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The *IHS 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.

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FRONT COVER:

Italian musicians from Basilicata, possibly members of Labattaglia String Band, were engaged to play at this race meeting at Deniliquin race-course, New South Wales, c1910.

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COMMUNITY AND CHURCH: Italians in South Australia in the early post-war years

by Monica Tolcvay

Monica Tolcvay is an Honours student in the Italian Section at Flinders University, Adelaide. This paper presents the results of some of her research for her thesis on the Italian community in South Australia and on the activities in the community of newly arrived clergy in the first two decades after World War II. Her supervisor is Dr Desmond O'Connor.

The number of Italians in Australia increased dramatically in the mass migration period after World War II, growing more than eightfold from 33,632 at the time of the 1947 census to 289,476 in 1971. The Catholic Church, with its strong Anglo-Celtic roots, was not prepared for this major shift in the ethnic composition of its parishioners. Many parish priests were hesitant about accommodating the particular spiritual needs of the new non-English-speaking Italians who were turning up at their church and who were accustomed to a way of worshipping that was far less personal and private and much more an expression of social, historical and cultural roots.

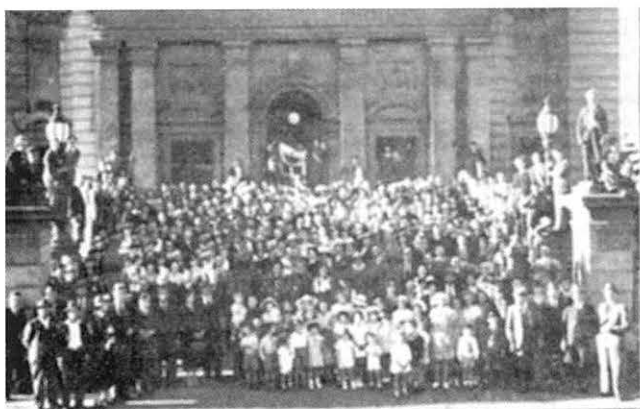
As early as 1939 the Italian presence in Australia had been considered an ecclesiastical 'problem', which, according to B.A. Santamaria, could only be solved if the Italians were urged to assimilate.¹ At the war's end, the Archbishop of Adelaide, Matthew Beovich, much to his credit, realised that the presence of Italian-speaking priests was essential if the local Catholic Church was to care for the spiritual welfare of Italian migrants.

It was in 1946 that South Australia received a permanent Italian-speaking priest, Fr Paul

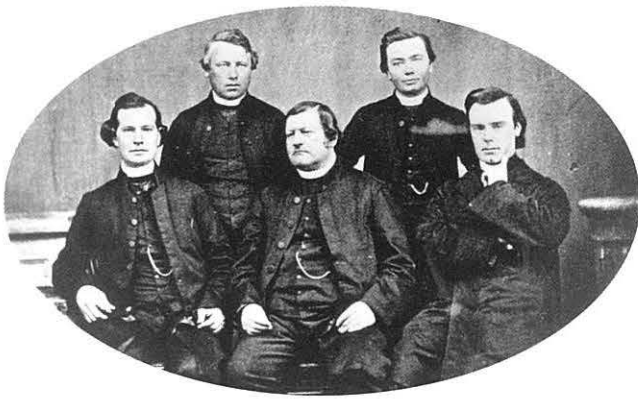
Zolin, whose mission it was to care for migrants. Fr Zolin, however, was not the first Italian priest to arrive in Adelaide. As early as 1846 Luigi Pesciaroli and Maurizio Lencioni, two Italian Passionist priests, arrived at Port Adelaide and began their ministry, Pesciaroli at Mount Baker and Lencioni in the Adelaide township.² Before the arrival of Fr Zolin, only two other Italian priests had lived in South Australia. They were Fr Aristide Gandolfi, who arrived in 1881 and was appointed to the Goodwood parish two years later, and Fr Giuseppe Minetti, who arrived in 1913 and spent some time in Salisbury, Birdwood and Brighton.³

Prior to Fr Zolin's arrival, Fr Ugo Modotti, a Jesuit priest from Melbourne, had made periodical visits to South Australia tending to the spiritual needs of Italian migrants. This, however, was not enough for Archbishop Beovich, who in 1944 wrote in his diary: 'We need an Italian-speaking priest who would live in Adelaide and spend each year giving missions to the Italians in SA.'⁴ He voiced his concerns at a meeting with the Apostolic Delegate, Mons. John Panico,⁵ who said that he would arrange for an Italian-speaking Salesian from the USA to go to Brooklyn Park, a suburb on the western side of the city in a market garden area where Italians had begun to settle before the war.⁶

Panico's 'Italian-speaking priest', Fr Zolin, spent three years, 1946-1949, caring for Adelaide's Italian migrants. In 1948 Fr Zolin wrote a report of the work he had performed during his time in Adelaide.⁷ The report highlights the efforts he made to visit Italian families, administer the sacraments and offer his services as an interpreter and translator. He travelled not only around Adelaide and the suburbs but also to country areas where Italians had settled, such as Waikerie, Tailem Bend, Jervois and Port Pirie. In his ministry he encountered the many problems



Members of the Italian community in Adelaide gathered to farewell Fr Modotti at the end of his mission to South Australia from 24 February to 4 March 1940. From L'Angelo della Famiglia bulletin, April 1940.



*Passionist priests in Adelaide, c1860.
Father Maurizio Lencioni in the centre.*
Courtesy Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide.

that the Italians faced in post-war South Australia. An Italian consulate had not yet been re-opened in Adelaide nor were there any Italian doctors or lawyers who could provide the community with the necessary bilingual assistance. Furthermore, Catholic parishes made no provision for *'quelle cerimonie e celebrazioni di feste in lingua italiana'*.⁸

Sensitive to the educational needs of Italian children, in 1948 Fr Zolin established a fund to provide scholarships for young Italian migrants who were commencing their Intermediate or Leaving year of school. To raise money for the scholarships dances were held at St Patrick's Hall in Grote Street, the church in the heart of the city that was frequented by many of the Italians who were beginning to arrive in increasing numbers.⁹

At about the time that Fr Zolin left Adelaide, a Passionist priest, Fr Germano Madonna, arrived in South Australia and soon began work similar to Fr Zolin's. Although he did not come to Adelaide to work specifically with Italians, it is clear from a letter written by the Passionist Provincial, Fr Alphonsus, that, given the need at the time, he soon took on the role of pastor to the Italian community.¹⁰ Fr Germano heard confessions, said the Italian Mass every Sunday at St Patrick's, took care of Italian organisations, and visited the sick and those in need.¹¹ He organised various social events including a number of picnics at McLaren Vale, south of Adelaide. One such picnic was held in 1949 when the Grand Opera Company visited Adelaide as part of their Australian tour.¹²

In 1949 Archbishop Beovich invited the Capuchins to South Australia to replace Fr Zolin. He wrote a letter to Fr Anastasio, the Capuchin

Provincial, advising that 'the Rev. Father Zolin will be relinquishing care of the Italians here very shortly and I am most anxious that an Italian priest or priests should succeed him in the work'.¹³ In December of that year the Archbishop formally requested that one or two Capuchins be sent to Adelaide.

The first Capuchin, Fr Nicola Simonazzi, arrived in 1950. He lived with the Passionist Fathers at Glen Osmond, where Fr Germano was living, until his house in the north-east suburb of Paradise was vacated. The two priests became good friends and worked together providing missions, saying Mass in Italian and organising gatherings, both religious and social. Fr Germano continued to say Mass at St Patrick's while Fr Nicola attended to the religious needs of the increasing number of Italians settling in the north-eastern suburbs of Payneham, Campbelltown and Athelstone, celebrating Mass first at Hectorville parish church and subsequently in a room at the Campbelltown Council Chambers. In May 1950 they together conducted their first mission in Thebarton, west of Adelaide, at the request of the parish priest, Fr Smyth. Other missions were held at Tailem Bend, Hectorville, St Patrick's and Flinders Park.¹⁴



Father Nicola Simonazzi, c1960.

One of the first religious events that Frs Germano and Nicola organised was a celebration for the canonisation of St Maria Goretti. Hundreds of Italians attended the ceremony in 1950, held in the Passionists' Church at Glen Osmond, at which the Italian choir sang hymns and children paraded in white clothes and regional costumes. The event was also celebrated with a concert in the Australia Hall, Angus Street, Adelaide. In September 1950 the two priests travelled together to Port Pirie to celebrate the Mass for the feast of the Madonna dei Martiri and took part in the procession.¹⁵



The first committee of the Italian Catholic Welfare Association, 1953. Front row from left: Silvio Genovese, Fr Nicola Simonazzi, Michele Bini (President), and Fr Germano Madonna.

By 1953 the Italian population in South Australia had increased to ten thousand. With two Capuchins priests, Fr Nicola Simonazzi and Fr Alfonso Panciroli, now living in Adelaide, it was decided to build an 'Italian' church in the north-eastern suburbs. On a 4 acre market-garden block at Campbelltown (now Newton), that had been cleared by Fr Nicola and Fr Alfonso, members of the Italian community offered their skills and their time to erect the church, named after St Francis of Assisi, which was opened on 4 October 1953, on the feast day of Italy's patron saint. A crowd of over 3000 people attended the spectacular opening, with the Italian, Papal and the Australian flags flying high. In attendance were Archbishop Beovich, the head of the Italian Legation in Australia Dr Silvio Daneo, Melbourne Consul Luca Dainelli, the recently appointed South Australian Vice Consul Miss Elena Rubeo, the South Australian Opposition Leader the Hon. Mr Walsh and many other dignitaries. During the ceremony there were confirmations and Benediction followed by several speeches.¹⁶ A telegram was even sent by the future Pope Paul VI congratulating the Italian community on their achievement: *'Inaugurandosi chiesa San Francesco per gli italiani Adelaide sua Santità augura frutti vita cristiana apostolato mentre benedice di cuore presenti cerimonia.'*¹⁷ On the occasion of the inauguration of St Francis' church for the Italians of Adelaide, His Holiness sends his wishes for a fruitful Christian life and His blessing to the participants at the ceremony.



The house purchased by CIWA in 1953 in Carrington Street, Adelaide. In 1957 it was demolished and a hall was built in its place.



Fr Germano Madonna (front row, third from right) and Fr Nicola Simonazzi (back row, first from left) with members of the CIWA at a picnic at McLaren Vale, c1953.

Before the arrival of the Capuchins, Fr Germano, in 1949, had begun what became known as the Catholic Italian Welfare Association (CIWA), whose committee consisted of eleven members chosen by Fr Germano. The President was Michele Bini, vice-President Gino Bendo, Treasurer Silvio Genovese, vice-Treasurer Tullio Gazzola, Secretary Danilo Della Flora and vice Secretary Silvio Rossin. In 1952 the CIWA became an incorporated association and adopted a constitution. During that same year, with the financial help of the Archbishop, the committee purchased a house in Carrington Street, in the heart of Adelaide. The house served as a meeting room for the committee and as an office for the Capuchins. The rear of the house was leased to the Rossin family, whose rent helped to repay the loan. The aims of the CIWA were to promote the spiritual well being and the continuity of the Catholic faith amongst Italian migrants and to help those in need.¹⁸ At that time the many newly-arrived single young Italian men living in the West-End of the city had little to do on a Sunday. The CIWA provided for their social needs by organising Sunday evening dances, which were held each week at St Patrick's Hall or the Cathedral Hall. These dances, the Association's main source of income, were advertised in Adelaide's Catholic newspaper, the *Southern Cross*, in a column entitled *L'angolo degli italiani*.

