1960s where he had a few cattle and fruit trees and was content to potter about. But there in the 1970s Ben's health started to deteriorate. He developed pneumonia, was found on the floor by the local priest, and subsequently admitted to the Maldon Hospital. At one stage he discharged himself, drove home and ran the car off the road. In any event, Ben recovered, but said he was going to put himself into an old people's home. His nephew John and John's wife Maureen offered him the chance of living in a bungalow to be built by their holiday house at Hoddles Creek, so that Ben's health would be monitored each week. Ben accepted the offer and lived out his final years as he had always lived – by the work ethic, as those younger members of the De Bolfo family only too readily discovered.

In his remaining days at Hoddles Creek, Ben lovingly prepared those famed toasted apricot sandwich slabs on his wood-fire stove for his great nephews Tony, Paul, Greg and Richard – provided of course that they had completed their necessary tasks, such as helping their father and mother clear the land. On one particular occasion, little Richard approached the tiny shed doubling as Ben's kitchen, dining and living room, seeking one of those tasty morsels. With great anticipation, he opened the old door and politely asked Ben for a piece of toast. Ben would gladly have met the youngster's request, providing of course Richard had helped his family with the clearing work. But when Richard, under interrogation, was sheepishly forced to admit he hadn't lifted an arm, Ben promptly bellowed: *Richard! No work, no toast!*

In declining health Ben lived for a short while with his brother Nino and Amelia before requiring hospitalisation. He passed away at St Vincent's Hospital on 28 April, 1980. The cross on Ben's casket was given to his brother Nino and taken back to San Nicolò by his sister-in-law Rita De Bolfo (Berto's wife), who visited Australia in 1995, to be placed in a roadside shrine about one hundred metres from his birthplace.

Silvio De Bolfo – a reflection

by his only son, John De Bolfo.

Silvio was the second of eight children of Giovanni and Giovanna, and was born in San Nicolò on 18 June, 1902. By the time he took those first few steps down the gangway at Victoria Dock with his brothers Frank and Nino, he was 25 years old.

According to Uncle Nino, my father spent four years of schooling at San Nicolò, before undertaking a carpentry apprenticeship with Fontana in Santo Stefano for about three years. Silvio later returned home in preparation for conscription, but was delayed as only one member of the family could be conscripted at a time. A further delay occurred when he underwent surgery on his arm to remove a tumour from the bone, after being taken to a hospital in Padova (Padua) by Aunt Rosina Zandonella, a sister of Silvio's mother. Accordingly, his medical for the conscription was delayed 6 months, and in fact, Frank was conscripted before Silvio. Following his conscription in 1922/3, Silvio worked for the grenadiers in Rome as a carpenter in the National Museum. Because of his carpentry skills Silvio was able to earn about ten times more than a typical conscript. Later, he worked in Bologna for the De Rigo ice chest makers from Costa and after a few years, saw an opportunity for ice chests in Bari, southern Italy. With financial funding from his father and with a partner Francesco Coluzzi from the town of Campolongo, near San Nicolò, business was set up in Bari.



The ice-chest manufacturing business of Silvio De Bolfo and Francesco Coluzzi in Bari, circa 1923-24. From left, Gino Cevo (the accountant) and Francesco Coluzzi, seated is Iginio De Bolfo, Coluzzi's son and a local Bari boy. The next man standing is a relative of Coluzzi, and Silvio De Bolfo. Another accountant from Genova, Gino Rene, is not in the picture.

Silvio came to this country with his certificate of apprenticeship obtained in his early years at Santo Stefano, along with the practical experience of running the business in Bari. A photograph of Silvio and Uncle Nino by the ice chest, as well as Silvio's certificate of apprenticeship, are treasured possessions of the De Bolfo family. Following the brothers' arrival in Melbourne, Silvio and his younger brother Frank bought a fish shop at 64 Koornang Road, Carnegie. It was around 1934 or '35 and by then Silvio had gained the necessary piscatorial knowledge, having worked part-time in the neighbouring fish shops for a few Spaniards – one of whom operated out of Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield. Though he was a qualified cabinet maker, I cannot recall my father plying his craft in those early years in Melbourne.

In 1935 my father met a young girl named Maria Cincotta. She was about 18 at the time and although living with her sister in Elsternwick, regularly caught the tram to Carnegie to take up her work serving customers in the local fruit shop. Co-incidentally, the fruit shop was situated right next door to the De Bolfos' fish shop in Koornang Road.

One particular day Silvio walked in and suggested to the lady running the shop that he would like to visit Maria. The lady relayed the message to Maria with the words, *De Bolfo's coming to see you tonight*. Maria would normally sleep at the shop on Thursday and Friday nights and head home on Saturday mornings. On the Saturday morning after they first met, she was preparing to catch the tram home, only to find Silvio waiting outside in the 'ute'. And while he graciously offered her a lift home, young Maria politely declined. *I'm not allowed to go home with strangers*, she reminded the fishmonger, to which Silvio promptly replied, *Come on, I'm not going to hurt you*. Mum later rejected Dad's offer of a wristwatch, again saying *I can't accept that, I don't know you well enough*. But she took the watch eventually, and when her mother quizzed her about the item, Maria insisted: *I found it in the shop*. Mum and Dad married in that very year, 1935, in Kerang, as Mum's mother and father were share farmers up there. In May of the following year, not long after the newlyweds moved into a new shop and dwelling at 477 Glenhuntly Road, South Caulfield, I was born. With Silvio gone, and Frank gaining work as a stevedore on the Melbourne waterfront, Ben, Nino and another brother Gilberto (Bert) continued to run the shop in Koornang Road.

At some point during The Great Depression, Silvio and Uncle Ben turned their hands to concreting for the De Marco brothers, who were at that time big names in the business. With the depression biting hard and the pair of them desperate for work, they heard that the De Marcos were sponsors of an Italian tug-of-war team. Since Silvio and Ben (and indeed Frank and Igino) all boasted sturdy physiques, they reasoned that if they could crack it for the De Marco tug-of-war team they could ultimately crack it for concreting work.

The De Bolfos subsequently ventured to the site of what later became known as the St Moritz ice skating rink, to participate in the tug-of-war trials. My father did very well as anchorman, Frank was the knot-man and Uncle Ben just about pulled them out onto The Esplanade. Sergio Silvagni's father, Giacomo, was also a member of that team, which ultimately competed in the Victorian championships, but more importantly landed that badly-needed concreting work with De Marcos. Dad was also politically-motivated, was a prominent member of Melbourne's Matteotti Club and was a welcome participant in many of the local anti-fascist rallies. He was never one to back off from a stoush either, especially when it came to racial abuse. He and Frank once happened to be in a pub in South Melbourne when three or four local wharfies gave this little Sicilian bloke a good going over. Frank and Silvio told the wharfies to cut it out, and when they replied *You want some too?* it was on for young and old. But that was the wharfies' mistake, for Silvio whacked each one of them in the breadbasket and Frank footed them in the backside and out the door just as quickly.

On those rare occasions when he wasn't working, Silvio's weekends were taken up playing poker, and for big money too. Uncle Ben, who would remain a bachelor all his life, happened to be a member of a card club in what was the old Eastern Market – now the site of the soon-to-be-demolished Southern Cross Hotel on Exhibition Street. Before Ben became a member there, the pair of them would play cards in an upstairs room behind the 'Florentino' restaurant. I remember at the appointed time on Sunday nights leaving my aunt's place in Smith Street with Mum to go fetch Silvio. Mum used to send me up the flight of stairs and into the room to get him, only to be told, *One more round, one more round*. As a result I'd be backwards and forwards relaying the messages between Mum and

Dad. Dad used to get his wine from Alexander and Patterson wine merchants, rather handily located beneath the Eastern Market where the card-playing occurred. He would extract the wine from the huge vats, fill his demijohns, take them home and bottle the wine – always chablis, no red. And he'd drink a glass with every meal. He was also an expert cook, the legacy of his years back home in Italy.

As Grandma was always preoccupied with running the family bakery in San Nicolò, Silvio was left to prepare dishes of gnocchi, ravioli, canederli and polenta, and I've never tasted roast chicken and rabbit like he used to make. Of course, roast pigeon was a speciality of his too, as I once discovered for all the wrong reasons. Dad put up this magnificent pigeon loft behind the garage of the family home in Raglan Street, Preston, which prompted me to start collecting pigeons. After a while I was developing quite an impressive collection, swapping plain ones for those with white wings, real beauties. But at some point I remember saying to my father, *My pigeons are going missing*, and it wasn't until I found out what I'd been eating with my polenta for tea that the penny finally dropped and my appetite suddenly waned.

