



# ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

January – June 2002  
VOLUME 10, No. 1



**ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
JOURNAL**

**January – June 2002  
Volume 10, No. 1**

**ISSN 1321-3881**

The editorial sub-committee for this edition was:  
Joan Campbell, Doug Campbell, Lorenzo Iozzi, Laura Mecca, Elsa Paulin.

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The Journal is published twice a year. Subscription is \$30.00 annually [GST inclusive]. This entitles you to membership of the Italian Historical Society. The Society is part of Co.As.It [Italian Assistance Association] and is governed by the rules and regulations of Co.As.It.

Subscriptions may be sent to:

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**FRONT COVER:**

*Giorgio Mangiamela in front of the flag display of participating countries at the 1965 Cannes Film Festival where his film Clay was shown. This was one of the first Australian films to be shown at Cannes. [See essay page 17].*

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# ITALIAN ART IN SYDNEY: GUIDO ZULIANI AND PETER MELOCCO, TWO INTERWOVEN STORIES OF EMIGRATION AND ENTERPRISE

by  
Anne Reynolds

*Anne Reynolds is Associate Professor in the Department of Italian Studies at the University of Sydney. Anne is the author of a recent study of Italians in Leichhardt, A Thematic History of Italy-born in Leichhardt and the Leichhardt Municipality, commissioned by Leichhardt Council and funded by the Heritage Office of NSW. This is the fourth article based on this study published in the IHS Journal. The three previous articles were published in the July-December 2001 issue (Vol. 9, No. 2).*

**G**uido Zuliani was born on 22 June 1927 in Spilimbergo, near Udine in Northern Italy, a town known for its celebrated School of Mosaics, established in 1922 and drawing on a centuries' old local tradition in mosaic work. Emigrés from Spilimbergo transported these traditions throughout the Italian diaspora. From the age of fourteen, Guido Zuliani attended the School for two years, learning by day the practical skills of the craft of mosaic which involved the use of marble, enamel and coloured stones from the Tagliamento River at Spilimbergo. In the evenings, Guido followed design classes to learn the required theoretical skills. He also began attending classes conducted by the artist Umberto Martina who trained with Ettore Tito.

At the age of sixteen, Guido gave up mosaic work and devoted himself wholly to drawing and painting as a pupil of the master, Martina. He accompanied Martina to portrait sittings, and earned money from sketches and portraits completed between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one. In 1948 Guido took part in an important exhibition of seven artists in Spilimbergo, reviewed by Franco Merli in the newspaper *Messaggero Veneto*, who noted that Zuliani '[p]ossiede la maestria delle forme ed il segreto delle realizzazioni efficaci' [has the consummate skill of the design and holds the secret of creating powerful works]. Rosetta De Marco was another artist from Spilimbergo in the exhibition.

Guido's emigration to Australia in 1948, at the age of twenty-one, was prompted by Peter Melocco who was in Italy to recruit craftsmen and artists for the family company, Melocco Pty. Ltd., based in Annandale, Sydney. Peter was impressed by Guido's works in an exhibition in Udine, for which Guido had also painted a large arras, hung at the entrance to the exhibition. Guido's sea passage to Sydney in late 1948 was financed by Peter Melocco.

Pietro (better known as Peter) Melocco was born in Toppo, near Udine in 1883.<sup>1</sup> The eldest of the three Melocco brothers, Peter arrived in Australia on 6 May 1908, with ten shillings in his pocket, inspired by a lantern slide show in New York of a booming construction industry in Sydney. At the age of ten, Peter had been sent from Italy to relatives in the building trades in New York. Trained as a mosaic artist at the Coopers Union technical college in New York, where he studied art and drawing, Peter rapidly established himself in the family business run by his uncles. Peter was involved in plaster, marble, mosaic and terrazzo work across the United States.

Before buying the building yard of Moodie Bros., Builders, at 1 Booth St., Annandale, which the business occupied from 1919 until 1960, Peter Melocco rented premises at 16 Regent Street, Redfern (1908-1911) and 37 Parramatta Road, Forest Lodge (1911-1919), opposite Sydney University, where the Melocco enterprise is referred to in the contemporary *Sand's Directory* as Mosaic Heraclite Paviers. During the time the company operated at 1 Booth Street, Annandale, the property, originally a series of iron-clad timber sheds, was significantly altered and expanded.

One of the earliest Melocco commissions was for a black and white marble mosaic at the entrance of the Kodak shop in George Street in the city. Another early commission was for St Mary's Cathedral, after the young Peter approached Cardinal Moran in 1910 with his design for the floor of the Chapel of Irish Saints and undercut by half the 1,000 pounds which the project might otherwise have cost. In these early days, Peter

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<sup>1</sup> Pietro Melocco died in Sydney in 1961. A recent website, compiled by members of the third generation of the family, which presents the history of the Melocco family is [www.virtualtour.com.au/melocco](http://www.virtualtour.com.au/melocco)



*Zuliani Studio, the second photographic studio established by Guido Zuliani, at 220a Norton Street Leichhardt. Photograph 1964. (photo: G. Zuliani archive).*

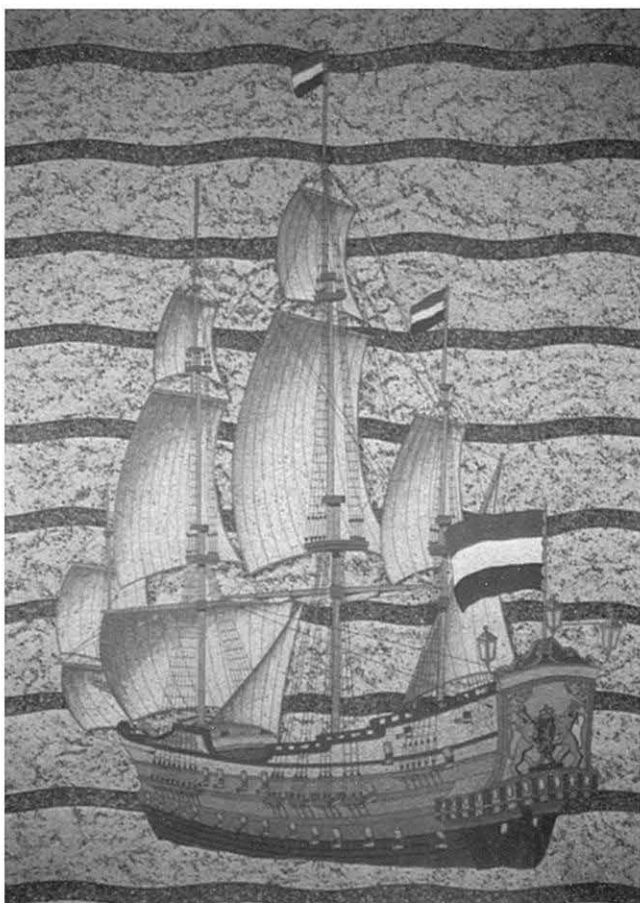
transported materials to the site by tram. Business on a larger scale was made possible in 1918 by the purchase of marble-cutting equipment from Anthony Hordern's.

Peter's younger brothers, Antonio (Anthony or Tony) (1887-1948) and Galliano (Galli) (1897-1971) arrived in Sydney in 1910. Anthony had trained as a mosaic worker in Paris and he joined Peter in the business. Anthony was largely responsible for the execution of Peter's designs, as production manager for the finishing trades. He was also responsible for work that drew on the ancient Italian craft of *scagliola* [the making of fake marble] which the Meloccos introduced to Australia. Anthony was a skilled craftsman and a perfect foil for the design skills of this older brother. Galliano, younger by ten years than Anthony and, much later, a contributor to the company's fortunes, is remembered for his engineering skills. Galliano took an active role in the family business from 1926. One could say that each brother served a different function in the partnership. Broadly, Peter ran the business side and continued to contribute his significant creativity in design, Anthony specialised in production and Galliano managed the construction aspect, later taking part in the other two areas as well. Melocco's employed a mix of Australian- and Italian-born workers.

Working for Peter Melocco according to the terms of his two-year contract, Guido Zuliani began to repay the fare of 204 pounds at 2 pounds per week. In 1949 Guido's full weekly wage was 6 pounds and rent at his first boarding house in Stanmore, owned by Signora Rina Pesavento, was 2 pounds. Guido subsequently lived in Commonwealth Street, Surry Hills, with an Italian family. Surry Hills had been a focal point for Italy-born in Sydney since the 1920s, and it was known for cheap rates in the small terrace houses and boarding houses to which single men gravitated from the boats that arrived at nearby Woolloomoolloo. Surry Hills was one of the several inner-city suburbs where Italian immigrants, in the majority single men, were able to find rooms in houses where Italian was spoken. Later Guido moved to Moore Park Road, Surry Hills with another Italian family where he remained for two years before moving on to Strathfield.

In 1963 Guido went to live in Leichhardt, by that time the acknowledged centre of Italian retail commerce. Six years previously he had established at 276 Norton Street, Leichhardt his first photographic business, known to the Italian-born community of Sydney as Zuliani Studio. Photography was Guido's second, and most enduring, career. In the years of the postwar immigration boom, he was responsible for documenting many aspects of the individual

lives and the collective history of Italy-born in Sydney. Weddings, religious *feste*, the building and opening of the A.P.I.A. Club, the opening of the Marconi Club, visits by Italian celebrities, including many boxers and variety entertainers, and Italian community social events, including the Italian dances at the Paddington Town Hall and the Trocadero in George Street, were among the events he recorded. Many of Guido's photographs are seminal elements in family collections in Australia and Italy; many were featured in the local Italian-language press.



*Marble mosaic of a seventeenth century sailing ship. Detail of the Tasman's Map mosaic constructed by Melocco Bros. Pty Ltd in the vestibule of the State Library of New South Wales.*

Guido's career in photography developed spontaneously out of his love of society with fellow Italians. As a single, unattached immigrant who spoke little English, he was keen to establish himself economically in a foreign country. Photography was a potentially lucrative career, and it was also clearly linked to his artistic sensibilities. However, before this career got seriously underway in the 1950s, Guido's training at the Spilimbergo Mosaic School and as Martina's pupil made him a valuable asset in

Peter Melocco's plans for a new project at St Mary's Cathedral.

Guido's design and mosaic skills were used on a number of significant Melocco projects in Sydney over the two-year period of his contract, from February 1949. The first project was the new Interstate Booking Office at Sydney Central Station. Guido elaborated full-scale the designs for the mosaic floor and the decorative frieze which Peter Melocco, as master designer, gave him in draft, relying also on advice from the commissioning body about the railway themes to be depicted. The next contract which Guido worked on was the splendid mosaic floor in the main body of the crypt of St Mary's, outstanding for the beauty of its design, created principally by the inspired creativity of Peter Melocco, and remarkable also for the high quality of its execution. For the Cathedral crypt, Guido worked under Giulio Ciurletti, an Italian-born sculptor employed by Peter Melocco. Ciurletti was responsible for the marble mosaic floor around the altar, and he was in charge of the later work for the main floor, on which Guido and others, including Corrado Tassi, collaborated.

The Melocco legacy in Sydney is rich. Thankfully, many of its many and varied elements have survived, in particular in public buildings. The magnificent marble and terrazzo inlay floor in the vestibule of the N.S.W. State Library, featuring Tasman's map of Australia, belongs to 1941. As David Melocco has noted, much of this work was done at the factory and brought to the site in panels. This process was repeated for the much grander scale work in the crypt of St Mary's. The crypt sanctuary floor was completed between 1945 and 1948, and the main floor between 1950 and 1958. The work, commissioned by Cardinal Norman Gilroy, followed a design on which Peter Melocco collaborated with the Rev. Dr. W. Leonard of St. Patrick's Seminary, Manly. Major influences on the floor design were the Book of Kells, with its Celtic designs and motifs, as well as the floor of the Duomo of Siena. During the later work in the crypt, Peter became ill with Parkinson's disease and visited the site in a wheelchair.

Giulio Ciurletti supervised work at the Booth Street factory. Individual sections of the floor were prepared by pressing rubber onto the surface in which the design was cut by hand and prepared for subsequent sandblasting that created half-inch recesses for the mosaic fillers, including marble, *scagliola*, granite and enamel. Guido was often responsible for

drawing full-scale cartoons of designs which Peter Melocco created in draft and also for cutting designs in the rubber. Completed sections of the floor were assembled on site at Booth Street and, once checked for sizing, were transported to the Cathedral and definitively installed. The marble used by Melocco's was high quality, imported from all over the world. Some of the best Australian marble came from the area around Wombeyan Caves in N.S.W. It was soft and ideal for altars and walls, but unsuitable for floors or sculpture.

In 1949 Guido returned part-time to his first love, art, attending classes at the studio of Antonio Dattilo Rubbo in the city, where tuition was not prohibitively expensive. Guido stayed for one year but left with feelings of rejection. Dattilo Rubbo was sorry at his departure, but Tony La Spina told Guido that he was being called a "dago", and he left because of this. Guido returned some years later for a longer period, when the studio was run by Dattilo Rubbo's successor, Professor G.F. Bissietta, the professional name of Giuseppe Fontanelli.

One of Guido's first Sydney portraits, of the celebrated Domain speaker, P.E.J. Ireland, was completed in 1949 at the Dattilo Rubbo studio. Ireland was a model at the studio and he was paid two shillings by each of the students in the group. After exhibiting this painting at the Royal Easter Show art exhibition, Guido later sold it to the *Chianti* restaurant in Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, in exchange for food and wine. The restaurant—as it was later to be—was established first as a cafeteria or *mensa* by the Capuchin Friars for Italian immigrants, many of whom lived, as Guido then did, in boarding houses in the local area. This portrait was later sold for 250 pounds to a New Zealand collector. *Chianti*, as it came to be known, was passed on by the Capuchins, possibly in the early 1960s, to Frank Orsatti who reportedly gave the restaurant its name.

Pursuing painting and drawing part-time and working full-time for Melocco, Guido often worked additional hours in the hope of being able to return to Italy. This was not to be. He rapidly realised that it would be difficult to make a living out of art, in particular because of the language barrier. Guido learned English slowly but never felt comfortable with it. Always in contact with Italians, he worked long hours and did not have time to attend English classes. In 1950, Guido started

photography in a small way, beginning more or less by accident what was to become his principal career when he took photographs for a friend who was returning to Italy. He discovered that it was a way of earning extra money. By 1951, Guido was a full-time photographer. He still worked occasionally for Melocco's and managed to paint from time to time. Peter Melocco maintained an interest in Guido's art. Guido's portrait of Peter Melocco, painted from photographs, hangs in the *Fogolar Furlan* club in Lansvale.