In 1957 the CIWA decided that it was time for the Italian community to have its own centre in which to hold its social functions. Once again the committee turned to the Archbishop for help, since the Association had very little money. Archbishop Beovich wrote to the Mortgage Department of the Savings Bank of SA saying that he would be prepared to support a loan of 16,000 pounds by guarantee of an amount up to 5,000 pounds. He was quite confident that the Association would be able to repay the loan, as a letter he wrote at the time shows: 'Judging by what they have done over the past five years, I feel that they will meet their commitments. With a hall of their own they will not only be able to increase their activities and good work, but also their own income'.¹⁹

The CIWA hall was opened on 28 September 1958 on the site of the original house in Carrington Street. In his opening speech the President of the CIWA, Silvio Genovese, dedicated the construction of the hall to the Italian pioneers



Blessing of the foundation stone of the new hall, 18 May 1958. Standing are the Archbishop of Adelaide, His Grace Matthew Beovich and the president of the CIWA, Silvio Genovese. Seated from left: Mons. Vincent Tiggeman, the Italian Vice-Consul to South Australia Elena Rubeo and Michele Bini.



Laying the foundation stone of the Italian Centre in Carrington Street, Adelaide, 18 May 1958, by Archbishop Beovich.

of South Australia. Archbishop Beovich thought that it was a 'good meeting'²⁰ and that the Italians should be 'proud of this centre and, please God, in the years to come it will do untold good'.²¹ After the building of the hall, however, the CIWA entered a period of financial crisis. It was not able to extinguish its debt, the police had banned the Association's main income, the Sunday night dances, and there was a lack of young new members.²² On 18 March 1963 a meeting of trustees and secretaries was held. Finding that there was also a lack of enthusiasm amongst members, they asked the Archbishop if they could alter the constitution, removing all reference to the Catholic Church, and approach other clubs to amalgamate with them. Archbishop Beovich agreed that there was no alternative but to approve the proposals. In 1965 the CIWA amalgamated with the local soccer club, Juventus

United, and with the sports and social club, Lega Italiana, to form the Italian-Australian Centre Inc.²³

In the first two decades after the war, when the Italian population increased twenty-fold from just 2,428 (in 1947) to 26,106 (in 1961), the Italian missionaries Fr Zolin, Fr Germano and the Capuchins played an important role in providing Italians in Adelaide with the necessary spiritual care, while the CIWA, in addition, offered the community a much needed social and cultural focal point. By the mid-1960s other Italian clergy, including the Scalabrinian order, had arrived in Adelaide to assist with the missionary work, and various clubs and associations were being formed to meet the social needs of individual groups that were eager to maintain and foster their regional identity.

NOTES

¹ B.A. Santamaria, 'The Italian Problem in Australia', *The Australasian Catholic Record*, Vol. XVI, No. 4, 1939. Forty years later Michael Kelly, in an article entitled 'Problems associated with a parish comprised of Australians of Italian and Irish descent', claimed that Italians 'must be actively prepared to adapt and learn from the many riches of the Australian way of life' and must realise that they are 'in a new country and that sometimes certain devotional practices are no longer viable on the community level' *The Australasian Catholic Record*, Vol. LVI, No.1, 1979, pp. 30-39. See also (ibid., pp. 3-10) the incisive article by Frank W. Lewins, 'The Italian Problem in Australia: Forty Years Later', and the paper by Adriano Pittarello 'Understanding Italian Religiousness', in Gaetano Rando and Michael Arrighi (eds), *Italians in Australia, Historical and Social Perspectives*, Wollongong NSW, Dept of Modern Languages, University of Wollongong, 1993, pp. 178-196.

The Italian migrant presence in the American Catholic Church had been labelled a 'problem' even in the Nineteenth Century. See Robert Anthony Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street. Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1985, p. 54.

² D. O'Connor, *No need to be afraid. Italian settlers in South Australia between 1839 and the second world war*, Kent Town SA, Wakefield Press, 1996, pp. 25-26.

³ *Ibid.*, p.131.

⁴ Archbishop Beovich's Diaries, 8 November 1944, p.140, Catholic Archives, Adelaide.

⁵ For further information on Mons. Panico and Italian missionaries see A. Cappello, 'Capuchins or Jesuits', *The Italian Historical Society Journal*, vol 4, July - December 1996, no 2, pp. 5-10

⁶ Archbishop Beovich's Diaries, 8 November 1944, p.140.

⁷ I am grateful to Fr Alan McDonald of the Salesian Order, Brooklyn Park, for making available to me Fr Paul Zolin's typescript.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Report by Fr Paul Zolin, 15 November 1948, p.21.

⁹ Pamphlet and flier, Box 153, Italians 1944-1958, folder 1, Catholic Archives, Adelaide.

¹⁰ Letter from Fr Alphonsus (CP), Provincial, to Archbishop Beovich, 9 January 1950, Box 166, Passionist Fathers, 1921-1980, folder 2, Catholic Archives, Adelaide.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Michele Bini, interviewed 4 June 1999.

¹³ Letter from Archbishop Beovich to Fr Anastasio Paoletti, 19 May 1949, Box 197, Capuchin Fathers 1949-1960, Catholic Archives, Adelaide.

¹⁴ 'La missione dei Padri Cappuccini in Adelaide', SA, p.4, Box 14, Folio 8, Capuchin Friars Australia, Provincial Archives.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.4-5. For a more detailed account of the origins of the Madonna dei Martiri festival at Port Pirie, see A. Paganoni, and D. O'Connor, *Se la processione va bene... Religiosità popolare italiana nel Sud Australia*, Rome, Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1999.

¹⁶ 'La missione dei Padri Cappuccini in Adelaide', *op cit.*, Apertura della nuova chiesa di San Francesco ad Adelaide.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Telegram from Giovanni Battista Montini, Prosegretario, to Capuchin Friars, 30 September 1953.

¹⁸ Constitution of the Catholic Italian Welfare Association Inc., obtained from Mons. V. Tiggeman, Adelaide.

¹⁹ Letter from Archbishop Beovich to the Manager of the Mortgage Department of the Savings Bank of SA, 18 July 1957, Box 330, CIWA 1952-1988, Catholic Archives, Adelaide.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Archbishop Beovich's Diaries, 28 September 1958.

²¹ Opening speech at the CIWA, 28 September 1958, recorded by John Genovese.

²² 'La comunità italiana di Adelaide', *La Fiamma*, Supplement, October 1963, p. 54.

²³ SA State Records, GRG 24/6/520/1953, letter of confirmation of amalgamation, 12 Nov. 1965. Juventus began as the Savoia Club in 1940 and would later become Adelaide City. The Lega Italiana, founded in 1954 as the Lega Giuliano Dalmata by a group of refugees from Istria, Dalmatia and Fiume, had by the early 1960s become a fully inter-regional organisation that was an active fundraiser in the community. For further details see *La Fiamma*, Oct. 1963, cit., p. 58.

**‘Mr Foster was noble enough to defend our rights,
often getting himself into difficult situations’:
One man’s extraordinary relationship with his Italian POWs**

by John Hall

John Hall is undertaking PhD research on Italian POWs in the Inverell area of northern NSW at the University of New England (UNE), Armidale. This is another interesting article about the relationship between Australians and Italian Prisoners of War. Two other articles by Hall on Italian POWs were published in the January-June 1997 [Vol. 5, No.1] and January-December 1998 [Vol. 6, Nos. 1-2] issues of the IHS Journal.

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the Australian War Memorial whose financial support enabled the gathering of archival material used in this article. He also acknowledges the assistance of members of the Foster family – Anne and Lionel Finlay, Heather Radin and Nancy Finlay.

During the last years of the Second World War, one farmer’s actions were to have a profound effect on the lives of the Italian prisoners of war (POWs) he employed on his property in north-western New South Wales. In an amazing series of episodes, Frank Foster’s attitudes and actions challenged the established prejudices of a small rural district and the wider community. In many respects, Foster’s actions were unique, and must have caused him and his family to question who was the actual enemy during the war – the Italian soldiers he employed or his fellow citizens.

Frank Courtland Foster was born in 1892. He served with distinction at Anzac Cove and later in France, receiving the Gallipoli Star and the Meritorious Service Medal. After the war, Foster returned to Australia with his new Scottish wife, Jessica. They were granted a Soldier Settler’s block first near Cowra, then moved to ‘Garnock’, approximately 30 kilometres west of Gunnedah. By the outbreak of the Second World War, Frank had purchased another block a few kilometres west of ‘Garnock’. Together, the two properties occupied over 1850 acres (750 hectares), operated



POW quarters (right) on one of the Foster properties. Farmers were obliged to supply suitable accommodation. Courtesy of Mrs A. Finlay.

only by Foster, three of his four daughters and his son-in-law.¹

While Frank was foremost a farmer, his sense of duty saw him enlist in 1941, as a driver in the 8th Garrison Battalion, based at Newcastle. Meanwhile, 'Garnock' was left in the hands of two of his daughters, Jean (aged 16) and Heather (aged 17). *The Land* newspaper was so impressed with this situation that a January 1942 article proudly proclaimed: 'Girls Run 900-acre Farm as Their "Digger" Father Re-enlists'. However, the accompanying photograph of Frank and his two smiling daughters did not reveal the hard work that the girls had to do. Heather remembers that she and her sister took 'turns to farm all day and night', and were 'too afraid to turn off the tractor because they might not have been able to restart it'.²

In 1942 Frank was discharged from the army after the death of his wife and returned to his Gunnedah farms. Meanwhile, by mid 1943, a rural labour scheme involving Italian POWs had been initiated by the Commonwealth Government.³ Due to the contentious and radical nature of the scheme — unguarded enemy prisoners, living on the property and working with minimal daily supervision by the farmer — the government was keen not to attract opposition to the plan. After each district was chosen and enough applications for POW labour had been received, a small Army contingent quietly set up their headquarters in the town.

The first Prisoner of War Control Centre (PWCC) in Australia opened at Coonabarabran, NSW in June 1943. Thereafter, other PWCCs soon became established in districts where rural labour was scarce. The Gunnedah PWCC, the twenty-seventh in the state, was established in June 1944, and was allocated a quota of 100 POWs.⁴ Frank Foster was one of the first farmers in the district to apply for, and receive, prisoner labour. Family members believe Frank employed the Italians 'for financial reasons', although the shortage of personnel for farmwork was probably also a factor in the final decision.⁵ Like many other Australian families preparing to greet their new workers, the Foster family were 'concerned and nervous [and] viewed their [the POWs] coming with much trepidation.' However, this uneasiness soon evaporated as Frank and his family recognised the Italians to be 'personable, respectful, hard working', and soon 'the Italians' respect was reciprocated'.⁶

In the months following the placement of the prisoners, work on the Foster farms proceeded without trouble. In a questionnaire completed by Foster in October 1944 which was designed to ensure prisoners were engaged in genuine rural work rather than trivial jobs such as gardening or improvements to homesteads, he stated his three POWs were erecting their living quarters as well as undertaking a range of jobs including fence repairs, feeding stock, milking cows, drainage work to prevent soil erosion and erecting pig sties. Future tasks for the Italians included 'post splitting for fencing ... clearing for cultivation, harvest work, hay making.' All of these tasks were approved by the authorities.⁷



The staff of the Gunnedah PWCC. Front row, left: Joe Radin, the centre's interpreter. Staff at each PWCC only numbered about seven.
Courtesy of Mrs H. Radin.

In Gunnedah, as with other centres where prisoner labour was used, opposition appeared towards the scheme and was directed at those farmers who employed the Italians. The two main opponents were the union movement and the veteran's organisation, the Returned Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Imperial League (RSSAIL), the forerunner of the modern RSL. The RSSAIL complained about the 'freedoms' given to prisoners while they were on the farms. Although each employer was obliged to sign a 'Notice' which outlined rules and regulations, the isolation of many farms from towns meant that, in reality, the prisoners could (and often did) engage in activities which were strictly forbidden.⁸ Frank Foster would have been a member of the RSSAIL, but it is not known if he encountered any problems from his local branch. However, it was no secret that the Fosters had a 'soft spot' for Italians, since the Sergeant interpreter attached to the Gunnedah



Italian born Sergeant Joe Radin, interpreter of the Centre. Courtesy of Mrs H. Radin.