Towards the end of the Second World War, Silvio developed bad arthritis. The illness prompted his admission to St Vincent's Hospital where he was to spend some time, and later forced him to sell the shop. Then, following a brief, 12-month stay at my maternal aunt Teresa Zagame's place at 98 Smith Street Collingwood (now Caffè Figaro Restaurant), Silvio purchased a double-fronted Victorian dwelling at 84 Raglan Street, Preston and settled there with his family in 1947. In later years, my father again took up the cabinet-making trade he learnt in another lifetime in Santo Stefano. Dad worked for TS Gill and Sons, glaziers and shopfitters, in Preston, and for AV Jennings on pre-fab houses. At the time of his retirement, he was working on the Royal Children's Hospital as a carpenter.

At some point in the late 1960s, Silvio's fondness for children, coupled with his renowned skills in working wood, prompted him to fashion what is now a De Bolfo family heirloom – a collapsible baltic pine stool for his two eldest grandsons, Tony and Paul. Throughout the ensuing winters, on the terraces of the old outer at Princes Park, the stool would sturdily support the two boys as they stood with their father and their Nonno in fanatical support of the Carlton football team. It

is a fanaticism which has gripped all De Bolfos since 1927, when the brothers first found shelter in a Rathdowne Street boarding house and began following the fortunes of the Mighty Blues not long after. Another heirloom is the 1962 EK Holden maroon sedan, which Silvio purchased as new from Campbell's Motors in High Street Preston. In the late 1970s, when a stroke incapacitated him, Silvio passed on the car to his oldest grandson, Tony, who at that time was in his final year at school and in the throes of obtaining his driver's licence. Though Campbell's Motors has long gone from High Street, the old car has been lovingly restored by Silvio's third grandson, Greg, and is now driven proudly by the youngest grandson, Richard. My father died on 29 April, 1981, aged 79 – one year and one day after his older brother Ben died at 79. They are buried within close proximity of each other at Springvale Cemetery, which as Mum once explained allows them that chance late at night to cut the cards and play just one more round.

Francesco 'Frank' De Bolfo

by his daughter, Anne De Bolfo.

Frank was the third of thirteen children of Giovanni Battista and Giovanna De Bolfo. The surviving eight children helped with the family bakery business, which operated from the basement of their home. Frank attended the elementary school in San Nicolò di Comelico. After completing six years of primary education at the local school, he worked as an apprentice for an upholsterer at Cortina D'Ampezzo – a trade he was never to practice professionally in Australia, but would dabble in as a hobby, even in his later years.

Cortina was about 80 kilometres from the family home and is today a world class ski resort in the heart of the Dolomites. It is a far cry from the humble town Frank knew as an apprentice. After his apprenticeship, Frank served in the National Service in the Alpini Corps of the Italian army. There was not sufficient work at the family bakery to support all of them, so, as their fathers and grand-fathers had done for generations, migration was the only alternative to starvation.

After his arrival in Melbourne, Frank worked for a few years on several jobs in country Victoria: as a farm hand in Mildura, on the building of a reservoir in the bush, on a roadbuilding site near Trafalgar, and cutting sleepers in the Gippsland/Walhalla area. Frank used to delight

in telling the story of going out in the scrub alone and being confronted by an enormous goanna. Naturally he'd never seen or heard of one before and believed he was being set upon by some huge carnivorous, probably a man-eating monster! He was relieved to find out after his escape that goannas are easily appeased by a few slices of bread.

For the majority of his working life in Australia, Frank worked on the Melbourne wharves. During the Second World War his job was deemed an essential service and, as such, Frank was not interned as were many other Italian immigrants. But it was necessary at this time for him to renounce allegiance to the King of Italy. In the late 1940s Frank took up residence in a boarding house in Moor Street, Fitzroy, which was run by Albina Dal Brun (nee Menara). Albina, her husband Francesco, and her children Alvise, Elvira and Aurora migrated to Australia from the town of Schio, in the Veneto region of Italy. Their youngest daughter Alba was born in Australia on 29 July, 1926. Alba worked as a cashier in restaurants owned by the Codognotto family, but was also her mother's main help in running the boarding house. It was while Frank was helping Alba to get her mother walking again after a bout of ill-health that romance blossomed, and they were married in 1949. Frank was a late starter at 46, his bride was 23. They stayed on with Alba's mother until they bought the family home in West Brunswick. This property was bought for cash, as was everything else, both large and small, in dollar terms. Tough times in the depression and, one suspects, a hard life in Italy had contributed to Frank's frugal nature and in his mind mortgages and loans were strictly out of the question.

Frank's and Alba's first child Benedict John (Ben) was born on 27 June, 1950. A daughter, Frances, born on 4 June, 1951, was the next addition to the family. Two more daughters completed the family. Anne Marie (the writer), was born on 4 April, 1957, and Gina Theresa on 19 April, 1961. At this time Alba's mother's health had started to fail, and by then widowed, she moved to live with Frank, Alba and the four children. Frank was compassionate and caring, as he had been whilst living at the boarding house, and continued to help nurse his mother-in-law, even building a hospital-style bed hoist so that she was able to move about in bed. She stayed with Frank and Alba until her death. Frank worked hard to provide a good Catholic education for his children. He delayed his retirement until

after the age of 65 so he could continue to provide for his children's educational needs. Frank was compulsorily retired at the age of 67, but he still wanted to continue working. He was extremely proud of his children's educational and working achievements, and he was later to be a proud and loving grandfather. Frank's main form of transport was his trusty bicycle. Although he had learned to drive, and held a driver's licence for many years, Frank was most comfortable on his bike. It was no impediment to his day-to-day routine or to his ability to transport various household needs. It was not unusual for him to come home from a timber mill balancing huge sacks of sawdust for the garden (40-50kg each and sometimes two at a time) on the handlebars, or to do the same with bags of wheat or pollard for the chickens, not to mention the weekly grocery shopping, boxes of live chickens, or fruit and vegetables from the Victoria Market.

He was knocked off his bike a couple of times, thus beginning a spate of operations and, at times, ill health which would dog his later years. But Frank rode his bike for many years, stopping only in his late 70s after a hip replacement operation. Frank always kept a large and productive garden. The front garden was always a mass of flowers, but the back garden was the working garden. The beautiful roses and hydrangeas at the front of the house gave way to a kitchen garden that supplied a myriad of the family's needs. The grapevines and fruit trees abounded and visitors were always proudly given the grand tour. As a child, Frank learned to cook by watching his mother and, despite the fact that Alba was a very good cook in her own right, Frank did much of the cooking for his family. He would make huge pots of soup every Sunday morning, and pasta sauce every week. The special treats were home made pasta, ravioli and gnocchi which he and Alba would always make together.

Frank also made *canederli* (Tyrol dumplings) which are peculiar to the Austrian border areas of Italy, and every now and then we'd also be treated to his home-made cakes and scones. He also made light-as-a-feather *crostoli* every Easter and Christmas. Alba passed away suddenly on 21 September, 1984 at the age of 58. Frank never returned to Italy and the village of his birth. He was fascinated by the photographs and stories that I brought back with me from a trip in 1985. I was the first of the descendants to return to Italy and I have been back twice more, in 1988 and 1996, the last time with my sister Gina.

