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FRONT COVER:

Nino Borsari with a Borsari brand bicycle. Borsari produced his own range of bicycles and sold them at this outlet 'Borsari Bicycle and Sports Centre'.

Borsari won an Olympic gold as a member of the record-breaking Italian 4000m pursuit team at the 1932 Games in Los Angeles. He was instrumental in securing the Melbourne bid for the 1956 Olympic Games, of which the 50th anniversary is being celebrated in Melbourne this year.

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meeting a marriage partner in a new land: south australian calabria-born women tell their story

by **GIULIA CICCONE** ¹ IS A POSTGRADUATE STUDENT IN ITALIAN, SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, AT FLINDERS UNIVERSITY, ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA. SINCE OBTAINING A RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP IN 2002 SHE HAS BEEN STUDYING THE PARTICULAR EXPERIENCES OF MIGRATION AND MARRIAGE OF CALABRIA-BORN WOMEN WHO ARRIVED IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA UNMARRIED OR AS PROXY BRIDES. HER SUPERVISOR IS PROFESSOR DESMOND O'CONNOR.

THIS ARTICLE PRESENTS SOME OF THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF MIGRATION AND MARRIAGE OF 42 CALABRIA-BORN WOMEN WHO ARRIVED IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA UNMARRIED (41) OR AS A PROXY BRIDE (ONE). THE REASONS FOR DEPARTURE ARE CONSIDERED, FOLLOWED BY THE WOMEN'S EMOTIONS AT THE TIME OF MIGRATION. THEIR SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA IS DISCUSSED AND SOME OF THEIR INITIAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE NEW LAND ARE PRESENTED. FOR THOSE WOMEN WHO ARRIVED UNMARRIED, THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THEIR MEETING OF A MARRIAGE PARTNER ARE CONSIDERED.

Migration has long been a reality for the inhabitants of Italy's southern-most mainland region, Calabria. This is because Calabria, with an economy based on a failing agricultural system and subject to corruption (*N'drangheta*), offered little prosperity to the common people, the majority of whom were peasants who worked on the land. Between 1901 and 1942 an estimated 884,585 Calabrians migrated from the region, constituting almost seven percent of the total Italian migration flow.² They headed to northern Italy, within Europe or to transoceanic destinations, in particular the United States of America. In this period, the Calabrian migrant was usually the economically motivated male who left his hometown in search of employment. Typical of young labourers from southern Italy, he migrated alone, found employment as quickly as possible and saved his money. He considered his migration to be temporary: he returned home, generally only after a few years abroad.

In the aftermath of the Second World War Calabria was still one of the poorest and most underdeveloped regions in Italy. The majority of the Calabrians, 67.3%,

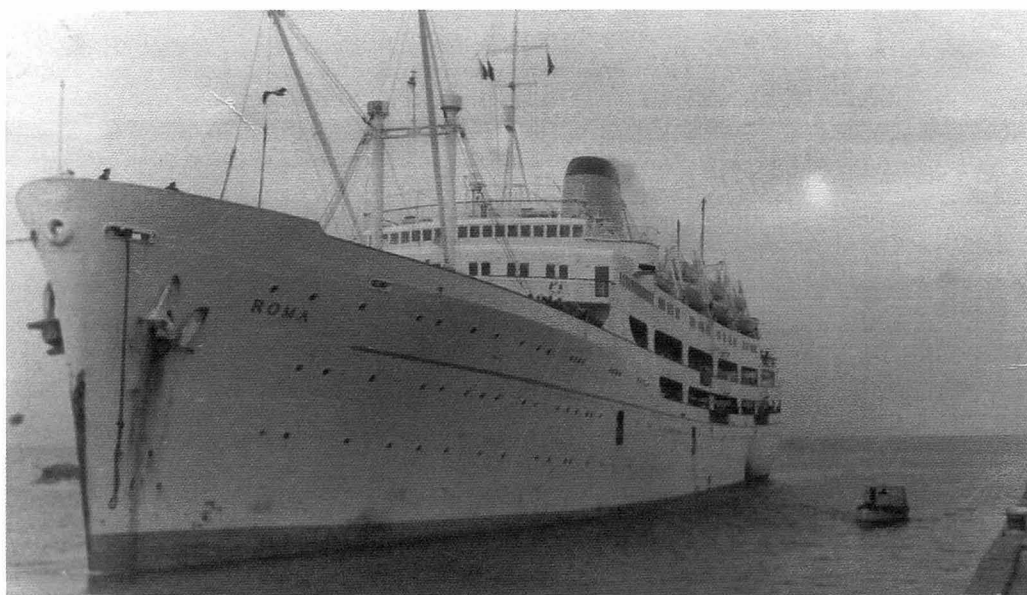
worked in the agricultural sector, which relied heavily on age-old practices and human and animal labour. Causing further problems for Calabria were natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. Despite the establishment in August 1950 of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* ('State Fund for the South'), the situation in post-war Calabria remained depressing: the percentage of families living in poverty was 37.7% (the highest in Italy); the average income in Calabria was 30% lower than anywhere else in Italy; 26% of Calabrians were illiterate (compared to the national average of nine percent); Calabria had the highest rate of unemployment in Italy.³

With the Italian government encouraging migration, particularly from the south,⁴ in the post-war period Calabria witnessed the largest exodus of its people since unification: more than 750,000 Calabrians left their homeland and they accounted for 10% of the total Italian migration flow.⁵ In this period there was a significant increase in the presence of Calabrian women. Between 1958 and 1967 of the 301,469 departures from Calabria 78,190 (26%) were women. This increase was the result of a change in the perception of migration by many Calabrian men: they now viewed migration as permanent and thus sponsored their wives, daughters and families.⁶ More than half of the Calabrian migrants (52%) headed for South America, while only five percent arrived in the USA due, in large part, to the nation's strict immigration policy. Over a quarter (27%) migrated to countries within Europe. A further 16% settled in other, more distant destinations, including Australia.⁷

Migrants from Calabria have always had a significant presence in Australia. Between 1890 and 1940 an estimated 2,515 Calabrians arrived in Australia, accounting for almost ten percent of Italian settlers.⁸ In the post-war period, the influx increased considerably and by 1976 they numbered approximately 47,400 and formed one of the biggest groups of Italy-born migrants in Australia.⁹ An estimated 8,549 of the post-war Calabrians settled in South Australia, of whom 3,485 (40%) were women.¹⁰ The women either migrated with a male or they waited in Calabria until their husband, father, relative or male *paesano*¹¹ had saved enough money in South Australia to sponsor them out. They rarely, if ever, began the migration chain.

In order to learn of the particular experiences of migration and marriage of

Migrating to Australia
The ship 'Roma' brought many
Calabrians to Australia.
(photograph courtesy of Connie Foti)



Calabria-born women in South Australia, 42 interviews were conducted. The year of birth of the informants covered the period 1914 to 1957. The women were born predominantly in towns within Reggio Calabria (36) that were strongly represented in South Australia's post-war Calabrian community:¹² Caulonia (six), Sinopoli (six), Taurianova (five), Benestare (three), Sant'Eufemia d'Aspromonte (three) and Varapodio (three). Two women were born in Placanica and one woman was born in each of the following towns: Careri, Delianuova, Gioiosa Jonica, Molochio, Oppido Mamertina, Platì, Rocella Jonica and Rosarno. There were four women born in towns in the province of Cosenza (CS) and two in towns in the province of Catanzaro (CZ).

Many of the women recalled difficult times in Calabria: *Non c'era moneta, non c'era da mangiare, non c'era niente, lavoravamo solamente per campà* ('There was no money, there was no food, there was nothing. We worked just to survive'). All the informants were born into agricultural and farming families and some commented on the hard life experienced on the land. One informant, from Sant'Eufemia d'Aspromonte (RC), whose father migrated to South Australia in 1956 when she was 12, remembered her father's frustration at his inability to become financially secure: 'Dad worked all the time, so did we, we were working the land, day and night, but we were getting nowhere...there was no future.' For many families the land was the only source of income and an often-unpredictable means of survival. As one informant born in Sinopoli (RC) explained: *Che fai se viene la sfortuna? Se non viene la pioggia? Se tutti i pianti muoiono? [sic] Hai perso tutto il lavoro e non hai neanche*

una lira in tasca e poi che fai? ('What do you do if you have bad luck? If it doesn't rain? If all the plants die? You have lost all your work and you don't even have a penny in your pocket and then what do you do?').

The earliest year of migration of an informant from Calabria to South Australia was 1935. The vast majority of the informants (39) migrated between 1946 and 1971, as part of the largest-ever influx of Italians into the state.¹³ Only two informants arrived after 1971. The youngest age at the time of migration was one year and the oldest 37 years. The women were most commonly sponsored out by a family member who had settled in South Australia some time earlier, in particular their father or brother. It was rare for the father to migrate at the same time as his family, usually because he wanted to find himself a job and some form of accommodation prior to sponsoring out his family. Four women migrated to join their fiancé and married within weeks of their arrival. In fact, one woman from Varapodio (RC) married her fiancé, a *paesano* who had settled in South Australia four years earlier, the very evening of her arrival in Adelaide. Another woman migrated to join her husband to whom she had been married by proxy.

In the post-war period it became relatively common for Italian women to migrate to Australia as proxy brides.¹⁴ One informant, born in Taurianova (RC), was married by proxy in 1955, at the age of 16, to a man in Australia, whom she had never met. She explained how her marriage came about:

I came out of college when I was 15 and I went to learn dressmaking. One day my

teacher and I went into the village to buy some zips and buttons. We stopped for a coffee at the shop of my teacher's friend. She was a photographer. She said to me: "Ohhh...I've never seen you before." My teacher told her that I had just come out of college. She said to me: "Do you mind if I take a photo of you?" I was young and shy and didn't know what to do, so I just sort of nodded. She took a photo of me and she put the photo in the window of her shop that faced out onto the town's main piazza. Anyway, my future brother-in-law saw the photo and thought that I was very nice and would be good for his brother in South Australia who had written to him asking him to find him a wife. He found out who I was and then his family came to talk with my family. I was young. I didn't know what was going on. All of a sudden I was engaged to this man in Australia.

On the day of her wedding she was accompanied by her brother to the local Catholic church. Her future brother-in-law stood in for the absent bridegroom during the actual ceremony. Two years later her husband was financially able to sponsor her to South Australia.

Leaving the homeland presented deep emotions for those informants who were old enough to recall their migration. All commented on their heartache at leaving behind loved ones, in particular parents and grandparents, and many were sad to farewell their beloved *paese*. One informant from Longobucco (CZ), 25 years old at the time of migration, did not want to leave because she did not want to be separated from her parents. However, her parents convinced her to depart: *I miei mi hanno detto: "Vai figlia perchè là fai una vita migliore di quella che stiamo facendo qua."* ('My parents said to me: "Daughter go, because there you will have a better life than we have here.'). Another woman, from Rocella Jonica (RC), who migrated when she was 36 years old, told how she cried every day of her journey to Australia: *Ho pianto tutto il viaggio perché non sapevo che avrei trovato in Australia ma sapevo quello che ho lasciato: la mamma, il papà, la sorella, il fratello.* ('I cried the entire trip because I didn't know what I would find in Australia but I knew what I had left behind: my mother, my father, my sister, my brother').