PWCC, Joe Radin, an Italian-born Australian had married Heather, Frank's daughter. Welcoming a 'foreigner' into a family would have caused tongues to wag in a small conservative town.

Unionists, too, opposed the POW scheme, alleging it was a backdoor method by the government to break down hard-fought wages and conditions for union members. Moreover, it was argued (usually by the principal union, the Australian Workers' Union or AWU) that the scheme employed cheap, foreign workers at the expense of unemployed Australian workers. The last argument does not appear to have any solid basis, since all labour, especially those in rural industries, was scarce during the war. As with the RSSAIL opposition, the AWU resistance to the Italians can partially be blamed on a degree of racism. Before and after Italy entered the war in 1940, Italians were regularly subjected to racist attacks by some Australian publications, sentiments endorsed by many Australians who considered themselves staunch and proud members of the British Empire.⁹ Frank Foster was soon to feel the wrath of such people.

During the scheme's 18 month operation in the Gunnedah district, the Fosters employed at least four prisoners: Donato Capezio, Francesco Armodio, Umberto Baldantino and Domenico D'Aloia. The bonds between Frank and his prisoners gradually became unwavering. The work ethic of the Italians particularly impressed Frank. This respect became apparent in February 1945 when Frank forwarded applications for naturalisation for three of his prisoners, Donato, Umberto and Domenico. It was a risky, some might say courageous endeavour: an Australian supporting citizenship

bids for three enemy soldiers while the war still raged would have not met with universal support in the district. The documents were initially sent to the Gunnedah PWCC, then forwarded to the Army administrator for POW affairs. The applications no longer exist, but they must have been accompanied by supporting letters of recommendation from Foster. The commanding officer of the Gunnedah PWCC stated that Foster's 'opinion of their [POWs'] character and ability is very high'. Further, the officer envisaged another use for the applications: 'While I appreciate the fact that there must be enormous difficulties in the way of fulfilment of these applications, they should be of some propaganda value'.¹⁰

The applications then proceeded through the Army bureaucracy, eventually reaching the office of the Adjutant-General in Melbourne. The decision from this office was swift and predictable:

Applications for naturalisation will not be accepted from PW held in Australia. In accordance with Art[icle] 75 of the PW Convention it is intended that all PW will be repatriated to their own countries as soon as possible after the conclusion of the peace.

A mere three weeks after forwarding the applications on to higher authorities, the Gunnedah PWCC was informed of the decision, and instructed to return the applications to the prisoners.¹¹ The prisoners' reactions are not known, but it is likely they were disappointed and crushed by the decision. However, this was not to be the last word from Foster in support of the Italians.

In March 1945, Tamworth's *Northern Daily Leader* reported that a multitude of local, state and national unions had declared the produce of a Gunnedah farm 'black' after the publication of comments by a farmer in an article on the value of Italian prisoner labour. The farmer was Frank Foster. AWU branches throughout northwestern NSW had publicly declared their vehement opposition to the POW scheme. District branches had warned employers that industrial action would occur if union members, especially shearers, were forced to work on properties which also employed Italian prisoners. However, Foster's *thoughts*, rather than his actions were the cause of the union bans.

The *Leader* story ascertained that Foster had written an article in an unnamed journal, complimenting the work of Italian POWs, while denigrating the

work ethic of Australian workers. Despite hearing that 'some of the statements ... were not made by him [Foster]' the unions decided that 'Mr Foster's denial would not be accepted.' Foster was particularly blunt and direct:

The Italians I have employed are hard-working, cheerful men, who learn quickly and do not worry about hours, but the average Australian farm worker, nowadays, works for a few days a week for 25 or 30 shillings or more a day and then knocks off. Italian war prisoners in my district and other country districts have saved the day for the farmers.¹²



This concrete and brick storage building on 'Garnock' was one of a number built by the POWs. All work had to be approved by the authorities, ensuring the POWs were not engaged in 'trivial' tasks.
Courtesy Mrs A. Finlay.

For this indiscretion, his farm's produce was declared 'black'. Unfortunately, the full content of Frank's article is unknown, but a neighbour, Pat Studdy-Clift has described the article as a letter sent to a local newspaper, in which Foster wrote that antagonism against the prisoners 'was unwarranted, that they [the prisoners] were good workers and fundamentally peace lovers'. Studdy-Clift declares Frank 'would have been much wiser not to do that because other people were losing their sons in the war'.¹³ However, Foster is remembered as always prepared to express 'his opinions rather forcefully', as well as continually defending 'his Italian prisoner employees as being decent people'.¹⁴ Others admired his 'humanitarian outlook on life, his 'Stand up and be counted' attitude'.¹⁵ Therefore, it probably comes as no surprise that Frank deliberately chose a public forum to air his views. Foster's motivation for the letter or article may never be known, but, in part, he may have openly forced the situation because of the rejection of the prisoners' applications the previous month.

Studdy-Clift remembers that Foster's stock could not be sold at the local stockyards, while another believed Frank 'was refused service by many of the local shops'.¹⁶ Whatever form the ban took, it was severe punishment for a farmer struggling in the midst of a war. It is unclear when the ban was lifted, but Gunnedah's small wartime population of only 4,200 in the town and district, and the contentious issue of prisoner labour probably ensured that some type of animosity continued towards the Fosters after the ban was cancelled.

Foster's stance was defended by an editorial in the *Leader* a few days later. Whether Foster actually said the comment 'is beside the question' asserted the newspaper. 'Have we come to the pass,' asked a clearly exasperated editor, 'where anybody who dares to express opinions contrary to trade union ideas is to be branded as a dangerous person to be punished by the boycott?' The union was also questioned why it 'did not go to the root of the matter' and take action against the Federal Labor government — who approved the POW scheme — rather than against an individual who 'had the temerity to express views unpalatable to the unions'.¹⁷ Besides dividing the local community, the incident attracted comment from other districts where the union action was publicised. A farmer near Glen Innes wrote that it was 'gratifying to read ... of [the] just treatment [by unions] meted out to Mr Foster, an employer of cheap foreign labour'.¹⁸ Years later, Donato Capezio summed up his former employer's dilemma: 'Mr Foster was noble enough to defend our rights, often getting himself into difficult situations'.¹⁹ However, the Frank Foster story did not end at this time. The regard with which Frank and his family were held by their prisoner employees becomes apparent in a series of letters written to the Foster family after the POWs had left the district.

The first to write was Umberto, who departed from the farm in early February 1945, possibly because of illness, since he wrote from Cowra, and mentions returning after 'a month of rest'. While brief, Umberto's feelings are unmistakable about his time with the Fosters: 'I am very sorry [when I] left your place ... my thought is ever there [the farm], me never forget you and your family.' [sic]²⁰ While Umberto did not see the Fosters again, the authorities were not so certain. In September 1946, while awaiting repatriation, Umberto escaped from a POW hostel in Sydney. In a circular to the NSW Police, the Army noted

that Umberto had applied (once again) 'to become a British Subject.' Another rebuff from the government may have been too much for Umberto, and he escaped. The Army, courtesy of their scrutiny of all POW correspondence, noted that Umberto had:

received a letter from F.C.FOSTER on 6 August 1946 apparently in answer to a letter from him and FOSTER is alleged to have promised PW employment for 12 months, should he obtain permission in Australia.

Umberto's freedom was short-lived — he was recaptured mid September 1946 and repatriated at the end of the year.²¹

The next letter also suggests the Fosters wrote regularly to their former POW employees. Dated May 1946, a letter from Francesco arrived, thanking Frank for his 'wellcome [sic] letter', and further requesting that promised photographs be sent 'because we like to keep them for remembrance'. Francesco, like many other POWs, thanked his one-time employer on behalf of those who had worked on the Foster properties: 'Well Mr Frank you never caused any trouble to us ... you have been always [a] very good man for us', ending with the anticipation: 'hoping to hear from you soon'.²² Another letter from Francesco confirmed that he had received the photos and asked to be forgiven if the request 'have given you any trouble'. Small talk filled the remainder of the letter, including queries about the farm. 'We think you shall have much to do without any help,' Francesco confided, then asked if a building project, started by the Italians, had been finished, 'or is it the same as we left it'.²³ The Fosters must have been busy that year replying to notes sent by the Italians, because another arrived late in July.

A letter written by Donato reveals that like many other prisoners, he taught himself to write in English. It is an example of a typical chatty letter between friends. He tells of his work in a military camp at Wagga Wagga after initially being sent to Liverpool when sent back from Gunnedah. News from Italy occupies Donato's thoughts next: 'I am displeasing [sic] after a year of expectation of news from my wife', but then continues by saying a letter from Italy had arrived and 'alls [sic] are in good health'. Notwithstanding this news, Donato tells of the despair of the conditions back in Italy. 'They [his family] are in badly [sic] condition... no more dress nor shoses [sic]', he reveals, adding that while doing 'slave-work' in Australia he

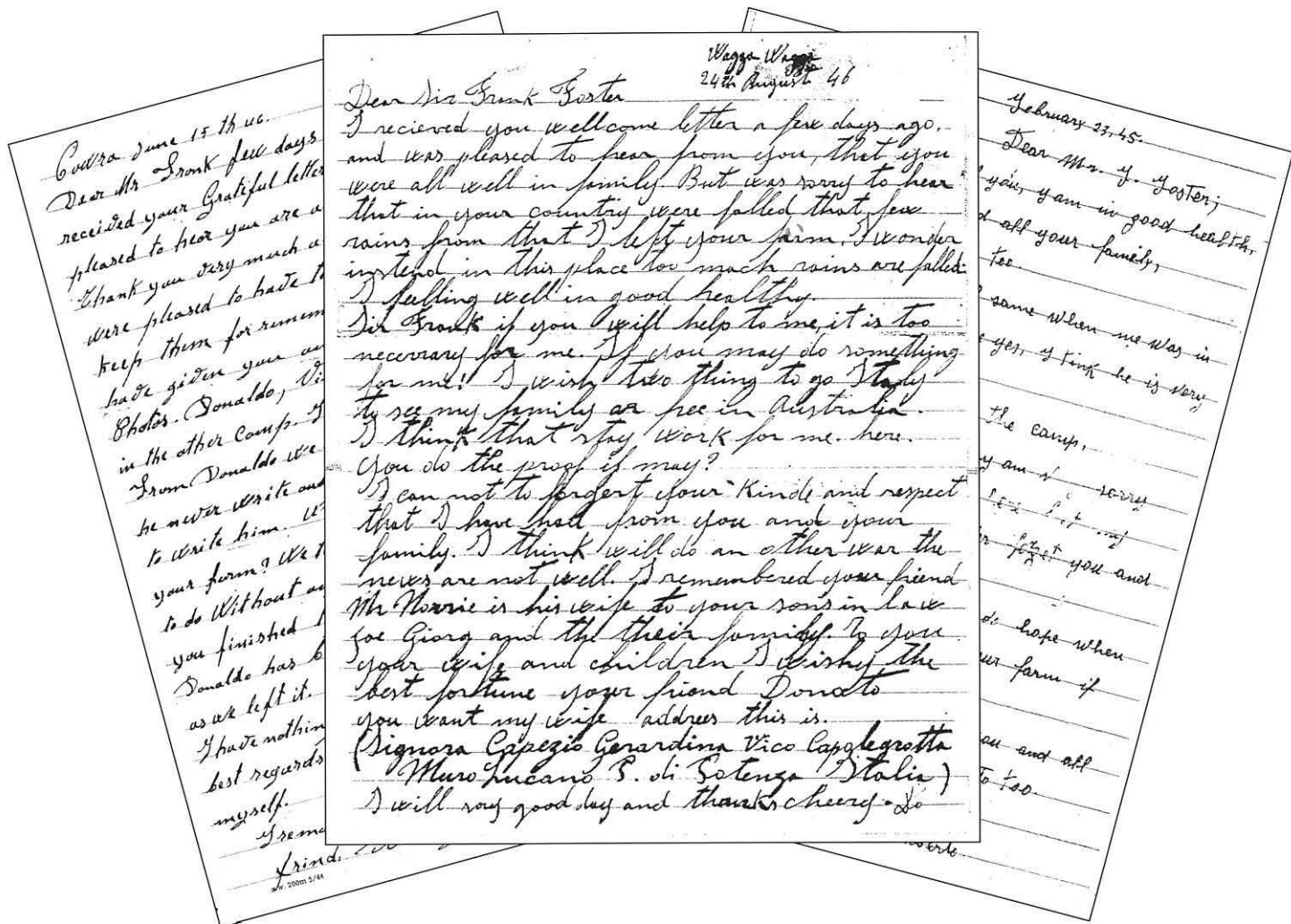
could not take care of his family.²⁴ A month later Donato was still in Wagga Wagga, and thanked Frank for his recent letter. However, he 'was sorry to hear that in your country ... few rains' had fallen, and went on to say that 'too much rains' had fallen where he was now located. Donato proceeded to then ask for a favour: while he had two wishes, the first was to return to Italy to see his family, but his main desire was to remain in Australia. Could Frank help in this respect by providing 'the proof' or arguments for his case to the authorities?²⁵ What the Fosters made of this request is not known, but previous dealings with authorities must have established that such requests were pointless.