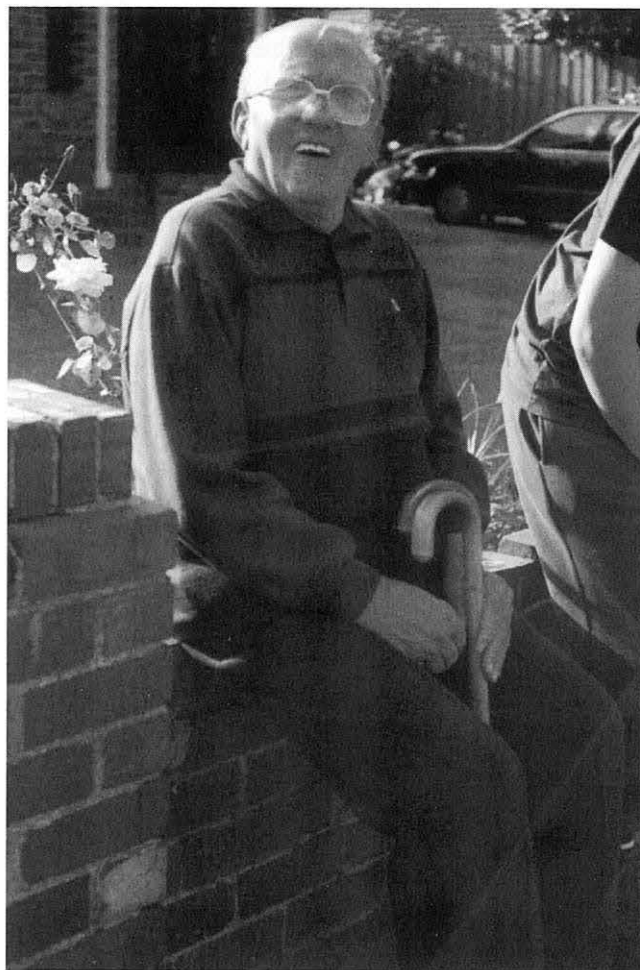
Despite the fact he never returned, Frank was always Italian at heart. He had a deep love of the language and was proud to speak 'pure' Italian, rather than dialect. When he bought the first family stereo, the first records purchased were Italian operas. He played them loudly as he attended to his garden. Though not a church-goer, Frank had a strong faith and held deeply religious beliefs. He taught his children to pray (in Italian) and he said his prayers without fail every day. Frank died at home on 10 August, 1987 and was buried at Fawkner Cemetery with his wife, Alba.

Iginio 'Nino' De Bolfo

written by Joan Miskin based on the recollections of her father, Nino De Bolfo.

Nino (or as he is known in Australia, Jim), the tenth child of Giovanni Battista and Giovanna, was born on the 10th of January 1911. He was named after the patron saint of the day and was christened, according to custom, on the next day. His earliest memory is of seeing the family house on fire. For a short while the family moved out of home whilst the fire damage was repaired. As a young child he sang for the Italian soldiers in the First World War who had taken over the family's front room for an officer's mess. Nino recollects seeing soldiers returning injured from the front in horse-drawn ambulances or on mules. His mother would often stop the injured and give them a bowl of soup and / or some bread to eat. In the last year of the war the town was occupied by the Austrians and Nino remembers how food was hidden. In fact, the family tried to leave the valley but after twenty miles it was obvious that there was no way out of the area and the family returned home. Most of the food in the house had been found by the Austrians but they had missed the large supply of potatoes cleverly hidden by Nino's father.

Nino completed four years of schooling at San Nicolò. His fourth grade report, for the school year 1921-1922, shows that he was a very strong student in all subjects with the exception of design. He topped the class – he was the youngest in the grade with students up to four years older than him! His teacher's comments were – *Ha sempre fatto bene con diligenza e volontà* – he has always performed well with diligence and willingness. Nino and his first cousin Ottavio completed another year of schooling sitting at the back of the grade 3 and 4 composite



Nino De Bolfo in 1995

class. Nino enjoyed learning but, unfortunately, the size of the family made it impossible for him to undertake further schooling. Throughout his years of schooling Nino, as did all the brothers, delivered the bread baked by his mother before going to school each day and also helped his father. As the eldest child at home Nino worked alongside his father after completing his schooling. He worked for a few months for a local carpenter. Nino joined his brother Silvio in Bari making ice chests. For two years he spent nine months of the year in Bari, returning home to work alongside his father or brothers. With the sponsorship of Ben, the eldest brother Nino, Frank and Silvio migrated to Australia. Just before leaving, Aunty Rosina, his mother's sister, who worked in Milano, visited and brought some tea. She advised Nino that he would have to get used to the taste of the tea. She gave him a cup of tea and it was terrible. It was a great relief for Nino that his first cup of tea in Australia tasted much better, thanks to milk and sugar. The three brothers shared a four berth cabin with another passenger. Other passengers were less fortunate sharing single-sex cabins sleeping 50 or more passengers. The trip within Italian

waters was most pleasant – white tablecloths and very good food. That changed once the ship left Italian waters – poor food, little water and no more white table cloths.

After disembarking with his brothers at Melbourne, Nino had his first meal of fish and chips at Osvaldo Mattea's fish shop in Richmond. That evening Ben collected Nino and took him by tram to a fish shop in Victoria Market. In the fish shop, Nino worked six days a week alongside his cousin Andrea Mattea, living above the shop. He was paid two pounds a week with an additional two shillings for his Sunday night meal. His meals were fish and chips from the shop. Nino would give the two pounds each week to his brothers who were unemployed to cover their living costs. This work lasted for three months. Through a hiring agency Nino obtained farm labouring work. Late one night he was taken by carrier to Rosebud – along the way the lights failed and it became quite a frightening trip. This was followed by a three mile walk to the farm. He was supposed to be given ten shillings a week but this was never paid. Nino then worked on a Moran and Cato asparagus farm managed by Don Haigh. He remembers the kindness and helpfulness of Don and his wife. It was here that Nino learnt about the Australian sun. He worked all day out in the sun and thought he was going to die – in fact, he had a very bad dose of sunstroke. During his time in Rosebud Nino taught himself to speak and read and write in English.

Still in Rosebud, Nino did general farming work for Mr Ralph for three years and by this stage had enough money for a deposit on a farm. In the second year of farming, just before he was about to pick a very good crop of early tomatoes, Rosebud was flooded and he lost the farm. During his time at Rosebud Nino had taken up cricket and, in order to keep him on the team, farming work was found for him at Cape Schanck. In 1937 Nino went to work for his brothers, Silvio then Ben in the fish shop in Carnegie. He would serve in the shop and cook the fish and chips. In 1939 Nino became an Australian citizen. The Second World War had started and in 1939 Nino joined up voluntarily and organised his rostered day off on a Friday so that he could help his brothers in the fish shop. After he completed his training at Fishermen's Bend he remained at the depot. Before he left Australia Nino was a temporary corporal and by

the time he served in New Guinea he was a sergeant. Just out of Port Moresby his foot was injured by falling timber and he spent six weeks in hospital in Port Moresby. Returned to Australia, he then served in North Borneo. At the end of the war Nino had further surgery on his foot at the Repatriation Hospital in Melbourne. He returned to work in the fish shop in Carnegie in 1946. It had always been agreed that Nino would be the first to return to Italy for a visit but, unfortunately, he had contracted malaria during his army service and could not even sit on a train let alone make the journey by sea to Italy. For many years he suffered bouts of malaria. As well, over the years Nino had a number of operations on his feet. He has always had to wear specially made surgical shoes provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs – even to play lawn bowls.

He married Armida (Amelia) Masocco at St John's in Carlton in 1949. Initially Nino and Amelia lived behind the fish shop along with Nino's brothers Ben and Berto as there was a housing shortage. Later they moved to their own house in Tranmere Avenue, Carnegie. In 1952 the fish shop was sold. Even thirty years later Nino could not walk in the local shopping centre without somebody recognising him as 'Mr Fish and Chips' and stopping for a chat.

Nino soon found work with the Department of Works and stayed there for two years. With the assistance of his neighbour, Ted Ambrose, he joined Noel Searle Glass and worked there until he retired in 1977. Just before he retired Nino took up lawn bowls and played competition bowls for his club. Over the years he worked his way up to playing for the top team in his club, an A Grade team. As well, he enjoyed playing in in-house and outside bowls competitions and was quite successful in winning small trophies. Nino and his partner Roe Fletcher won the Victorian Metropolitan Group 14 Bowls pairs – the first bowlers in their club to win such a competition.

Nino and Amelia had three children, Joan, Peter and Susan. The children enjoyed the legacy of the fish shop – fresh and beautifully cooked fish, chips and potato cakes. The house in Carnegie had numerous fruit trees and a large vegetable garden, with tomatoes always ripe before Christmas. If there was something to fix or some one needed assistance in the neighbourhood Nino was always ready to help. It was rare for Nino

to show anger, except in one area. He was and continues to be a true-blue, one-eyed Carlton supporter. At football matches or in front of the television he always makes his feelings known to that biased umpire!

While Nino's brother Ben lived at Toolangi numerous Sundays, Christmas Days and Easter Sundays were spent visiting Ben. More often than not there were jobs to be done and Ben would direct the various family members, Joan, Susan and Peter who learnt how important it was to close gates! Nino's children, nephews and nieces all have memories of a man who loves children. Nino was keen to give his children the educational opportunities that he never had.