With the exception of a woman who travelled by plane from Rome to Adelaide in 1975, all the women travelled to Australia by ship, a journey that took around one month. They disembarked in Melbourne

(39) or Port Pirie (two). A family member, fiancé or, in one case, a husband was waiting for the women at their destination and accompanied them to Adelaide. The women settled predominantly in the market-garden areas of Lockleys and Fulham Gardens (to the west of the city) or Payneham, Athelstone and Campbelltown (to the north-east of the city).¹⁵

Some women told of their initial impressions of Adelaide. An informant who arrived from Sant'Eufemia d'Aspromonte (RC) at the age of 12 in 1960 recalled: 'We arrived at the station in town and I saw Adelaide for the first time, the nice big wide streets and all the trees and people and I thought it was really nice.' Another woman from Oppido Mamertina (RC), who arrived in 1962, thought: *Come paese era abbastanza buono* ('As a town it was ok'). On the other hand, one informant, born in Benestare (RC), whose initial impressions were very negative, expected that life would be better in Australia. When she saw her father's accommodation in Parafield Gardens (a northern suburb) she felt extremely disappointed: *Era piuttosto uno shed e basta e quando l'ho visto mi ha fatto piangere. Non c'era né un bagno né un gabinetto, nothing. Ho pensato, mannaggia, sono venuta qua a morire* ('It was just a shed, that's it and when I saw it I started to cry. There wasn't a bathroom or a toilet, nothing. I thought, damn it, I've come here to die').

Many informants told of being extremely homesick in South Australia and missing their loved ones in Calabria. According to one informant, from Careri (RC), who migrated in 1952 when she was 15 to join her father, she cried all the time when her father was not around because she desperately missed her grandparents and friends. She did not want her father to know how sad she was because her voyage to Australia had been expensive, so whenever he asked her if she liked Australia, she would reply yes. Another informant who migrated when she was 19 years old longed for her friends and her town of Placanica (RC):

I suffered quite a lot, leaving all my friends after nearly 20 years. Arriving in this new place, I had the shock of my life. I was so distressed that I didn't have my periods for one year. I went to the doctor and he said: "Don't worry, it's because of the trauma of the changes," and it was true. I used to cry all the time, I missed my friends and my village, my home.

Not being able to speak the language was a significant problem for the informants and an issue that made them feel frightened,

lonely and out of place.¹⁶ One informant from Sinopoli (RC), who arrived in 1955 at the age of 26, summed up the feelings of many: *Non sapevo dire niente e non capivo niente, così mi sono sentita persa. Mi sono trovata fuori come un uccellino fuori della gabbia* ('I couldn't say a word and I didn't understand anything, that's why I felt lost. I felt like a little bird out of its cage'). Unfortunately, it was not uncommon for isolation, loneliness and homesickness to manifest itself in depression. This was the case for one informant from Caulonia (RC). She told how unhappy she was in Australia: *Ho passato dei momenti molto rigidi e molto brutti. Piangevo sempre. Per due anni non ho voluto uscire fuori dalla porta. Sono rimasta chiusa dentro e io non volevo sapere niente, volevo solo ritornare a casa* ('I had some tough, horrible moments. I cried all the time. For two years I did not want to go outside the house. I stayed closed inside and I didn't want to know about anything, I only wanted to go home'). Indeed, many women were so unhappy upon arrival that they wanted to return immediately to Calabria. However, as one informant from Longobucco (CZ) succinctly put it: *Per andare indietro la moneta non ci stava* (laughs) *allora ho dovuto per forza restare qua* ('There was no money to go back home (laughs) so I had no choice but to stay here'). With time she, and the majority of the informants, settled into life in South Australia.

With the exception of the woman who arrived married by proxy, and one woman who returned to Italy for her wedding day, all of the women married in South Australia between 1946 and 1980. The majority of the women were married young, half before the age of 21. Of the 41 women who arrived unmarried, 37 married within their group (endogamously) to men who were either born in Calabria (24), other regions of Italy (12) or who were of Italian origin (one). On the other hand, only four women married out of the group (exogamously) to either a man born in Australia (two women) or a man born in Europe: in Poland (one woman); in Austria (one woman). The circumstances surrounding the woman's meeting of her partner and the subsequent engagement and marriage were very interesting.

In the 1950s and 1960s, such was the disproportion of Italian bachelors who wanted to marry an Italian woman, that receiving numerous marriage proposals was not uncommon among the women interviewed. According to one woman, who arrived from Caulonia (RC), when she was 12 years old, in



1951: 'At that time there were many more Italian boys than girls, so I could choose [whom I wanted to marry] (laughs). I had quite a few proposals from boys from different parts of Italy as well as from Calabria.' It is clear that this informant wished only to marry an Italian man. She never considered marrying an Australian: '*Uno storto di testa!*' ('You're off your head!') they [my parents] would have said if I married an Australian.' When she was 16 years old she met her brother-in-law's first cousin when she was visiting her sister. He was a *paesano*. They married the following year (1956).

Another informant, who arrived in Adelaide from Caulonia (RC) with her mother in 1955, told how her husband-to-be rushed to meet her and convince her to marry him. Many *paesani* knew her father who had settled in the state some years earlier. They had heard that he had a young daughter who would soon arrive. Numerous men expressed their desire to meet her. As soon as she arrived in Adelaide, she was visited

Married by proxy (1955).
TOP: Connie Foti, 16 years old,
on her wedding day in Taurianova
(RC). Accompanied to the local
church by her brother.

BOTTOM LEFT: Connie Foti in
church with her brother

BOTTOM RIGHT: Taking their vows.
Connie Foti's future
brother-in-law stands in for the
absent bridegroom.
(Photographs courtesy
of informant)

17 year old Laura Greco, born in Caulonia (RC), on her wedding day to a man from her hometown. Adelaide (1956).
(Photograph courtesy of informant)



each evening by one *paesano* in particular. After only one month the boy spoke to her father about becoming engaged to her. The haste with which this husband-to-be sought a Calabrian bride and arranged his wedding was relatively common among Italian men in post-war South Australia. This seemed to suggest an urgent desire for *sistemazione*,¹⁷ as well as the desperation of males who had been lonely in a foreign land for so long.

How important was it for the women to marry a Calabrian man? Two women told of their parents' desire for them to marry a man from their village. One woman, who arrived from Sinopoli (RC) in 1954, when she was 19, recalled: *lo non ero tanto bella però avevo le richieste, così tante richieste che non sapevo chi scegliere* ('I wasn't very attractive but I had offers of marriage, so many offers that I didn't know who to choose'). She received a marriage proposal from a man from northern Italy, a man from Campania and from a *paesano*. She wrote to her parents, who had not migrated, and asked them for their advice. They told her to marry the boy from her village. Similarly, the parents of an informant who received a marriage proposal from a Calabrian man and another from a man from the Veneto insisted she marry the Calabrian man, even though she preferred the man from the Veneto: 'They told me: "Better the people that you know than the people that you don't know." In three cases the women's parents were initially unhappy when their

daughters became engaged to Italian men who were not from Calabria.

Many parents were very keen for their daughters to marry a Calabrian, or at least an Italian, because they felt that it was the only tangible way in which culture and traditions within the family could be maintained. One woman from Caulonia (RC) told how she had fallen in love with an Australian boy and wanted to marry him, however her mother forbade it. When she was 17 years old she married a *paesano*. He was her brother-in-law's first cousin and she met him at her sister's house. She recalled that she was not attracted to him at all. However, before she knew it, her parents were arranging an engagement. This total control held by the parents in the selection of a marriage partner for their daughters was not uncommon in the Calabrian community in South Australia as elsewhere.

On the other hand, while the parents of some women did not directly forbid them to choose a partner from outside the group, the informants were acutely aware of the expectation that their marriage partner would be Italian. As one woman, born in Sant'Eufemia d'Aspromonte (RC), stated: 'Deep down we all knew that we were going to get married to an Italian because there was no way in the world our parents would have accepted anyone else.' Another woman from Taurianova (RC), who married a *paesano* in 1972, when she was 19, explained: 'My parents never said anything as such but I knew. He had to be Italian for sure. Nothing else would do.' In contrast, a woman from Varapodio (RC) recalled how her parents 'drummed into her' the expectation that she would marry an Italian: 'We knew that when we were 17, 18 or 19 we would get married. We didn't know any other way. We went along with the tradition. We knew that we married our own people, our own race.' When she was 13 years old a Calabrian man, from Platì (RC), noticed her at a wedding and came to visit her family. Soon after she became engaged to this man. She married in 1965 at the age of 17.

Two women were particularly happy to marry men from other regions of Italy instead of Calabria. Indeed, a woman from Sinopoli (RC), who arrived in 1956, when she was 23 years old, told how she specifically did not want to marry a Calabrian. She explained her reasons: *In quei tempi i calabresi erano gelosi. La donna con un marito calabrese era tenuta troppo stretta. Non poteva fare niente* ('In those days the Calabrian men were too jealous. A woman with a Calabrian husband was under his control. She couldn't

do anything'). Her parents were happy for her to marry anyone she desired so long as he was Italian. In 1959 she married a man from Treviso, Veneto. In another case, a woman, from Platì (RC), married a man from Apollosa (BN), Campania, in 1965, when she was 18 years old. She was pleased that he was not Calabrian because 'Calabrian men were always more hard-line, very tough and jealous, whereas the men from Campania weren't as bad.'

While the influence of parents with regard to the selection of a marriage partner is obviously very significant, other factors contributed to a high proportion of endogamous marriages. The language barrier forced many women to marry within their group for the simple reason that they did not speak English. As one woman from Sinopoli (RC), who became engaged to a man from Varapodio in 1955, stated: *Non sapevo parlare inglese, allora come facevo a sposare un australiano? Ho dovuto per forza sposare un italiano* ('I could not speak English so how could I marry an Australian? I most definitely had to marry an Italian'). Moreover, the fact that Calabrian girls were rarely allowed to go out and mix within the host society no doubt contributed to the high rate of endogamous marriages. As one woman from Careri (RC), who married a man from a nearby town in 1957, put it: *Se non potevi uscire, come potevi incontrare qualcuno?* ('If you couldn't go out, how could you meet someone?').

What about free choice? It would seem that the four women who married out of the group chose their marriage partner independently. They spoke candidly about their selection of a partner who was not Italian. One woman, from Cosenza, who arrived in Australia in 1969 with her mother, when she was 18 years old, recalled: 'It wasn't a conscious decision to say I'm not going to marry an Italian guy. It was mainly that there weren't any that took my fancy. They were either too young or too old, they were married or they were revolting (laughs).' Upon arrival, she went to live with her brothers. She attended school and completed her matriculation. She gained a job as a clerk and was later accepted into the Air Force. In the meantime, her mother passed away and the informant lived with the brother who was not married. Through her work in the Air Force she met many Australian boys. In 1979, she met and fell in love with one particular Australian man of English origin. She told how her brother was not terribly happy about her choice of partner but he didn't cause any problems for her.

