

Ilario Nesci



From Caulionia's Shores to Buonasera's
Door's
An Italian Australian Culinary Journey to
Adelaide.

Edited by G. Geracitano



Italian Historical Society of SA Inc. 2025

Designed by
2025



ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

A TRUNK FULL OF MEMORIES, A SUITCASE FULL OF DREAMS: STORIES OF
ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

CATEGORY

A TAVOLA: THE INFLUENCE OF ITALIAN IMMIGRATION ON SOUTH
AUSTRALIAN FOOD CULTURE: DINING OUT

INTERVIEW WITH

ILARIO NESCI

CONDUCTED BY

GIUSEPPE (JOE) GERACITANO

13 SEPTEMBER 2024

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A Trunk Full of Dreams, a Suitcase Full of Memories: Honouring Italian Migration in South Australia

For over a century, Italians have journeyed across oceans and continents in search of opportunity, dignity, and a better life. While Italian migration has shaped societies across the globe—from the bustling cities of Argentina to the alpine towns of Switzerland, its imprint on South Australia is both profound and deeply personal.

A Global Movement, A Local Legacy

Following Italy's unification in 1861, waves of migration surged as millions fled poverty and hardship. Between 1876 and the late 1980s, nearly 27 million Italians left their homeland. Initially, the Americas were the primary destination, with Argentina, Brazil, and the United States welcoming the largest numbers. Europe also played a significant role, especially Germany and Switzerland.

Australia, though home to Italians since colonization, saw its most significant influx after World War II. By 1933, just under 1,500 Italians lived in South Australia, the bulk arriving in the mid-1920s. By 1971, that number had soared to over 32,000. Today, almost 104,000 South Australians claim Italian ancestry, with the City of Campbelltown standing out, nearly one in four residents there trace their roots to Italy.

Preserving the Stories That Built a State

Despite their contributions, Italian migrants, like many non-Anglo-Celtic communities, remain underrepresented in Australia's historical record. Their stories, struggles, and triumphs are often absent from national archives and mainstream narratives.

To redress this imbalance, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. was founded in 2015. With a mission rooted in cultural preservation and community pride, the Society collects oral histories, documents, and photographs that illuminate the Italian experience in South Australia.

The transcripts of these firsthand accounts are preserved in esteemed institutions including the State Library of South Australia, the South Australian Parliament Research Library, the National Library of Australia, the Migration Museum of South Australia, and other relevant repositories. This ensures enduring accessibility for researchers, descendants, and the wider public. Discussions are currently underway with the State Library of South Australia to house the oral interviews within the J.D. Somerville Oral History Collection, further safeguarding these voices for future generations.

A Trunk Full of Dreams and a Suitcase Full of Memories

The Society's flagship project, *A Trunk Full of Dreams and a Suitcase Full of Memories*, captures the diverse journeys of Italian immigrants. Stories are grouped into evocative categories—Life Achievement, Business, Sport, Community Organizations, Trades, and A Tavola, which explores the influence of Italian cuisine on Australian food culture.

The motivations behind this collection are threefold:

- To help descendants understand and honour their heritage.
- To reconnect Italian families with the stories of those who left.
- To enrich Australia's immigration history by showcasing how Italian migrants adapted to new cultural rhythms, work practices, and civic life.

This is the story of a young immigrant, *Ilario Nesci*, from Caulonia, in the province of Reggio Calabria, Italy, who arrived in Australia at just 16 years old. After qualifying as a hairdresser and spending his early years in the trade, he was unexpectedly called upon to manage a restaurant. With vision and determination, he transformed it into an iconic Italian dining destination, one that has proudly endured for 59 years.

A Living Archive for Future Generations

The Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. stands as a guardian of memory, ensuring that the voices of Italian migrants are not lost to time. Through its work, the Society invites all South Australians to reflect on the richness of their multicultural heritage and to celebrate the enduring legacy of those who arrived with little more than hope, and a suitcase full of memories.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano

President, Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

2025

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A Tavola: How Italian Immigration Transformed South Australian Food Culture

Australia's culinary landscape has undergone a profound transformation over the past century, and few influences have been as enduring and flavourful as that of Italian immigration. While the popular narrative credits post-World War II migration with introducing Australians to pasta, espresso, and olive oil, the full story is far richer woven through generations of resilience, entrepreneurship, and cultural pride.

From 'Wogfood' to National Treasure

In the immediate post-war years, Italian food was often dismissed as foreign and inferior. Derogatory terms like "spaghetti eaters" and "garlic munchers" reflected a broader cultural resistance. Yet today, Italian cuisine is celebrated as a cornerstone of Australian dining, with the Mediterranean diet hailed as one of the healthiest in the world. This shift didn't happen overnight, it was shaped by a complex interplay of social, economic, and cultural forces.

Beyond the Kitchen: Institutions That Shaped Taste

Italian migrants didn't just bring recipes they built institutions. From family-run restaurants and cafés to manufacturers and market gardeners, Italians created a food ecosystem that served both their own communities and the broader Australian public. Businesses like D'Orsogna Smallgoods, Vittoria Coffee, and the Perfect Cheese Company began as humble ventures and grew into household names.

Retailers such as delicatessens, fruit and vegetable shops, and butchers filled a gap in the market, offering familiar ingredients to migrants and eventually attracting mainstream customers. Meanwhile, importers ensured that 'Made in Italy' products remained accessible, even as local production grew.