Frank Foster (left) poses with his employee POW Don Capezio (right) and a group of school children near Gunnedah after the war.

In late November 1946, the Fosters received one last letter from Francesco. He, too, pondered his future back in Italy, explicitly stating that 'perhaps I will not stay long in Italy'. He proceeded to disclose his wish: 'I intend to return here [to Australia] when I have been allowed', and asked that the Fosters continue to write to him in Italy, because 'I will be very interesting [sic] to know Australia's future etc.' The drought at Gunnedah must have persisted, because Francesco, like Donato, sympathised with his former employer's plight, and said he was 'sorry that this year has been very bad ... I wish you no more like this'.²⁶

Frank's well-known liberal attitude towards Italians resulted in a request from another former POW some years later. Vincenzo Giancola had worked as a POW on a property next to the Foster's during the war, and while there became



Letters written by Italian POWs to their former employer Frank Foster.

friends with Francesco. From a mining camp in France, Vincenzo wrote in June 1950 asking if it was possible for Frank to help him gain a permit to work and live in Australia. Francesco had told him to write to Frank, 'as he has an excellent remembrance of his stay at your farm'.²⁷ However, Vincenzo's request could not be honoured, as Frank was already involved with the sponsorship of Donato, his former employee. It was an opportunity for Frank to realize a goal he could not achieve during the war.

Donato Capezio was born in Potenza, in Basilicata in southern Italy. A mason by trade, he was a corporal in the Italian army when captured in western Egypt in December 1940. Before arriving in Australia in April 1944, Donato had to endure over three years in an Indian POW camp. After only two months in Australia, Donato was sent to Gunnedah and was keen to escape the boredom of life behind barbed wire and use his skills. Arriving in Gunnedah, he was placed with the Fosters, and continued to work for Frank until early January 1946.²⁸ While on the properties, Donato used his considerable

building skills to help erect many farm buildings, including silos and underground water tanks.

His enthusiasm and hard work obviously made an impression on Frank, who agreed to sponsor Donato back to Australia in the late 1940s, and provide him with employment. Returning with his son, Donato worked for 18 months for Frank and his son-in-law on the Gunnedah properties. In 1950 Donato's wife and remaining children immigrated to Australia, setting up home in Gunnedah. In the early 1960s, the Capezios moved to Canberra where Donato became a prominent builder with over 30 employees (the Diplomat Hotel was one of Don's projects). As the years passed, Don also helped other members of his family immigrate to Australia. Members of the Foster family were 'treated like royalty' on visits to Canberra, and on Frank's death in 1976, the Capezio family chartered a private plane to attend his funeral as 'a measure of their respect for him and also of their success in this country'.²⁹ Although Don has since passed on, family members still live in Gunnedah and Canberra — enduring

symbols of the remarkable relationship between an Australian and his supposed enemy.

This series of incidents and correspondence between this Gunnedah farmer and his former employees should not be viewed in isolation. Many other Australians sponsored the immigration of former Italian prisoner employees after the war. The high incidence of former employers becoming benefactors suggests special relationships existed on many farms between prisoners and their 'hosts'. However, few farmers could claim to have spoken out publicly in the manner Frank Foster did in 1945. Fewer still paid the high price of censure and condemnation from fellow Australians which the Fosters endured. Frank's actions during the war, defending and supporting his Italian POWs, defied the standard thinking of the day. By sponsoring a former POW after the war, Frank was prepared to support his words with actions. While Frank's descendants indicate he was no saint, his accomplishments and beliefs in his Italian workmates as friends and potential citizens cannot be underestimated in the establishment of a multicultural Australia. Such actions surely mark him as an exceptional person who fought wartime prejudice and who was prepared to speak his mind. Many Australians are richer for his determination that labels and prejudice can be defied and overcome despite widespread opposition.

NOTES

- ¹ Mrs A.Finlay: Letter, 10 February 1998; *The Land*, 30 January 1942, p.3.
- ² *ibid*
- ³ The plan was given approval by the Australian War Cabinet on 6 April 1943: National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA) Melbourne, Series MP742/1 Item 255/21/33: 'War Cabinet Minute' 6 April 1943. The plan was based on a similar scheme operating in Britain. However, unlike this plan, the Australian government was not going to use POWs in factories and other industrial locations. The scarcity of rural labourers was viewed as critical and the prisoners were only to be used in rural industries.
- ⁴ NAA Melbourne, Series MP24/1/2 Item WOB 14 MD180A: 'Prisoners of War' file. Prisoners could be located on farms within a 60 kilometre radius of the town. PWCC staff were obliged to visit each farm on a regular basis. An interpreter (with the rank of Sergeant) accompanied each visit, checking on the prisoners and investigating any complaints from either the employers or the Italians. While the Gunnedah PWCC was allocated 100 POWs, this number was never filled. At its peak, the district had about 75 Italian POWs.
- ⁵ Pay rates for the POWs were determined by the

Geneva Convention. However, the rate of £1 per week per prisoners was well under the standard labourer's pay of approximately £4-£5 per week. The prisoners received 1/3d each day for a 5-6 day week, the remaining amount paying for administrative costs.

- ⁶ Mrs A.Finlay: Letter, 10 February 1998.
- ⁷ NAA Sydney, Series SP191/1, Item 24989 Part B: 'Review Activities POW Labour' 4 October 1944.
- ⁸ Glen Innes and District Historical Society, 'Notice to Employers of Prisoners of War', June 1944. The Notice outlined board and lodging conditions, rates of pay, hours of work and numerous security conditions.
- ⁹ It was regular for some publications to print articles that derided and ridiculed Italians. *Smith's Weekly* was perhaps the most infamous newspaper in this category — Italians were always referred to as 'wogs', 'dagos' or 'Luigi'. For the duration of the labour scheme, *Smith's* was its most vocal critic, often publishing wildly inaccurate rumours associated with the Italian POWs.
- ¹⁰ NAA Sydney, Series SP459/1, Item 489/3/3904: Letter, 12 February 1945.
- ¹¹ NAA Sydney, Series SP459/1, Item 489/3/3904: Letters, 17 February 1945; 22 February 1945; 2 March 1945.
- ¹² *Northern Daily Leader*, 17 March 1945, p.3.
- ¹³ D.Connell, *The War at Home 1939 Australia 1949*, ABC Enterprises, Sydney, 1988, p.105. The *Leader's* editorial states the offending words were written in a letter to a Sydney newspaper. An extensive search of various newspapers has failed to find the article.
- ¹⁴ Mrs A.Finlay: Letter, 10 February 1998.
- ¹⁵ Mr B.Forrest: Letter, 31 January 1998.
- ¹⁶ Mr B.Forrest: *ibid*; Pat Studdy-Clift, *Only Our Gloves On*, Courier Productions, Narrabri, 1981, p.86.
- ¹⁷ *Northern Daily Leader*, 19 March 1945, p.2.
- ¹⁸ *Glen Innes Examiner*, 22 March 1945, p.4. A total of 16 letters were sent to the *Examiner* over four weeks in February-March 1945 in a general debate over the use of POWs. Most local newspapers throughout the country printed letters for and against the Italians while they were located in rural districts. Correspondents ranged from housewives, former servicemen, union members to employers of the POWs. Readers were usually divided evenly over the merits of using the POWs, although the debates often descended to personal attacks and racist comments. Meanwhile, other readers suggested alternative jobs the prisoners could undertake rather than farmwork.
- ¹⁹ Studdy-Clift, *op.cit.*, p.86.
- ²⁰ Letter, 23 February 1945 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²¹ NAA Sydney, Series SP1714/1, Item N38319 Part 4: Letter, 4 September 1946.
- ²² Letter, 1 May 1946 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²³ Letter, 15 June 1946 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²⁴ Letter, 27 July 1946 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²⁵ Letter, 24 August 1946 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²⁶ Letter, 24 November 1946 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²⁷ Letter, 28 June 1950 (courtesy Mrs A.Finlay).
- ²⁸ NAA Melbourne, Series MP1103/1, Vol.89: 'Service and Casualty Form' Donato Capezio.
- ²⁹ Mrs A.Finlay: Letter, 10 February 1998.

RAFFAELLO 'GREAT WORKS'

The legacy of an Italian revolutionary to the history of Australia

by Angelo Cipullo

Angelo Cipullo was born in 1948 in Monterotondo near Rome. He studied at the University of Rome graduating in 1975 with a degree in Geological Sciences. He moved to Sydney the same year to take up a teaching fellowship in the School of Civil Engineering at the University of New South Wales, where he was awarded a Ph.D degree in 1984. During his distinguished professional career in both private practice and government positions in Australia, Hong Kong and USA, he was also commissioned to work in Africa for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. History is a passion which he has nurtured all his life. He and his wife now reside in Adelaide.

The reason behind the rather personalised title of this article will become clear after the following historical outline.

In 1851 gold was discovered in the creeks and gullies surrounding the present day site of Ballarat, a country town some seventy miles west of Melbourne. This discovery attracted many people from many parts of the world, all of them in search of a 'quick fortune'. Since much of the State of Victoria was Crown Land, gold could not be mined without permission and a system of licences was introduced. Struggling against bankruptcy and believing that many gold miners, locally known as 'diggers', were wealthy, the colonial government doubled the cost of the licence in early 1854 and the police intensified their inspections of the goldfields with what became known as 'licence hunts'. The miners had to pay their dues on demand and were harassed by police officials, yet they had no voice in the administration of the goldfields. It was not long before the miners organized themselves and revolted against what they felt was a harsh and oppressive government. At a meeting on 29 November 1854 the Ballarat Reform League was formed and its new flag, devised as a symbol of resistance, and hoisted up a tall flagpole was described by Carboni:

There is no flag in old Europe half so beautiful as the 'Southern Cross' of the Ballarat miners, first hoisted on the old spot, Bakery-hill. The flag is silk, blue ground, with a large silver cross, similar to the one in our southern firmament; no device or arms, but all exceedingly chaste and natural.¹

Next, pointing to the flag, Peter Lalor led the 500 or so diggers in proclaiming a solemn oath:

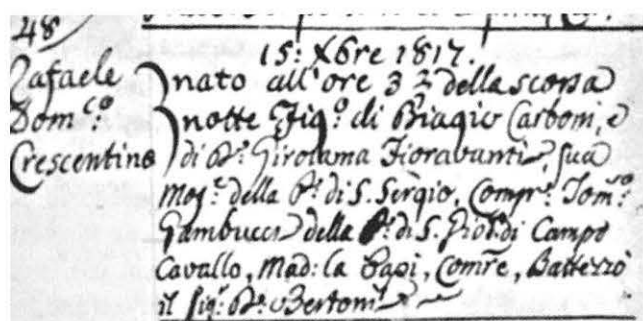
We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other, and fight to defend our rights and liberties.