For the other woman, who married an



17 year old Concettina Romeo, born in Varapodio (RC), arriving at St Patrick's church, Adelaide, accompanied by her father and bridesmaids, to marry a man from Platì (RC), (1965). (Photograph courtesy of informant)

Australian man of English origin, her choice of partner was the result of a conscious decision not to marry an Italian. She explained: 'Many Italian guys had come to meet me and I just couldn't speak to them because they had certain expectations. They didn't want anything else from me other than for me to marry them and have kids. I didn't like that at all.' She met her future husband at a wedding in 1971. She was in her final year of teachers college. When asked what attracted her to her future husband, she immediately replied: 'The fact that he wasn't Italian.' She continued: 'The thing I liked about him was that he had no expectations or preconceived ideas of how I should be.' They were married in 1976. Her parents were very happy with her choice of partner and the marriage was always supported by both families.

One woman, who arrived in Adelaide from Varapodio (RC) in 1955, when she was 16 years old, told of being bombarded by men who wanted to meet and marry her: 'So many boys came to visit me and I would wonder: "What's this fellow doing here? I don't know him." I had a lot of requests from the moment I arrived in Australia.' She rejected the marriage proposals that she received from the Italian men because she was not prepared to marry a man she did not know or a man who had been chosen for her. Her mother and aunt became very concerned because she was 20 and not married: Her aunt would say to my mum: "You know, she's not that good looking. I don't know what she's waiting for." When she was 21 years old, she met an Austrian man who worked at the factory where she also worked. She recalled her attraction to him: 'We had a lot in common. We had both experienced poverty and migration. We both came from a big family. We knew what it was like not to be able to speak the language in a new land.' He invited her to the factory's annual ball in 1960. She asked her mother for permission and her mother agreed, so long as her brother chaperoned. Her parents immediately considered this man to be their daughter's fiancé. She recalled her concern in telling her parents that he was

not Italian: 'I thought: "How are they going to take this?" But they loved him. I don't know how, because they couldn't understand each other. Sometimes I think that's why they got on well (laughs).' The following year they married. Both families were very happy.

Only one woman who married exogamously faced strong opposition to her choice of partner, not only in the lead-up to her wedding, but for many years of her married life. Born in Sinopoli (RC), the informant migrated in 1955 when she was 26 years old to join her brother in South Australia. Upon arrival, her brother and sister-in-law, who was also Calabrian, introduced her to numerous Calabrian men whom they considered to be suitable partners. However, she did not show interest in any of them. Instead, she fell in love with a Polish boy whom she met at the bus stop. The boy came and visited her brother to ask for permission to become engaged to her. She told of her brother's reaction: *Mio fratello è stato contrarissimo, proprio contrario. È diventato una belva perché era polacco* ('My brother was really

against it. He turned into a wild beast because the boy was Polish'). However, she decided that she wanted to marry him and was determined to do so. Her brother was so angry that he did not attend her wedding. It took many years for her brother to accept her husband.

The stories of migration, settlement and marriage in South Australia, shared very openly and honestly by the women interviewed, give a personal insight into the migration phenomenon and settlement in Australia. Through the experiences of this particular cohort of Calabria-born women we can gain a real appreciation of the women's struggles and emotions associated with leaving their homeland, settling abroad and establishing a new life. The majority of the informants have returned, at least once, for a relatively brief stay in their hometown (on average, one month). Despite the fact that, in most cases, almost half a century has passed since their migration, for those who grew up in Calabria, the attachment to and longing for their homeland has not subsided.

NOTES

- 1 I am grateful to my supervisor Professor Desmond O'Connor for his help in the preparation of this article.
- 2 Rosoli, G (ed.) 1978, *Un secolo di emigrazione italiana 1876 - 1976*, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Rome, pp. 26, 34.
- 3 Arena, C 1981, 'La disoccupazione in Italia' in Cavallaro, R, *Storie senza Storia*, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Rome, p. 14.
- 4 Following the Second World War and the fall of fascism, Christian Democrat Prime Minister De Gasperi told Southern farm workers: *imparate le lingue e andate all'estero* ('learn a language and go abroad'). Ciuffoletti, Z & Degli Innocenti, M 1978, *L'emigrazione nella storia d'Italia 1868/1975-Storia e documenti*, Vallecchi editore, Florence, p. 232.
- 5 Rosoli, G (ed.) op.cit., p. 40.
- 6 De Nardo, V 1971, *L'emigrazione in Calabria*, Pellegrini Editore, Cosenza, p. 23.
- 7 De Bartolo, G 1990, 'Aspetti dell'emigrazione italiana e calabrese negli Stati Uniti nel secondo dopoguerra', *Affari Sociali Internazionali*, No. 3, pp. 102-103.
- 8 Price, C. A 1963, *Southern Europeans in Australia*, Halstead Press, Sydney, p. 19.
- 9 Ware, H 1981, *A profile of the Italian community in Australia*, AIMA & CO.AS.IT, Hawthorn Victoria, p. 27.
- 10 The estimates for South Australia are for the period 1948 to 1971. O'Connor, D 2004, 'The post-war settlement of Italians in South Australia' in O'Connor, D (ed.), *Memories and identities. Proceedings of the Second Conference on the Impact of Italians in South Australia*, Australian Humanities Press, Adelaide, South Australia, p. 62.
- 11 Someone from the same town (*paese*).
- 12 O'Connor, D 2004, op.cit., p. 62.
- 13 At the time of the first post-war census (1947) there were 2,438 Italy-born people in South Australia. By the 1971 census this number had increased to 32,428.
- 14 For a comprehensive study of Italian proxy brides in Australia see Bella Wardrop, S 1996, *By proxy—a study of Italian proxy brides in Australia*, Italian Historical Society, Co.As.It, Victoria.
- 15 O'Connor, D 2004, op.cit., p. 58.
- 16 The difficulty of not speaking the language of the host nation for Italian migrants in Australia is highlighted by Loh, M 1980, *With Courage in their cases—the experiences of thirty-five Italian immigrant workers and their families in Australia*, FILEF, Victoria. See, in particular pp. 79-88.
- 17 'set-up', 'settling down.' For a detailed definition see Baldassar, L 2001, *Visits Home*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, p. 360.

italian internees in victoria and the murchison ossario

VIVEN ACHIA IS A PERSONAL HISTORIAN FOR THE MEMOIRS FOUNDATION (AUSTRALIA), HELPING PEOPLE WRITE AND PUBLISH THEIR LIFE STORIES. IN THIS ARTICLE SHE DRAWS ON THE RICH COLLECTION OF POW AND INTERNEE HISTORIES HELD AT THE TATURA IRRIGATION AND WARTIME CAMPS MUSEUM IN NORTHERN VICTORIA. THIS AREA OF VICTORIA WAS HOME TO SEVERAL POW AND INTERNEE CAMPS DURING WORLD WAR II. INTERNEES WHO DIED IN THESE CAMPS HAVE SINCE BEEN REINTERRED AT THE MURCHISON OSSARIO OR, BONE HOUSE, AN EVENT WHICH IS COMMEMORATED BY THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY EVERY NOVEMBER.

You could be forgiven for driving though Murchison in northern Victoria believing it to be just another pleasant country town, with the river beside the main street, and little more to see. However, if you drove on you would miss the *Ossario* (Bone House), a mausoleum of national and international significance, housing the remains of Italians who died in Prisoner-of-War and internment camps throughout Australia during WWII. It is a monument to the strong Italian community in the Goulburn Valley, of the early twentieth century, and the tireless efforts of a voluntary worker, Luigi Gigliotti, who together provided the funding and support for the construction of this *Ossario*.

Murchison has a long history of Italian settlement. Post World War I Italian immigration to this area increased, perhaps a consequence of the severe restrictions imposed upon Italians entering the United States in the 1920s. Northern Victoria attracted Italian immigrants with names such as Lanza, Gervasi, Natalizio, Italia, Lagazzino and Quattrocchi, whose devotion and skill in growing fruit and vegetables were rewarded by the irrigation, good soil and temperate climate of the Goulburn Valley.

When Italy entered the Second World War on the German side, the status of Italians in Australia changed radically. The National Security Act of 1939¹ gave the government of the day the power to create, and enforce, regulations that overrode the constitution and bypassed the parliament. In particular, the right to act against 'alien enemies' or persons having enemy associations or connections. Internees were civilians whose place of birth, or political leanings, were considered potentially dangerous to national security.

Included amongst these were 'alien' and naturalised Italian fishermen and market gardeners, fruit growers, cane cutters, farm and construction workers.

Australia also received many Italian POWs, captured in overseas battle, mainly in Palestine but also in North Africa and Europe². In 1940-41 Murchison, and neighbouring Tatura and Rushworth, were chosen for the establishment of three POW and four internment camps. Joyce Hammond reports in her book *Walls of Wire*³ that these camps held 12-13,000 people from 23 nations, overseen by several thousand army guards. Inmates lived, for up to seven years, in tin huts behind multiple rows of barbed wire, which, at Tatura, were two metres high and ten metres apart.

Not everyone survived internment – 130 Italians died while imprisoned, their remains originally dispersed to cemeteries across Australia. In 1956, prior to the construction of the *Ossario* at Murchison, the graves of some Italian POWs in the Murchison cemetery suffered severe flood damage. Luigi Gigliotti, MBE, became a tireless advocate for the Italians who had died in the camps. He conceived of the idea of a dedicated memorial for Italian POWs and internees from across Australia, to be built in the Murchison cemetery. Luigi Gigliotti's negotiations with the Italian Government and Consuls resulted in the remains of all deceased Italian POWs being interred in one place. To fund this project he approached Italian families in the Goulburn Valley, raising 25,000 pounds sterling; asking for, 'a shilling here, a shilling there.' Construction of the *Ossario* began in 1958, and it was consecrated in 1961.

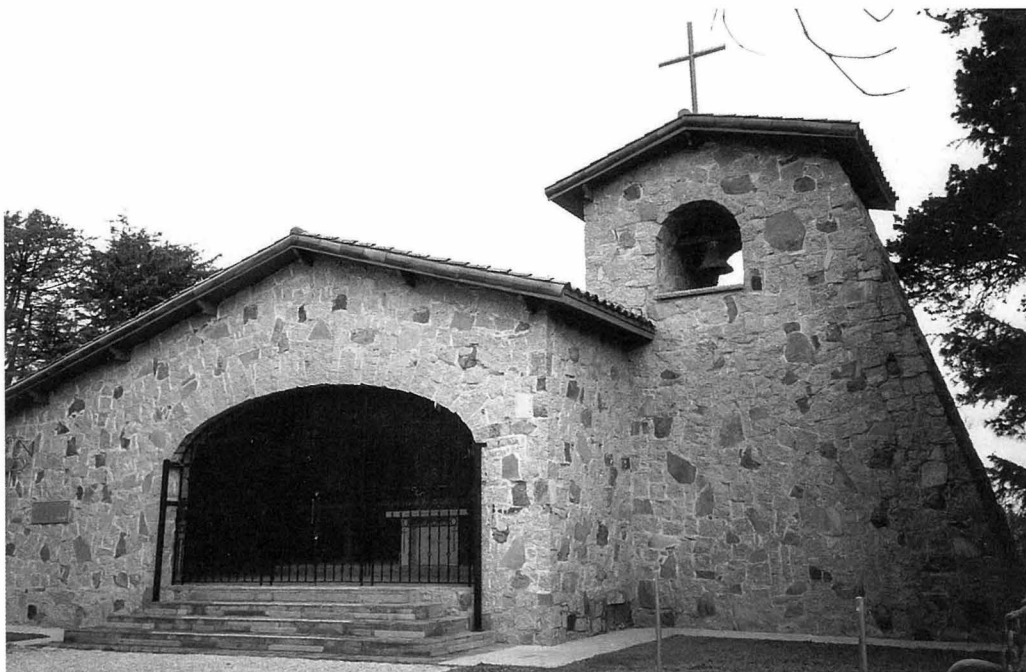
The remains of forty POWs and internees from Victoria, thirty-eight from New South Wales, twenty-six from South Australia, twenty-one from Western Australia and five from Queensland, the majority of whom died of natural causes, are interred in this simple and striking building. Gigliotti personally took delivery of each coffin.