In the early 1970s the family moved to Murrumbena. Nino is not very mobile these days but he continues to read and keep up-to-date with the current news. He can talk happily on most subjects and amazes everyone with his tremendous recall of the past. As he would say at present *I'm 87 – not out.*

70 years on, and Nino speaks for all his brothers when he looks back with pride on what he achieved for himself and his descendants. *Not going back after the war to see Mum and Dad was the only setback, but I wouldn't have gone back for anything else. So many things happened in that time, good things and bad things, but I'm still alive. And I couldn't be happier. I wouldn't have changed my family or my way of life for anything that's happened.*

Gilberto 'Berto' De Bolfo

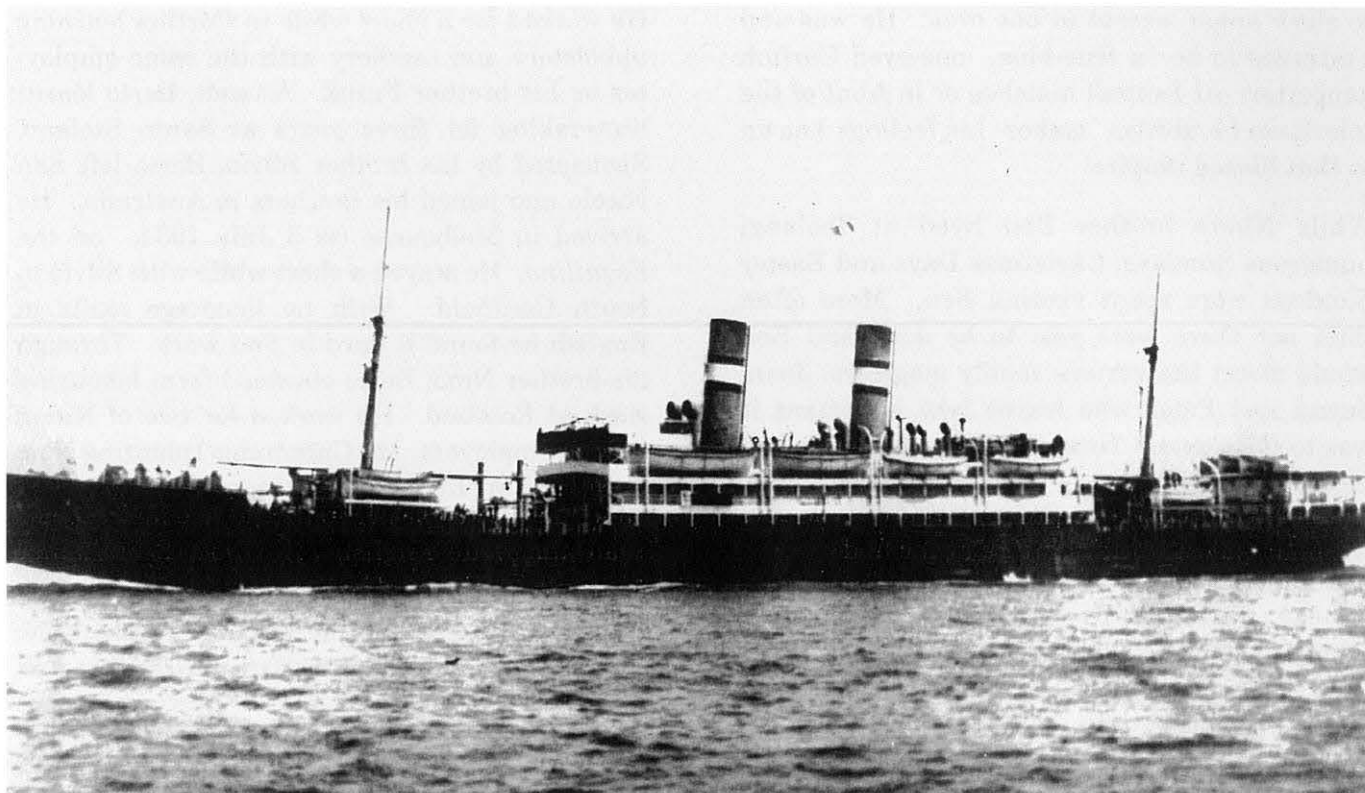
written by his niece Joan Miskin based on the recollections of her father, Nino De Bolfo.

Berto De Bolfo was the ninth child of Giovanni Battista De Bolfo and his wife Giovanna. As a young child Berto's arm was badly burnt and his father felt it was important for him to have an education or trade. Berto's injury was treated at the World War I first-aid camp set up by the Italian army at San Nicolò. After he had completed four years of schooling at San Nicolò Berto undertook private schooling, like his brother Ben, in Dosoleto. Berto continued his schooling with the Salesian brothers at Treviglio, near Milano (Milan). He was a boarder for three years and came home during the school holidays.

Berto undertook training in a number of trades.

He worked for a short while in Cortina learning upholstery and saddlery with the same employers as his brother Frank. As well, Berto learnt bootmaking for three years at Santo Stefano. Sponsored by his brother Silvio, Berto left San Nicolò and joined his brothers in Australia. He arrived in Melbourne on 5 July 1934, on the *Esquilino*. He stayed a short while with Silvio in South Caulfield. With no language skills in English he found it hard to find work. Through his brother Nino, Berto obtained farm labouring work at Rosebud. He worked for two of Nino's former employers, Mr Cummings (planting pine trees) and Mr Ralph (general farm work). At this time, as matter of necessity, he learnt to speak, read and write English. By 1938, Berto joined his brothers Ben and Nino and worked in the fish shop in Carnegie. Like all the brothers he worked long hours, particularly on Friday and Saturday. During the war Berto was not interned but was required to do timber cutting for a number of months near Trentham. He became an Australian citizen in 1944.

Berto was the first and only one of the brothers who migrated to return to or visit San Nicolò. He visited Italy in 1946, arriving just before the death of his mother. Berto was able to reassure her that all her boys had made a future for themselves in Australia. Returning to Australia about a year later, Berto continued to work in the fish shop. He was the godfather of Nino's first child, Joan. In 1952 he returned to Italy and married Rita Costan. They set up home in the De Bolfo family home in San Nicolò. He became a very successful businessman. Berto and Rita had four children, Cornelio, Andreina, Giuliana and Benedetta (Benny). Benny has made two trips to Australia and stayed with or toured with the children and grandchildren of Silvio, Frank and Nino. Berto never forgot his time in Australia and Australian relatives or friends of the family were always made most welcome. He never gave up his passion for a good cup of tea. Even though Berto passed away in 1994, Rita, her children and grandchildren continue the tradition of welcoming the children and grandchildren of Silvio, Frank and Nino when they come to visit the birthplace of their fathers and grandfathers. In 1995 Rita visited Australia and spent time with the families of John (son of Silvio) and Nino De Bolfo. She also visited the site of the old fish shop in Carnegie, now a bread shop, where her husband had worked so long and hard for so many years.



The Re d'Italia

108 passengers (104 men, three women and an infant male) disembarked in Melbourne from the Re d'Italia on 24 November, 1927. The fate of 45 of those passengers has since been determined, but further information is being sought as to the whereabouts of each of the remaining 63, whose age, occupation and marital status at the time of their arrival is also listed below. Information relating to these passengers would be gratefully received by Tony De Bolfo on (03) 9480 1308.