On 2 December, 1854 they marched to the Eureka gold field, erected a stockade of piled-up logs and lengths of timber and let the new flag fly high above the camp: this is known today as the Eureka flag. The goldfields government Commissioner believed the local police camp to be in danger and sent for reinforcements. At about 3.30 on the morning of Sunday, 3 December at least two hundred and ninety well-armed troops attacked the stockade where about only one hundred and twenty miners were spending the night. A brief but bloody battle ensued:

Coarse cries and oaths came from the police, soldiers and rebels alike- cries of fear, of pain; shouts of rage, threats and screams of horses, the crackling roar of weapon fire. Men fell, bleeding!²

It was all over in a matter of minutes and when the firing died down five of the troopers and thirty miners lay dead among the ruins of the stockade, and a legend was born! In Australia's history the revolt of the Eureka Stockade stands as the great example of courage and resistance to authority and it has come to be regarded as a milestone in Australian democracy. The daily events, the role of the 'diggers' and the uprising have all become part of Australia's popular culture and mythology. The only full-length eyewitness account of the battle at the Eureka Stockade, the events that preceded it and its aftermath, published in Melbourne one year after the uprising, was written, to 'set the record straight' by none other than an Italian revolutionary, his name: **Raffaello Carboni**, the title of his book: **The Eureka Stockade**.

Raffaello Carboni was born in Urbino on 15 December 1817.³ After a year at the University of Urbino, Carboni went to Rome in 1838 where he found employment at the church of Santa Trinità dei Pellegrini. The church was then a centre for foreign travellers and Carboni learnt French, German, Spanish and took lessons in English from the Very Reverend W. Vincent Eyre, vice-rector of the English College. In Carboni's own words: 'It has cost me immense pains to rear my English up to the mark; but I could never master the language to perfection'. Seminary studies were not for him and when he left he was engaged as a clerk in the Torlonia Bank by the Prince Alessandro Torlonia himself. As young Italian intellectuals became inflamed by Austrian oppression in the north and French interference in Italy at large, he joined the republican-inspired movement *Giovine Italia* founded by Giuseppe Mazzini. He was a soldier in the rebellions of 1848 and in the Roman campaign of 1849 when he was wounded three times. During a subsequent self-imposed political exile he travelled to Paris, Berlin, Malta, Cologne, Frankfurt and Hanover but spent most of his time in London where he taught languages as a member of the College of Preceptors. While in London in the summer of 1852 he was attracted, like many others, by articles, particularly those of the *Illustrated London News*, on the gold discoveries in Australia and promptly set sail for Melbourne where he arrived late that year.



Extract from the parish register recording Carboni's birth.

Raffaello reached the goldfields of Ballarat soon after his arrival and worked there for nearly all of 1853, after which he took up shepherding since shepherds at that time were in short supply and hence well paid. He tells us a few things about his experiences:

One night lost the whole blessed lot of my flock. Myself, the shepherd, did not know, in the name of heavens, which way to turn. Got

among the blacks, the whole Tarrang tribe in corrobory, found natives very humane though. [Noted] the slender arms and small hands of their young girls, though the fingers be rather too long.⁴

After his experiences in shepherding and living with an Aboriginal tribe he succumbed to gold fever and returned to Ballarat where he stayed from Easter 1854 until the frightful morning of 3 December that year. Raffaello was known among the other miners with the nickname of 'Great Works' because he was always crying '*Cose Grandi*!', to underscore his passionate observation of events, laced with polyglot whimsy and occasional bombast. This aspect of Carboni's personality is evident in his form of address contained in a letter:

More et Consuetudine Romanorum Raffaello of the Ancient Roman Family de Carbonari Carbonis, who gave to Proconsuls under the Roman Republic (see Gibbons's or Niebuhr's *History of Rome*) ... To his respected W.H. Archer, Esqre, plenty of tin, heaps of gold dust, big lumps preferred of course.⁵

He was described as: 'a shrewd, restless little man, under the middle height, with reddish hair and red beard cut short, and small hazel eyes that had even a fiery twinkle beneath the broad forehead and rather shaggy eyebrows.'⁶ The following is Raffaello's own view of the unjust licensing system:

The incomprehensible, unsettled, impracticable ordinances for the abominable management of the goldfields, which ordinances are left to the discretion — that is the caprice — and to the good sense — that is the motto 'odi profanum vulgus et arceo' — and to the best judgement — that is the proverbial incapability — of all aristocratical red tape: HOW TO RULE US VAGABONDS.⁷

At the invitation of Peter Lalor, the Irish leader of the Ballarat Reform League, Raffaello started attending the miners' meetings introducing himself as follows:

Myself, Carboni Raffaello da Roma; Member of the College of Preceptors (1850), Bloomsbury Square, professor, interpreter and translator of the Italian, French, Spanish and German languages into English or vice versa, late of 4, Castle-court, Birchin-Lane, Cornhill, London; now gold-digger of Ballarat.⁸

He was an obvious spokesman for all miners of non-British origin. He spoke at the final, exasperated

meeting of the 'diggers' on 29 November with such fervor that he had to be led away from the platform by his own friends as he had launched into an 'inflammatory and suicidal rant'.⁹ He was also part of a small group that went to petition for the discontinuance of 'licence hunting'. Raffaello was put in charge of the foreign detachment and became a member of the central council of twelve miners. After drilling his troops on Saturday 2 December, Raffaello left the Stockade about midnight. At that stage there was confidence that a resolution could be obtained without bloodshed and nobody was expecting any assault from the military and the police. Raffaello slept in his tent which was very close to, but outside the Stockade. The noise of the assault of the British troops and police awakened him and he took shelter in his chimney from the erratic crossfire from both sides. In his book he gives a very accurate and vivid account of the battle, including the bayonetting atrocities which followed the taking of the Stockade. When the assault forces began to burn tents around the Stockade, he came out to protest, was arrested, then released, and spent considerable time helping the wounded. Later on that Sunday he was arrested again and later charged with high treason and tried together with other survivors. At the trial in Melbourne, eight police and military witnesses gave false evidence against him and the judge did his best

to influence the jurors towards a guilty verdict. In Raffaello's own words: 'His Honour tried the patience of the jury'.¹⁰ Raffaello was acquitted and subsequently unanimously elected to the new local miners' court at Ballarat where he served for the following six months.

There is one source which says that Raffaello was cowardly at the Stockade: 'The fiery son of Mars skulked in his chimney inside the Stockade'.¹¹ Keneally maintains 'it is obvious from all the evidence that Raffaello's tent *was* outside the Stockade, and his services to the wounded were hardly those of a coward. Nor did any witness, hostile or not, accuse him of cowardice. In fact Raffaello himself [was] amused that the Crown [Prosecutor's] witnesses... paint[ed] him as a particularly fearsome rebel leader'.¹² Carboni himself admitted that once the diggers were caught between two fires, further resistance was useless and he was caught by a police inspector at pistol point and made prisoner as he was rushing towards his tent to rescue his books and papers.¹¹ Furthermore if there had been any perception that Raffaello behaved badly at the Stockade, his election to the very first miners court would have been unlikely.¹³

He returned to Ballarat after his acquittal especially to produce his account of the events, to exonerate himself and both the dead and survivors of the Stockade, to flay colonial authorities who contributed to the general inequities which prevailed on the goldfields and to depict the crimes against humanity committed on the fateful morning of 3 December and thereafter, including the unjust detention of prisoners, himself amongst them. He knew that his presentation of the events might be dismissed because of his Italian background as it was said: 'What business have these foreign beggars to come and dig for gold on British Crown Land?'¹⁴ Some early historians tended to blame events on foreign agitators and Raffaello was described as: 'a redheaded Italian who seemed to hate all authority because he had been brought up to hate the Austrians'.¹⁵ More recent historians afford a more sympathetic attitude towards Raffaello's account. Comments on Raffaello's style range from 'commingled spredeagleism to 'a literary freak of extraordinary vividness and entertainment value' to 'it is impossible to deny him greatness as writer and 'historian'.¹⁶ In the introduction to a 1969 edition of the book the Australian historian G. Serle wrote: 'The more



Raffaello Carboni, c1850.
Courtesy State Library of Victoria

work that is done on the subject of Eureka, the more reliable Raffaello's narrative proves to be. 'None of the facts he states from observation have been disproved'.¹⁷ There is now strong agreement among historians that, whatever could be said about Raffaello's idiosyncrasies as an eyewitness account, *The Eureka Stockade* reeks of truth.¹⁸ The writer Brian Fitzpatrick as early as 1947 said of the book: 'As an accurate account of the incidents which it describes, it merits being "prescribed" reading in every Australian school, and self-prescribed reading for every Australian citizen'.¹⁹

A number of important social changes and political improvements arose out of the event at Eureka. These included: abolition of the oppressive licensing fee, greater democracy for the diggers, the right to vote for political representatives and the realisation that all colonists had to be treated in a more civilised manner. As for the original Eureka flag, it is well documented that during the attack it was hauled down from a flag pole by trooper John King and brought in triumph to the Government camp where small pieces were allowed to be torn as souvenirs. The flag remained in the King family until 1895 when it was presented to the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery where it has remained to this day.

Raffaello Carboni sailed from Australia on 18 January 1856 on the French vessel *Princess Eugénie* and after three years of travel in the East he returned to Italy via London and Paris. His linguistic knowledge afforded him positions as official interpreter for the municipalities of Milan and Genoa. He took part in the '*Expedition of the Thousand*' during which Giuseppe Garibaldi gave him captain's rank. He subsequently worked in Palermo as interpreter and translator in the office of statesman Francesco Crispi and when promoted to the position of first grade sub-commissar of war he was also entrusted with the secret correspondence between Crispi and Lord John Russell. Soon after he became assistant to Ippolito Nievo but left Sicily following the premature death of the young writer. He travelled in Europe for a time and settled in Naples for reasons of health. He wrote and published a number of plays, libretti and grand operas but none was presented on stage nor was his music publicly performed. He returned to Rome in 1870 where he died at the Saint James' Hospital on 24 October 1870, unemployed and financially embarrassed.

In his death certificate he is described as 'unmarried' and 'man of letters'. The location of his grave is unknown.²⁰

And so Raffaello Carboni, known as 'Great Works' on the antipodean goldfields, remains unknown in Italy but is remembered 'Down Under' as having been a significant part of, eyewitness to and faithful reporter on one of the most significant events in the history of Australia.

NOTES

- ¹ R. Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade with an introduction by Tom Keneally*, Melbourne University Press, 1993. Pp 67-8.
- ² B. O'Brien, *Massacre of Eureka*, 1992, p 89.
- ³ The State Archives of Turin declare that he was born on 24 June 1820. However, the records in the register of San Giorgio parish, Urbino show that he was born at 3 am on 15 December 1817 and christened by Father Bertoni the same day.
- ⁴ R. Carboni, op. cit, p 9.
- ⁵ Cited in T. Keneally's Introduction, p xiii
- ⁶ W.B. Withers, *History of Ballarat*, 1870 cited by T. Keneally, op. cit, p x.
- ⁷ R. Carboni, op. cit, p. 14.
- ⁸ *ibid* p 63.
- ⁹ T. Keneally, op. cit, pp xii-xiii.
- ¹⁰ R. Carboni, op. cit, p 161.
- ¹¹ J. Lynch, *The Story of the Eureka Stockade*, p 13, cited by G. Serle in his Introduction to Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne University Press, 1969.
- ¹² T. Keneally, op. cit, pp xvi-xvii.
- ¹³ *ibid*, p xvii.
- ¹⁴ *ibid*, p viii.
- ¹⁵ *ibid*, pp vii-ix.
- ¹⁶ *ibid*, p x.
- ¹⁷ G. Serle, op. cit, p xiv.
- ¹⁸ T. Keneally, op. cit, p x.
- ¹⁹ Cited by T. Keneally, *ibid*.
- ²⁰ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Edited by D.H. Pike, 1986, Vol 3, pp 352-353.