Guido's first professional photographs of the early 1950s were taken at Fairfield and Bossley Park in outer south-western Sydney



*Guido Zuliani working on the pavement for St Mary's Cathedral crypt, pictured at Melocco Bros. factory, Annandale Sydney, 1951 (photo: G. Zuliani archive).*

where he travelled by train to take photographs on Saturdays for Italian farmers to send to family in Italy. Guido took shots of farmers working their land and, later in the day, of family groups gathered for formal portraits. In the early days, Guido worked as a photographer principally on weekends. By 1957 he had set up his first Leichhardt photographic studio, at 276 Norton Street, downstairs from where the fledgling A.P.I.A. sports association held meetings in the rented

premises occupied before the Frazer Street clubhouse was built. Guido's first photographic studio was in a rented house in Annandale, which he shared with a friend at a weekly rent of 4 pounds.

Guido decided to move his business to Leichhardt because of its strong connections with Italy-born, many of whom by that time had moved from the inner city and had chosen Leichhardt and adjacent suburbs as a more lasting place of residence. A.P.I.A., as it then was, was located in rented premises above Guido's first Norton Street studio. Lucchitti's grocery shop was next door, with a retail section at the front and wholesale section at the back. The commercial hub of Leichhardt, centred on Parramatta Road and the southern end of Norton Street, was already host to many Italian-run businesses. In addition, the church of St Fiacre's in Catherine Street, Leichhardt, which had been handed over by Cardinal Gilroy to Italian-American Capuchin Friars in 1946, was a major focus for Italy-born, with services, both religious and secular, provided by an Italian-speaking clergy.

Father Atanasio Gonelli, the Capuchin Friar, who celebrated in 2000 the fiftieth anniversary of his mission in Australia, spent many years at St Fiacre's. Guido came into contact with Fr Gonelli through taking photographs at weddings. Another church popular among Italians was located in Albion Street, Surry Hills where the Scalabrinian Fathers, following in Capuchin footsteps, carried out welfare and missionary work among Italian immigrants. The friars sent Guido work, and he occasionally took them in return to the *Moro* restaurant in Petersham and to the *Chianti*.

By 1957 Leichhardt had a number of identifiable Italian commercial characteristics, besides those already noted. Cantarella and Lucchitti imported products from Italy. Cantarella then operated in Flood Street, Leichhardt. Parramatta Road, on the strip between Catherine and Norton Streets in particular, was a busy shopping area, especially on Saturdays, with a large number of Italian shops and Italian-born customers. Guido remembers that more Italian shops soon began to appear on Norton Street. Mezzapica's *pasticceria* at 130 Norton Street was established in 1952. Caffé Sport, at 2a Norton Street, the first Italian coffee shop in Leichhardt, was opened by Raffaello Raffaelli in 1956. In 2001, both businesses, still so named, have become icons of Italian retail commerce in Sydney.

Guido often frequented *Chianti*, with its convivial atmosphere and mix of people, some playing accordion and guitar. He suggested to Frank Orsatti the idea of hanging paintings for sale and decoration in the restaurant. The *Florentino* restaurant in Elizabeth Street in the city where Guido also ate, was a basement restaurant that had been under the proprietorship of Mario Faggion since 1932. Guido liked to sing: he was often asked for Italian songs, especially the songs of *emigranti*. In the period of the 1950s to the 1960s, there were relatively very few restaurants that served authentic Italian food. Well remembered are *Il Florentino*, *Le Tre Venezie* in Stanmore, *Chianti* in Surry Hills, *Miramare* and *Moro* on Parramatta Road, Petersham, and *La Veneziana* on the CBD fringe in East Sydney.

Guido worked as a photographer in restaurants in the evenings and afternoons. He often sold his art in exchange for restaurant food and wine. *Moro* was one of his favourite locales. It was owned from the latter 1950s by Luciano Franceschini who first came to Australia in 1956 as the principal chef of the Italian Olympic team. Guido convinced Luciano to hang his paintings, and art soon became a meal ticket. Guido preferred portrait painting, following the example of his first teacher, Martina.

In 1959, at the time of his marriage, Guido lived at Summer Hill. Later in 1962-1963, when he built the ground floor of 220a Norton Street, where he definitively established Zuliani Studio Pty. Ltd., a photographic studio with an attached residence, Guido borrowed funds from the Italian immigrant loan society, financed by the Italian government, as well as 1,000 pounds from a friend to buy the land. Guido became official photographer of the A.P.I.A. Club which, by the mid-1960s, was established in new premises in Frazer Street, Leichhardt. He documented in photographs the building of the new clubhouse, from the foundations up, and also took movies of events there. Success as a photographer enabled Guido by the later 1960s to dedicate more time to painting. On 28 November 1965 at the new A.P.I.A. Club, an exhibition of his art was opened by Professor Bissietta. Many of the more than thirty paintings and drawings exhibited were sold.

Guido was subsequently successful in having

work hung at the Archibald Prize exhibition, in 1971 and 1972. In 1971 he entered a portrait of the Italian-born artist, Ricardo Just, from Muggia near Trieste, who was at that time living in Sydney. For the 1972 Archibald Prize, Guido entered a portrait of the ex-State Premier, Jack Lang, who was by then well over ninety years of age. Guido had been introduced to Mr Lang by the journalist, Franco Battistessa. Lang sat for the portrait in Guido's Leichhardt studio over six two-hour sittings. Guido would collect Lang from his home in Auburn and, after sittings, drive him to his office in the city.

Guido's memories of the talented and highly skilled Italians who worked with him at Melocco's are mixed with more personal memories of photographs of farmers and their families and of early portraits, including his landlady, Signora Pesavento, P.E.J. Ireland, and Father Atanasio. Italian craft skills,

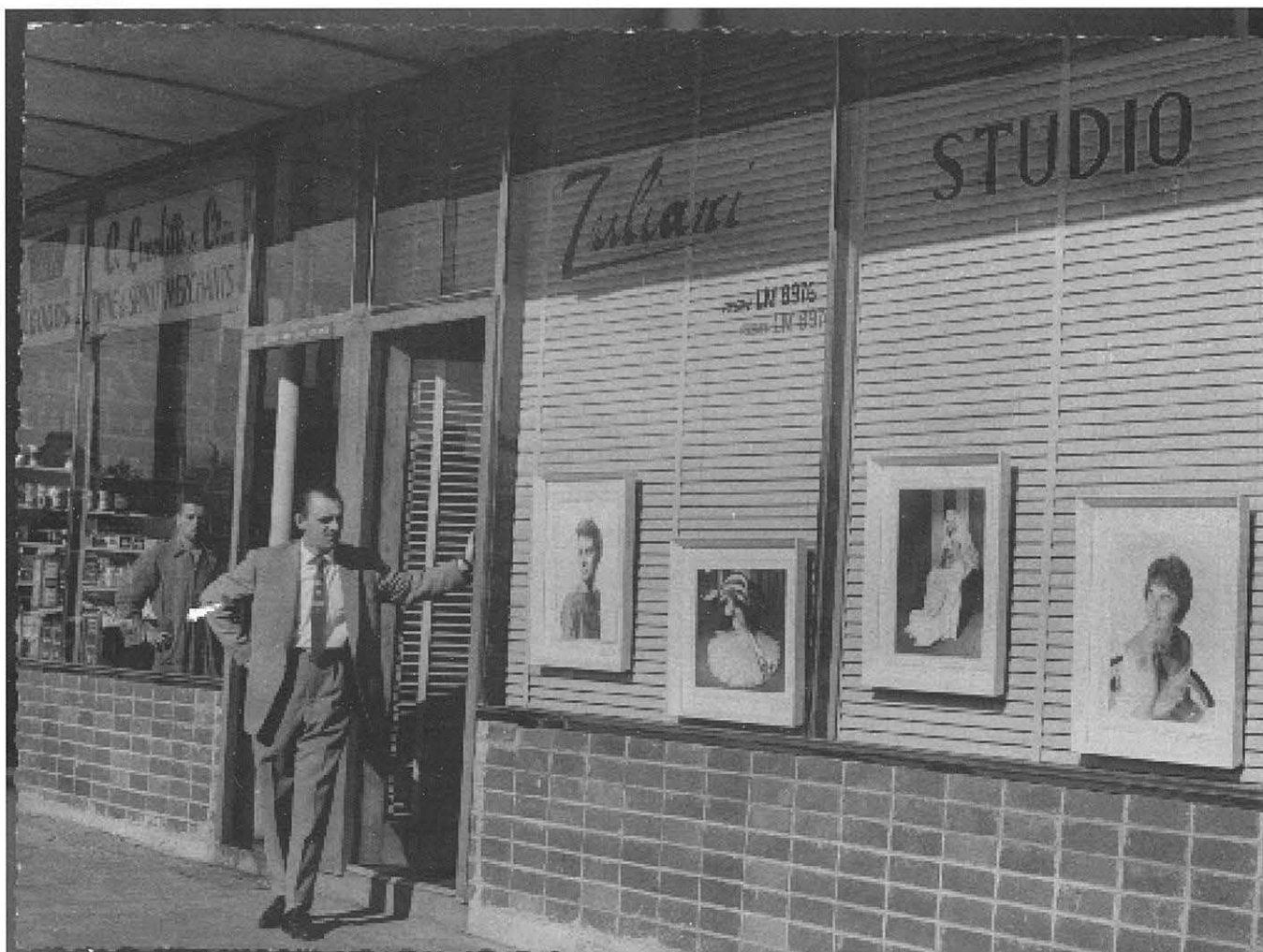
artistic traditions and culinary customs are interwoven themes of Guido's story in Australia. Melocco, Zuliani, Orsatti, Gonelli — these are just some of the names of Italians who made new lives and created their own history in Australia.

Guido Zuliani and Peter Melocco are two of the many Italians whose stories of migration and settlement inform us about the lived experience of Italian-Australians, their contribution to our collective life and their role in the fundamental transformations to the fabric and spirit of Australian society over the past hundred years. □

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The Melocco Brothers website can be consulted at <http://www.virtualtour.com.au/melocco>

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*Guido Zuliani at the door of his first photographic studio, at 276 Norton Street, Leichhardt, 1957 (photo: G. Zuliani archive).*

## AN OCEAN LINER NAMED AUSTRALIA

by  
Lorenzo Iozzi

*Lorenzo Iozzi is curator of the Italian Historical Society. He was born in Calabria and migrated to Australia at the age of four. Two years ago, together with his wife Janine, he visited Italy for the first time. This is his story of his migration experience and the journey back home.*

**M**y earliest memory is that of being on board a ship out at sea. I was four years old and travelling with my mother, my sister and one of my three brothers and we were sailing away from Italy. So my earliest memory is that of being a migrant. The passenger liner we were on was named, symbolically, the *Australia*. Somehow, the name was more than a name: it engendered a promise. This too was probably the only word of 'English' we knew between the four of us ...Australia.



*The ship Australia, with migrants on board departing from Italy on one of her many voyages to Australia during the 1950s.*



*Passport photograph of the author (left), his mother, Caterina and one of his brothers, Cesare, shortly before migrating to Australia 1954.*

We had left our hometown, Girifalco, in the region of Calabria, to join my father and my two elder brothers who were already in Australia. My father had emigrated first, alone, two years earlier. He had settled in Melbourne and worked to save enough money so that the eldest son could join him. They in turn saved enough for the second eldest to make the trip out and so on, until the three of them had secured the passage for the rest of the family. They were at Princes Pier, Port Melbourne, to meet us on the night of 11 November 1954. They were part of a multitude of people congregated on the pier to greet the other 360 passengers aboard the

*Australia*. And so at last my family was reunited after being apart for so long.

My mother and father would never see Italy again. Nor would they ever see their parents, relatives and friends whom they had left behind. My family would no longer participate in the festivals, customs and traditions handed down through the centuries, some of which can be traced back to the Ancient Greeks and Romans, to pagan times and even earlier.

The character of southern Italians is most defined by their attitude and adherence to these components of life: the family, which they place above all else; their feasts, which are manifestations of their emotions; and the divine properties they attribute to nature. Religion, superstition and magic, metamorphosed over the ages, are at the heart of their traditions and customs.

Over the years I would hear about these traditions from my family. One of the most famous of the festivals was and still is *Carnevale*, originally a festival dedicated to Saturno, the god who descended to earth in Italy – the Earth God – and there taught the original inhabitants the art of agriculture. Every

year my family would have celebrated the *festa* of San Rocco, the patron saint of Girifalco, which commemorates the day when, centuries before, the saint is said to have rid the town of the plague. They would also have celebrated the *festa della raccolta*, festivals for the harvesting of the olives, the grapes and the corn. In time, they would cease to believe in the divine and magical properties of nature such as those bestowed on fire, which rejuvenates life; or the wind, which when it arrives suddenly and impetuously, brings with it a foreboding of violent death. Or those properties bestowed on matter, such as rock salt which when placed in the home or carried on one's person, wards off malign spirits. Vanishing too were many of the culinary traditions such as the annual pig-slaughtering at home from which they would make their own small goods including *capiccoli*, *soppresse* and *prosciutti* as well as such bizarre delicacies as *sanguinaccio*, a dessert made at Carnevale and whose essential ingredients include pig's blood, cocoa and wine must. This last process indicates the lengths that they went to to ensure that no part of the beast (or any food for that matter) was thrown away or wasted.

There are many reasons why my parents did not return to Italy, not the least of which were financial considerations, especially in their early years in Australia. But there are other, psychological, reasons why someone chooses not to repatriate. Even when affordability ceased to be an issue, my parents still did not make the journey back. And this is because, generally speaking, emigrants can be classified into two types: those who leave their country with the notion that one day they will return; and those — emigrants in the strictest sense of the word — who are determined never to return. Why go back to a place that you have abandoned in search of a better life? My father at least fell into this latter category. This should not be interpreted as a hatred for the country on his part, quite the contrary. He was motivated by a belief that in order to surmount the obstacles and difficulties inherent in migration, nothing short of this resolve would suffice. In a sense, he was determined not to look back.