Port of Embarkation	Occupation	Age	Marital status
GENOA			
Acquasaliente Ampelio	farm labourer	23	single
Bello Attilio Giovanni Battista	farm labourer	26	single
Benetti Angelo	farm labourer	18	single
Bertagna Pasquino	farm labourer	26	married
Bianchi Antonio	farm labourer	21	single
Bianchi Valerio	farm labourer	22	single
Bonan(n)i Ettore	mason	30	married
Bonan(n)i Vittorio	mason	34	married
Borgnolo Vittorio	farm labourer	26	single
Caffaro Domenico	farm labourer	25	single
Campara Domenico	farm labourer	28	married
Carbonetto Maria	domestic	28	married
Costella Giovanni	child	4	
Da Vinchie Giovanni Battista	farm labourer	28	single
De Bortoli Beniamino	farm labourer	42	married
Deppi Girolamo	farm labourer	34	married
Destro Giuseppe	farm labourer	28	single
Dozzi Luigi	farm labourer	25	married
Fogliato Valentino	farm labourer	28	single
Formentini Pietro	farm labourer	28	married
Gnata Antonio	miner	19	single

Frigo Marco	farm labourer	17	single
Girardi Massimo	farm labourer	27	married
Paganin Tiziano	farm labourer	37	married
Parlato Agostino	farm labourer	46	married
Pasquali Ridolfo	farm labourer	23	single
Pizzato Giovanni	mason	24	single
Ponta Ermenegildo	carpenter	29	married
Querin Antonio	farm labourer	28	single
Reffo Osvaldo	farm labourer	34	married
Rizzollo Marco	farm labourer	17	single
Sartori Gaetano	farm labourer	25	single
Sartori Giacomo	farm labourer	34	single
Simaz Luigi	farm labourer	26	single
Sisti Anselmo	farm labourer	41	married
Stella Luigi	farm labourer	18	single
Zammarchi Giuseppe	farm labourer	26	single

NAPLES

Benavoli Giuseppe	farm labourer	49	married
Chiera Domenico	farm labourer	35	married
Curcio Francesco	farm labourer	26	married
D'Amico Pietro	farm labourer	39	married
Di Giglio Domenico	farm labourer	40	married
Di Gregorio Vincenzo	farm labourer	51	married
Giarracca Luigi	farm labourer	45	married
Guida Annunziato	farm labourer	33	married
Italia Antonio	farm labourer	44	single
Loizzi Giuseppe	farm labourer	41	married
Loprese Domenico	farm labourer	38	married
Lotorto Giuseppe	farm labourer	32	married
Menta Carmelo	farm labourer	47	married

MESSINA

Nicolazzo Nicola	farm labourer	23	married
Pileggi Francesco	farm labourer	37	married
Romano Gaetano	farm labourer	30	married
Sanzaro Giuseppe	mechanic	33	married
Segreto Michele	farm labourer	18	single
Spadaro Carmelo	farm labourer	31	married
Taranto Francesco	farm labourer	37	married
Taranto Giovanni	farm labourer	13	
Taranto Giuseppe	farm labourer	24	single
Virgona Angelo	farm labourer	14	single
Virgona Felice	farm labourer	16	single
Zappia Giuseppe	farm labourer	43	married

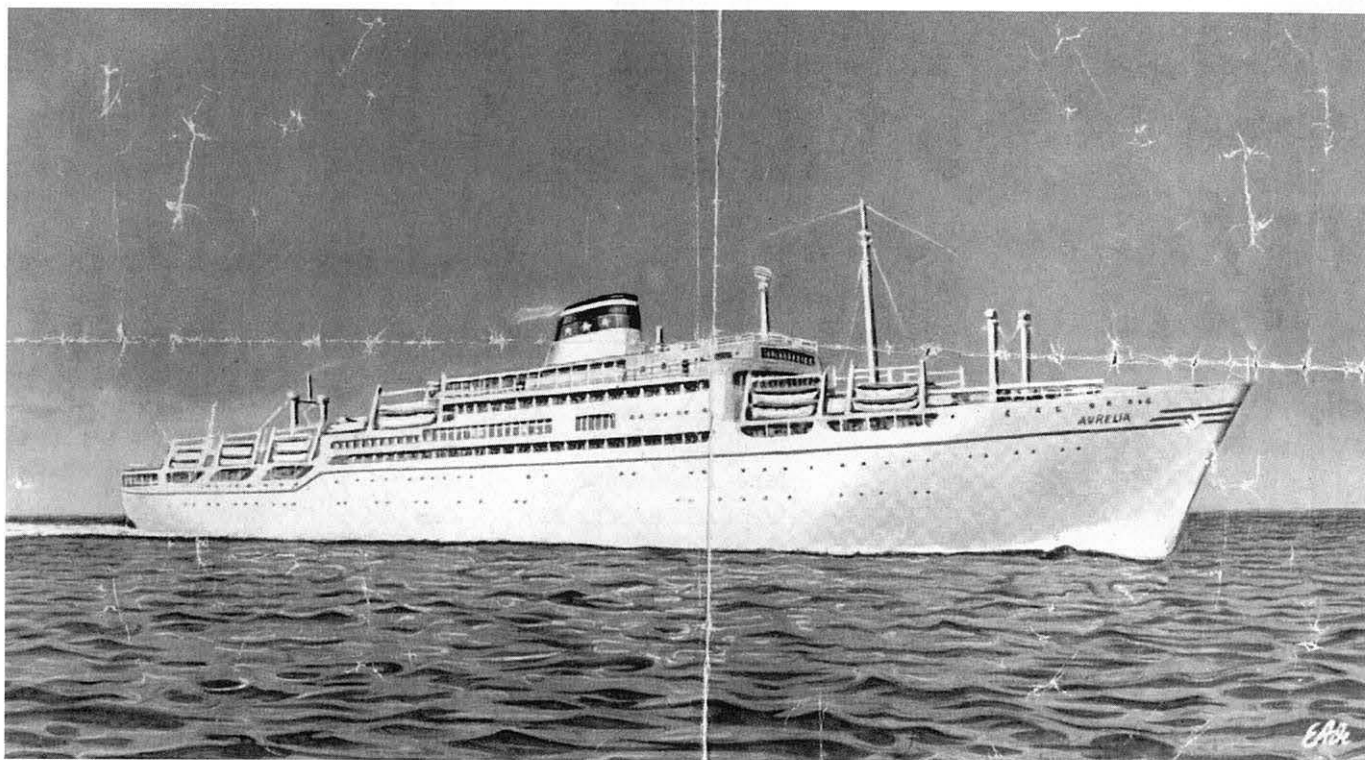
PORT SAID

Basile Patroche	telegraphist	33	married
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Emigrant Ships

by Maria Tence

The Society wishes to thank New South Wales University Press for permission to use extracts from Emigrant Ships to Luxury Liners by Peter Plowman. The book, published in 1992, is a valuable source of information on the history and voyages of numerous ships that brought hundreds of immigrants to Australia. The Aurelia is the second ship profiled in this series.



The Aurelia (Collection of the Italian Historical Society).

This vessel was originally named *Huascaran* and was built for the Hamburg-America Line. It entered service in April 1939. With 6951 gross tonnage and a service speed of 17 knots, she was primarily a cargo ship but could accommodate up to 58 passengers, servicing the trade ports from Hamburg to the west coast of South America via Panama.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, *Huascaran* was taken over by the German Navy and converted into a submarine depot ship. She survived the war, was seized by the Allies and prized to Canada.

In September 1947, the *Huascaran* was refitted to carry 773 passengers and renamed *Beaverbrae*. She was intended to carry migrants from Europe to Canada and return with a full cargo. Over the next six years, *Beaverbrae* made 51 round trips between Canada and European ports.

As the demand for migrants passaged on that route declined, the *Beaverbrae* was sold to the Cogedar Line in 1954 and renamed the *Aurelia*. She went to Trieste for rebuilding as a passenger liner carrying 1124 passengers. A few of her cabins were renovated with private facilities and new amenities including an outdoor swimming pool and a theatre. On 13 May 1955, the *Aurelia* left Trieste for her maiden voyage to Australia, but later that year her terminal became Genoa. Then Naples, Messina, Malta and Piraeus were added to her itinerary. *Aurelia* made four round trips to Australia per year transporting thousands of Italian migrants.

The caption of an image of the ship, held in the collection of the Australian Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Canberra, reads *The gleaming white Italian migrant liner Aurelia ties up at the Cairns wharf in warm, tropical*

winter sunshine. On board were 1200 Italian migrants attracted to Australia by high wages, universal 40-hour week and full employment. At Cairns, 552 brawny cane-cutters and 100 women and children left the ship. The rest left the ship at southern ports.

In 1958 *Aurelia* was withdrawn for further alterations when her original diesels were replaced and her superstructure enlarged. She then entered a new service to Australia from Bremerhaven with her first departure in June 1959.

Aurelia operated through Suez, or round Africa when the canal was inactive until the end of 1964, departing Rotterdam, crossing the Atlantic through the Panama Canal, across the Pacific to Auckland then to Sydney, returning through the Suez.

The closure of the Suez in 1967 combined with a decline in the migrant trade to Australia eventually brought about the end of the Cogedar Line service to Australia. In September 1968 the

Aurelia left Rotterdam on her final voyage, departing Sydney for the last time on 29 October. On her return to Europe, *Aurelia* was refitted for service as a cruise ship accommodating 470 passengers. This cruise program finished in May 1969 when she then made six round trips to New York. As returns were poor, the vessel was sold to Chandris Cruises in September 1970 and renamed *Romanza*.