MY FATHER, NAZZARENO GANINO

By Joseph Ganino

Nazzareno Ganino was born 6 February 1916 in a village called Laureana di Borello, in the province of Reggio Calabria in the southern part of Italy. He was the third youngest in a family of eleven children and had six brothers and four sisters.



Nazzareno Ganino as a young soldier in 1939.

Life was hard but his childhood was happy enough as he was one to seek adventure when opportunity came his way. He grew up in the Depression years and on leaving school worked on the family farm until he was called up for national service in the Italian army in 1937. The village had only one taxi, so on the day he went to enlist some of the young men piled into the taxi and the rest stood on the running boards on the outside; the taxi hit a large pothole and all the men on the running boards were thrown off and Dad spent many weeks in hospital with a broken wrist and twenty five stitches in his head.

For his army training he was sent off to Tripoli, North Africa when he was twenty years old and it was his first time away from home. He saw his family only once more before the Second World War started, and was not to see them again until

1945. During the war he was sent to the Sabratha Division of the 86th infantry regiment where he officially held the rank of Corporal and led a squad of 12 men, cutting wire and gathering intelligence behind enemy lines. It was a dangerous job and at times he experienced fear and at other times struggled to make it back to his lines, but he always succeeded. Although he would never risk his men unnecessarily there were nearly always some casualties due to capture and death.

After the outbreak of war, supplies dwindled and it seemed that they were forgotten men in the desert, so at times they would have to shoot camels to supplement their rations. It appeared that the Germans and some Italian forces well known for their strong support of the Fascist regime were receiving preferential treatment, while at the same time the arrogance of some Italian and German commanders cost the imprisonment and lives of thousands of young Italian soldiers.

On 3 January 1941 he was wounded and captured but managed to escape a few days later with some other men; they trekked through the desert and coastal roads for days without food or water and were forced to eat weeds to survive, until found by some Italian officers, when Dad was returned to his division. On 7 December 1941 he was captured once again and after enduring nearly one and a half years of cruelty, suffering thirst and near starvation and malaria, so weak he was nearly blind and could hardly walk, he was shipped to South Africa where conditions did not improve much but at least there was plenty of water. On 13 March 1943 while being shipped from South Africa to England, the *Empress of Canada* was torpedoed by the Italian submarine *Leonardo da Vinci*. All the Italian POWs were kept below decks until all civilians and allied military personnel were evacuated. Dad could not swim and stayed on the ship while it was sinking until he was forced into the water and started to drown, but a second explosion brought him to the surface. It was only because he was wounded that he was pulled on to a raft. After being rescued he was taken to a hospital in Sierra Leone, and after recovery he was shipped to England near London where he experienced an air raid on his first night and thought that 'After going through all this I'm going to die here'. He had a loaf of bread with him and he ate it just in case! Things got better and life in England as a POW was bearable, he had plenty to eat and the people treated him well, and the monotony of camp life was broken with work trips to farms.

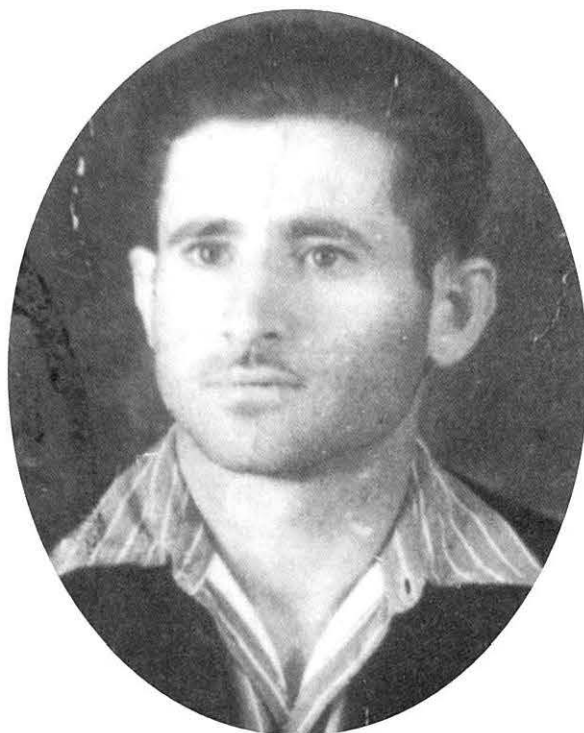
In 1945 the war was over and he was sent home, but instead of a happy home-coming he came home to a war-torn Italy of instability — as they got off the planes some people threw stones and called them traitors. (This was the gratitude he got for the years of service to his country). Although he was reunited with his family, life could not be the same, there was no longer any happiness in the village, the gaiety of his youth had gone and there was now sadness and poverty. A lot of the young men never made it home and many of his friends that he grew up with never returned; life continued and he went back to a farming life, but his health had suffered from many years of prison.

In 1946 he was introduced to Concettina Sofra, a beautiful young woman from a nearby village and after the family formalities of the day, he started to court her. Once a week he would walk six kilometres (as a short cut) through a forest which was actually a dangerous practice after the war, because of bandits roaming in the area, but this did not deter Dad because on 4 September 1947 they were married. In 1948 their first son, Carmelo, was born and in the same year Dad decided to come to Australia. He had his own land but he was still unsettled by the war and was in search of a better life although this would mean leaving his wife and son behind to join him at a later date.

On 11 September 1949 Dad arrived in Australia, on the ship *Surriento* at Port Melbourne. His new life was to start with a partnership with his brothers-in-law in the Goulburn Valley, on a property on the banks of the Broken River, in Shepparton East, where my uncles and Dad grew vegetables for the Victoria Market. My father shared a house with my uncle and his family. Work was hard and the hours long and the produce was trucked to Melbourne by the eldest brother-in-law who had migrated to Australia in the early twenties. Within a couple of years he had saved enough money to send for his wife and son who arrived in Australia on the *Toscana* on 10 September 1951. Unfortunately it was a great shock for my mother who arrived at the home-stead in darkness and was greeted by a kerosene lamp and knee-high nettles, but my mother was to endure much more than this with snakes, floods and mosquitos for many years.

The partnership lasted until about 1952 when my uncles ventured out on their own; Dad stayed on and share-farmed while holding a permanent job on a nearby orchard. He referred to his boss

as Mr Jones, an English gentleman who worked him hard but was an honest and fair man and treated Dad as one of the family. He referred to Dad as 'Frank' because he had great difficulty pronouncing 'Nazzareno' and Mrs Jones was also fond of him and kept in touch with Dad for many years after he left their employment until she passed away.



Passport photo of Nazzareno Ganino, 1949.

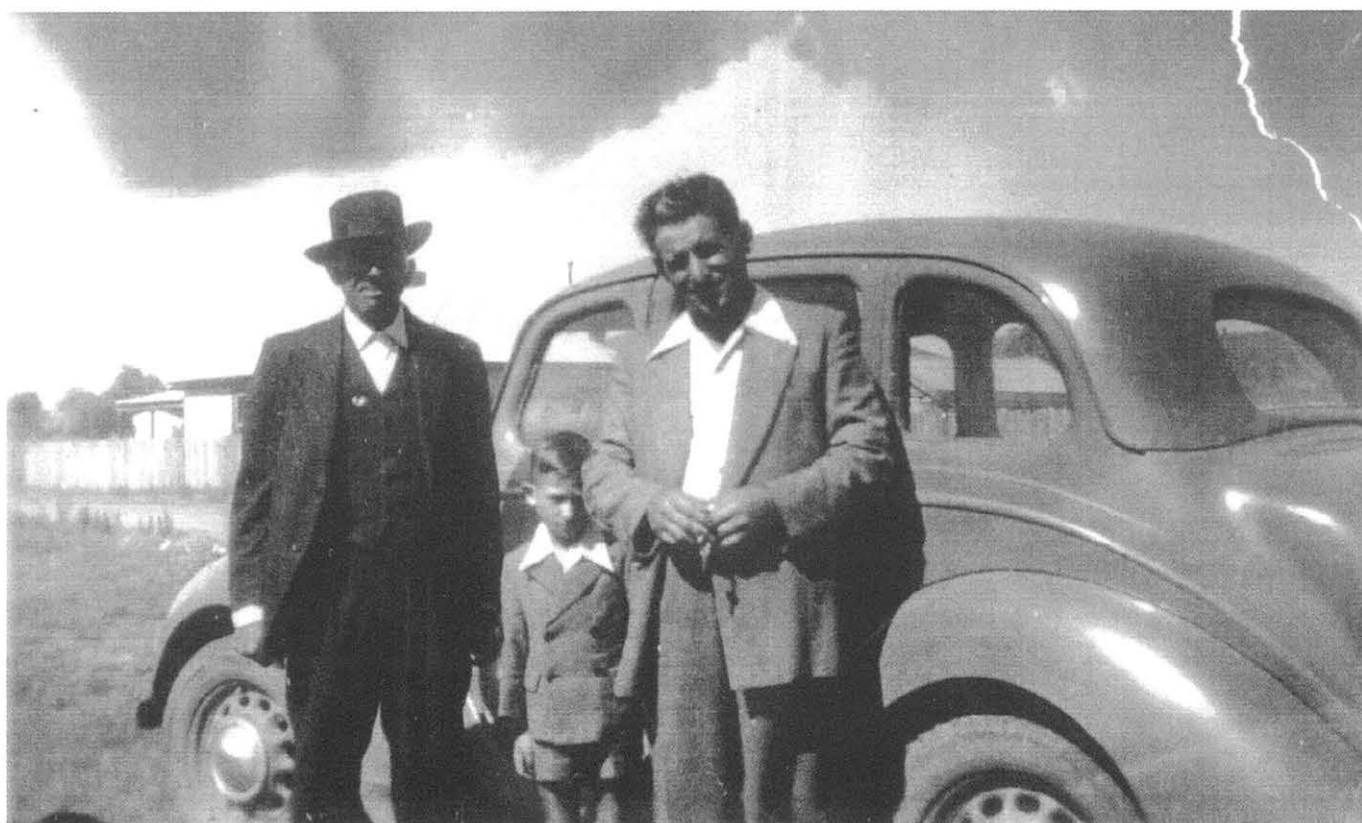


Passport photo of Concettina Ganino, nee Sofra, 1951.

In 1955 their second son Giuseppe was born. In 1956 Dad left the Jones' employment and purchased his own property on the outskirts of Shepparton. The property had once been a dairy and chicken farm; it had an old house and was quite comfortable, but it had no implements to speak of so he had to start from scratch. He planted tomatoes with the help of his wife and son who worked long and hard, and in winter he went contract pruning to supplement his income, but at least he was heading in the direction of working for himself. In 1958 disaster struck when the family home was destroyed by an electrical storm; fortunately everyone was in the kitchen due to a late dinner and this was the only room which was not destroyed by the storm. If the family had been in any other part of the house at the time they would have surely been killed. However, the rest of the house was completely destroyed, everything was lost — crops, possessions, sheds and even the family car was pinned down by a tree which had fallen across the garage. My mother was pregnant at that time. My parents carried us across the paddocks to my uncle's property in the dark, for shelter. We stayed there for a few months until Dad could afford to shift to another old house on the property in 1959, when they had their third child, Mary.