The *Ossario* stands on the river side of the Murchison cemetery, and is approached along an avenue of dark Mediterranean Cypress trees that were planted after 1970. Each tree bears a plaque with the name of an Italian military service association. The *Ossario* transports you to another country, Italy, and another time, when war and politics made 'enemy aliens' of former friends and neighbours. Reminiscent of a church, the *Ossario* was constructed of richly textured grey, cream and gold

by
VIVIEN ACHIA

TOP: The Murchison Ossario

BOTTOM: War memorial dedicated to Italian POWs and Civil Internees



Castlemaine stone, roofed with red Roman tiles. To the right of the building stands a bell tower topped by a plain cross. Inside iron gates, under an ornate copper lamp, a white marble altar stands before a crypt that houses the remains in wooden coffins mounted on the walls, each bearing a bronze name plate. A deep stillness prevails.

The silence is broken on the second Sunday of November each year. On this day several thousand Italian visitors from Victoria and interstate converge on the *Ossario*: members

of Italian service associations; army, navy, air force, parachutists, nurses, the French Resistance, the military police (*carabinieri*), all supported by family and friends.

Along the gravel path leading to the *Ossario*, a brilliant spectacle awaits participants and visitors. This one day of the year the iron gates at the entrance to the mausoleum are open, and the official party stands on the steps to receive the groups. Local service clubs, including the Lions Club and St. John's Ambulance, police and enthusiastic residents are also involved in the commemoration. Conversation stops, firstly for 'Advance Australia Fair', followed by the 'Inno Di Mameli' a stirring Italian song, then finally the 'Last Post.'

A long procession forms as uniformed members of the military associations line up holding red, green, blue, white and gold banners and flags, embroidered with crests and emblems. Some carry elaborate and brightly coloured wreaths. The marchers are led by the *carabinieri* in their magnificent black, red and white uniforms with red and blue cockaded hats. The Italian Consul General, who will lay a wreath, and other dignitaries, including the Mayor of Shepparton, the local Member of Parliament, Professor Genovesi, and a representative from the Returned Services League, follow, flanked by *bersaglieri*, from the rifle regiments, who act as marshals.

A large crowd, gathered on either side of the pathway, applauds each group as it passes, while a breeze blows the flags, creating a brilliant panorama of colour. The *bersaglieri*, wearing their distinctive hats



ABOVE: Achia Carabinieri (Italian Military Police) in uniform

TOP LEFT: Flag bearers of the various military associations.

LEFT: Standard bearers in procession.



with cascades of shining black rooster feathers, are famous worldwide for a band whose musicians run with their musical instruments. These older men walk, some stiffly, until someone in the crowd calls; 'Run.' For the last twenty metres they run, as the spectators cheer them on.

Veteran attendees of this annual event have wisely brought chairs, coats and scarves. One woman waves an Australian flag as the groups pass. Guido Ciaccia, an official organiser of the commemoration since 1975, speaks: 'We remember the courage of Italians in hard times, the sacrifices they made for us all. They form part of Italy's patriotic story. We remember countrymen, husbands, brothers, friends. We know that life here is transitory; we

must live our lives, as they did, with values that are eternal - justice, truth, faith and love.'⁴

After the formal remembrance has been completed, a local priest conducts a memorial mass, assisted by a small but fervent choir. The mass ends with a handshake of peace, while hundreds of people line up to take Communion. A lone bell rings. The fallen have been remembered, their names honoured, the fact that they died painfully far from friends and family, acknowledged.

When the ceremony and solemnity of the commemoration are over, thousands relocate to the park along the riverbank, where the Italian love of food, wine and company is evident, with much spirited talk and laughter.

As Murchison celebrates one of Australia's sacred sites, no visitor can remain unmoved by the memories evoked and the sense of communion with the past. Murchison richly rewards those who stay a while and make time to discover its history.

Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum, Hogan Street, Tatura, houses a large collection of photographs, written

material and memorabilia. Stories of many former POWs, internees and garrison staff are available for researchers to use.

Mail: Tatura and District Historical Society Inc, P.O. Box 156, Tatura, Vic 3616 or contact Lurline Knee, tel: 03 5824 1084 or email: kneefam@mcmedia.com.au
Opening hours: 1-3 pm Monday- Friday, 2-4 pm Saturdays, Sundays, Public Holidays.

NOTES

¹ See for example, Fitzpatrick, B 1940, *National security and individual insecurity : an account of the national security legislation and regulations*, Left Book Club of Victoria, Research Group, Melbourne.

² See for example, Bevege, M 1993, *Behind Barbed Wire*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia; Bosworth, R, & Ugolini, R (eds) 1992, *War, Internment and Mass Migration: The Italo-Australian Experience 1940-1990*, Gruppo Editoriale Internazionale, Rome.

³ Joyce Hammond, *Walls of Wire: Tatura, Rushworth, Murchison*, J Hammond, Rushworth, 1990, p.9.

⁴ Tatura and District Historical Society, Oral History Collection.

surviving adversity: the legacy of michael and zelinda scarrabelotti's catastrophic journey from venetia to new south wales 1880-1881

IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY IN THE SMALL TOWN OF ORSAGO, NORTH OF VENICE IN THE REGION OF VENETIA, THE PATRIARCH OF THE SCARRABELOTTI FAMILY DIED. THE DEMISE OF THIS MAN HAD AN IMMEDIATE AND DISASTROUS EFFECT ON HIS CHILDREN. GIUSEPPE, THE ELDEST, CLAIMED THE FAMILY ESTATE AND TURNED OUT HIS SIBLINGS TO FEND FOR THEMSELVES. THIS IS THE STORY OF ONE OF THOSE SIBLINGS, MICHAEL, AND HIS WIFE ZELINDA WHO SURVIVED THE FRAUDULENT MARQUIS DE RAYS COLONIZATION SCHEME, JOINED OTHER VENETIAN FAMILIES TO FOUND THE NEW ITALY SETTLEMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND RAISED TWELVE CHILDREN IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY.

The story of the Marquis de Rays (sometimes spelt Marquis de Ray) and Michael Scarrabelotti's fateful journey to Australia is almost a legend in my family. I first heard an account from my father who on a trip to Queensland when I was a child studiously stopped at the New Italy monument near the Pacific Highway in New South Wales and proudly pointed out the name Scarrabelotti carved into the stone. The story of my Italian ancestry provided a means by which our family could self-identify and through which I found explanation for endless trivial questions such as why my grandmother was such a wonderful cook, why I LOVED pasta or why our family had such a strong Catholic heritage and connection to the Society of Jesus.

My grandmother, Madeline Scarrabelotti, passed away when I was only two years old but her presence in our family endures. Madeline's husband, Walter, died of a heart-attack in his fifties when my father was only a boy and so it fell to the women in the family to raise my father, Tom, who was the youngest child. Like Walter, my father suffered a great deal in his life from heart problems and died tragically in 2001 at the age of 57. Throughout his life, Tom showed the same determination and amazing strength of spirit that must have been so present in his grandfather, Michael. This was one of the gifts of our Italian heritage; the ability to make the best of a situation, to improve ourselves and our life through hard work and perseverance, and to value the love of family more than anything else in the world.

Madeline's brother Frank is still alive and at 109 is the oldest man in Australia. Uncle Frank, as I call him, remembers the story of

Michael coming to Australia in more detail than my father recalled. Frank tells how after Michael was turned out of home, he set about finding work in Austria-Hungary. He lived an itinerant life of subsistence suitable only for a bachelor and Michael wanted a more settled existence. At about this time Michael read an advertisement about a new settlement sponsored by the French Marquis de Rays near New Guinea in the Pacific Ocean.

Charles Bonaventure du Breil, the Marquis de Rays, was a member of the French aristocracy whose family had lost their wealth and power during the French revolution. Born in 1832, the Marquis de Rays devised a plan to send colonists to a group of islands off the coast of New Guinea that the Dutch had not occupied or any other country claimed.¹ The Marquis called the area "New France, the free Colony of Port Breton, in Oceania" and, although he had never visited the area, claimed that it had "a climate 'equal to that of the south of France', and 'continually cooled down by the breezes of the great Pacific Ocean'; the land intersected by 'constant streams of fresh water'; of 'easy cultivation, and possessing really prodigious fertility'".² The Marquis advertised his scheme in newspapers and magazines across France and opened offices in Bordeaux, Quimper, Paris and Brussels.³ Eventually the Marquis' scheme was exposed as the money-making venture that it was. From this perspective, his only concern was that he received payment from the migrants for sending them to the prospective colony, not what happened to them afterwards.

Ten years following the first of the Marquis' colonising expeditions Frederick Chudleigh Clifford described the deal the Marquis de Rays offered prospective settlers. In a prospectus of 1 January 1879 the Marquis agreed

*to assign a property of 20 hectares of land, with a house with four rooms, well built of wood, stone, or bricks, to every family of agriculturalists who wish to establish themselves in that colony, for the price of 1,800 francs in gold, the price to include the transport of the family to the colony, with rations equal to those of the sailors, and provisions for six months after arrival.*⁴

The fact that the land of New France was not the property of the Marquis to give away, or that there were no buildings and few supplies was no deterrent to the success of his scheme that raised £200,000.⁵

by
DR FRANCES THIELE

Uncle Frank doesn't know where his father Michael heard about New France but I think it is likely he saw a pamphlet promoting the colony on a return visit to Venetia. By 1879 the Marquis de Rays had enlisted the assistance of agents who operated in Europe recruiting people for the New France scheme. One of these was a man by the name of Edwidge Schenini who specifically recruited peasants from Northern Italy.⁶ Convincing Italian families to leave their homes was not difficult for Schenini. Italy had recently been unified in 1860 but Venetia, the region that included the Scarrabelotti hometown of Orsago, remained annexed to Austria until 1866. Italian unification caused considerable civil unrest and the appropriation of Venetia into the union had only been achieved after Italy agreed to support Prussia in the Austro-Prussian war, also called the Third War of Italian Unification.⁷ As David Thomson describes, the gradual accumulation of territory for a united Italy was disruptive "since each acquisition involved war, and Italy had to be perpetually on the alert and in a state of preparation for war, they were won at excessive cost".⁸ The financial burden of war put a strain on the national economy affecting all levels of society and continuing into the decades following unification.

In the period just before the Marquis de Rays chose to promote his scheme, Northern Italian farmers also suffered due to crop failure after particularly bad flooding.⁹ An article in the *New South Wales Educational Gazette*¹⁰ described the life of the Venetian peasant farmer:

Those who had land had only very small areas; many had to work for scanty wages. During the long summer days they could only earn tenpence a day; in spring and autumn, fivepence; and in the severe winter, lasting for nearly six months, work was not to be obtained. They naturally seized such a chance of bettering themselves.