On our first night in Australia we were taken to a boarding house in Collingwood. What a sight Collingwood must have seemed to us in the light of day with its factories, cramped housing and mix of people. To get a sense of this we need only consider that at the time in Girifalco, then with a population of 8000, there wasn't a single factory. There was no running water: one or two taps



*The author on the verandah of a boarding house in Collingwood with his father looking on, shortly after arrival in Australia from Italy in 1954.*

served the whole town: you went to the piazza for a drink at the fountain or further on to the stream to wash clothes. The only people to own an automobile were the landlords. Because of mass unemployment, most people eked out a living as best they could unless they were fortunate enough to have employment within the few government institutions such as the hospital, school or municipal offices. Some went from town to town, peddling eggs, or fruit, or music if they had those commodities, others went from town to town mending pots and pans if one was a tinsmith. Many, mainly those with a trade, ventured further afield for work, to another region or indeed to another country, to Switzerland, America, Argentina or Australia. The people from the region were down-to-earth people, rooted in nature, shepherds, farmhands and peasants. For this was the land of the *contadino*, by which we mean: he who is from and belongs to the land; he who works the land, especially under a landlord. He is the antithesis of the *cittadino*, by which we mean he who belongs to the city (*città*).

Collingwood, on the other hand, was one of the most industrialized suburbs in Australia. One factory alone, MacRobertson Confectionery Ltd. spanned six city blocks on the Fitzroy - Collingwood boundary. Yarra Falls Ltd. Spinning

Mills and Foy and Gibson Woollen Mills were just as expansive; R.N. Raymond Boot Manufacturers and Box Makers were at 6 – 54 and 5 – 45 Easey Street as well as several other locations throughout the suburb. Collectively, these four factories employed the equivalent of the whole population of Girifalco. Bradford Cotton Mills, British United Shoe Manufacturing Company, Dunlop Rubber, Abbotsford Breweries, Carlton and United Breweries Ltd and Godfrey Phillips International Tobacco Manufacturers are just a few of the many factories dotted throughout the suburb which remain in my memory.

One of the promises the name of our ship symbolized was most definitely *work* and in this the migrants who settled in Collingwood were not disappointed. Interspersed among the myriad factories were rows and rows of tiny houses. Commonly referred to as ‘workingmen’s cottages’ — many of them owned by the factories themselves — they were filled with families of every race: Carboni, Adamopoulos, Fortunato, Chandler, Popovic, Johnson, Kyriakidis, Leizerowitz, Italiano, Uebergang, Zsamboky, Sopovski, Russo, Gyftopolous, Crockett, Pitts. We did not feel out of place.

And so it was that my family made the leap from an agricultural society to an industrialised one. And it was no mean feat. In order to achieve this they had to exile themselves from their native land, travel to the other side of the world on the longest journey they would ever make and live as strangers in a ‘strange’ land.

Collingwood in the post war years was a hostile suburb. How could it have been otherwise? Essentially the suburb was one big machine with people herded from near and far to operate it. Much of it was still squalor and it was regarded as one of the ‘roughest and toughest’ suburbs of Melbourne where violence on the streets was commonplace. Many of the youth expressed their manhood by forming or joining rival gangs. Understandably, it was hostile to migrants but more than this it was hostile to life and living in general. It is commonly accepted that at certain stages of it’s history, nobody lived in Collingwood by choice. So why then had my father chosen so deliberately to uproot his family for Collingwood?

Forty-five years would pass before I could answer this question satisfactorily for myself. That’s how long it took me to see Italy again and

discover something of my origins. There were several contributing factors to my inertia. Firstly, some of my father’s reluctance may have worn off on me. Secondly, it was a stigma to be a Calabrian and hence difficult to feel good about your origins, a condition induced more by the perception that northern Italians had towards southerners then, than by the perception that Australians had towards us. Finally, and despite these notions, I always harbored some romantic dream of Italy, which I felt would no doubt be tainted by the reality of a first-hand experience. But avoid my past as I may, the inevitable happened and two years ago I retraced my steps and made the journey back to Italy.

‘There is something special about going back to your place of birth’, a friend informed me prior to my leaving for Italy. At the time I did not know what he meant, believing that this ‘something special’ referred to external things. Consequently I

believed that he was talking about something tangible like finding evidence of Renaissance art in the town or proof that a Roman emperor had passed through, thereby imbuing it with some historical importance which I could call my heritage. I even searched tourist books like the *Lonely Planet* hoping to find something, anything about my

hometown, given the prominence that Italy has for tourists, but Girifalco hardly ranks a mention. The few travel guides that make reference to Catanzaro, the principal city, advise you to bypass the area and head straight for the city of Reggio Calabria or the island of Sicily!

Of course my friend was not referring to the physical aspects of the trip, but more the spiritual journey that was in store for me. I did not know this at the time and consequently we didn’t begin our trip in Girifalco. Instead our trip began where so many first visits to Italy begin — Venice. From there we took the well trodden track that maps out the wonders of Italy: its art, architecture, history, music and cuisine, to such places as Florence, Sienna, Rome and Amalfi. I could dwell at length on these wonders now but somehow this trip was about an altogether other mission, one in which all roads led to Girifalco.

The first thing that strikes you about Calabria is the landscape itself: paradoxically, breathtakingly beautiful and at the same time austere and severe. Some of the mountains, for the most part rocky, are so

*‘...the longest  
journey they  
would ever  
make.’*

sheer as to appear perpendicular and you wonder how the terrain came to be inhabited, let alone cultivated. There are two aspects to the beauty of this landscape: the one created by the hand of man, such that the land has become 'sculpted' into its present form through centuries of cultivation; and the one created by the hand of 'God', those areas which appear to be untouched by man. Looking at the landscape, it is easy to be transported back in time and envisage a primordial existence because of these aspects and indeed around Girifalco itself can be found caves and tombs from the Neolithic Period of 30,000 - 40,000 years ago. Calabria is full of ironies, beginning with its very name. Its derivation from the ancient Greek can be taken to mean 'sleeping beauty' or 'a place of beauty', which it is but there are other sides to it.



*Back in Italy for the first time since migrating to Australia as a child. Photograph taken in 2000.*

Girifalco is a mountainous town. Its isolation, position and layout can be traced to its origins for the town was established when two other towns, Toco and Caria, on the plains below, were invaded and destroyed by the Saracens in the year 836. The inhabitants of these towns fled to the relative safety of the mountains. The etymology behind the name Girifalco is unclear. It translates as 'the circling falcon' and the most plausible derivation of the name is that the survivors of the invasion saw a falcon circling overhead once they reached the site where their future town would be built and took this as their omen.

The last house – if one can call it a house – which my family occupied before we emigrated is still standing though derelict. It is built of

rendered stones or rocks and occupies an area of land measuring approximately five metres by five metres and consists of two small rooms, one-up-one-down, with no outside space. The most outstanding feature of the exterior is the toilet that stands on the front porch abutting the front door. At first sight, one cannot help but ask why it was placed in that position until one realizes that there is *absolutely* no other available area. Such were the cramped conditions of the housing, due in part to the fact that earth quakes in the area were frequent and hence they tended to 'huddle' or 'lock' the dwellings tightly next to each other for safety. Of course the little land afforded to the people and the scarcity of building materials were also contributing factors. The 'kitchen' to our house – a stone oven and tiny basin – was on the landing at the top of the stairs. That night I tried in vain to figure out how up to seven people lived in two small rooms, or just how the beds fitted into the space, let alone wardrobes, tables, chairs, commodes and all the other essential furnishings most of which would not even fit through the front and only entrance to the house. Where did we eat? Where did we bathe? I have since learnt that not only did a family of seven live here but my mother, a seamstress, also worked in the bottom room which doubled as the 'master bedroom' for my parents.

Not all the houses in Girifalco were this bad in the early 1950s when mass emigration took place. And indeed, some were worse. Nor were these conditions confined to Girifalco or Calabria. As a consequence of the Second World War, Italy itself was in tatters, both physically and spiritually. The Italian neo-realist films of this period document a dispirited Italy where unemployment, homelessness and starvation were widespread to the point where even some of the most lavish quarters of cities such as Rome and Milan are depicted as being reduced to shantytowns. But it was the South and places like Girifalco, which really felt the full effects of the War, primarily because of their isolation and hence the exodus from Italy was mainly from the South.

Emigration was seen as one solution to Italy's problems, just as immigration was seen as one solution to Australia's problems. Why else would one government 'push' a million and more of its inhabitants to emigrate? Why else would another government take almost as many 'aliens', as we were referred to in parliamentary papers of the time?

After finding my paternal home we visited a house of God. God has four houses in Girifalco. In the church of San Rocco, the patron saint of the town, you can see baroque paintings which transport you away from earthly things; paintings like the *Ascension into Heaven* and the *Resurrection of the Dead*. They are some of the few examples of public art in the town. You can also see in the church a plate glass (bullet-proof we were told) display case and in it... necklaces, earrings, wedding rings, brooches and other simple and modest jewellery given by the townsfolk as offerings to God, in some cases no doubt for deliverance, such as sparing the town from further calamities. The only sculpture we saw was a statue of Duke Fabrizio Caracciolo, who presided over the town in the seventeenth century and administered the land. People walking past the statue daily are thereby reminded of Girifalco's feudalistic past.

We were taken to a hilltop overlooking the town and saw the four churches which are the most prominent landmarks apart from one other building, the Psychiatric Hospital or *Il Manicomio*, which is now closed down. The word *manicomio* itself is now in disuse because of its derogatory connotations: manic and maniac, of course, are two derivations. Essentially, it meant 'a dispirited and marginalized place', a little like the English word bedlam. Sadly, it is Girifalco's most enduring symbol and one that fits its history, for like many parts of the south, the town was neglected by the Italian Government. If Girifalco is known at all in other parts of Italy, Florence for example, it is first and foremost for its *Manicomio*. The hospital was a former monastery, dating from the 1600s when the Roman Catholic Church ruled the papal states and religious institutions throughout Italy. After the Risorgimento and the unification of the various territories and kingdoms, the Church was obliged to relinquish many of its holdings to the newly formed State. The ancient monastery in Girifalco was one such property. And so in 1881 it went from a place for the saintly to a place for the insane. It became one of the leading psychiatric hospitals in Italy. For example, it is credited with identifying Alzheimer's Disease before the disease had a name. Herein lies yet another irony: a town barely able to find the means for its own survival assumed the care for a significant proportion of the nation's mentally ill,

although I suspect that it was initiated more by an 'out of sight, out of mind' solution by the Italian Government. This tells us a lot about the nature of the Girifalcesi, who are characterized as warm hearted, maybe too warm hearted: Girifalco accepted the hospital when other towns in the region opposed and rejected it. The hospital was both a curse and a blessing for the town, given that it was the largest source of employment for the district.

It seems to me that the true Italians are those who emigrate. If I had any doubts about this fact, it was driven home to me in Milan when residents there described their city as the least Italian of all the cities in Italy, and the most European, reflecting the phenomenal changes which have transformed not only Milan but the whole of Italy in the last fifty years; a shift from Italianism to internationalism. The most accurate picture of what defined an Italian or how Italy was fifty years ago, a capsule of history if you like, may well be held in the minds of those who emigrated just after the Second World War and not so much by those who remained in Italy. This change in the essential character of the nation is also apparent in the dying out of dialects, which once gave Italy its variety and uniqueness. Growing up in Australia we spoke a Calabrian dialect which bore little resemblance to the principal language, an indication of just how isolated and individual regions of Italy were half a century ago. I expected to encounter this dialect on my return to Calabria and so it was a surprise to find most of the inhabitants speaking 'Italian'. In fact, legislation has been passed, making the Florentine dialect the accepted universal language in Italy, thus ensuring or enforcing the demise of the individual dialects and with them the regional customs.

Over the years I have been asked many times whether I consider myself Italian or Australian. My problem answering this question in the past would leave me puzzled about who I am, until I realized that the confusion lay in the question, which implies selecting one nationality to the exclusion of the other. If there is one thing that the trip back to Italy has taught me, it is this: I am both.

But the last word on race, nationality and other countries should really go to the Viggianesi. The town of Viggiano in southern Italy is renowned for its itinerant musicians who have travelled the world and hence the opening line of a poem which originated there, begins: "...*Son Viggianese; Tutta la terra è il mio paese*: (I am Viggianese; all the world is my country)". □



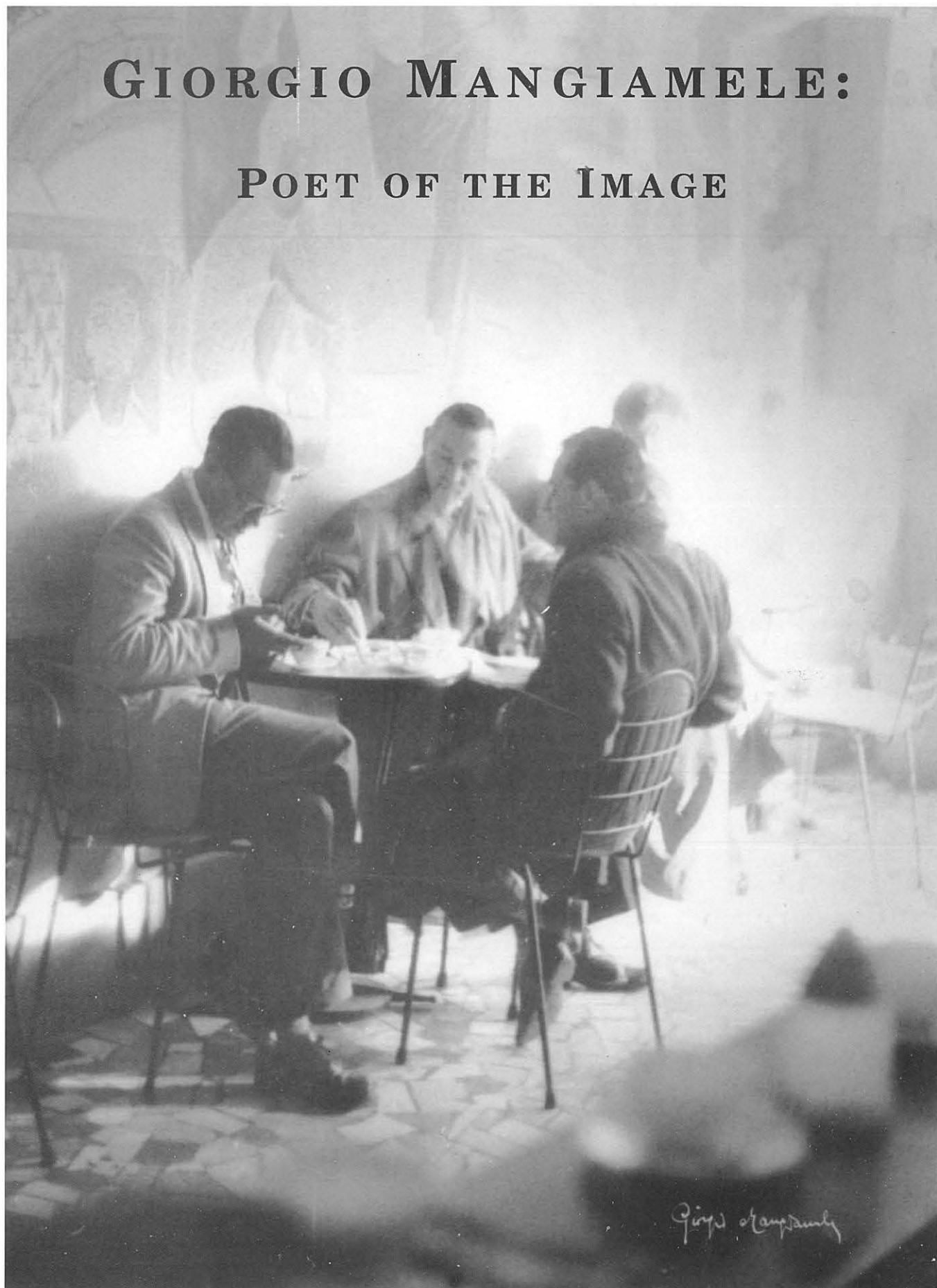
*View of the township of Girifalco looking towards the former Psychiatric Hospital, which is visible in the background, c1998. (photo: C. Iozzi)*