Dad struggled for years after this as he had to start all over again and my mother never recovered emotionally and was always afraid of storms. Relatives offered to help but Dad was a proud man and refused charity. Unfortunately at this stage my father's health started to deteriorate due to a recurring illness from the POW camps and my mother and brother kept the farm going while Dad was in Melbourne seeking medical attention. At 14 my brother left school and got a job to help support the family.

By 1962 my parent's fourth child, Anna was born. By 1963 Dad had made a decision to sell a portion of his land (against my mother's wishes) in order to relieve the burden on his family. Life finally started to become better and Dad started his orchard and after a while devoted all his time to the orchard. In 1971 he went back to Italy to see his family, but unfortunately he could not fulfil his promise to see his parents again, as they had passed away. By this stage the orchard was paying for itself and Dad supplied the local cannery and also supplied fruit to the Melbourne market. In 1982 he retired from running the orchard and his sons took over; he never interfered with the running of the orchard except when his beloved grapes were about to be pulled out to plant a more productive



From left: Antonio Sofra (father-in-law), Carmelo Ganino (son) and Nazzareno Ganino. Nazzareno was very proud of his first good car, c.1954

fruit; he promptly advised otherwise! Retirement did not stop Mum and Dad and they still helped to pick the fruit.

Dad always wanted to go back to Italy but Mum hated travelling so he spent his time around the orchard growing his vegetables and helping with the fruit. By the 1980s all his children were married and they had started to enjoy their grandchildren. In August, 1991 my mother passed away suddenly; she had been his partner for nearly forty-four years, she was by his side since the day they were married; through good and bad times, they worked hard and raised a family. Dad was devastated by this. He was not in good health and for a time we thought we would lose him. It took him nearly a year to recover from major surgery and a minor stroke, and he stayed with his daughter in Melbourne while recovering, but the city was not for him. He suffered a great deal not only emotionally but physically, and returned to live at home on the orchard.

My Dad was a survivor and although he lived alone for nearly eight years and at times was lonely, he was an excellent cook and looked after himself very well, and was always a little vain about his appearance. Life went on for a very proud man who refused to be a burden on any of his children

and although he was not well and at times in much pain, he rarely worried anyone. He still drove his car much to the protest of all his children; he couldn't see or hear well but managed to pass his assessments for his driving licence and claimed that his car was his freedom. Dad had a good sense of humour, he had many friends and loved a good chat and at 82 years old he still liked to help out, but sadly his tough spirit and mind were not enough to keep his old body going. He spent his 83rd birthday in hospital much to his annoyance and one week after he saw his eldest grandson go off to university. On 3 March 1999 Dad passed away, with his children by his side. He was courageous and dignified to the end, and even though he was on his deathbed he still had time for a joke and a smile.

He loved his wife and family and adored his 10 grandchildren. We can never repay Dad for what he has done for us, but the last honour we paid him was to drape his coffin with a WWII Italian flag and a bugler played 'Il Silenzio' by his graveside. Sadly he never got to see the year 2000.

We are eternally grateful to both of my parents for their love, their sacrifices, guidance and devotion. They will never be forgotten.



The Ganino Family, c.1988

NEWS

SUPPORT FOR THE SOCIETY

Readers of this Journal will recall that in the last issue we published an article on the Italian Historical Society's Photographic Collection in which we outlined our most recent initiative, the computer cataloguing of the images collection. The article made mention of the significant funds — for wages, electronic equipment, photographic copying and conservation materials — required for a project such as this. All too often, important conservation projects such as computer cataloguing are overlooked because of lack of resources. We are therefore pleased to announce that the Society was successful in acquiring two grants in 1999 which will go a considerable way to helping us in our venture.

The first of these was from *Arts Victoria* [Housing the Arts Program] towards the purchase of computer equipment; and the other from the *National Library of Australia* [Community Heritage Grants] to copy original photographs onto negative format. We are grateful to both these organisations for their support. The announcement of the 1999 Community Heritage Grants Awards was made by the Federal Minister for the Arts, Peter McGauran, at the National Library on November 3, 1999.



Lorenzo Iozzi, Collection Manager and Curator of the Italian Historical Society, receives the Community Heritage Grant Award from the Hon. Peter McGauran, Federal Minister for the Arts.

The Society has also been fortunate in the response to its call for volunteers. We now have a great team made up of valuable helpers in Tony Santospirito, Win Guata, Aida Innocente, Lianne Barbaro, Allie Dawe and Carlo Canteri. Tony has been working for a number of months on the large collection of letters covering twenty-five years of community activities of his mother Lena Santospirito. Aida is sorting out and providing summarised translations of documents in the Candela Collection. Win, Lianne, Allie and Carlo are kept very busy with computer cataloguing the general collection and other office tasks.



Volunteer Carlo Canteri and Lorenzo Iozzi discussing cataloguing procedures.

To this important group of volunteers, we add Joan and Doug Campbell, Maria Tence, Mark Donato and Anna Scariot who as I.H.S. committee members continue to give their time and expertise to the Society.

RESEARCH ON MIGRANTS FROM THE VALTELLINA REGION

Dr Flavio Lucchesi, associate Professor of Human Geography in the Faculty of Arts at the State University of Milan, is currently undertaking a study on the history of Italians who migrated from the Valtellina region in Lombardy to Australia, from the goldrushes to post-war mass migration. As part of this research Dr Lucchesi recently spent several weeks at the Italian Historical Society bringing to light some fascinating bibliographical material on the subject.

A key component of this research project is a questionnaire, which poses a range of questions to the descendants of early pioneers from villages such as Lovero, Tirano, Villa di Tirano, Grosio,

Grosotto, Sernio, Teglio, Tresivio and Vervio, from which Dr Lucchesi will undoubtedly extract material of interest for his project.

We are pleased to include with this current edition of the *IHS Journal* a copy of the questionnaire, confident that many Valtellina descendents will respond by completing the form and returning it to the Italian Historical Society. Questionnaires for first and second generation immigrants from the Valtellina are available from the Society and will be sent out on request (Ph. 9347 3555).

This is a great opportunity to participate in a thorough and important scientific research project on the immigration of Italians to Australia.

CAPPUCCINO, PLEASE!

The contribution of Australia's Italians to the development of coffee and café culture in Australia is to be represented in an exhibition at the Museum of Australia in Canberra coinciding with its opening in 2001. The curator of the exhibition Tom Heinsohn recently visited the Society to view photographs and a variety of coffee making implements in the collection. Many of the objects are from the Candela Collection, such as a coffee toaster, a coffee grinder, catalogues and letters dating from the early 1900s. *We seek the assistance of our readers to locate pre-war or 1950s coffee machines or implements brought to Australia for personal or commercial use. Please contact the Italian Historical Society on (03) 9347 3555.*

LOSS OF A FRIEND

We mourn the loss of Charles D'Aprano who passed away in November 1999. Charles was a friend of the Society whose work he supported and encouraged in his distinctly warm and colorful way. Charles was born in 1923 in Ventosa, in the Lazio region,. He emigrated to Australia in 1937, at the age of 14, leaving behind his mother and four brothers with whom he would be reunited in Australia eleven years later. In Melbourne he worked as a shop assistant, factory hand and barman before serving in the Australian army between 1942 and 1946.

During his four years in the army he was strongly influenced by left wing politics and soon after the Second World War he joined the Italia Libera Anti-Fascist Movement, which in the late forties changed the name to the Italo-Australian League. He held the position of Victorian secretary for

many years. As a member of the League, Charles was particularly active during the years of mass migration of Italians to Australia in the early 1950s. The scarcity of employment opportunities for newly arrived migrants, who were forced to spend long periods idle in migrant hostels, led to demonstrations in many States. The riot at the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre in July 1952 is remembered as the most important one. Several hundred Italians, anxious to find a job, aired their protest to the Australian authorities. Charles paid several visits to Bonegilla to discuss with the Italian migrants their rights and unmet expectations and to distribute pamphlets inciting the migrants. These activities were deemed 'subversive' and 'communist' by the Australian authorities who monitored Charles's activities for several years.



Charles D'Aprano (left) interviewing Ottavio Brida in 1980.

With the building boom in the early 1950s in Melbourne, Charles turned to building work including employment as a painter on a number of large construction jobs. In his mid-thirties he returned to his formal education and began teaching at the age of 37. He was appointed to Swinburne Institute of Technology in 1970 and taught there for 17 years. He retired as Head of Italian Studies in 1988.

Charles D'Aprano was the author of several books on topics ranging from history to politics. His most recent publications include *From Goldrush to Federation: Italian Pioneers in Victoria 1850 to 1900* [1995] and *Tears, Laughter and the Revolution* [1998].

Charles lived for many years in his beloved Carlton, where he was a very-well known identity.

He will be sadly missed by his many friends for his wit, warmth, love of humankind and passion in recording the history and contribution of his community in Australia.

We wish to thank Charles's brother, Ron D'Aprano, for the donation to the Society of several books on the history of Italian migration to Australia which belonged to Charles. They have been entered into our specialised library which can be accessed by students, researchers and the general public.

LEST WE FORGET

In our July-December 1996 issue of the *IHS Journal* (Vol. 4, No.2), we wrote of the donation to the Society by a returned Australian soldier of an exceptional item of great significance for the Italian people: an Italian Navy flag with a number of Italian military insignia sewn on to it. It was captured by some Australian soldiers in Libya in 1941, during World War II, when thousands of Italian soldiers were taken prisoner. The Society had promised to return the flag to Italy.

When the President of Italy, the Hon. Luigi Scalfaro, visited CO.AS.IT in December 1998, Sir James Gobbo, on behalf of the Italian Historical Society, handed over the flag to the President for its final safe-keeping in an Italian War Museum. It was a moving ceremony which touched the President. The flag is now permanently deposited in the historic collection of the Italian Military Headquarters in Rome.

NEED SPACE?

Co.As.It. Italian Assistance Association (our umbrella organisation) has available at competitive rates, in the heart of Italian Carlton, newly refurbished facilities for lectures, meetings, conferences, product launches, trade shows, art exhibitions and performances. The following equipment and features are included in the cost: PA system, overhead projector, TV and video recorder, whiteboard, Internet and data connection, video-conferencing output, tables and chairs, tea and coffee facilities. Detailed information and rates are available on application. Please address your enquiry to:

Gabriella Belgiovane

Telephone (03) 9347 3555

Fax (03) 93449 1063

e-mail coasit@com.au



The formal acquisition of the historic flag in the collection of the Italian Military Headquarters in Rome.

OUR ACTIVITIES

NEW MATERIAL

In the last six months the collection of the Italian Historical Society has been enriched by the donation of large numbers of photographs spanning from 1890s to 1960s.

Frank Del Monaco's passion and determination that the history and contribution of the Viggianesi musicians in general and of the Briglia family in particular be thoroughly documented, has resulted in the acquisition of a significant number of photographs of exceptional quality. The image on the front cover of this *Journal* is an example. The photographs portray children, musicians, weddings and functions; some of which require identification. We reproduce two of these images in the hope that someone will be able to assist with identification.



We appeal to the many descendants of musicians from Viggiano and Marsicovetere who subscribe to our *Journal* to assist with identification by viewing the photographs at the Society. Please contact us on (03) 9347 3555 to arrange a visit.



Many aspects of the life of Italians in Carlton, already well documented in the Society's collection, were further augmented by over 60 images depicting family gatherings, backyard activities, child's play and work. The photographs relate to many of the 'oldest' Carlton families from the Friuli region, such as the Rebeschini, Scomazzon, Sabbadini, Colautti, Vincenzotti, Romanin, Mongiat, Rigutto, Rangan, Miotto and Dozzi.