By 1879 the Marquis had already sent two ships of prospective settlers to New France on the *Chandernagore* and the *Genil*. He began his scheme with the proposed settlement of New Ireland, a small island in the Bismarck Archipelago 320 kilometres long and about 10 kilometres wide that is now part of the north-eastern province of Papua New Guinea, after reading a favourable description of the place in the work of French commander Duperrey.¹¹ The Marquis' first two ships carried mainly male immigrants from Germany and France, although some Swiss-Italian, Belgian and

Spanish travellers were also on board.¹² The *Chandernagore* dropped some people at Lauchlan Island before disembarking the rest at New Ireland on 16 January 1880.¹³ The settlers began cutting a road through the jungle of vegetation between Port Breton on one side of New Ireland and Likiliki Bay on the other but it was hard work. Disputes arose among the colonists about who was in charge and many became ill from the heat and the effort of cutting through the forest. Just over a month after their arrival the *Chandernagore* suddenly departed for Sydney on 20 February leaving about sixty colonists abandoned on the island without medical or other supplies. The food rations given to the settlers were running out and several men took to the sea in local canoes attempting to get help from the missionary settlements on the nearby islands of Papua New Guinea. Eventually, some of these men made it to the Duke of York Island on 31 March 1880 and sought assistance from the Wesleyan Missionaries Rev. George Brown and Rev. Benjamin Danks. Brown and Danks sailed their steamer to New Ireland and rescued the forty or so remaining colonists. Rev. Brown recalled, "They were in a wretched state, and there was not one of them that was not suffering from intermittent fever, dysentery, or other disease".¹⁴

Most of the Marquis' settlers on the second ship, the *Genil* never made it to their destination. The *Genil* left Barcelona for New Ireland on 13 or 14 March 1880 with approximately one hundred settlers on board.¹⁵ The *Genil* also carried building supplies, equipment for clearing the land, a sugar refining and crushing plant, glass for the construction of a church, arms and ammunition. By the time the *Genil* reached Singapore the ship was in difficulty, she was low on fuel and taking in water. The *Genil* stayed in Singapore for several weeks for repairs. During this time reports of events surrounding the *Chandernagore* reached Singapore and nearly all the travellers decided not to continue their journey. Most of the crew deserted the ship. Captain Rabardy of the *Genil* wrote to the Marquis de Rays and was reassured that he was to continue on to New Ireland despite the lack of passengers. Rabardy replaced his missing crew and continued on after repairs were complete with about ten settlers arriving at Likiliki on 28 August 1880. A few days later Rabardy sailed the *Genil* around the southern end of New Ireland to Port Breton to await the arrival of the next group of colonists aboard the Marquis' third ship the *India*.¹⁶

The colonists on the *India* were almost

entirely Italian peasants from Venetia. The enthusiasm of the Italians to escape the hardship of their lives in Venetia is seen in their determination to continue their Pacific adventure despite the warnings. By this time reports of the fate of the *Chandernagore* colonists had reached Europe. The French Minister for Agriculture placed a ban on the recruitment of immigrants for New France and the Royal Investigation Bureau of Milan refused to issue passports to those travelling to New France. Passport applicants received the following message from the Italian Government with their refusal: "The minister has received information that the locality where you intend to travel is sterile and therefore he cannot allow you to go to suffer misery and privations and perhaps die of hunger".¹⁷

Hearing of the chance to settle in the Pacific, Michael Scarrabelotti set about saving the money needed to pay the Marquis de Rays. As Michael did not have a wife or children, the risk of travelling so far for a new beginning was not as great as for those who migrated with a spouse and young children so perhaps he thought it worth the chance for a new life. In his prospectus of 1879 the Marquis generously declared that those who wanted to go to New France but did not have the money to pay upfront could still travel claiming that

*Everyone willing to give his services as agricultural labourer for the duration of five years will be put into possession of a house with four rooms, with 20 hectares of land, with payment of 250 francs for single men and women, of 125 francs for children, and of 1,000 francs for families consisting of not less than five persons.*¹⁸

Clifford states that only one passenger on the *India*, Antonio Nardi, paid the full 1,800 francs, the rest preferring to take the option of the five-year labour contract and the lesser amount.¹⁹ However, Uncle Frank believes Michael Scarrabelotti also made the full payment and confirms that everyone who travelled on the Marquis' boat paid some kind of a fee.

As the *India* left from Barcelona, the intending migrants had to make their way to Spain before leaving for New Ireland. This was difficult given the refusal of the Italian Government to issue them papers but once they reached Marseille the Marquis was able to use his contacts to get the Venetians to Barcelona. Once the migrants had arrived at the Spanish port they still needed to apply to the Italian



Madeline Gladwin
(nee Scarrabelotti) with her
husband Walter and their eight
month old son, John, 3 July 1935.
(Image reproduced courtesy of
Maureen Flanagan).

Consulate in Spain for passports before they could travel. Faced with considerable lobbying from the prospective travellers, the Consul eventually gave the Venetians their passports after two or three months of waiting.²⁰ The *India* set sail on 7 July 1880 with 340 crew and passengers including the Italian migrants.²¹ On board the ship were at least three other families from Michael's hometown of Orsago; Angelo Roder and his mother, four sisters, younger brother, infant nephew and several other family members, the Spinaze family and the Mellare family that included Michael's future bride Zelinda.

The deaths started soon after the ship's departure. Rations on board were of poor quality and made people ill. Many of the infant passengers, in particular, could not cope with the relentless heat as the ship sailed through the Suez Canal and into the Indian Ocean.²² One report described how after the *India* set sail from Barcelona the "real troubles of these unfortunate exiles" began:

*Cooped up in a small vessel, supplied with bad provisions, one after another sickened. As far as quantity, food was plentiful – but quality! It consisted almost entirely of salt pork nearly rotten, and biscuits so full of grubs as to be uneatable. The steamer was slow. To add to their bad luck, a break-down in the Suez Canal detained them for a week. It was the 14th October when they arrived at Port Breton. Nearly twenty of their number had been committed to the deep.*²³

When the ship reached Port Breton, New Ireland, on 14 October 1880 they found the *Genil* moored in the harbour with most of its passengers gone.²⁴ The Hans Meyer range with a peak of 2,150 metres dominated the island that was surrounded by dense forest stretching almost to the sea. The settlement described by the Marquis in his prospectus did not exist. The area was also characterised by a particularly high rainfall that combined with the heat created a tropical environment the migrants were unused to and that was completely unsuited to the kind of cultivation of the

land they had planned to undertake.²⁵ There were reports that the Venetians were determined to make the best of the situation despite their disappointment and set about trying to establish a settlement, leaving the *India* for long hours during the day attempting to build shelter and working knee deep in water constructing a jetty for the steamer. This work did not continue for very long before more people succumbed to malaria and starvation. A cemetery was laid out on the island and forty more people were laid to rest in the harsh environment.²⁶

Realising that it was only a matter of time before the supplies they had would run out, the captain of the *India*, the Marquis' representative and nominated governor of the new colony Captain Jules le Prevost, decided to send the *Genil* for supplies. Captain le Prevost took charge of the *Genil* himself and set off for Sydney on 10 December 1880 leaving Captain Leroy in command of the *India*. When two months later the *Genil* had not returned the Italian settlers wrote two formal letters to Captain Leroy demanding that he take them all to Sydney as well. On 10 February 1881 the colonists pleaded to Leroy:

*We unfortunate Italians have always been obedient to the orders of the administration and born all the miseries and fatigues. Finding ourselves in the critical condition of want of provisions and seeing the victims that fall every day we appeal to your humanity and request you bring us to Sydney (Australia) where the other steamers have gone and where the chief of the Colony Mr. Jules Prevost resides.*²⁷

Leroy agreed to take the remaining settlers to Sydney but as the *India* was running low on coal and supplies decided to sail to Noumea in New Caledonia to replenish the ship. The *India* left Port Breton on 20 February 1881 but the ship broke down soon after their journey began and it took weeks to arrive at Noumea. Several more people died during this time before the *India* finally arrived in Noumea on 12 March. The French authorities soon declared that the *India* was unseaworthy and its passengers were stranded unable to continue to Australia.²⁸ The French consul offered the Venetians land at New Caledonia but they were reluctant to accept because it was a penal colony.²⁹ At this point a group of Italian elders including Girolamo Tome and Guiseppi Martinuzzi decided to intercede on behalf of their people. The men contacted the British and French Consuls in Noumea who were able to apply for assistance of their behalf to the

Italian Consulate in Sydney. After the Italian Consulate lobbied the New South Wales government and after news of the stranded Italians appeared in the local press, the New South Wales Premier Henry Parkes agreed to send the *James Paterson* to Noumea to pick up the Venetians and bring them to Australia.³⁰ The Venetians finally arrived in Sydney on 7 April 1881. Only 217 of the original passengers had survived the journey.³¹ Although figures vary, somewhere in between 48 and 100 people died during the voyage to Australia.³²

The travellers aboard the *James Paterson* remained on the ship in the Sydney Harbour until cleared by a health officer. A newspaper report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* the day after the arrival of the migrants reveals the terrible state they were in and the extent of their suffering:

*An extended inspection between decks revealed more suffering than witnessed on the previous visits. Several poor women – two of them young girls of eighteen and twenty – were stretched helpless, the victims of fever. One was a mother beside a child, lifted up to show me that it was a living, or rather a dying skeleton. From another berth where a sick mother also was languishing, a small parcel was handed to me. From its size and shape – the arms and feet were wrapped round like a mummy's, the head alone being visible – I thought that it was an Italian doll made of wood and rags. A movement of its head made me start, and my heart beat quicker on finding that it was a living child of, I supposed, a few days old. Placing the bound-up parcel on my bent arm, the head in the bend of the elbow, the feet did not quite reach my finger-ends. Its weight, clothes and all, could not have been more than 5lb. I asked its age, when I was told it was seven months! The poor mother pointed to her own emaciated frame and explained that she had no nourishment for her little mite. Such a wonder of life one must see to believe.*³³

A list of passengers who disembarked from the *James Paterson* can be found in the archives of the State Records of New South Wales. The list includes the names of the male passengers, their spouse and number of children. Michael Scarrabelotti is listed with a 'Madame Michael'.³⁴ According to all other accounts and knowledge within the family, Michael was a bachelor when he left Venetia. Civil registration records reveal that Michael married fellow migrant Zelinda Mellare at St Mary's Cathedral in 1882, just a year after they arrived in

Sydney. Most likely Michael and Zelinda became engaged at some time during their terrible ordeal in New Ireland and she was mistaken as 'Madame Michael' on their arrival.

Initially Michael and Zelinda, as with all the other Italian migrants, were sent to work for employers around New South Wales. The Colonial Government did not want the Venetians to stay together as a group after their arrival despite their protests to the contrary. The Colonial Secretary set up an inquiry to review the situation of the new arrivals that was later published as the *Italian Immigrants Inquiry Board Report*. The inquiry board also formally declared in an *Address to the Italian Immigrants* that

*The customs of the country and other circumstances render it undesirable, indeed almost impossible, for them to settle down together in one locality. Even if this were practicable it would not be for their own good to do so. They need for their own welfare to get some knowledge of the English language, and to learn the way of the English people, and this can only be done by their engaging with English employers.*³⁵

The migrants made formal hiring agreements with prospective employers for a nominated period of time. Clifford describes this period as 'the dispersion' when the Italian migrants were dispersed to various forms of work across New South Wales.³⁶ The desire of the Venetians to be together, however, was strong because a year later after they had fulfilled their contractual obligations to employers, the Government opened up land in the Richmond River region for selection and the Italians took the opportunity to form a settlement.