*Aerial view of Fitzroy and Collingwood, showing Smith Street (with cable tram), Johnston Street (top right corner) and Westgarth Street (bottom left corner), c1940.*

# GIORGIO MANGIAMELE:

## POET OF THE IMAGE



*Three men having coffee at Don Camillo caffè, 215 Victoria Street North Melbourne.  
Photograph by Giorgio Mangiamiele c1955.*

## ENVISIONING THE ITALIAN MIGRANT EXPERIENCE DOWN UNDER: GIORGIO MANGIAMELE, POET OF THE IMAGE

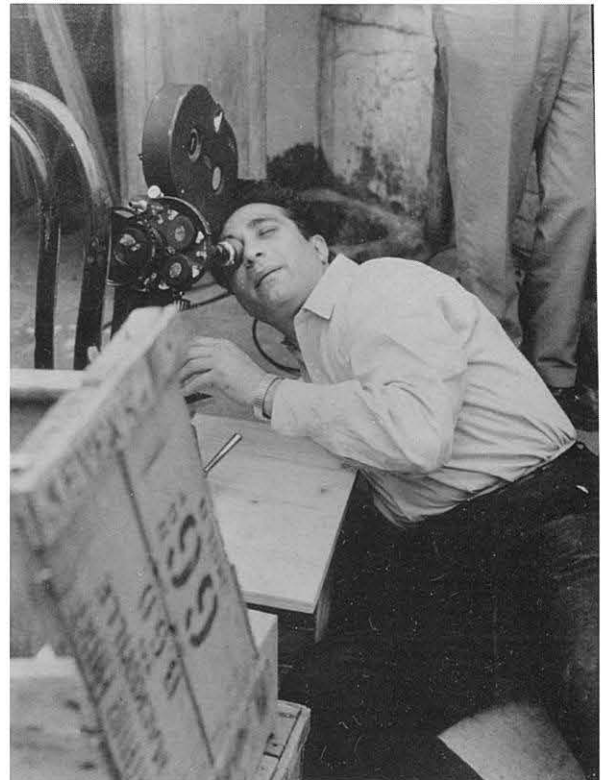
by  
Raffaele Lampugnani

*Raffaele Lampugnani graduated from Flinders University in South Australia. He now teaches Italian language and literature at Monash University. He has maintained a keen interest in the history of Italian migration to Australia, teaching a third and fourth-year optional subject 'The Italian Experience in Australia'. He often carries out research in the Italian community in Melbourne, which he integrates into his teaching where possible.*

**T**he untimely death of Giorgio Mangiamiele in May this year may be rightfully regarded as a great loss to the Italo-Australian community, not only because of the man's standing, his undoubtedly profound humanity, passionate morality and strength of character, but also because the Sicilian born filmmaker remained till the end a largely untapped resource which could have enriched our understanding of the Italian migrant experience and knowledge of the early cinema industry in Australia.

Several articles and obituaries have appeared recently, giving Mangiamiele a well deserved, if 'overdue', recognition of his artistic genius and of the personal courage which is evident in his life-long struggle to be accepted by an industry that was notoriously antagonistic to what it perceived as 'ethnic'.

John Conomos in an article published in 1992 argued that 'Giorgio Mangiamiele's work should be regarded as a mile-stone' and that his films ought to be taken into account as 'foundational' in any enquiry aimed at 'reading Australian cinema in terms of its multiple representations of the non-Anglo-Celtic migrant since the 1920s'.<sup>1</sup> Quentin Turnour in the obituary 'Giorgio' argues that Mangiamiele had a much wider impact on the Australian film industry, suggesting that 'the case for Giorgio as a 'multicultural' filmmaker should not be overstated' as many of the themes treated by him are also commonplace in mainstream society. He identifies innovative traits that were well ahead of the times and which were later to be found in other, better known directors, such as Peter Weir.<sup>2</sup> More recently Scott Murray in 'Passionate Filmmaker' reiterates a commonplace, if indispensable, observation, considering Mangiamiele as primarily a visual director: 'his films belong to the era of Film as Art, where (mostly) European directors conjured powerful tone poems that are the antithesis of the dialogue-driven narratives of today'.<sup>3</sup>



*Giorgio Mangiamiele, filmmaker and photographer, behind the camera on the set of one of his films, c1975.*

The expression 'poet of the image' seems to be now a widely accepted definition which aptly describes the unique aesthetic and lyric power of the Italo-Australian filmmaker. The term is used in the obituary 'È scomparso Mangiamiele, poeta dell'immagine' published in *Il progresso italo-australiano* (July – August 2001, pp 22-23), and in Rob Ditessa's moving article 'Farewell to a Passionate Poet of the Image' which appeared recently in *Italy Down Under* (n. 6, Spring 2001, pp 76-80). The association of Mangiamiele's visual style and poetry, implicit in the phrase, was first established critically in a review of the film *Clay* published in *Variety* (New York, 14 December 1964): '... visually it's frequently a poem brought to life with some breathtakingly poignant and arty shots'. France's *Nice-Matin* also termed *Clay* 'Australian poetry' (Cannes,

22 May 1965) and the journal *La cinématographie française* suggested that 'Giorgio Mangiamiele has painted, in a visual poem, the story of an impossible love' (Paris, 29 May 1965).

Yet, in spite of the numerous accolades, and renewed interest, and with the notable exception of Turnour's article which deals sensitively and critically with the film *Il contratto* in particular, there have been no in-depth analyses of Mangiamiele's films as artistic artefacts. Most critical efforts have attempted to periodise Mangiamiele's production, placing it mainly in the post-war Italian Neo-realist tradition or in the context of Italian migrant contribution. This is the position assumed by Gaetano Rando in his socio-historical study 'Narrating the Italian Experience'. He states: 'Although [Mangiamiele's] role in the emerging Australian film industry has been a relatively minor one, his is the only Italian name included in John Baxter's fundamental work on Australian cinema'.<sup>4</sup> Rando, in the more recent article 'Migrant images in Italian Australian Movies and Documentaries', reiterates this position with further comments on four short feature films which he highlights as having 'a migrant theme'.<sup>5</sup>

Whilst it is quite justified to view Mangiamiele's work within the framework of Italo-Australian artistic production, it is clearly necessary to move critically beyond the mere labelling of his work as 'ethnic' or marginal to mainstream production. Critical inroads have been made elsewhere in the analysis of so called 'marginal literatures' which could be profitably applied to non-mainstream Australian film. Particularly promising are the approaches that critic Graziella Parati has put forward with regard to Italophone migrant literature: '[t]his minority... appropriates a space within [the dominant] culture and language, which are consequently both deterritorialized'.<sup>6</sup> Also challenging are the methodological premises formulated by Italian critic Alfredo Luzi who proposes the concept of 'literature of contact', suggesting a convergence of cultural elements connected intimately with the socio-economic and marginal cultural position of the author.<sup>7</sup>

Few attempts were made to draw inferences from Mangiamiele's own life experiences as a migrant which in some ways mirror the struggles and endeavours of many compatriots. If on the one hand Mangiamiele shared the Italian migrant experience in his desire to be integrated and accepted and in his resourcefulness and resolve to succeed with few

means, on the other hand, he was perhaps atypical as a migrant of the post-war generation, in that he was highly educated. Obviously, any attempt to view critically Mangiamiele's work should also take into account the cultural background from which he drew elements for his films and photographic stills, and which includes the Italian literary Canon and popular culture.<sup>8</sup>

Mangiamiele's films, seen in the light of Luzi's concepts, offer uniquely rich interpretative elements, as well as emphasising observations about the two cultures. But it is above all the visual aspect of his films which have been neglected. Mangiamiele's discourse articulates visually through images: the author himself has defined his films as 'silent movies', in spite of the presence of a soundtrack. Images on the screen may be regarded as metaphors of the human condition, sentiments and emotions; they are poetic emblems of human relationships or of alienated states. Films such as *The Spag* and *Ninety Nine Per Cent* should be analysed not only from the point of view of the story line, but also of characterisation, visual background information, general composition, treatment of object sizes, perspective and movement. The film *Clay* should not merely be seen as the depiction of 'an impossible love story', but also as a metaphor of the artist's own yearning to mould human characters in the filmic medium, as the protagonists do using 'clay', and his feeling of persecution. *Clay* has been described as 'a dream within a dream' and as such is considered in connection with subsequent works displaying similar techniques and structures (Turnour, cit.). But *Clay*'s oneiric quality should also provide excellent scope for a psychoanalytical examination, one which would no doubt reflect the director's own world view and existential disquiet. Given Mangiamiele's explicit interest in Freud and psychoanalysis (see interview below), such an interpretation seems feasible.

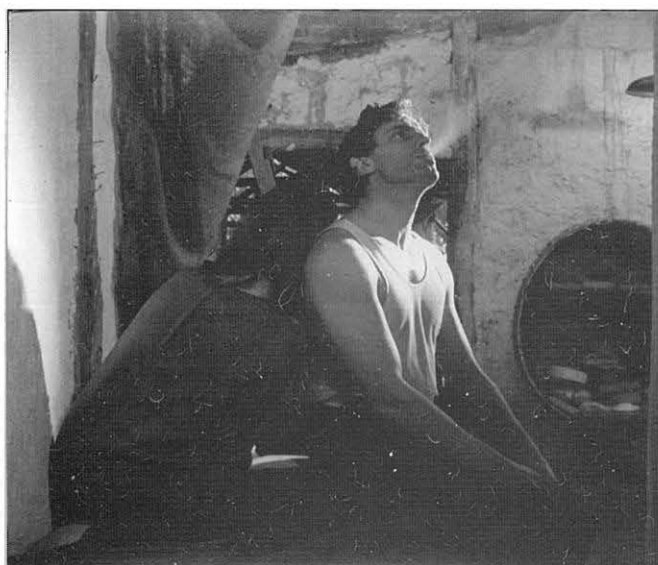
The excerpts reproduced in the following pages were translated from the first of two interviews recorded on Friday, 25 October 1996. It is hoped that the information they contain may provide further elements for a reappraisal of Mangiamiele's personal experience and work, and highlight its individual, artistic and conceptual worth, as well as the filmmaker's attitude towards migrants' issues, the Italian and the host communities, and his art in general.

## INTERVIEW WITH GIORGIO MANGIAMELE

I am from Catania (Sicily). I studied there fine arts at the *Liceo Artistico*. Then I moved to Rome... I became a Police officer, I became a specialist in photographs and cinematography, the technical side, because I had already studied cinema from an artistic and aesthetic point of view [...] I never made films in Italy, I used to experiment. I made the first full-length film here.

### **How was your inspiration born? Was it a consequence of your artistic studies?**

I have a dynamic temperament, so that in cinema for me the movement, the camera, the use of lights, are important. It is a very instinctive thing. Even now I think in cinematographic or photographic terms when I look at things in the light... three dimensional effects, objects, etc. Mechanically. It is a subconscious process, natural – it has become natural.



*A scene from the film Clay, directed by Giorgio Mangiamele and screened at Cannes, 1965.*

### **Why did you decide to come to Australia? At what time?**

I was in the Police Force just after the end of the War... There were people the Police used to catch... with bludgeons hitting people, all that, the Police at that time. The pay was minimal, wretched. I didn't have...there was no opportunity to plan for the future, we used to live by the day. I did not like this thing as I wanted an in-depth vision for the future, of what my future would be. Cinematography, I found

out information about Australia and also on New Guinea...

### **What attracted you to Australia? Why Australia and not another country?**

Well! There are blonde women here and this is important for me. The ideal woman is blonde – I don't know why, I cannot explain it. There are probably psychological reasons linked to my childhood. Because there are very few blonde women in Sicily. This is one reason. [The other is] the fact that it is a new country where if one has courage and ideas, one can succeed. This is what I dreamt about, one could achieve so many things. But then it is not true. It is worse in the new country. There are jealousies, envies, of this, and of that. Anomalous affections, individuals who cannot communicate with others, not even with one's own husband or wife. I have many friends, etc. The wife has her own car and bank account... there lacks that in-depth feeling which we Latins have in relationships... From an emotional point of view, I missed this very much, because I am one who gives a lot, but I must also receive a lot. That's the fact. In other words, this society does not give a lot. It is full of smiles. It is all fake in order for people to live peacefully with one another. Courteous and cordial, but only on the surface. No in-depth relationships, especially at that time, as I remember it. Only now things are starting to change.