The post-war migration and settlement experience is well documented in material donated by Rosario and Maria Cicero. Rosario and his brother Gregorio arrived in Melbourne on board the *Toscana* in 1949 from Vizzini, Sicily. Rosario married by proxy Maria Frazzetto whom he 'met' for the first time in a group photograph of his eldest brother's wedding celebrated in Sicily. The material received includes photographs of Maria's proxy wedding, Rosario's voyage to Australia, arrivals of family members at Station Pier, Melbourne, work and some original documents.

Pamphlets and catalogues on exhibitions of art works by a group of Italian migrant artists in Melbourne in the 1960s were donated to the Society by sculptor Ernesto Murgo, whose works are present in many private and public collections. Murgo's *Knights* and the *Altar* wrought in metal



Rosario and Giuseppina Cicero in Rome in 1996. This was their second visit to Italy since Rosario's migration to Australia in 1949.

in the Chapel of Santa Sofia, patron saint of Kooweerup in Gippsland, Victoria, made in 1973, are a living testimony to his artistic talent. Kooweerup has had a long association with pre-war Italian migrants who settled in the area as market gardeners, in particular for the cultivation of peas and potatoes.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Society continues to be a great source of material for Australian and overseas tertiary students. Some of the topics undertaken include:

- Dialect maintenance between first and second generation Italians from the Italian region of Abruzzo
- Italian Carlton: a walking tour
- Traditional songs and music of people from the Veneto region
- Correspondence of the botanist Dr Von Mueller in the Italian Diplomatic Archives

- The voice of migrants: historical, anthropological and ethnomusicological relationships
- Australian history since 1914: memories, identity and history
- The Australian wine industry

JOINT PROJECT WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

One of the Society's most significant collections, the Santospirito Collection, formed the basis for a major grant application to the Australian Research Council, Strategic Partnership with Industry. We are pleased to inform our readers that an APAI award was granted to the University for a project which combines historical research for a PhD degree, and applied archival work. A History PhD on Mrs Santospirito's community activities will be produced, with a guide to the collection and a management and conservation plan. It is expected that work on the collection will commence in the 2000 academic year and will continue for three years.



Associate Professor Alan Mayne [centre] visit the Society with a group of History students from the University of Melbourne.

FAMILY HISTORY

WE WELCOME ENQUIRIES

If you are researching your family history and wish to share your experience (or frustrations!) with us, or you are planning a family reunion, we will be happy to publish your enquiry in the *IHS Journal*. Please write to: Italian Historical Society, 189 Faraday Street, Carlton 3053. Telephone (03) 9347 3555, Fax. (03) 9347 8269, E-mail ihsc@coasit.com.au

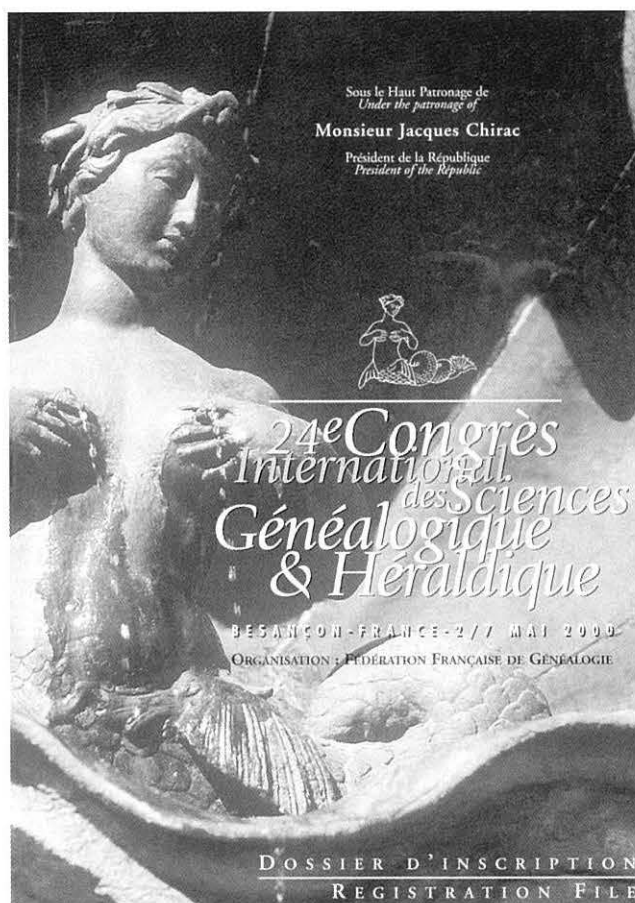
CONFERENCE TO FIND AN IRISH ANCESTOR

Many Italian pioneers in Australia married Irish women. The Catholic religion was the common link. If you are planning a trip to Ireland to research your Irish ancestors, the 10th annual family history conference *Searching for that Elusive Irish Ancestor* to be held in Belfast, Ireland, from 19-26 September 2000 seems to be a very good starting point in your research. The purpose of the conference is to offer delegates practical guided research in the main archives and repositories in Belfast and Dublin. The conference is designed to benefit family historians at all levels of their ancestral research, giving the beginner and the seasoned genealogist alike, guidance in making effective use of the resources in Ireland. Through an extensive program of lectures and workshops, delegates will receive step-by-step instruction in using the full range of documentary sources available to the family historian. The conference will also include a range of tours, social events and entertainment all at no extra cost. There will also be a post-conference tour of Scotland beginning on 26 September 2000. For further details on the conference contact: Ulster Historical Foundation, Balmoral Buildings, 12 College Square East, Belfast BT1 6 D D. Telephone 01232 332288, Fax. 01232 239885, E-mail enquiry@uhf.org.uk, Internet: www.uhf.org.uk

An interesting collection of publications ranging from the history of Ulster to the history of Irish migration to the United States and Australia is available from the Foundation. The catalogue for direct orders can be viewed at the Italian Historical Society, Tel. 03 9347 3555.

CONGRESS FOR THE SERIOUS FAMILY HISTORIAN

The 24th Congress on Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences will be held at Besançon in France, from 2nd to 7th May 2000. The purpose of the Congress is to bring together the whole of the genealogy and heraldry community on the eve of the third millennium in order to establish an inventory of world sources. The congress includes more than sixty papers, an international exhibition and a series of associated events, activities and functions. Registration and reservation forms and literature on the Congress are available from the Italian Historical Society, Tel. 03 9347 3555.



PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

This list outlines the books received by the Society by gift or purchase. These books may not necessarily be recent releases. The recommended retail price is indicated where available. These books can be viewed at the Italian Historical Society, 1st Floor, 189 Faraday Street, Carlton between 10am and 4pm Tuesday to Thursday.

Se la processione va bene... Religiosità popolare italiana nel Sud Australia

By Antonio Paganoni and Desmond O'Connor.
Centro Studi Emigrazione, Rome, 1999.

In the Italian language only.

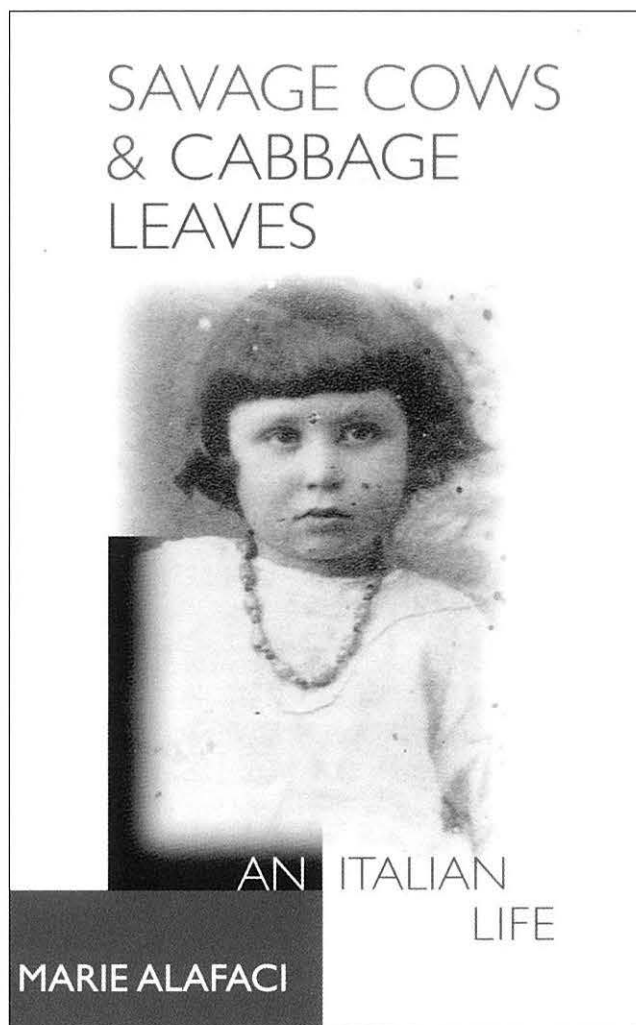
This will be of interest to those who wish to know more about the phenomenon of Italian popular religion in general. It is divided into three parts. Part one traces the presence of popular devotion both in Catholicism from its beginnings and in other religious traditions. Part two considers the religious microcosm of the various religious celebrations that have been transplanted to South Australia by Italian immigrants. The third part is devoted to an evaluation of the phenomenon, seen as an expression of the inclination to form associations in emigration and as a valid alternative to the institutional aspect of religion. It contains detailed information on 32 religious festivals celebrated annually in South Australia. \$25 plus postage (\$5.50 within South Australia and \$7.00 for other States). Available from: Italian Section, Department of Languages, Flinders University, GPO Box 2100, Adelaide SA 5001. Tel. (08) 8201 2194; email: itdjo@flinders.edu.au



Savage Cows and Cabbage Leaves: An Italian Life.

By Marie Alafaci. Hale & Iremonger, 1999.

The story of Carmela Barbaro, who arrived in Australia at a young age in the 1920s is brought to life by her niece Marie Alafaci. It is a richly woven memoir, evoking the joys and sorrows of immigrant life, resonant with the intensity of living. After five years of backbreaking poorly paid labour, Nino Barbaro can finally afford to bring his wife and young daughter Carmela, whom he has never met, from Italy to Melbourne. The promise of a new life, rich with opportunity, does not last long. The poverty and industrial unrest of the Depression, racial bigotry and internationally shifting alliances made life hard for Italians in Australia in the 1920s and 1930s. Enhancing the tumultuous events that shape the Barbaros' lives is the addition of family histories, newspaper clippings and traditional Calabrian recipes. The family's survival of kidnapping attempts, poverty, language barriers, fire bomb attacks and severe prejudice makes this book a compelling heart-rending read. Paperback, available from leading book stores.



Great Australian Chefs.

By Mietta O'Donnell and Tony Knox.

A cook book with a difference. It features a profile on fifty famous Australian chefs as well as photographs of them in action in their kitchens along with a selection of their signature recipes. Each of these chefs has made a significant contribution to food in Australia. They have all been at the cutting edge of the explosion of interest in food and dining that has taken place over the past twenty years. The author Mietta O'Donnell

is a well known author and restaurateur. Mietta is the granddaughter of Mario and Teresa Viganò who arrived in Melbourne from Milan in 1928. They established the legendary Mario's restaurant which they ran for more than thirty years. Mietta was influenced by their entertainment flair from an early age and in 1974 she started Mietta's which was until its closure in 1995 one of the most exclusive restaurants in Melbourne. The book is hardback, with 300 pages and is available from leading book stores at \$39.95.



Mario Viganò [centre] and head-waiter Armando taste chef Pietro Grossi's food at Mario's restaurant in c1961. Pietro Grossi later worked for Rinaldo Massoni at Tolarno in St. Kilda and in c1983 opened his own famous restaurant in South Yarra. Recently the Grossi family acquired the exclusive Florentino which is operated by Pietro's son, Guy Grossi, a great chef like his father.