Rocco Cominiti was the first Italian settler to select land in the area. Cominiti was not a survivor of the Marquis de Rays expedition but he knew some of the Venetians who arrived on the *James Paterson* and he soon told them about the land available at Richmond River. The area was attractive to the Venetians because they were used to small-scale cultivation and the land on offer was available in 40-80 acre lots. The New South Wales government determined that the Italians could purchase land for 8 shillings and 4 pence an acre with 30 years to pay.³⁷ The area favoured by the Italians was bushland on the Bungawalbyn Creek, about 13 kilometres from South Woodburn and 8 kilometres to Swan Bay. The close proximity of a creek that fed into the larger Richmond River was important

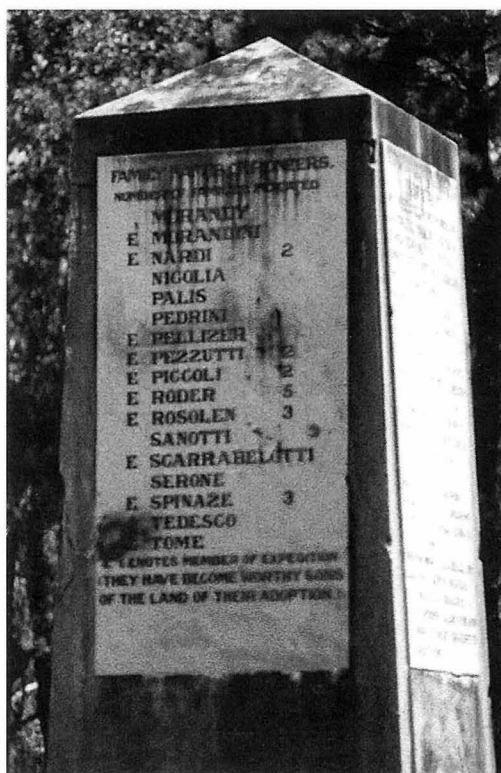


Madeline Gladwin
(nee Scarrabelotti) with her son
Tom and grand-daughter Frances,
c.1970. (Image reproduced
courtesy of the Gladwin Family).

as the waterway served as a method of transportation for timber, the main industry in the area, and was the principal method of travel to the settlement for visitors.³⁸ The first group of migrants arrived in 1882 including Zelinda's father Antonio Mellare and the rest of her family. Newlyweds Michael and Zelinda followed Antonio to take up 40 acres in 1883. Relationships between the settlers were strengthened through inter-marriage at the settlement. Zelinda's sister Guidetta Mellare married John Tome and later my great-aunt Lucia married Marco Pezzutti. A survey taken in September 1888 revealed that there were 250 residents of the settlement that the Government now officially recognised as 'New Italy'.³⁹ Most of the families were survivors of the Marquis de Rays' colonization scheme and all were Roman Catholics.

Initially the settlers walked from accommodation in Swan Bay to their selection everyday until they had built some sort of shelter to live in. Considerable effort was required to clear the land and then attempt to cultivate the soil. Rocco Cominiti and another early settler, Antonio Pezzutti, intended to grow grapes to begin a wine-making business and several of the other Italian migrants followed their lead. Michael Scarrabelotti tried growing grapes but was unsuccessful and so was forced to walk several miles to Pimlico near Ballina to cut sleepers for the railway during the week returning home to see his family on the weekend. In the first years of the settlement it was common for the men to seek work outside the community to support their families while the women tended the other fledgling cottage industries developing at home.⁴⁰

New Italy Memorial showing
the name 'Scarrabelotti'. c.1983.
(Image reproduced courtesy of the
Gladwin Family).



While the Venetians were able to grow enough fruit and vegetables for their own needs, ultimately they could not produce enough to make a viable income and transportation to outside markets was too slow for the produce to remain fresh. For some of the settlers grapes were reasonably successful and wine easily transportable but attempts to grow sugar cane and silk worms did not last long. A venture by shepherd Angelo Roder to farm sheep also failed. Gradually the soil quality, which was much poorer than first thought, undermined the settlers' attempts to undertake any major cultivation of the land. Other disasters also took their toll:

The settlers attempted to grow figs, bananas, sweet potatoes, maize, oats, barley, citrus trees and vegetables, all with a singular lack of success. Within a short time, the orchards were infested with fruit fly, and the vines with phylloxera, and both fruits and grapes were suffering from the poor soil. Indeed, to produce the little that they did was a task of enormous magnitude, and the women would walk miles to collect the animal dung to add some goodness to the soil. Some tobacco was produced, but only for local consumption. New Italy was almost self-sufficient, but the poor soil would not yield sufficient crops to meet the available outside markets.⁴¹

Michael and Zelinda Scarrabelotti were one of a few Italian families who decided to try their hand at diary farming. The Scarrabelotti

family, including five small children Lucia, Antonio, Joseph, Mary and Laurence, left New Italy in 1892 to live in Bungawalbyn. My grandmother Madeline was born in Bungawalbyn in 1901, the second last child of twelve. The family moved to a bigger farm in Coorabell, which Michael's son, Joseph, took over, before finally buying 100 acres at Nashua on the banks of the Wilson Creek in 1905. Michael hadn't forgotten the lessons of New Italy and over these years gradually improved the quality of the land he owned. The Nashua property, called 'Lornesmere', was a dairy farm producing milk for drinking and cream for the butter factories in the area. Zelinda died from scarlet fever around the time the family moved to Nashua.

Michael and Zelinda wanted their children to integrate fully into life in Australia without losing their cultural heritage. The Scarrabelotti children were encouraged to speak English and so we are not an Italian speaking family. The Scarrabelotti's literally put their life on the line in support of their new home when three of Michael's sons fought in World War One, Angelo, Laurence and Michael, all of them returning to Australia after the war. The Government awarded Michael the Distinguished Conduct Medal in 1918 for his bravery in Flanders. Michael and Zelinda were also able to instil in their children an enduring Catholic faith that continues in the lives of their grandchildren. Michael died in 1945 after a short illness at the age of 94. A newspaper report at the time described him as "a keen authority on dairy lands, prospective buyers often sought after his advice. His cheerful and understanding outlook endeared him to all who whom (sic) he came in contact".⁴² Despite the trauma of their arrival in Australia, Michael and Zelinda were able to improve their situation considerably in their adopted country and leave behind a life of poverty as poor Italian peasant farmers. Michael could not write his own name when he arrived in Sydney in 1881 but his grandchildren went on to achieve university degrees and other accolades. My father was an industrial chemist who ran his own business working in Australia and overseas - his favourite saying was 'work hard and play hard!' a sentiment that reflected the work ethos of his elders. Tom never forgot the importance of his Italian ancestry and the hard won opportunities that his family had given him. Years later when he bought his own property in the Macedon Ranges, Tom affectionately called it 'Lornesmere' in memory of his grandfather, mother, and numerous uncles and aunties of the Scarrabelotti family. Uncle Frank remains the last surviving link to the New Italy settlement.

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- 1 Cecilia, T 1987, *We Didn't Arrive Yesterday*, The Sunnyland Press, Red Cliffs, p.111.
- 2 Clifford, FC 1889, *New Italy: A Brief Sketch of a New and Thriving Colony Founded and Established by the Italian Immigrants Who Were Sufferers by the Marquis de Ray's New Ireland Colonization Scheme*, Government Printer, Sydney, p.1.
- 3 Cecilia, op.cit., p.112.
- 4 Clifford, op.cit., p.1.
- 5 Harrigan, R 2006, *They Were Expeditioners: The Chronicle of Northern Italian Farmers – Pioneer Settlers of New Italy with Documentation of the Marquis de Rays' Four Expeditions to New Ireland Between 1879 and 1881*, Self Published, Werribee, p.137.
- 6 Thompson, AG 1978, 'How the Settlement of New Italy Came to Be Established an Addendum to "The Last of the South Sea Bubbles"', *Armidale and District Historical Society Journal and Proceedings*, vol. 21, p.104.
- 7 Thomson, D 1986, *Europe Since Napoleon*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, pp.312-3.
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- 13 Harrigan, op.cit., p.13.
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- 16 *ibid.*, pp.41-3.
- 17 Thompson, AG 1980, *Turmoil-Tragedy to Triumph: The Story of New Italy*, International Colour Productions, Stanthorpe, p.6.
- 18 Clifford, *op.cit.*, p.1.
- 19 *ibid.*, p.2.
- 20 Thompson, *Turmoil-Tragedy to Triumph*, *op.cit.*, pp.6-7.
- 21 Niau, JH 1980, *The Phantom Paradise: The Story of the Expedition of the Marquis de Rays*, Angus and Robertson Publishers, London, p.49.
- 22 Cecilia, *op.cit.*, pp.113-4.
- 23 *New South Wales Educational Gazette*, 1 August 1899, p.53.
- 24 Harrigan, *op.cit.*, p.62.
- 25 Niau, *op.cit.*, pp.52-3.
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- 27 Harrigan, *op.cit.*, p.73.
- 28 *ibid.*, pp. 76-7.
- 29 Niau, *op.cit.*, pp.61-2.
- 30 Hennessy, *op.cit.*, p.107.
- 31 Thompson, *Turmoil-Tragedy to Triumph*, p.14.
- 32 Cecilia, *op.cit.*, p.118; Clifford, *op.cit.*, p.2; Harrigan, *op.cit.*, p.83.
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- 36 Clifford, *op.cit.*, p.3.
- 37 Hennessey, *op.cit.*, p.108.
- 38 Thompson, *Turmoil-Tragedy to Triumph*, p.21
- 39 Hennessy, *op.cit.*, p.110.
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- 41 *ibid.*, p.113.
- 42 Scarrabelotti Family Scrapbook n.d.

piminoro — olives from calabria with love

BORN IN AUSTRALIA, MARIA IS OF ITALIAN ORIGIN. SHE IS EMBARKING ON A PROJECT IN WHICH SHE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO SHOW METHODS OF FOOD PREPARATION EMPLOYED BY SOUTHERN ITALIANS. SHE ADMITS THAT THE BOOK SHE IS WRITING IS NOT A RECIPE BOOK, RATHER ONE WHICH DOCUMENTS HOW PEOPLE WHO LIVED A LIFE SOLELY ON THE LAND SURVIVED AND WHAT CONSTITUTED THEIR DIETS. MARIA BEGAN WORKING IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY IN 1996 AS A VERY INEXPERIENCED WAITRESS, SUDDENLY SURROUNDED BY LOTS OF ITALIAN CUISINE WITH WHICH SHE HAD GROWN UP. TEN YEARS LATER, MARIA IS STILL AT THE SAME RESTAURANT BUT NOW SHE IS ITS MANAGER AND PART OWNER.

My parents Giuseppe Timpano and Giulia Ligori were both born and raised in Piminoro in the province of Reggio Calabria. My father migrated to Australia in February 1951 aboard the ship *Assiminia* and my mother, two years later, in March 1953 aboard the ship *Australia*.

Piminoro, the village from which my parents came, was and essentially still is one of shepherds and farmers. As far back as they can remember olives and the production of olive oil, was a staple product of the town. There is much I could share with you about these goods, but there is one particular story that I believe to be important.