### **Has society changed somewhat since then?**

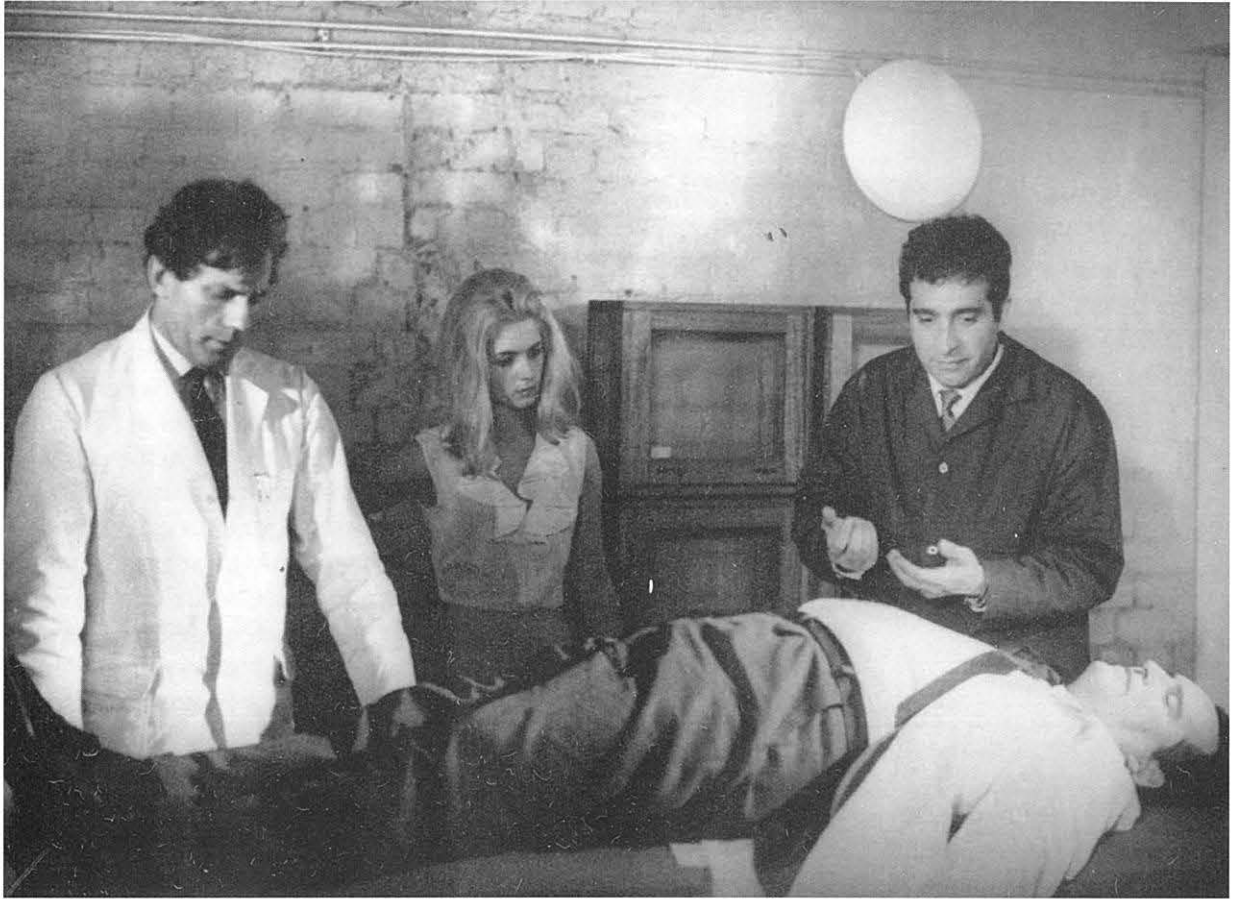
Well, we try to deepen our understanding of life. The problem is that it is a materialistic society, whereas before it was not. What I remember is that I felt at ease in this regard because there was trust. In other words Australia was very different then, much simpler and I like simplicity a lot.

### **So was a lack of emotions what you found in Australia, or did you feel outright rejection from society?**

Perhaps that, because this society accepts easily in a superficial manner. There are very few more educated people, etc. Speaking of life acquires a much more intense significance with these people, these friends of mine that I had for many years. This is not the country where I thought I could be happy. In fact, I am not unhappy, I am alive. It is similar to life which is given only once.

### **This is what we all felt and experienced when we migrated...**

Well, those who went to South America after the War [...] those with a university degree were received with affection, a sympathetic attitude



*Giorgio Mangiamele (at right) directing a scene on the set of his film *Beyond Reason*, 1958.*



*Patrons leaving the Palais Theatre at the 1965 Cannes Film Festival after viewing the film *Clay*, directed by Giorgio Mangiamele (centre, third from right).*

and all kinds of help. They were highly regarded and were able to make a contribution to South America at least... they were migrants. Not so here ...

**That is true. It would be difficult to name a really outstanding migrant ...**

Let's say [that people showed acceptance by means of] mediocre clichés, ready-made phrases, words which do not mean very much. Giving the right impression is what counts.

**Not the substance?**

Not the substance. If there is substance, there is no need to give the impression [of cordiality] because it is there. It is felt. There is a certain magnetism...

**On the subject of clichés and ready made phrases, I remember a scene in *Ninety Nine Per Cent* where school teachers are sitting at a table and repeat 'I would... I wouldn't... I do...'. These really seem set phrases without any real intention of communicating an idea.**

There is a historic reason... these people refuse to communicate... of becoming involved. For instance, in Italy [...] they loved someone precisely because he had to face up to difficult things. Here nothing happens. Here he is ignored, perhaps they might even speak badly about him. I am speaking in general terms of course because I have friends who are not like this. At another [educated] level, all men in the world are the same and communicate very well, because they have none of those fears. They have courage and the intelligence to be themselves.

**When did you come to Australia?**

In 1952 [...] 44 years ago. At the beginning of the great wave of Italian migration.

I signed a contract in Rome. A two-year contract with the Australian government. When we arrived, they told me and two thousand others... that the contract was worthless because there were no jobs. There was unemployment at the time, crisis...

**Did you disembark in Melbourne?**

Yes, they sent me to Rushworth.

**Was it a migrants' camp?**

A camp full of snakes... Houses were not houses but huts made of corrugated iron [...] It was hot, there were countless rabbits. Food was terrible because they had asked some Polish people to do the cooking... I stayed there for a month and then ran away. Meanwhile... whilst I was on the ship, I used to take photographs, photos [for migrants] to send back home. I set myself up in a little room. I used to take photos and develop

them. I made quite a lot of money immediately. I was the richest man on board after the captain. When I arrived at Rushworth, I bought myself a motorbike so I could travel to nearby towns to buy photographic materials. The camp was ten miles from the town of Rushworth and people, migrants, many migrants used to walk ten miles to go to town to see what was there, then walk back again.

**It sounds like a concentration camp.**

Yes, quite so. I went back to see the camp. There is nothing left there, just a platform. What a horrible memory. That was a psychologically difficult moment because we did not know anything about our future. Some of our colleagues had committed suicide. Someone went to Sydney and threw himself from the bridge. There were horrendous human dramas. Some had borrowed money from their families to come to Australia. The family had borrowed from the bank and expected the debt to be repaid. Migrants couldn't send anything and were desperate. The one who couldn't find a solution committed suicide.

**Can you mention names or...**

With my motorcycle I went to Melbourne to the Italian Consulate. I spoke with the Consul and told him I was experienced in office work. He said: 'What can you do?' 'I can type, I like it, my Italian is good' (it was much better than my Italian now). They all took minutes [of meetings], but no one knew how to type so they had been accumulating work for months. There were letters that should have been sent, but were not sent because nobody made copies. So I began to work there and stayed for a year typing on the typewriter.

**Is this how you were able to get out of the camp?**

Yes. I met my wife there at the camp. She used to teach English, even though she was German. I was in love and she came to Melbourne ... In my spare time I used to take photographs. I used to go to the churches on Sundays when people also used to go to Mass. I also took photographs in St. George Park<sup>9</sup>, etc. I would take the photo and then I would send it. I had set up a nice little business. In the end, I made an agreement with the priest. I told him 'You have lots of marriages, why don't you send them to me and I will give you a commission'. This was normal in Australia. At that time we also did this in Italy but not so openly [...] So I bought a house in Rathdowne Street and I had a cellar dug up. More than a cellar it was a studio, deep, right under the house. A large studio which had lots of

advantages: it had the same temperature summer or winter, there was no noise and when cars went past, you could not hear them. I also used it as a cinematographic studio. I photographed countless marriages...

**What parish was this, Mr Mangiamiele?**  
St. George.

**St. George. Were they Italians?**

It was in Rathdowne Street where many Italians used to go.

**But the priest?**

It was a monster of a priest who used to fight with everybody.

**What was the relationship between Italians and the Catholic Church here in Australia at that time?**

Look, I do not believe in any religion at all. I believe that it is home-made by man and that it is of no consequence. According to Freud or Jung, man has created God according to a father image. As a child, the father was a god because it could help him. He was strong. When the child became an adult, the father was old and frail and so he created a God, another father that was stronger and invisible. In other words, they are

all creations of the human fantasy.

**It seems to me that the Catholic Church has given the Italian migrant community a sense of identity at a time that Italians needed support, especially the Scalabrinians and Capuchins.**

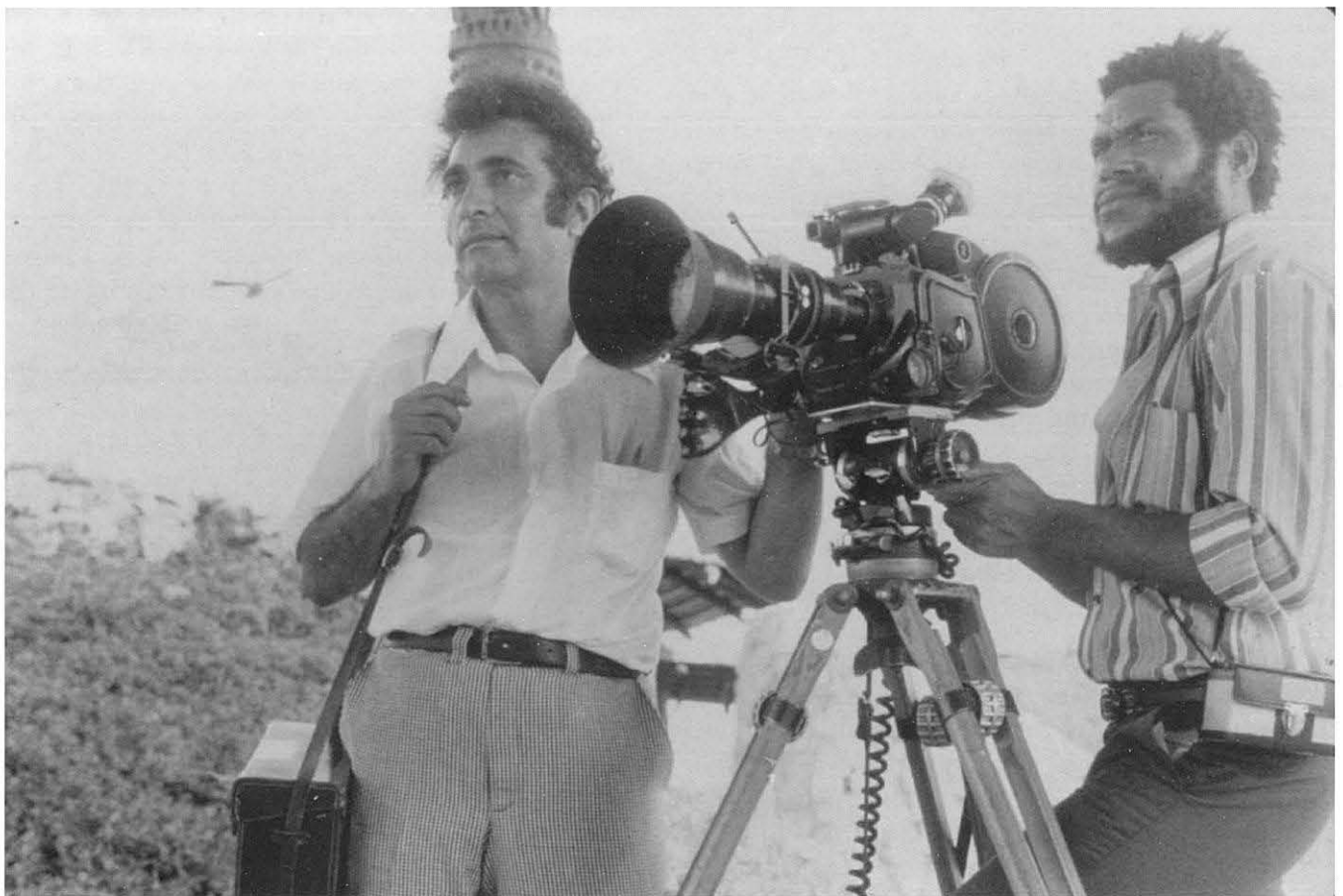
Yes, but in the Church of St. George there were older Australian parish priests.

**That's another matter.**

In matters of religion I have my doubts. Priests then were racist and they showed it openly.<sup>10</sup> When they were speaking to an Australian, they were all smiles and compliments, but when it was an Italian...

**I asked you the question on the Catholic Church because in *Clay* there is a very strange character, very enigmatic. At first one cannot understand the function it has in the film. Towards the middle of the film, a priest on a bicycle appears...**

It is the opportunistic priest that goes from farm to farm to scrounge. *Clay* is a dream. From the start it is established that it is a dream. Things happen as if in a dream, the way people walk and talk, it is not realistic.



*Giorgio Mangiamiele and cameraman Simon Mers on the set of the film Sapos which was shot in Papua New Guinea, 1981.*

**But this priest is an image...**

An image... the only person who could show some human warmth, etc. He comes to scrounge. It has a sterile meaning.

**The reference to the shadow. Nick asks the priest to move away because he doesn't want his shadow cast over him.**

Precisely. [Nick] has killed someone... Religion in this case [instead of forgiveness] gives him condemnation. [...] The priest gives his condemnation by casting his shadow over him.

**Look, you have just mentioned Freud. Have you studied him? Is he of interest to you?**

Yes. Very much so. I studied Freud. Above all I studied the *Theory of Dreams*. I speak a little German, but I read it in Italian as *La teoria dei sogni*, even though it doesn't work today because of... Then there is *Psychoanalysis*, a powerful and frightful theory, but today it is a theory devoid of any sense, a little like religion which has gone out of fashion.

**It has gone out of fashion now, but what about then?**

I was very interested then. I also studied psychology and psychiatry. I studied it for two years here in Australia because I made the film *Beyond Reason*. The actors were all mental patients. Each one was a different case and so I had to study well, not so much to be able to identify the various cases, but in order to have my characters act in a realistic manner... [...] the television never bought it.

**Television never wanted it?**

It never buys anything of mine. I don't know what to say: *blacklisted*. I don't even know why. I don't know if there is a black list or a black book, whatever. When I went to France, that is to Cannes, they invited me. They invited my film and also asked me to take an Australian representative, the main actors, etc., a small group. When I asked Canberra, etc. they said no, they were not interested. They did not send even a government person, etc., a secretary, nothing. *Sitmar Lines* gave us our fare almost for free. We went there by any means available, and in a sense it was sheer luck... out of charity... the Australian film arrives there thanks to the charity of *Sitmar Lines*. When I arrived there I went to the Australian Embassy in Paris... all the employees told me he was busy, the usual stories. I could not get in touch. Luckily, a friend of mine by the name of Peter Hoysten, a clever young man, was in England... I had helped him

to create a theatre group, because he's a theatre director, to enable him to go to England. As soon as he found out I was there (he is a good friend) he dropped everything and came over from England to Cannes. That's the situation. He said: 'I'll stop in Paris on the way and speak to the Ambassador'... [...] He told the Ambassador the story [...] it was a matter of hours but he made it just in time for the screening of the film. I will never forget that man there [the Australian Ambassador] because he behaved like a real gentleman.