The ship was rebuilt, installing private facilities for 650 passengers in one class. On 1 April 1971 *Romanza* left Venice on her first cruise where she spent her subsequent career cruising the Mediterranean. In 1976 she came to an abrupt end when the company went bankrupt and then *Romanza* spent most of 1977 cruising out of Brazil. In 1979 she ran aground in the Aegean Sea and was refloated after two days. She was repaired and returned to her Mediterranean cruising circuit. In 1988 she was reported to be under charter as a floating hotel in the Canary Islands.



Italian cane-cutters disembarking from the *Aurelia* in Cairns in 1956. (Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs photograph).

NEWS

Forthcoming Exhibition:

A Box Full of Promises: Preparing for a Family

The Italian Historical Society is preparing an exhibition on the tradition and significance of the dowry, to be presented in the Access Gallery of the Immigration Museum, located in the old Customs House, in William Street, Melbourne. The opening of the Society's exhibition will coincide with the official opening of the newly created Immigration Museum.

A Box Full of Promises: Preparing for a Family is to be one of several exhibitions prepared under the umbrella of *The Australian Family*. *The Australian Family* is an exhibition concept which involves the unprecedented cooperation and participation of twenty Victorian museums, galleries and cultural institutions. Among them are the Jewish Museum of Australia, Melbourne Cricket Club Museum, National Trust of Australia, Koorie Heritage Trust, Latrobe Regional Gallery and the Victorian Racing Museum. The concept has evolved in response to the International Council of Museums conference which will be held in Melbourne in October 1998. The theme of the conference is 'Museums and Cultural Diversity: Ancient Cultures, New Worlds'. *The Australian Family* is an interpretation of this theme. The participating organisations will each interpret the concept of the *Australian Family* in their own way.

The Society's exhibition will explore how traditional dowry items transcend material and class values to transmit family history, regional customs and cultural and familial values handed down from mother to daughter, and the responsibility placed on that process.

A curator, Ingrid Unger, has been employed by the Society to research and prepare the exhibition. Ingrid is presently looking for objects related to the Italian dowry as found in Australia. If you have items from your dowry, from your mother's or grandmother's, Ingrid (or Laura Mecca) would love to hear from you. We are particularly looking for items other than linen which were part of the dowry and stored in the girl's glory box in anticipation of her marriage and the setting up of a new family. Did your family include jewellery, land or furniture as part of the dowry? Can you remember what your mother or grand-

mother did for her dowry? What was the practice in your town or region? Do you have any dowry lists or legal agreements of your mother or grandmother? How has your dowry changed from your mother's or your grandmother's? Do you still have the original *cassone* (glory box) where items such as linen and household items were stored over many years as an integral part of the girl's dowry, awaiting for a 'new home'? If you do, we would love to see it and maybe use it in the exhibition.

If you can assist with this project, please contact the Society on 9349 1144 during office hours.



This linen towel was skillfully embroidered by Lusiana LiVolti's great-grandmother for her dowry early this century in Sicily. It was handed down to Lusiana's mother who married in Italy in 1960. She included it in the glory box of her Australia born daughter, Lusiana, who married in Melbourne in 1993.

Santospirito Collection:

A multi-disciplinary research project

Laura Mecca represented the Society at the International Conference *Italian Migrant Women* held in Rome in November 1997, organised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Over eighty countries were represented by women of Italian origin who addressed the conference on topics such as the history and contribution of Italian migrant women, their economic and social achievements, the maintenance of the

Italian language, culture and traditions. The Society presented a paper on a research project based on the large holding of documents which form the Santospirito Collection, held in the Society's collection. Mrs Lena Santospirito was an exceptional woman who worked for the Melbourne Italian community for over 20 years, from 1940 to 1960. The project will be undertaken in cooperation with the prestigious Università La Sapienza, Rome.

The Society also presented a photographic exhibition on the history of Australian Italian migrant women, which captured the attention of the participants and of the Italian media covering the conference and provided the perfect background for many official photographs and snapshots.

Agreement with Melbourne University

Our umbrella organisation CO.AS.IT has entered into an important affiliation agreement with the University of Melbourne. The agreement, which has a validity of five years, was signed in December 1997 by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Boris Schedvin and Bernard Bongiorno, President of CO.AS.IT in the presence of Sir James Gobbo, Governor of Victoria, Prof. Peter McPhee, Head Department of History Melbourne University, Dr Mario Montecalvo, acting Italian Ambassador, Mr Giancarlo Martini-Piovan, director of CO.AS.IT and several members and friends of the Society.

The Society will cooperate during the life of this agreement with the History Department of the

University to promote and assist with the teaching and supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate students and encourage appropriate research among such students and staff members of the Society and of the University.

The success of this agreement can be measured in the overwhelming number of undergraduates and postgraduates who are undertaking research projects at the Society on the history of Italian migration and settlement in the 1998 academic year.

Farewell to a Friend

Marino Bartolai was an enthusiastic supporter of the Italian Historical Society. He recently passed away leaving a big void in the life of his family and friends.

Marino arrived in Western Australia from a town in the province of Lucca, Tuscany, in 1927. He was a skilled stonemason and successfully applied his skills in his trade first as an employee in the quarries of Western Australia and then in his own business in the 1960s in Swan Hill, Victoria. In a work-related reference letter, Gerald H. Randell writes in 1946: *Owing to my good fortune in securing Mr Bartolai's services, I feel sure I have a much better house.* Most of all Marino was a 'true Italian' and defended and maintained his *italianità* until the end.

Ciao, Marino!



Representatives of Australia's contingent to the Italian Migrant Women Conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Rome. In the background is the photographic exhibition presented by the Italian Historical Society.

FAMILY HISTORY

The Society has received the following enquiries:

Giuseppe SCALA and Maria SCALA (nee Ravenna)

Angelo CERESETO and Caterina CERESETO (nee Scala)

Giuseppe and Maria Scala arrived in Victoria in approximately 1857. Giuseppe's naturalization shows that in 1858 he was at Sandhurst, Victoria. Giuseppe was born in Chiavari, near Genova in 1806. He died in Australia in 1877.

Their daughter Caterina married Angelo Cereseto in Victoria in 1860. Some of Angelo and Caterina's children were born in Castlemaine, including Amelia born in 1862. In the 1860s Angelo and Caterina Cereseto moved with their children to Reefton, South Island, New Zealand, attracted by the discovery of gold in that country. They settled in New Zealand.

Mrs Margaret Paton, grand-daughter of Amelia Cereseto, is interested in tracing any descendants of Giuseppe and Maria Scala still living in Victoria. If you can assist her, please write to: 12A Kaharoa Avenue, Omokoroa, Tauranga, New Zealand.

Dominiko Sonsee (also spelled Sonse /Souce)

Dominiko was born in Venice in 1818. He was a mariner who, for unknown reasons, decided that Geelong was the place to settle down in 1843. He arrived on board the ship *James*. In 1845 he married Catherine English, born in 1825 at Tipperary, Ireland. They had nine children: Mark born in Corio in 1846; Annette born in Geelong in 1848; Dominic born at Indented Head in 1850; Bernetta born in Magpie, near Ballarat, in 1857. Lucia (1860), John (1862), Michael (1864), Mary (1867) and Margaret (1870) were born in Creswick.

Dominiko naturalised in December 1852. He lived with his family in the Creswick area (Spring Mount/Spring Hill) for about 40 years before his death in 1899. It would appear that his name was anglicised.

Anyone who may have information on this family is welcome to contact John Bergin, 44 Columba Street, North Balwyn 3104.

Note from the Society: *It was fairly common in those days to change the spelling of the name to 'meet' the*

English pronunciation of the Italian name. Thus, it is possible that the name was originally spelled 'Sonci', which in English would be pronounced 'Sonsee'. Sonci is quite a common surname in the Veneto region. Another example is the current spelling of the first name, from Domenico to Dominiko. Many Italian pioneers, whose literacy was limited, on arrival in Australia lacked the knowledge of the English language and were not able to spell their name correctly. Thus, the name was entered into official records spelled according to the phonetic interpretation that an English-speaking person would give to it.