During the inter-war years and immediately after the end of World War II, the villagers of Piminoro had very little money as such. Their "wealth" lay in the land and the products they could derive from it. Traditionally, the area had been used to grow olives, among other things, and most villagers had plots of land where they grew their own trees, or had access to olives so they could press their own oil. Those villagers who had an abundant crop often sold part of it to others who then pressed the olives for their own use. There was also the opportunity to sell some of the fruit and the oil to large companies which then shipped the products out of the province to sell throughout the country. Larger olive farmers employed workers for the harvest and these could often trade part or all of their wages for the equivalent in olives. In this way, people were always able to obtain olive oil, an essential commodity used by all. For those who had very little money, olives were traded not only for their oil, but for the cost of the pressing as well. Thus olives helped the villagers sustain a living and were also used to barter

for other necessities; the olive was a better asset, than money.

by
MARIA SMITH

We know that for the generations that preceded us, resourcefulness meant using or re-using everything the land offered. People rarely wasted anything and in relation to the olive, they wasted none of it. The pressing of the olive to harvest its oil was the most obvious and laborious task, however there were other by-products. The *sansa*, which was the remnants of the crushed olives, such as the skin or stone after the first pressing, would be used to fertilize crops. The stones were also thrown into fires to keep them lit. The *olio sporco* (third or fourth filtering of the crushed olive paste) was boiled and mixed with caustic soda to make soap. Once hardened, it was cut into pieces, ready for use.

To return to my parents' story: my mother has always said that when she grew up in Piminoro, she remembers the existence of three olive presses made of huge stone boulders which were situated on the side of the valley's river, almost touching that part of the river which had dried up. This area was also home to a *mulino* (mill) grinding wheat and corn seeds into beautifully textured flour. The presses were powered by a huge water wheel that rotated two large stones that crushed the olives. The pulp was then put into *sporte* (large hand-made grass bags) stacked one on top of the other and placed into the *torchio* (press) to squeeze out the juices. The oil that flowed was the first grade and the only grade of oil. My mother remembers the first electrically operated press arriving in town in 1948.

In 1951 and 1952 the area sustained major flooding with subsequent landslides; many of the water-powered riverbed presses were destroyed. The electrically operated machines were not affected and therefore the old presses were never rebuilt. Ruins of the old stone press survive in the nearby town of Bovalino and I believe that somewhere in those mountains, someone is still pressing the old way.

With my mother's memories at the back of my mind, I began searching for any information about the "old" olive pressing techniques. I even rang some of the olive oil producing companies but they appeared to have no knowledge of the subject. It was as if my mother's memories had been a product of her imagination; they didn't exist at all. What would a stone press have looked like? I just couldn't imagine anything so big sitting on a riverbed.

My discouragement grew until my brother gave me a wonderful book called *Wog Food: An Oral History with Recipes*¹ by John Newton. The stories it contained were inspirational: some heartbreaking, others funny. Within its pages was the story of Giuseppe, an Italian man from Varapodio, who migrated to Australia at the age twelve and who brought with him the skill of pressing olives. He remembered growing up in the south of Italy in an olive-growing village where the stone presses used to produce oil were eventually destroyed by a flood. Here it was: my mother's story! I screamed with delight! I could not believe it! I had heard my mother speak of Varapodio as it was not far from Piminoro and she had been there many times.

My determination was bubbling. I ploughed through directories and found his telephone number. He was a total stranger yet he recalled the very same story my mother had recounted so many times

before. Someone remembered: someone actually knew. I asked if he knew of any photographs of the stone press I was so desperate to see. To my utter delight, I received a package in the mail from him shortly after. Wrapped around a small bottle of olive oil that he had just pressed, was a book on the town of Varapodio and inside the book was a drawing of a stone press and a picture of the ruins at Bovalino.

Some months later my mother and I went to meet him in South Australia. We watched him press his olive harvest. My mother even knew some of the people he had worked for in Italy and they had many conversations about what used to be.

This is what my parents and migrants such as Giuseppe brought with them to Australia: their knowledge of ingredients, of fresh, pure produce, of unique flavours. May everyone enjoy good food.

NOTES

¹ Newton, J 1996, *Wog Food: An Oral History with Recipes*, Random House Australia, Sydney.

prov's index to outward passengers: from statistics to social history

SUSIE LEEHANE IS MANAGER OF THE VIBRANT VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM AT THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE OF VICTORIA (PROV). PROV HAS RECENTLY COMPLETED A 25-YEAR PROJECT TO INDEX THE INWARDS PASSENGER LISTS, AND THIS DECEMBER WILL PUBLISH A FIFTEEN YEAR INSTALMENT OF THE INDEX. SUSIE IS CURRENTLY LEADING 70 VOLUNTEERS IN INDEXING THE OUTWARD LISTS.

PROV's online *Index to Outward Passengers to Interstate, UK, NZ and Foreign Ports*¹ now covers the years 1852 to 1861. The index has been generated by the sterling efforts of PROV volunteers and refers researchers to microfilm copies of original passenger lists. It offers some fascinating insights into life in Victoria during the early colonial period.

Under nineteenth-century laws relating to the carriage of passengers by sea, a ship's master was obliged to keep 'the Name and other Particulars of the Ship, and of every Passenger on Board, countersigned by the Emigration Officer'. This listing was then to 'be delivered by the Master to the customs from whom a clearance of such a ship be demanded'. In addition to the names of passengers, the lists included marital status, age and gender, and sometimes nationality and occupation.

When the colony of Victoria was created in 1851, it had fewer than 90,000 residents. The following year, however, saw the beginning of the Victorian gold rushes. People flooded into Victoria from New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania and the years 1852 to 1853 proved a period of unprecedented activity for the fledgling port of Melbourne, with hundreds of passenger and cargo ships carrying people to and from Victoria. The scale of this passenger traffic, and the enormous number of sailing vessels involved, are unrivalled in Australian maritime history. Only the port of San Francisco, during the Californian gold rush of 1849, saw more movement than Melbourne's passenger docks in the early 1850s.

Viewed against this backdrop, the statistics relating to outward passengers are particularly intriguing. An analysis of the records indexed at PROV has shown that 282,616 people left Victoria by ship between 1852 and 1861.² An initial glance at Italian surnames cited on the

database offers a great number of Italians leaving Victoria for other states as early as 1852.

by
SUSIE LEEHANE

A specific historical phenomenon is reflected in the statistics for October 1858, when 4804 hopeful miners left Victoria for the goldfields of Canoona, Queensland. In what was described by the contemporary commentator William Lees, as the 'maddest of all the Australian rushes'³ twenty-four ships sailed from Victoria to Port Curtis and a further ten ships docked in Keppel Bay. At the time, M. C. O'Connell reported to the Colonial Secretary in Rockhampton that "considerable numbers may be expected from Melbourne and other ports ... under the vague hope that gold is to be found".⁴ In fact this gold fever was short lived and in the following month no passengers left Victoria for Port Curtis or Keppel Bay.

From November 1852 to March 1853, for example, a total of 25,142 people journeyed to New South Wales, to Tasmania and to South Australia. Many were miners returning to their original place of residence to join their families for Christmas. After Christmas thousands of these miners returned to the Victorian goldfields.

Interestingly, despite the significant levels of outward passage in the 1850s, the perception that miners who made their fortune were likely to return to Britain, continental Europe or the United States is not borne out by the statistics. Between November 1852 and March 1853, for example, only 1382 of the total aggregate of passengers departing Victoria sailed directly for London and Liverpool, with an even smaller number bound for America or continental Europe; fewer than 50 individuals sailed directly to New Zealand, and not one Chinese miner returned to Hong Kong. Certainly a percentage of international passengers may have travelled to Sydney or Hobart to join a vessel bound for an overseas destination.

Exploring the statistics generated by PROV's *Index to Outward Passengers to Interstate, UK, NZ and Foreign Ports* reveals just how much passenger lists can tell us about colonial migration, in particular the travels of mid-nineteenth-century Victorians. There are many more exciting discoveries to come in *Series 948 Outward Passenger Lists*. It is anticipated that a further 20 years of this index (1862-81) will be published on the PROV website in December 2006.

NOTES

¹ Public Record Office of Victoria, 2005, cited 23 November 2006, http://www.proarchives.imagineering.com.au/index_search.asp?searchid=42

² Leehane, S June 2006, 'PROV's index to outward passengers: From statistics to social history', *PROactive*, Issue 37, pp. 10-11.

³ and ⁴ Lees, W 1899, *The Goldfields of Queensland: Gympie Edition* Outridge Printing Co., Brisbane.

italian historical society news

MADAME SERINI COLLECTION

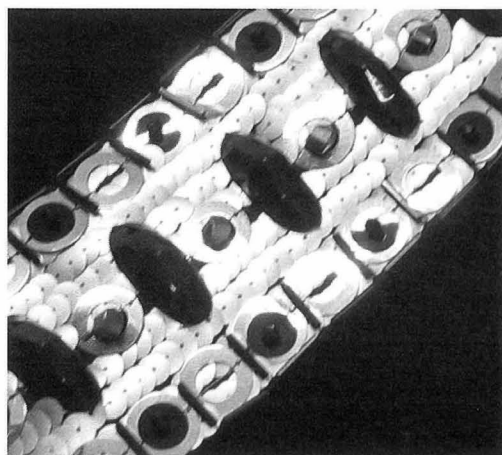
It is with great sorrow that the Italian Historical Society marks the passing of Madame Itala Serini in Melbourne on 18 September 2006. Madame Serini, as she came to be known, was born in 1918 in Fiume, Italy, and migrated to Australia with her husband Giuseppe, son Marcello and daughter Anna Maria (Nucci) in January 1950. The family lived in Hobart for the first three years, where Madame Serini worked from her own salon, and then moved to Melbourne to pursue an invitation to design exclusively for *Le Louvre*, one of Melbourne's most exclusive boutiques located at the Paris end of Collins Street.

After several years and great success as the head designer and dressmaker at *Le Louvre* Madame Serini spent four months in Italy with her daughter, visiting family and studying current European fashions. On her return to Melbourne she established her own salon in the wealthy Melbourne suburb of Toorak and it was opened by the Italian Consul-General. Over the next two decades Madame Serini established a formidable reputation as a designer of exceptional style and quality and acquired a loyal clientele of some of Australia's wealthiest and most fashionable women.

Madame Serini always felt her Italian heritage was a distinct advantage in the fashion industry in an era when European style, fabrics and accessories were at the pinnacle of style and glamour.

In October this year Anna Serini (Nucci), daughter of Madame Serini, generously donated over 20 original Serini creations to the Italian Historical Society. This donation joins a series of photographs and two oral histories already in the IHS collection. The garments date from Madame Serini's last salon collection. The collection consists mostly of evening wear, and as with all of Madame Serini's creations this collection reflects her dedication to classic elegance and the best quality materials and craftsmanship. The fabrics, all of European origin, were purchased on buying trips to Milan and Paris by her daughter Nucci who worked with her mother the length of her career, first as a model and then as a buyer. The accessories, buttons, belts and beading are also of the highest European quality.

Fabric details from Madame Serini's Collection.