**So it was a satisfaction.**

Yes, of course.

**Was *Clay* the first Australian film at Cannes?**

Before there was *Jedda*.<sup>11</sup> We know it was sent to Cannes and I don't know if it was screened or not. I imagine that it was screened if it was chosen. So that mine must have been second, but this is not important ten years later. I had begun something new in Australia... it is not important to be the first. What matters is to be in it, even after the film was invited, it's not a trivial matter.

**Was it invited? How did they know?**

They knew I made films because all the papers talked about it, etc. They asked me if I could send a 16mm inspection copy. I sent it immediately and shortly after I received word 'You are invited to the next festival; you have a month's time'.

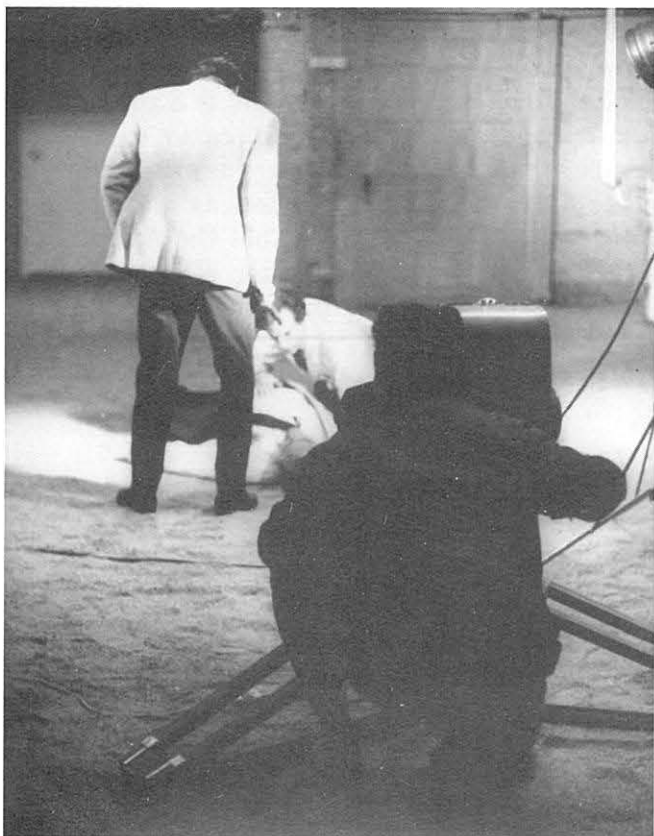
**So you made very many films?**

I worked on 24 films all told. They are not all mine. I also worked on the films of others, but a heap are mine. I wrote the stories myself and all that. The only thing is that when I came back to Australia... from Europe, from Cannes, there wasn't a dog who rang me up to say congratulations, nothing. Silence, the silence of a tomb, typically Anglo-Saxon. They have ignored me for years. I was really trying to get some help.

**Nevertheless you persisted and you have never...**

In conclusion, we are still there. I don't manage to gain anything. Just yesterday I went to see one of the Italian ministers and he is trying to do something. I don't know, you see, it's hatred they have towards the migrant, because I went to Cannes at a time when Australians did not produce a decent film. These are petty, stupid things. Here [the film industry] is dominated by

*'I went to  
Cannes at a  
time when  
Australians  
did not  
produce a  
decent film'*



Giorgio Mangiamele behind the camera during the shooting of his film *Beyond Reason*, 1958.

the American production. They were all American films. At that time they were trying to destroy me and have attempted with all means. In the case of *Ninety Nine Per Cent* there was someone who wanted to distribute it. He wanted to buy it and distribute it. [...] American interests stopped him. The film was bought by Channel 2 of the ABC and it was screened in some Australian cities, but not in Melbourne. In conclusion, small things, childish ones [...] they are the same emotions, the same passions that children have.

#### Which film do you cherish the most?

From a sentimental point of view, and this is a personal thing, *The Spag*. It is not at the same level technically as the other films, but my heart is in that film.

#### Why, which are the aspects?

There we are: the persecution felt by the child because of racism, etc. That's what I saw then. And that is what persists today, we are still there today. That woman<sup>12</sup> who speaks out now [in Parliament] against migrants, and again against the Vietnamese, the Asians and all that. This is a mentality that is unchanging. Even the humanitarian, the priest, the philosopher, whoever he might be, he says nice things in public on humanity, but he is racist deep down, and on occasions the poor migrant suffers. □

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>See 'Cultural Difference and Ethnicity in Australian Cinema', *Cinema Papers* 90, 1992, 12.

<sup>2</sup>Turnour, for instance, judges that *Clay's* dream-like atmosphere was not well received in 1965 because it was too innovative at a time when 'Australian film culture was still possessed by the dominant post-war idea that literary realism was the only mode of film art address'. In his view, it was ironic 'that, of course, the dream landscape of *Clay* is almost that that Peter Weir's *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) was later to penetrate'. See Quentin Turnour 'Giorgio' now in *Senses of the Cinema* (online) at [http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/01/14/mangiamele\\_quentin.htm](http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/01/14/mangiamele_quentin.htm)

<sup>3</sup>'Giorgio Mangiamele – Passionate film-maker, 13 Aug 1926 – 13 May 2001' now in *Senses of the Cinema* (online) at [http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/01/14/mangiamele\\_obit.html](http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/01/14/mangiamele_obit.html)

<sup>4</sup>See Stephen Castles, et. al., *Australia's Italians: Culture and Community in a Changing Society*, St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1992, 199.

<sup>5</sup>Rando asserts that of his productions four short features – *The Contract* (1953), *The Brothers* (1958), *The Spag* (1961) and *Ninety Nine Per Cent* (1963) – are on a 'migrant' theme. See *Altretalia*, vol. 16 luglio-dicembre 1997, [http://www.italians-world.org/altretalia/16\\_altretalia\\_contenuti.htm#Saggi](http://www.italians-world.org/altretalia/16_altretalia_contenuti.htm#Saggi)

<sup>6</sup>Graziella Parati (ed.) *Mediterranean Crossroads: Migration Literature in Italy*, London: Associated University Presses, 1999, 18.

<sup>7</sup>Alfredo Luzi 'La letteratura italo-australiana in lingua italiana', *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Macerata* XXI, Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1988, 127-43.

<sup>8</sup>Few commentators are aware that Mangiamele named the protagonist of his film *Clay* after a fictional character in *Albi dell'Intrepido*, a film that was popular in Post-War Italy. It is hoped that more cultural elements may emerge from the transcript of this interview.

<sup>9</sup>Contemporary maps of inner Melbourne do not show a park or a Catholic church by this name, and I have been unable to confirm the accuracy of this reference as yet.

<sup>10</sup>Mangiamele's view on the attitude of the Australian Catholic Church towards Italian migrants seems to coincide to an extent with the findings of Caroline Alcorso, et.al., in 'Community Networks and Institutions' in Stephen Castles et. al., *Australia's Italians: Culture and Community in a Changing Society* op. cit., p 107.

<sup>11</sup>The Australian Film Commission on its web site lists *Jedda* (1955) by Charles Chauvel as the first Australian film to be selected and screened at the Cannes Film Festival. See <http://www.afc.gov.au/>

<sup>12</sup> Mangiamele may have been referring to the emerging *One Nation* party.

## THE LONG TUNNEL MINE, ITALIAN HILL: HANDS IN THE RIFFLES<sup>1</sup>

by  
Ruth Dwyer

*Ruth Dwyer is a free-lance researcher and author. She has contributed to a number of publications, notably A History of Hawthorn, the suburb in which she lives. The areas of research generally undertaken include work on the non-British in nineteenth century Victoria and the documentation of silver, jewellery, furniture and dwellings of that period.*

In the silence of the late Autumn night, a figure bent low in the gloom. Shots rang out echoing down the hillside. There was a muffled cry and the sound of shuffling. The bent figure disappeared from view.

Stefano Pozzi was to appear before the local magistrates Messrs. L.O. Hart and M. Bedolla, Justices of the Peace, in the Daylesford Police Court on April 12, 1882, to answer a charge of shooting with intent to maim. He was charged under Section 15 of the Police Offences Statute - the element necessary to sustain such a charge being malice.

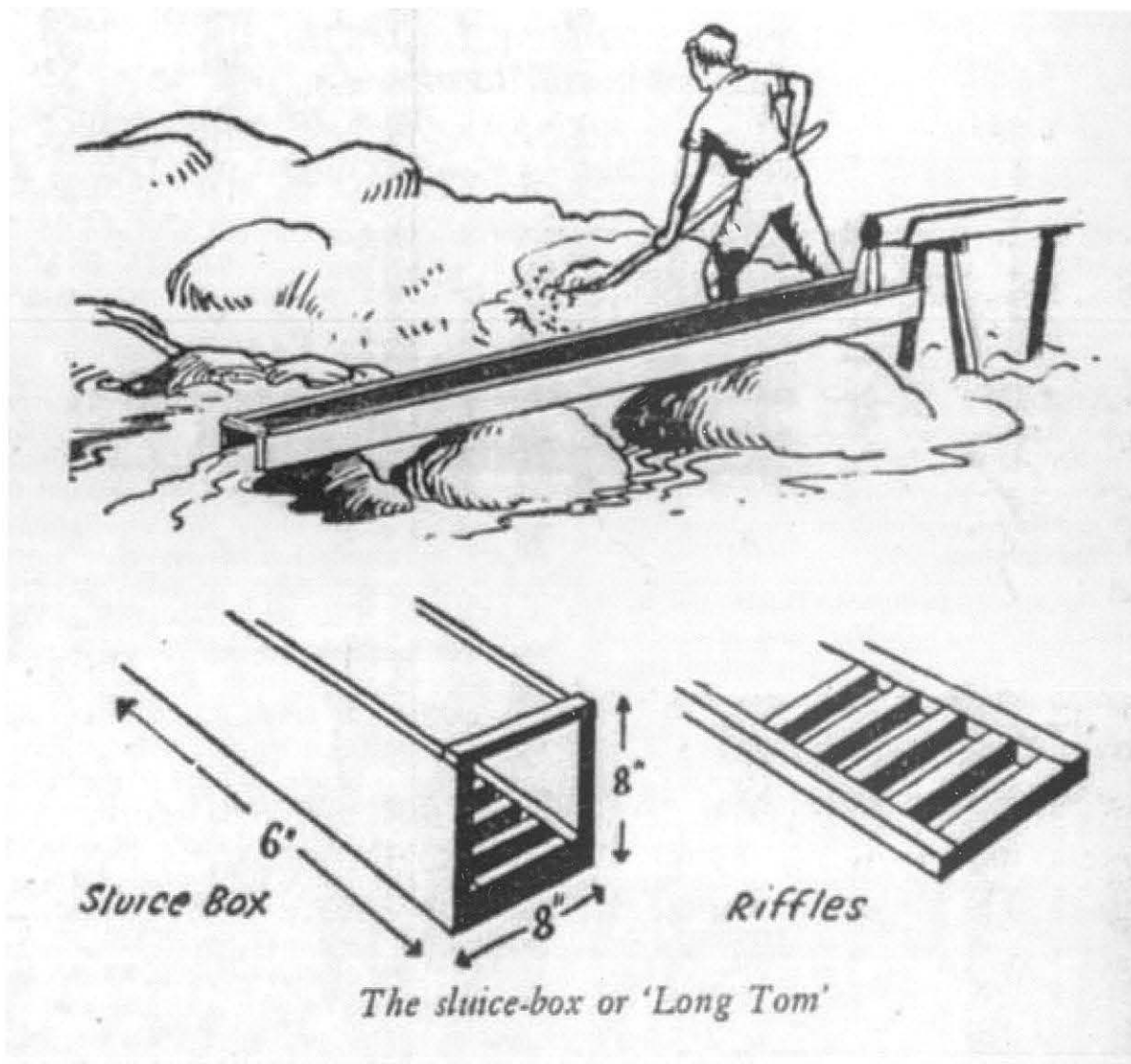


*Stefano Pozzi and his wife Giacomina, c1865. (Reproduced from the book L'emigrazione Ticinese in Australia, by Giorgio Cheda).*

Pozzi, (1833-1922) was born in the town of Giumaglio in the Valley of Valmaggia, in the Canton of Ticino, Switzerland. He immigrated to

Victoria aboard the *Carpentaria*, leaving on 14 May, 1854, and landing in Port Phillip on 1 August of that year. Pozzi, after a short time in Melbourne, settled in the Hepburn Springs area. After leaving school at the age of seventeen, he had been apprenticed for four years to the watchmaking trade, after which time he attended the Watchmakers' School in Geneva for six months. Consequently, he opened as a watchmaker and jeweller in Hepburn Springs, the premises being built on a large stump and known appropriately as *Up a Tree*. Pozzi Bros. later traded from a bakery and store at Oldracecourse, Hepburn, and a store in Yandoit. In Daylesford in 1867, Stefano opened a Wine Vault in Vincent Street and, in partnership with his brother, Leonardo, owned the *Star Hotel*. Stefano Pozzi's residence, *Valle Maggia*, and the later hotel, *The Vines*, in which he held a share, stood on Jubilee Lake Road. Pozzi was a member of the Daylesford Fire Brigade, the Masonic and Oddfellows Lodges and the Daylesford Borough Brass Band. He was always ready to befriend or assist financially those in need. Known among the community of Daylesford to be *industrious, energetic, enterprising and honest*, how could it be that Stefano Pozzi stood in the dock before the local magistrates on a charge perhaps sufficiently serious to warrant his case being heard in a higher court?

*The Vines* and Stefano Pozzi's residence were close to the entrance of the Long Tunnel Mine, Italian Hill, Daylesford, in which Pozzi, Christian Fumberger (c1842-1892) and Albino Paganetti (c1836-1924) were in partnership. For some time past, it was suspected that gold was being stolen from the sluice box at the Long Tunnel Mine. For several nights Pozzi kept watch. In the early hours of March 28, 1882, standing some fifteen yards away, he heard a noise in the sluice box. He called out. There was no response. The sound of the gun reverberated. Small shot flew. On subsequent investigation, Pozzi found no-one. Later in the morning when he inspected the site, blood



*Diagram showing the construction of a sluice box which was used to trap gold between the wooden slats or 'riffles'. (Illustration from the book *Prospecting for Gold* by William Frederick Heinz, Pegasus, Christchurch, New Zealand, 1952)*

stains and shot marks were found on the sluice box and the posts supporting the roofing. Pozzi then called at the Police Station, stating that he believed he had shot a Chinaman in the act of robbing the sluice box. He then gave himself into custody. Bail was granted.