Antonio Quadri

Antonio was a Swiss-born Italian who came to the goldfields around Ballarat with a friend or relation called Del Marco [surname] during the Gold Rush in Victoria in the 1850s. He married an Irish woman. He was registered as a 'linguistic' and opened a wine retail shop at some stage. He later joined the Gold Rush in New Zealand, where a son called Antonio was born.

Betty McIntyre, 5A Radcliffe Street, Whangarei, Northland, New Zealand, great granddaughter of Antonio, is interested to hear from any descendants of either the Quadri or Del Marco.

Augustine Salvatoria [?] Zanoni

Augustine settled in Australia in 1857. It is rumoured that he came with a brother, but no record of this can be located. He settled in Queenscliff, Victoria, as a fisherman, and married Elizabeth White, an English woman. Augustine was from Genoa. The descendants are unable to locate shipping information. They believe he sailed on the *Andante* (or spelt *Ineanti*). Zanoni was illiterate.

Please write to Kylie Tune, 2 Millner Street, Millner, Darwin, NT, 0810 – E-mail tuna@taunet.com.au

Giacomo Antonio Pedrazzi

Giacomo was a painter who emigrated to Australia from Cerentino, Canton Ticino, Switzerland, in 1854. He raised a loan of Swiss Fr. 1000 with the Council of his village to pay for his fare.

A few months after his arrival, he exhibited four oil paintings at the Melbourne Exhibition of 1854. It appears that in 1854 he also worked on some frescoes in a Melbourne church under construction. A notice published in *The Melbourne Morning Herald* of 22 December 1854 reads:

Paintings – The party who has called about three months ago at Mr Petrazzi's artist, No. 240 Lonsdale Street east, leaving orders for the execution of several paintings, is hereby informed that the painting which was left for renovation in deposit will be disposed of to defray expenses, if not called for within three days from this 18th December 1854.

According to the *Official Catalogue of the Melbourne Exhibition-1854*, Pedrazzi's paintings on display were titled 'Elevation of the Cross', 'Symbol of the Crucifixion', 'Emblem of the Odd Fellow Society' and 'The Temptation'. According to historian G. Cheda, Pedrazzi went back to Ticino in 1855, with Fr. 3,000 in his pocket.

Mr Sergio Ravani from Someo, Switzerland, would like to find out:

- 1) Why did Pedrazzi stay such a short time in Australia when he appears to have been quite successful as a painter?
- 2) Does anyone know the whereabouts of the paintings shown in the Melbourne Exhibition of 1854?
- 3) What was the 'Odd Fellows Society'?
- 4) In which Melbourne church did Pedrazzi work?

If you can assist, please contact the Italian Historical Society (Laura Mecca) on (03) 9349 1144 during office hours.

Edgar Raffaele Arpante

Born in Bologna in 1860, Arpante arrived in Australia in 1881 on board the *Europa*. In his application for naturalization, he stated as his father the Marquis di Castellano from Bologna and Michelina as his mother. He settled in Sydney where he became a wine merchant.

According to the 'Italian Diplomatic Archives' in the collection of the Italian Historical Society, there is evidence that in the 1920s Arpante was actively involved with the Sydney Italian community. He was the president of a committee for the celebrations of the National Day in which Tommaso Fiaschi, a notable surgeon and vigneron, was also a member.

His descendant Mr Frank Wiseman, 64 Cleary Crt, Clayton South 3168 is seeking more information on the life of his ancestor.

Cesare Vagarini

Cesare was born in Rome in 1905. He was an accomplished painter, having studied at the

Florence Institute of Art and at the prestigious Academy of Brera, in Milan. In 1941 Cesare and his wife Maria were taken prisoner by the English in Palestine, where he was working on frescoes commissioned for the Church of St Elizabeth. He was sent with his wife to Australia on board the *Queen Elizabeth*. On 26 August 1942 they arrived at the Internment Camp 3, in Tatura, Victoria, which held Italian and German families, many of whom were also captured in Palestine.

During his period in internment, Vagarini executed several fine paintings of the camp, which were donated or sold to other internees or to the Australians guarding the camp. After his release in c.1945, he executed several works for the Mary Immaculate Church, Glen Waverley, Victoria. He also wrote critiques for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Melbourne Advocate*. In 1946 he exhibited in the NSW Society of Artists Drawing Exhibition at David Jones Gallery in Sydney. He returned to Palestine in 1947 and later settled in San Geminiano (Tuscany), where he died in 1990.

The Benalla Art Gallery is planning an exhibition of Vagarini's and other internees painting works by October this year. The Curator, Fiona Stephens, is interested to talk to anyone who may have met Vagarini, or could assist with the location of his works in Australia.

Please contact Fiona on (03) 5762 3027. Facsimile (03) 5762 5604. Benalla Art Gallery, P.O. Box 108, Benalla 3672.

Genealogical research in Italy:

The Society has received an offer of assistance to family history researchers from:

Mr Giulio C. Salemme

Via Aurelia, 13 – Prati

19020 Vezzano Ligure (La Spezia) Italy

Ph./Fax 0011 39 187 981500

E-mail: julius@village.it

Home Page: <<http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/5864/giulio.html>>

Enquiries are welcome in English.

The Society strongly suggests that you to ask for further information as to the records and related cost, before engaging Giulio's or anyone else's services in tracing your family records in Italy. It may be cheaper to fly there and do it yourself!

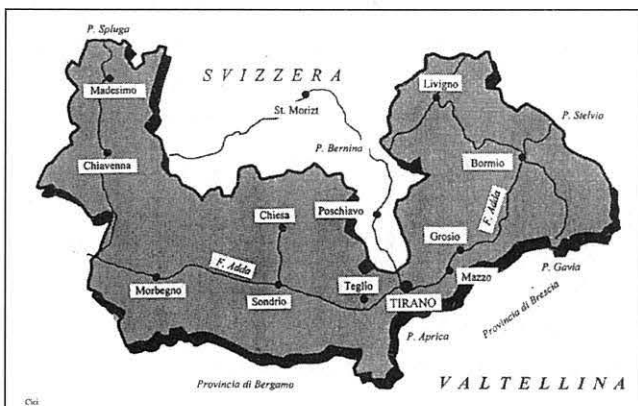
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

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. The recommended retail price is indicated where available. The books can be viewed at the Italian Historical Society, 185 Faraday Street, Carlton between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

l'Cambrin dèla Memòria: Composizione in rima in dialetto tiranese. By Cici Bonazzi. Terza edizione con testo italiano a fronte. Canberra 1994.

Scarizi che brüsa: Racconti e poesie in dialetto tiranese. By Cici Bonazzi. Con testo italiano a fronte. Canberra 1995.

Dizionario Tiranese - Italiano. By Cici Bonazzi. Terza edizione. Canberra 1996.



The spread of the Italian language at the expense of local languages is an inevitable outcome of the Unification of Italy. Ancient regional attachments have remained remarkably strong in Italy down to our own time, but even remote parts have suffered a loss and a devaluation of their dialects under the impact of mass media and with the spread of education. This ironing out has proceeded apace since the Second World War. Children are no longer learning their parents' ancient tongues. One of the sad consequences is that much beautiful literature is inaccessible to all but a few.

Lazzaro (Cici) Bonazzi has lived for many years in Canberra but has never lost his attachment to his native Tirano in the Valtellina and its language. Cici is well-known in Tirano. He returns there frequently, to visit his parents and old friends, to replenish his memories, and to gather the memories of others. Indeed he is something of a legend among the people there. Did I know Cici, I was asked constantly, when I first went to

Tirano to study its history some years ago. He is one of a growing band of those who, with the realisation that their mother tongues were fast disappearing, are endeavouring, in one way or another, to preserve their native dialects, and to encourage others to appreciate that they are not degraded forms of 'proper Italian' but rich languages in their own right, expressive of the spirit of their people and the lives they lived. Over the years, in Australia, Cici Bonazzi has written and published many stories in prose and in rhyme, about Tirano and its history, its people and their memories, in the Tiranese language. These writings are the outcome of a deep personal commitment to his native place and its dialect, and a burning passion to ensure that the old language should not disappear forever.

Much of it has disappeared or is fast disappearing and in promoting and codifying the language, Cici Bonazzi has not only sought to preserve the dialect as it can be heard today, but has devoted many years to recovering and collecting lost words. The third revised and expanded edition of his dictionary is a monumental achievement and an invaluable contribution to the preservation of a fascinating language. Many objects and places are also gone forever and this dictionary is therefore something of an encyclopedia, with fine drawings and illustrations of things which have disappeared or which are hard to describe in words: plants, tools, utensils, farm implements, clothes and places. This work is not only to be enjoyed by the student of philology. It is fascinating also for those who, like myself, are mere lovers of words, or historians, seeking to understand a world that is rapidly passing and a people and way of life which cannot readily be divorced from their dialect.