CANDELA MUSIC SHEET COLLECTION MOVES TO MONASH UNIVERSITY RARE BOOKS

The Candelas were musicians, tailors and photographers from Viggiano in Basilicata. The Italian Historical Society holds the Candela family papers, along with photographic plates and lantern slides (of Melbourne and Italy) dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. To ensure the preservation of the Candela Music Sheet Collection 5 boxes, containing a total of 392 music sheets and booklets, were given into the custody of the Monash University Rare Book collection. The IHS looks forward to working with Monash University on research, display and preservation projects relating to this important collection.

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL GOES ONLINE

This edition of the Italian Historical Society Journal is our last in print format. To reach a wider audience and reduce costs the next edition of the Journal will only be available online on our website www.coasit.com.au/ IHS and will be FREE OF CHARGE.

GANGITANO FILMS AT RMIT

Earlier this year the Italian Historical Society received a very generous and exciting donation of films from Gianni Gangitano. To facilitate the preservation of these original reels the collection have been passed to School of Applied Communication at RMIT.

The reels will no doubt be useful to the project currently underway at RMIT conducted by Associate Professor Deb Verhoeven, which examines Melbourne's Italian cinema audiences and venues from 1949 until 1980.

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON WORLDWIDE META MUSEUM SITE: WWW.WWMM.ORG

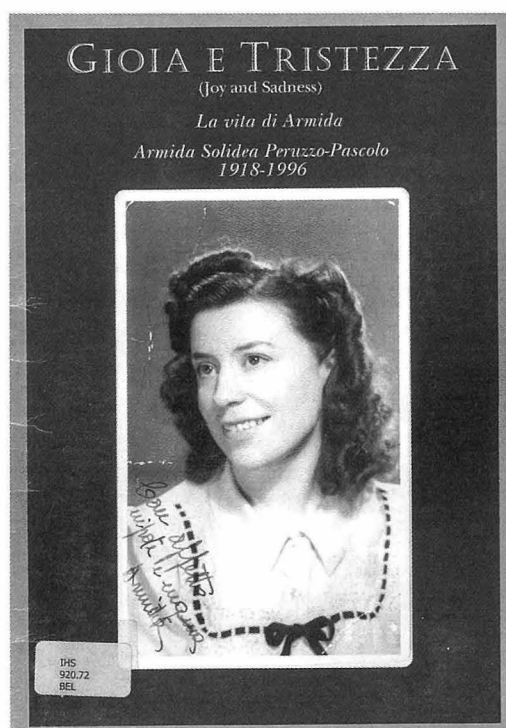
An agreement has been signed between the Italian Historical Society and the World Wide Meta Museum site, a project of the University of Milano-Bicocca and the University of Bergamo. This allows the Society to post a number of illustrated stories about Italians and Australia on the Internet, for didactic purposes in Italian schools. Our initial contribution deals with the first contacts from the 17th century to the early 1900s and will appear in February 2007. The presentation is in English and Italian.

Plans are under way to publish further stories and to promote an exchange between schools in Italy and Australia.

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



GIOIA E TRISTEZZA: JOY AND SADNESS: LA VITA DI ARMIDA SOLIDEA PERUZZO-PASCOLO
BY RITA BELTRAME,
SELF-PUBLISHED, MELBOURNE, 2002.

This is a lovingly written and presented book by the protagonist's daughter, Rita Beltrame. The reminiscences and short stories are from the various diaries kept by Armida throughout her life in Australia and in Italy. In the preface to the book, the author states that the intention to write this biography was for the benefit of Armida's descendants who had not yet been born at the time of her death in 1996. The book illustrates Armida's warm and tenacious personality and conjures up what her youth might have been like in her native San Martino al Tagliamento in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region. The book also includes a detailed family tree.



GROWING UP IN COLLINGWOOD, 1934-1955: A MEMOIR
BY JOHN VENTURA,
SELF-PUBLISHED, RESERVOIR, 2005.

The idea to write this book came to John when he was camping in the Gulf of Carpentaria and met a stranger who recognised him as the person behind the counter at the Ventura family's fish shop in Collingwood. Thus began several long, nostalgic talks about the "good ol' days" and the premise for this book. As the author himself says: "I wanted to recapture the feel and flavour of the lifestyle in the 30's and 40's and paint a picture of my childhood in its surroundings". Filled with photographs and documents, the book is a must for anyone who has ever been in contact with Collingwood or Abbotsford, Victoria.

POSCHIAVINI IN AUSTRALIA INCLUDING THOSE FROM THE SCHAMS VALLEY
BY HANS HUMBERGER,
SELF-PUBLISHED, ZURICH, 2005.

This work is a continuation of the detailed research undertaken by Joseph Gentili in his book *Swiss Poschiavini in Australia* published by the Department of Geography, University of Western Australia in 1989. The newer study is a complete listing of approximately 700 Swiss immigrants to Australian shores and includes shipping list data of age and parents' names. The CDROM and accompanying paper documents are divided into 3 separate sections: diverse family trees of the various migrants from data derived from the Victorian and NSW Civil Registries; descriptions of tables and data from the various sources and thirdly, reference and ID numbers of all migrants. An extensive range of marriage and death certificates procured from Melbourne, Poschiavo, Valposchiavo and Bruscio are available.

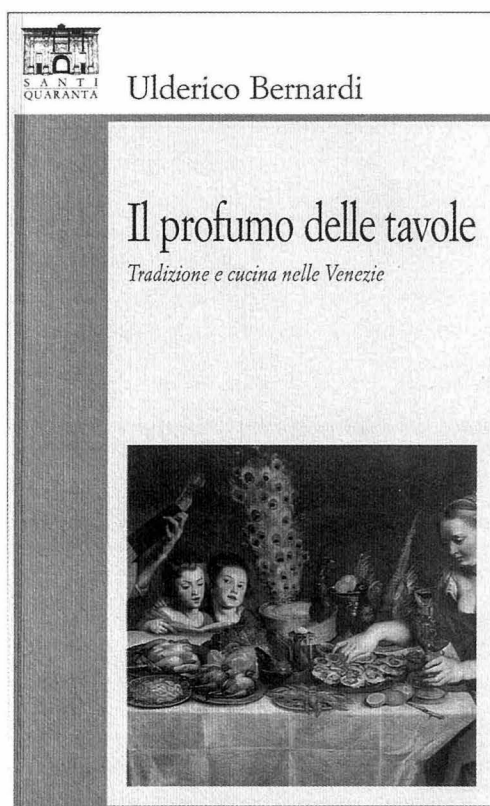
IL DIARIO DI SALVATORE GIARDI : RICORDI D'AUSTRALIA
BY SALVATORE GIARDI, UFFICIO PROVINCIALE DEL LAVORO E DELL'EMIGRAZIONE, SEZIONE VALTELLINESE, TIRANO, 1913.

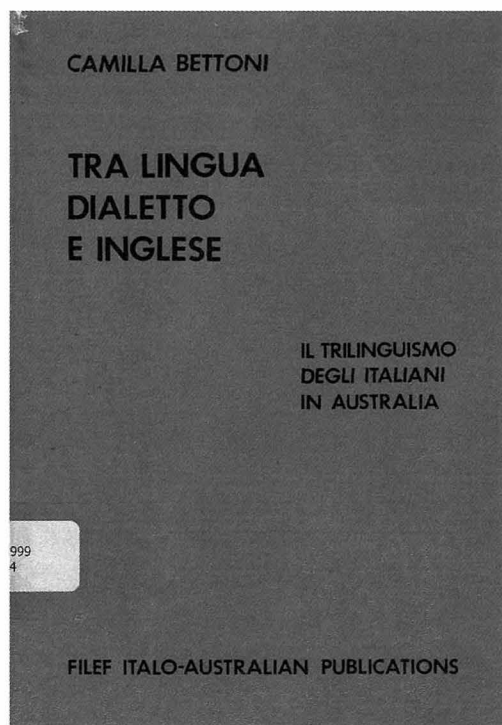
This book was donated to us from the estate of Jacqueline Templeton. Written in the early 1900s, it chronicles the life and times of the author Salvatore Giardi from his wedding in 1903 to his departure to Australia in April a year later. It vividly recalls what life must have been like in Fremantle, Perth for these two pioneers. There are interesting accounts of the people he meets along the way, of the different jobs he performs to sustain his family and ends with pertinent reflections on the migration process.

BOOKS IN ITALIAN

IL PROFUMO DELLE TAVOLE: TRADIZIONE E CUCINA NELLE VENEZIE
BY ULDERICO BERNARDI,
SANTI QUARANTA, TREVISO, 2006.

This is not just another Italian cookbook: it is a tapestry of the Venetian character, weaving together cuisine and literature. Gastronomically, the book focuses on the Venetian staples of polenta, bread and salt cod (*baccalà*). It also provides a "literary pantry" of anecdotes, proverbs, sayings and nursery rhymes related to the food of the region. This book was donated to us by the author, Ulderico Bernardi, who is Professor of Sociology at the University of Venice – Cà Foscari.





**TRA LINGUA, DIALETTO E INGLESE :
IL TRILINGUISTICO DEGLI ITALIANI IN
AUSTRALIA**

BY CAMILLA BETTONI,
FILEF ITALO-AUSTRALIAN
PUBLICATIONS, LEICHARDT, 1985.

Although not a new publication this copy has only recently been acquired by the IHS. This is one of the first studies to examine the sociolinguistic distribution of language use in Italian immigrant communities in Sydney. Taking into account the use of English, Standard Italian and Italian dialects, the study examines the influences on language choice and use in these communities which stem both from the immigrants' Italian origins and from their new lives in Australia, and how the languages themselves are changed by this diverse heritage.



**EMIGRAZIONE ANARCHICA ITALIANA IN
AUSTRALIA**

BY MORENO MARCHI, ANARCHIST
MEDIA INSTITUTE, LIBERTARIAN
WORKERS FOR A SELF MANAGED
SOCIETY, MELBOURNE, 1988.

This is a rare publication the IHS has been trying to acquire for some time. The first anarchists to arrive in Australia experienced linguistic, cultural and political isolation and had little opportunity to express themselves. After the Second World War, with more arrivals, organised anarchist groups were formed. This publication traces the experiences and stories of these groups, their founders and supporters.

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

SCOPE

The journal of the Italian Historical Society is produced for a general readership. Preference will be given to articles which increase an understanding of the history of Italian immigrants and their descendants.

The editors of the IHS Journal accept unsolicited articles. However, we reserve the right to decline publication. We welcome articles from professional and amateur historians and writers. All items submitted are subject to editing. There is no payment for contributions.

The IHS Journal is published twice yearly. Deadlines for articles are:

June issue	31 March
December issue	30 September

MANUSCRIPT PRESENTATION

1. Send one electronic copy of the article, either as an MWord attachment to an email or on disc/CD to:

Italian Historical Society—COASIT, Melbourne
1st Floor, 54 University Street, Carlton VIC Australia 3053.

2. Articles should be of no more than 6,000 words, wordprocessed in MWord, 12 point, double-spaced, including endnotes.
3. Articles should be preceded by an abstract of no more than 100 words.
4. Illustrative material is to be supplied in the form of black and white, medium resolution jpgs (300 dpi). All images are to be clearly captioned. The author is to supply evidence of copyright clearance.
5. Authors are to indicate sources and references where appropriate by the use of numbers at the end of the relevant sentence. These numbered endnotes should be grouped at the end of the article.
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