On the morning of the April 12, 1882, the court convened. Messrs. Hart and Bedolla took their places on the Bench. Stefano Pozzi appeared to answer the charge of shooting, with intent to maim.

The first witness to appear was Hock Sim of the Chinese camp, a slight scarred man, aged about thirty-five. In the traditional Chinese way, he took the oath by the blowing out of a match. Hock Sim examined, stated that he lived by gambling. At about 1.00 o'clock on the morning of March 28, being under the influence of opium, he could not sleep, and went to see a friend, Li

Chang, before the latter left for Launceston. On his way, he broke his shoe which came off. The shoe and his foot had become muddy. Hock Sim bent over a race to wash them in the water. Shots were fired. He was hit. He did not go anywhere near the sluice box.

Mr. Geake, for the defence:

'If there are any blood-stains on the sluice box, they are not yours, then?'

'Were you not hit with a shovel when you were in a sluice box, at Blind Creek, in the night-time?'

'How long were you in Blackwood gaol? Was it not for being in a sluice box?'

Sergeant Frood, sworn, stated that he had, on the morning of March 28, proceeded to Hock Sim's house in the Chinese camp and found him suffering from gun shot wounds. His soft Chinese shoes were muddy. In answer to a question, Hock Sim said he had been shot *at the*

*first claim up the creek.* Frood subsequently examined the sluice box at the Long Tunnel Mine and found gun shot marks and blood stains. He had no doubt at all that whoever was shot had the intention of stealing gold from the sluice box. Frood had not heard of anyone else shot on that day.

Constable Carroll testified that he had taken Hock Sim to the Hospital.

Dr. Bennie, called, stated that Hock Sim was brought to the Hospital on the morning of March 28. There were twenty-seven shot marks in the right leg, eighteen in the right arm, nine in the

head, eleven in the left arm and five in the left leg.

The evidence concluded, Mr Geake stood to address the Bench. He stated that there was no evidence of malice in the case and called the attention of the Bench to Section 6 of the Police Offences Statute, which indicated that Pozzi was lawfully entitled to guard his own property, and had taken action which was fully justified. Hock Sim was undoubtedly in the sluice box for an unlawful purpose, and his evidence was inconsistent with that given by Frood.

The prisoner, Stefano Pozzi, was discharged. □



*The road from Daylesford to Hepburn Springs. Both these areas had significant gold strikes in the 1850s and attracted migrants from northern Italy and Switzerland.*

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to Laura Mecca, in particular for her translation of passages from *l'emigrazione ticinese in Australia*

#### NOTES

1. Riffles are the narrow slats of wood set crosswise in the canvas-lined bottom of a sluice box to catch the gold. Water flows from the race down the sluice box and over the wash dirt. Gold, being heavier, is trapped by the riffles.

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## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

*With the introduction of this new column in our journal, we hope to feature items of interest from one or more of the many components of the IHS Collection. For this publication we have chosen two newspaper articles from the IHS Newspaper Cuttings. The articles appeared in Melbourne in 1865 and highlight the beginnings of trade between Italy and Australia in the early days of Victoria's history.*

### MARBLE COMES TO MELBOURNE

#### The Age, Melbourne, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1865

A few gentlemen met at noon, yesterday, at the Carrara Marble Works, situated near the exhibition building, Latrobe street [corner William Street], for the purpose of inspecting the articles of use and vertu exhibited there for sale, and made from the marble dug from the quarries of Carrara, Genoa and the neighbourhood. The visitors were taken over the works by Signor Martelli, one of the proprietors, who courteously afforded information relative to the various objects under inspection. That gentleman explained that he had, for some time, been impressed with the idea that, if some really good, ornamental and useful marble ware were introduced, it would find ready sale in the colonies; and he had, therefore, written to a friend in Italy, who was the proprietor of one of the best quarries in Carrara, to send out a consignment of goods. The result of that letter was on the premises, in the shape of the various articles which were exhibited. Much of the marble used in the formation of those articles was of the very best quality; and, instead of being of the inferior sort which was usually exported to the colonies, was such as would be sent to London or Paris, and would bear the examination of the most critical judges. The specimens which were exhibited, and which formed only portion of the consignments which had been received, consisted of a number of fountains, large and small, of mantel-pieces, monumental tombstones, fonts, baths and vases, a quantity of sanctuary and some other articles, which, at the same time, showed exquisite workmanship and artistic skill of the first order. The marble bath, a luxury enjoyed in the old days of Rome and now used in all the cities in Europe, may now be had, thanks to the enterprise of the proprietor of the Carrara Marble Works, in Australia. A number of specimens of slabs of yellow sienna, black and gold, and other marbles of very fine quality were shown, and a fountain of particularly fine grained semi-transparent stone was much admired. Attention was called to some marble steps which, it was stated, could be furnished at a slight advance on the price of common bluestone ones. A beautifully carved

camellia of pure white marble upon a base of agate, the whole forming a paper weight and intended for presentation to Lady Darling, was also exhibited, as were also several blocks of marble intended to be sawn into slabs for the facing of the fronts of houses. A very pleasant hour may be passed by a visit to these works, and inspection must prove a treat to any admirer of the fine arts.

#### The Herald, Melbourne, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1865

The opening of the stores of the Carrara Marble Company, an enterprise started under the direction of Merrs. Martelli and Sevali [Veroli] took place yesterday in the presence of a number of the friends of those gentlemen. The store, which is of moderate size, is situated nearly opposite the Crown Lands office, in Latrobe street, and has been built upon land obtained [bought] for the purpose from the government. The stock is already very large, and includes not only statuary, fountains, etc., but also blocks and slabs of marble, suitable either for sculptors or builders. Some of the statuary is very fine, and is sculptured in the very choicest marble, such as is usually kept for the European market. The fountains are generally very beautiful in design. There are marble baths for those who are wealthy enough to indulge in such a luxury, altars, baptismal fonts, Medici vases, table tops of every shade and colour, mantelpieces, and garden fountains. A small ornament, a pair of camellia buds apparently thrown carelessly on the ground, carved in pure white marble, attracted much attention, and deservedly so, the execution being remarkably good. We understand that already several orders have been received and attended to; a very fine monument and an elaborate fountain having been forwarded to Adelaide. After inspecting the various specimens of art the party of guests were invited by Mr. Martelli to partake of a light refection, at which, prosperity to the company was drunk, and good feeling towards its promoters liberally expressed. □

## FAMILY HISTORY

*The following are summaries of some of the interesting enquiries received by the Italian Historical Society:*

### Carlo Saverio SCOPIE

Carlo was born in Venice in 1831 and was the son of Carlo Scopie, a captain in the Austrian Navy, and Mary Ann Scopie (nee Scarp). He arrived in the Colony of Victoria on 21 May 1855 on the ship *Seaking* from London. Soon after his arrival he married Margaret Taylor in Ballarat. Their children were: Annie Amelia, Emily Margaret, Alice Amelia, Margaret Catherine, Eliza, Esse Elizabeth, Charles John, Charles Ernest Albert, George William, Marian Adeline and Beatrice Mandy. In his application for naturalization, dated 4 February, 1876, Scopie stated that he was residing at Ballarat as a draper. He died in Ballarat at Errard Street on April 12, 1882.

Attempts made by his descendant, Mr. R. L. Master of Toorak, Victoria, to obtain a birth certificate from the Comune of Venice were unsuccessful, the reply being that that birth, marriage and death records pre-dating 1871 were kept by the Archivio Storico della Curia Patriarcale [Patriarchal Curia's Archives] of Venice. However the Archives require the name of the church in which the birth, marriage and death (B/M/D) took place.

*It is almost impossible to find the name of the church in those cases where the person was born in a large city where churches were (and are) numerous. The name of a street or district would enable the identification of the church. The recording of B/M/D in Venice were introduced on 1 September 1871, five years after the annexation of the Veneto Region to the Kingdom of Italy.*

### Assunta TERZI

Len Fletcher is researching his grandmother's history in Australia and Italy and would appreciate hearing from anyone who has come across her name. So far he has gathered the following information.

Assunta was born in Rome in 1877. She was the daughter of Antonio Terzi and Serafina Gentili. Her home town was Cavriago in the province of Reggio Emilia. Assunta arrived in Australia in 1902 disembarking in Melbourne. In 1904 she was living with Michael Iles in Perth, where she gave birth to a daughter in 20 November, 1904. On 18 December, 1905 she married Cecil Heberle in Perth in a Roman Catholic Church. In 1906 she may have lived in Adelaide or Sydney and may have returned for a trip to Italy. In 1910 she lived in Fremantle and in

1916/17 she was in Perth. Her marriage to Cecil Heberle was dissolved in Sydney on 18 July, 1910 on grounds of desertion. She died in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, on 21 February, 1919 and was buried in the local cemetery (grave no. 5232).

Assunta's grandson is keen to find out the exact birth date of Assunta and any other places of residence in Italy or in Australia between 1903 and 1919. He can be contacted by e-mail c/o E. DePellegrin@curtin.edu.au

### Tranquillo Giuseppe PATÀ

It is quite a rare event to receive the visit of a descendant of Italian pioneers seeking to meet distant relatives in Australia.

Mrs Valeria Patà and her husband, from Bern, Switzerland, sought the help of the Society in tracing in Victoria descendants of Tranquillo Giuseppe Patà who emigrated to Australia from Sonogno (Canton of Ticino) in 1855 and settled in the Bendigo district.

Tranquillo was born in 1829. He was naturalized in 1864 and in 1861 married Mary Guilfoyle, fathering 8 children: Mary Ellen (1861-1862), Mary Rosalia (1865-1928), Luise Josephine (1867-1932), Elizabeth (1869-1877), Lucy Hannah (1871-1948), Marta (1874-1951), Eliza (1877-1945) and Patrick Joseph (1863-1945). Tranquillo's brother Cherubino who lived in Sonogno was a distinguished artist and a successful exhibition of his paintings was held in 2001 in Ticino. The Society was able to assist Mr and Mrs Patà in tracing 'relatives' in Melbourne and in Brisbane who were delighted to meet them. Valeria Patà can be contacted by e-mail at [valeripata@hotmail.com](mailto:valeripata@hotmail.com)



*Laura Mecca (left) with Mr and Mrs Patà on the occasion of their visit to the Italian Historical Society.*

### The GIULIANI Family

Antonio Giuliani was born about 1833 in the village of San Carlo, Poschiavo Valley, Switzerland. He sailed from Liverpool on 6 February 1858 aboard the

ship *Scottish Chief*, arriving in the Colony of Victoria on 10 May 1858. He worked and lived in Eaglehawk and Mandurang on the Victorian goldfields in the Bendigo area. By March 1870 he had moved onto the New South Wales goldfields.

Antonio's brother Carlo accompanied him to Australia and he too worked on the Victorian goldfields for some years, returning to Switzerland c1870 to marry Ann(ett)a Mini. They arrived back in Melbourne in November 1873 accompanied by Antonio and Carlo's sister Margherita Giuliani.

Other members of the family came to Australia at various times: Battista, Giuseppe (Joseph) and Cecilia Maria Giuliani. In New South Wales Cecilia later married Stefano Ferrari who travelled overland from the Victorian goldfields in 1860. Stefano was also born in the Poschiavo Valley.

Descendant Margaret Majurey of 2 McLaren Street, Tullamarine Vic 3043, would like to receive information on the Giuliani and Ferrari families.

### **Giuseppe Alfredo RANGAN**

He was born in Venice in the 1850s. It is believed he arrived in the Colony of Victoria in the early 1880s. In his 1882 marriage certificate to an English woman he declared his occupation as an artist. He disappeared from Melbourne a few short years after his marriage, leaving behind his wife and a young daughter, Reda Rangan, who later became a well-known opera singer as *mezzosoprano*. Warrick Duvé is a descendant of Rangan and would like to hear from anyone who may have come across his name. Please write to his address at 10 Deepdene Road, Deepdene 3103.

### **Umberto DECINI**

Kay Salt and her brother Terrence Decini are seeking advice and assistance in their search for any distant relatives in Italy. Their paternal grandfather Umberto Decini was born in Rome c1883 and settled in Australia early 1900s. Through the Internet they have obtained the addresses and telephone numbers of several Decini and would like to know what steps they can make now as neither of them speaks or writes the Italian language.

*A general letter in Italian explaining the reason for their research and a summarised history of their ancestor would attract some attention. There are several translating agencies providing this service (Yellow Pages). However, we stress that the Italians - that is of those living in the country today - do not seem to be very interested in their family history or in tracing or establishing contacts with possible descendants of long-gone family members. Twenty million Italians have migrated since the 1830s, most of them to South and North America and to other*

*European countries. It is therefore quite possible that every Italian has some distant relative somewhere in the world!*

### **Giacomo AUCHETTO (later Auchetti)**

The name could also be spelt Orchetto, Ouchetto or Ogitoo. ✖

Giacomo arrived in Australia in 1856 on board the *Eagle*. He was reported to have been born in Piedmont. His parents were Bortolomeo Auchetto and Maria Caterina Cappello. Soon after his arrival in the Colony he married Honora Fogarty and had four children. He managed or owned a vineyard at Dundee near Geelong. Unfortunately he was killed in an accident in 1864 and died in the Geelong Hospital. His wife Hanora remarried and moved to Bunningyong, near Ballarat. Descendant Doreen Sheriff (sheriff.d@impulse.net.au) is trying with great difficulty to research the Italian archives for dates.

*Without knowing the exact town of birth, marriage or death it is impossible to access any civil or church records in Italy. Unfortunately the country does not have a centralised record-keeping system. The application for naturalization (National Archives of Australia) or marriage and death certificates should include this vital information.*

### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

#### **2002 Local and Family History Expo, Ballarat**

Central Highlands Historical Association (CHHA) is holding its annual Local and Family History Expo on Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October 2002 in Ballarat at the Australian Catholic University (Aquinas).

The inaugural CHHA Expo Lecture will be held at the Australian Catholic University Mulkearns Lecture Theatre, beginning at 8.00pm.

Further details on the Expo and inaugural lecture will be progressively updated on the website [www.ballaratgenealogy.org.au](http://www.ballaratgenealogy.org.au) (click on CHHA Expo) or write to CHHA, PO Box 2209, Ballarat Mail Centre, 3354 – Phone 03 5331 7006.