The accompanying Italian text makes the stories and poetry accessible to those who read only Italian. It also enables those literate in Tiranese to appreciate how much colour and bite these wonderful tales lose when translated. The Tiranese people in Tirano and in Australia are rightly proud to have on their own side one who so persistently and energetically reminds us of the richness and the charm of their wonderful and gritty language.

Jacqueline Templeton

For orders write to: Myriam Bonazzi, PO Box 4021, Kingston ACT 2604.

Towards our Destination: A history of the Bombara family. By Giovanna Raneri-Jenour. Dynamic Print, Bunbury WA, 1996.

This is a comprehensive family history of the Bombara family which left their native Capo d'Orlando in Sicily before the turn of the century to live and work in Fremantle, Western Australia. Many fishermen from this village situated on the northern coast of Sicily, in the province of Messina, emigrated to Australia between the 1890s and 1920s. They established the Italian fishing community of Western Australia. Their descendants are still actively involved in the fishing industry of W.A.

The author is a grand-daughter of the original Giuseppe and Santa Bombara. She is a graduate of the University of Western Australia and a retired secondary schoolteacher. The book took 13 years to research. In all, five generations of the Bombara family are covered. As we follow the family members we learn of and appreciate the degrees of social hardship and deep loneliness they experienced, which were mixed with love and gratitude for their adopted country. A chapter on internment during the Second World War covers many aspects of a little-known element of social chaos as it impinged on this family.

This publication contains a wealth of data on shipping lists, documents, letters, and some interesting heritage photos of Capo d'Orlando. It is printed on glossy quality paper illustrated by a large number of good images which make the book come alive. Its 347 pages make interesting factual as well as anecdotal reading.

The book sells for \$35 per copy plus p & p of \$11. It would make a worthwhile inclusion in any library. Please telephone or fax 08 9795 7034 for your copy.

Pioneers of Sugar Cane. By Peter R. Oliveri. Published by the author. Capalba, Qld. 1996.

A well written and interesting biographical account of the experiences and contribution of the Oliveri Family to the development of the sugar cane industry in Mossman and Innisfail from 1896 to 1953.

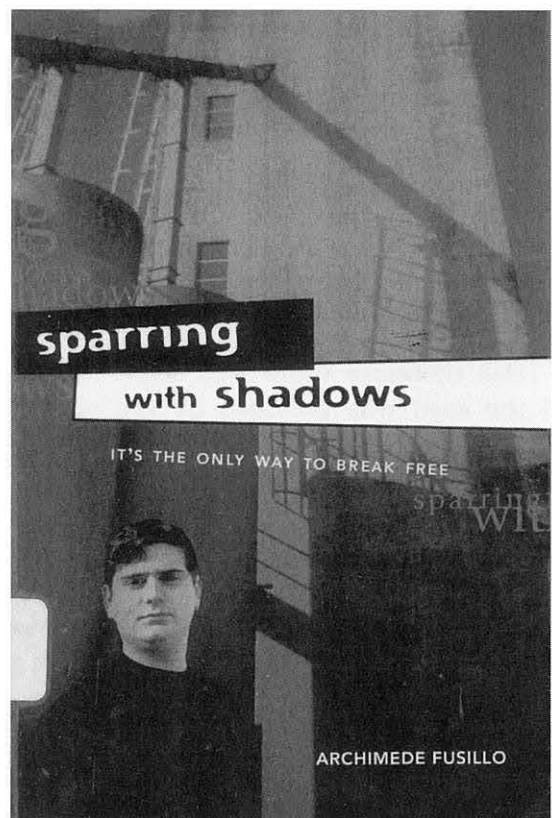
The cost of the book is \$20 including postage. Send orders to: Peter R. Oliveri, 6 Dublin Street, Capalba Qld 4157. email olly@ats.com.au

Sparring with Shadows. By Archimede Fusillo, Penguin Books Australia, 1997.

A well written fiction story of growing up between two cultures. The main character, David Martinesi, is a 15 year old, first generation Italian Australian growing up in the inner suburbs and trying to come to terms with his background. Labelled a 'wog' and a 'stay at home', David is waiting for change. He is also fighting with the shadows cast by his Italian upbringing and the ties to his culture. Things change when David is befriended by Nathan, the tough kid at school, and Nathan's friend Ralph. As the friendship develops, David learns the truth about Nathan's life and the tragic consequences for Ralph, while finally becoming comfortable with himself and his family's culture.

The author, Archimede Fusillo, was born in Melbourne in 1962. He has worked as a secondary school teacher for many years and also has an extensive background in writing. He has had numerous works published, including two children's books and over 40 short stories in many literary magazines, journals and anthologies, winning 15 awards or shortlistings since 1984. Fusillo is also editor of the Alfa Romeo magazine *Il Quadrifoglio*.

The book is available in most bookshops at \$12.95.



Reluctant Italians? By Alan Mayne, Dante Alighieri Society, Melbourne, 1997.

Why reluctant? Three themes run through this history of the oldest Dante Alighieri Society in the English-speaking world. The most important, which also forms the permanent background to the story, is the cultural history of Italy. The second is an understanding of that culture – whether it can be divorced from the context of its people developing through time and transposed as an immigrant community. By implication, this raises the question as to whether or not *italianità* is an occasion for cultural icons and socialising or whether it requires community engagement – and in fact, need the two be mutually exclusive? The third theme concerns the setting for this story – Melbourne, Australia.

Every city has its own unique nature – some such as Sydney are blessed by a dramatic physical environment; in others such as Rome there is a rich *tiramisu* of layers of history. Melbourne has neither of these; instead, from the time of the Gold Rushes, it built a prosperous middle class society soon noted for its cultural curiosity, as well as the search for respectability. The English concept of a 'Home', as a fundamental of society prevailed, but French and German cultures were also popular models. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the colonial city had already widely adopted the *italianate* style, much of which remains to this day. It can be seen in buildings such as the old Treasury or the Exhibition, and miles of arrow-like streets flowing between facades of neo-renaissance architraves, scrolls and urns. The new theatres were soon filled with the music of Rossini, Donizetti and Verdi; in other words, Italy supplied style and culture – and through its Risorgimento, political excitement in a time of colonial liberation.

By 1895 therefore there was some fertile soil, and the seed was provided by the visit of an Italian warship the *Cristoforo Colombo*, with minor royalty in its crew. As Alan Mayne succinctly tells the story, *italianità* became part of the social élite's range of activities, and the Dante Alighieri Society was founded in 1896 under the patronage of the State Governor. Nevertheless these activities were seen as almost dilettante – promotion and active cultural participation seemed distinctly secondary to the more social side. Herein lay one aspect of reluctance; for in those times of naïve racism, it was the Italy

of high culture, of the stage and of painting, not of the dark, peasant immigrant seen on the street, that attracted interest. Without continued fertilisation that interest was reduced to the purely social, and the reluctance to fully engage with the whole range of Italian experience caused the Society's first fading.

A revival in the Society's fortunes in fact came into play with the second phase of the Society's history and again a visiting warship, the *Raimondo Montecuccoli* in 1938, came to symbolise this renewed interest in *italianità*. Then, the new underlying tensions were political, as the small Italian community played out in miniature the issues of Fascist Italy. The promotion of Italian language and culture again became compromised with the outbreak of World War II and the subsequent suspension of the activities of the Dante Alighieri Society.

The Society commenced again in the post-war period, this time after substantial Italian immigration and following the rise of the first generation born in Melbourne. Alan Mayne traces through the continual balancing acts, showing how the Society acts both as a catalyst for and a direct promoter of *italianità*. He notes the triumph of the spread of Italian language teaching up to university level, co-existing with tensions over the Society's own role. However, it has not succumbed, and we may hope that any reluctance that might appear in the future will be merely that of ordinary and temporary human inertia – after all it is very Italian to say '*dolce far niente*'.

This history illustrates many aspects of why Melbourne is one of the examples of multicultural success, and how *italianità* has been, from architecture to Lygon St., one of the richer contributions.

Felice Rocca



Italian Consul General Pasquale Corte, founder of the Melbourne branch of the Dante Alighieri Society.