#### **10<sup>th</sup> Australasian Congress of Genealogy and Heraldry.**

This important Congress will be held at the Melbourne Convention Centre from the 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April 2003. Those who wish to have some commercial opportunity at the Congress selling their own publications or family history material, including registration and accommodation enquiries should contact the Secretariat Conference Consultants Australia, Level 1, 123-125 York Street, South Melbourne 3205. Telephone 03 9698 7444, Fax 03 9690 3944 (Bev Williamson or Anna Civiti). □

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

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

### BOOKS IN ENGLISH

 ***Ferguson Plarre Bakehouses: A Recipe for Success, Four Generations of Baking Excellence***  
Ari Unglik, Wilder Ghostwriters, Toorak, 1997.

This wonderfully presented publication traces the history of the Ferguson and Plarre families who ran separate food and pastry businesses before merging them to become Ferguson Plarre Bakehouses. The Italian connection to this successful company lies in the contribution of Artemisa (Misa) Panelli, wife of Percy Ferguson. Misa's family migrated to Australia in 1888 and settled in Hastings where her father Benedetto Panelli worked as a fisherman until 1893. The family then moved to Melbourne where Benedetto established a market garden in Brunswick, a business he sold in 1901 to purchase a wine bar in Gertrude Street Fitzroy.



(Back Row L-R): Tony Virgona, Jimmy Watson Snr., Jimmy Watson, Percy Ferguson, Mr Donini, Mondy Watson, Mr Digilo, Rinaldo Massoni (Centre Row): Velia Virgona, unknown, Teresa Panelli, Misa Ferguson, Giselda Watson, Grace (Watson) Panelli (Front Row) Mario Virgona, Benedetto Panelli, Jack Ferguson.

All three Panelli daughters married: Giselda married Jim Watson and their son Jimmy established J.C. Watson Wine Merchants in Lygon Street Carlton; Grace married Rinaldo Massoni and established Café Florentino in

Bourke Street and Velia married Tony Virgona, a tenor who toured with the Melba-Williamson Opera Company and who later established Casa Virgona Restaurant in Brunswick Street Fitzroy.



*The Panelli sisters in Sydney 1908*

 ***My Italian Notebook***  
Gough Whitlam, Allen & Unwin, Crow's Nest, 2001. \$35.00

Australia's former Prime Minister discusses topical issues about Italy, a country to which he has made over 30 trips. He covers topics from art to politics, to royal genealogy and makes particular references to the Italian contribution to Australia's history in the chapter on B.A. Santamaria.

 ***Microcosms***  
Claudio Magris, The Harvill Press, London 1999. Translated by Iain Halliday. \$13.00.

The author focuses on the people who live on the border of Istria and Italy, with Trieste as their chief cultural centre. As the author writes: *'They have been the play things of History and have never enjoyed either settled frontiers or a settled language'*. This book also touches on the question of migration out of the area to foreign lands.

 ***One of Us?: A Century of Australian Citizenship***  
David Dutton, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney 2002. \$25.00.

At a time when questions of who can and can't be "one of us," when citizenship, race and multiculturalism are in the forefront of contemporary politics, this books demonstrates that *"Australian citizenship has much less to do with questions of democracy, civil and political rights than with a determination to create a cohesive and loyal citizenry"*.

 ***Threepence a Book and Other Stories from Moonee Valley***

Joe De Iacovo and Contributors, Wingate Avenue Community Centre, Ascot Vale, 2001. \$12.00.

These personal reminiscences about the Moonee Valley region span from the years 1890 to 1998. Italian contributors to the book are Luciana Pantaleo and Antonietta Cerantonio.

 ***Radical Melbourne: A Secret History***

Jeff Sparrow and Jill Sparrow, The Vulgar Press, North Carlton, 2001. \$45.00.

This thoroughly interesting book takes readers on a journey through the streets of Melbourne, retelling stories of the city from a view-point not often expressed in other history books: the radical, fringe and alternative elements of Victorian history...*'Part walking tour, part social archaeology, it transforms familiar city landmarks into monuments to the passionate struggles that rocked the metropolis in its first hundred years...'* Areas of interest for Italian-Australian history are the Matteotti Club, Queen Victoria Market, the anti-Fascist protests of the 1920s and 1930s, the Tivoli Theatre and Trades Hall.



*Matteotti Club members (including Francesco Carmagnola, a leader of the anti-Fascist cause in Australia) outside the club's original headquarters in Spring Street Melbourne c1927.*

 ***Ordinary Women Extraordinary Lives: Capturing the Contribution of Victorian Women Since Federation***

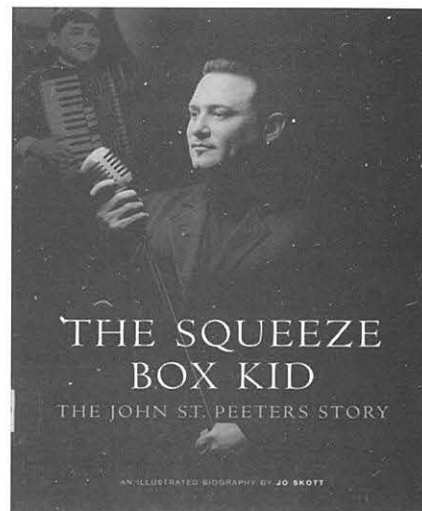
Australian Women's Trust, Melbourne 2001. \$31.00.

This publication is the result of a travelling exhibition during 2001 called *Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives* which placed women's contributions to Victorian history firmly on the public record. As a result, this book offers those who have not seen the exhibition, a chance to

meet the women at its centre. Italian contributors include Kavisha Marzella, Judy Falla, Mary D'Aprano, Ninette Trifiletti, Gilda Canil, Anna Verzulli, Mary Lorenzini and Salva Marotta.

 ***The Squeeze Box Kid: The John St. Peeters Story***

Jo Skott, Muso's Publications, Northcote, 2001. \$30.00.



An illustrated biography, this book follows the career of John St. Peeters whose birth name is Johnny Lo Piccolo. The artist, who began his professional career at the age of seven playing the piano accordion, has had 24 single hits and 9 albums produced to date. He has had his own TV show and 4 of his singles have made it into the Australian Top Ten.

 ***Voices and Stories from Many Lands: A Century of Change in Boroondara***

Ruth McLean, City of Boroondara, Camberwell, 2001. Book donated by Amelia M. Dozzi.

This oral history project celebrates the ethnic diversity of the Boroondara region. A section is devoted to the Dozzi family.

 ***IATICE: Italian Australian Technological Innovations Conference and Exhibition, 2002***

Published by IATICE, Melbourne, 2002.

This kit includes all papers and other materials presented at the conference of the same name, held in Melbourne in April 2002.

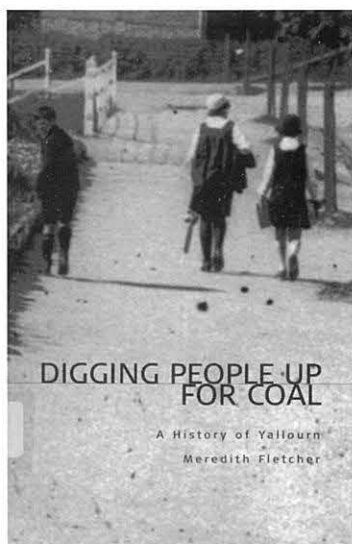
 ***Trieste and the Meaning of Nowhere***

Jan Morris, Faber & Faber, Trieste, 2001. \$40.00

A brief history of the city of Trieste, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and an explanation of the split from Italy of areas such as Pola, Istria, and Dalmatia after the Second World War. The book is written in narrative form.

 ***Digging People up for Coal: A History of Yallourn***

Meredith Fletcher, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 2002. \$35.00.



Yallourn was designed in the 1920s as a pretty, picturesque garden town. Due to the wealth of coal deposits in the area, Yallourn became a thriving and close-knit community, home to several generations of State Electricity Commission workers and their families. This was especially true for thousands of Italian migrants and their families who settled in the area in the 1950s. By the 1960s however, *'the town was surplus to requirements'* and a large part of the industry was subsequently wound up. And what happened then was...you will be surprised when you read the book!

 ***Sugar Heaven***

Jean Devanny, Modern Publishers, Sydney, 1936. \$120.00.

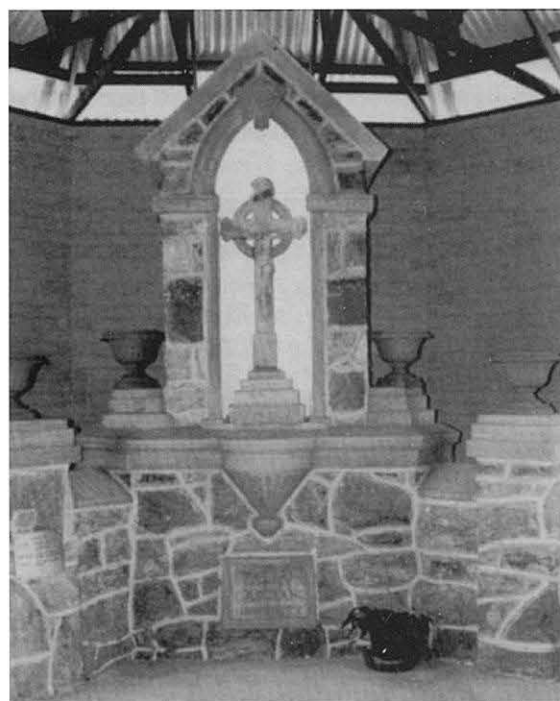
We are very proud to have acquired this rare, first edition publication which offers readers a front-seat view of the epic sugar industry strikes in Queensland in the 1930s. As the author herself writes: *'In the course of an eight month lecturing tour through....Queensland, ... I was privileged to become involved in the fiercest and most important strike struggle that the sugar industry has known. Not a struggle for wages, but for life; for the living labour forces upon whose backs the tentacles of the giant sugar industry....are fastened'*.

The book is written in narrative form and the characters, although given fictitious names, are drawn from the author's first hand view of the workers' struggle.

 ***A Story is Told: Internment, Truth, Memory and Reconciliation***

Edited by Sister Mary Cabrini Fontana, Harvey Shire Council, Harvey, W.A., 2002.

This thought provoking book is a compilation of articles written in Western Australian newspapers, periodicals and personal recollections of the Western Australian internment camp. It also chronicles the history of the Harvey Internment Camp Memorial Shrine built by Italian internees. Included are the names of each Italian internee placed at Harvey and Australian Army records detailing the employment of each internee.



*The Wayside Shrine built by Italian Civil Internees in Camp no.11, Harvey, Western Australia.*

 ***Women as Australian Citizens: Underlying Histories***

Edited by Patricia Crawford and Philippa Maddern, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 2001. \$35.00.

The publication examines the history of citizenship for women in Australia since gaining the vote in 1901. It analyses the various ethnic and cultural groups of women in Australia, showing how *'gender, far from being irrelevant, has been central to the concept of citizenship'*.

 ***Across the Years: Twentieth Century Memories***

Edited by Margaret Heathorn, Shirley Sydenham and Cynthia Schultz, Spectrum, Richmond, 2001, \$22.00

This book is a compilation of reminiscences by older Australians, all of whom attend the Linlithgow Day Centre in inner Melbourne. Italian contributors to the book are Olga Giuliani, Tommaso Di Tullio, Raffaele De Rango, Cosimo Di Paola, Bortolo and Natalia Pigatto.

 ***The Reds: The Communist Party of Australia from Origins to Illegality***

Stuart Macintyre, Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, 1999. \$33.00.

The Australian Communist Party was a force to be reckoned with for more than half a century from 1920. It influenced social movements, cultural life and trade unions in its time and was suppressed during the Second World war. This comprehensive account of Australian communism, is interspersed throughout with Italian names and contributions.

 ***Mediterranean Son: Memoirs of a Calabrian Migrant***

Giovanni Sgrò, Scoprire il Sud, Coburg, 2000. Translated by Anne Sgrò. \$15.00.

The biography of politician Giovanni Sgrò from migration to Australia in 1952, his Australian



A group of young men (including the author Giovanni Sgrò) at Bagnoli, near Naples, waiting to migrate to Australia, 1952.

Labour Party activism, his denial of Australian citizenship and re-entry visas, his subsequent election to the Victorian parliament and his maiden speech to this parliament in Italian, Mr Sgrò has always remained true to his Calabrian roots.

## BOOKS IN ITALIAN

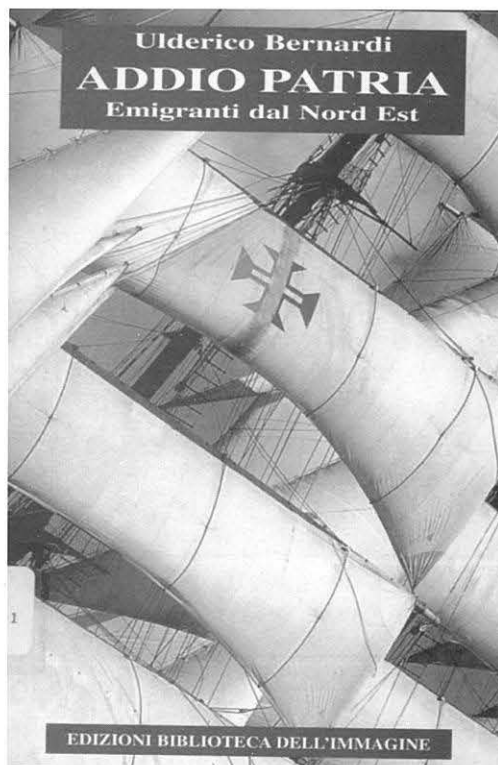
 ***L'Emigrante Ignoto***

Pino Bosi and Santo Aiello, Insegna, Brunswick, 2001. Bi-lingual text.

Donated to the IHS by Pino Bosi. This tome incorporates the recollections, reflections and confessions of 70 Italian migrants.

 ***Addio Patria: Emigranti dal Nord Est***

Ulderico Bernardi, Biblioteca dell' Immagine, Pordenone, 2002. Donated by the author.



Associates the first great wave of Italian migration between the years 1879 and 1925 of 15 million Italians to unknown shores, with the adventurous spirit of Marco Polo. Chapter 2 of this book deals specifically with the failed expedition to the South Pacific of the Marquis De Ray's group, and the subsequent settlement of this group of migrants in New South Wales to form what became known as New Italy.

 ***Toscani di Qua Toscani di La.***

Pino Bosi, Regione Toscana, Florence, 2001. Donated by the author.

A pictorial and historical account of Tuscan migration to Australia. Includes the biography of many Italian-Australians that have made important contributions to our history. □



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