A Toast to Italian Wine Culture

Italian migrants also reshaped Australia's wine industry. Their love of wine with meals introduced a new way of drinking, one rooted in tradition and conviviality. From the Barossa Valley to the Limestone Coast, Italian families like Virgara, Serafino, Zerella, and Di Giorgio helped elevate Australian wine to international acclaim. They brought not only expertise but also new grape varieties, enriching the nation's viticultural diversity.

Oral Histories: Preserving the Legacy

The *A Tavola* project seeks to document this transformation through oral histories and archival research, focusing on South Australia's unique experience. By capturing the voices of restaurateurs, growers, manufacturers, and retailers, the project aims to fill gaps in the literature and honour the everyday heroes who changed how Australians eat and live.

More Than Food: A Way of Life

Italian food is more than nourishment; it's a cultural expression. It speaks of identity, belonging, and the joy of gathering around a table. As one Italian saying goes, '*Una tavola senza vino è com'una giornata senza sole*', [a table without wine is like a day without sunshine]. Through their culinary traditions, Italian migrants taught Australians not just how to eat, but how to savour life.

This story on *Ilario Nesci* celebrates the enduring legacy of Italian migration and its delicious impact on Australian culture. For more stories and updates on the *A Tavola* project, stay tuned to our upcoming publications.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.
2025

From Caulonia to Adelaide: A Legacy of Migration, Memory, and Celebration

In the heart of Calabria's rugged *Stilaro* Valley lies *Caulonia*, a town steeped in history, resilience, and cultural pride. Once known as *Castelvetere*, this southern Italian Comune has weathered centuries of change—from medieval sieges to political revolts and natural disasters. But perhaps its most transformative chapter began in the mid-20th century, when thousands of *Cauloniesi* left their homeland in search of new beginnings. Their journey led many to the western suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia, where a vibrant community continues to honour its roots with remarkable devotion.

From Magna Graecia to Memory

Caulonia's story begins in the 7th century BC, when Achaean Greeks, drawn by the promise of fertile lands and coastal beauty, founded a colony on the Ionian Sea. Known in antiquity as *Καυλωνία* (*Kaulōnía*), it was part of the vibrant constellation of cities that formed Magna Graecia where Hellenic culture flourished far from its homeland.

Though politically aligned with Croton, *Caulonia* minted its own coins and carved out an identity marked by independence and artistry. But history, as ever, is shaped by conflict. In 389 BC, the city fell to Dionysius I of Syracuse, and its people were exiled, yet even in displacement, they carried their legacy forward.

Resilience Through Ruin

Caulonia's fate was sealed again during the Second Punic War, when it sided with Hannibal against Rome. The city was razed, and its name faded from maps but not from memory. Survivors moved inland, founding *Stilida*, which later became *Stilo*, and centuries later, in 1862, the town of *Castelvetere* adopted the name *Caulonia*, believing itself to be heir to the ancient city's legacy.

The Push to Leave: History's Hand in Migration

The mass emigration from *Caulonia* was driven by a confluence of hardship and hope. In the aftermath of World War II, the town faced devastating floods in 1951 and 1953, which compounded economic struggles and accelerated the decline of its population. Earlier, in 1945, *Caulonia* had briefly declared itself the 'Red Republic of Caulonia', a five-day uprising led by communist mayor Pasquale Cavallaro, reflecting deep social unrest and the desire for reform. Though the revolt was swiftly crushed, it underscored the tensions that made life untenable for many.

With limited prospects at home and restrictive U.S. immigration laws closing one door, *Cauloniesi* families turned toward Australia. Between the 1950s and 1970s, waves of

migrants arrived in Adelaide, bringing with them not only their dreams but their traditions, language, and faith.

Building a New Home in Adelaide

Settling primarily in Adelaide's western suburbs, Kidman Park, Findon, Fulham Gardens, Lockleys, Flinders Park, and Seaton, the *Cauloniese* community quickly established itself as a cornerstone of Italian life in South Australia. The area, bounded by arterial roads like Grange Road, Torrens Road, and Sir Donald Bradman Drive, became a cultural triangle where Italian heritage thrived.

Homes were built, families grew, and the rhythms of *Caulonia* found new life in the southern hemisphere. Today, many descendants of the original immigrants still live in these suburbs, forming a third generation of Australian-born *Cauloniesi* who remain deeply connected to their heritage.

Tradition in Full Bloom: Faith, Food, and Festivity

At the heart of this enduring legacy is the *Festa di S. Ilarione* (the Feast of Saint Hilarion). Held annually on the third Sunday of October, it is the largest Italian religious festival in South Australia. Honouring *Caulonia*'s patron saint, the event draws thousands from across the state and beyond, including visitors from *Caulonia* itself, who marvel at the scale and spirit of the celebration. The feast was founded in 1955 by four immigrants from *Caulonia*, *Giuseppe Ciccarello*, *Ilario Fazzalari*, *Ilario Lamberto*, and *John Anthony Costa OAM*.

Thanks to visionary leaders like Nick Fazzalari and Vince Greco, the Feast has grown into a cultural phenomenon. From its early days at Campbelltown to Saint Michael's College to its current home at Gleneagles Reserve in Seaton, the event features music, dancing, and the beloved zeppole that have become a culinary hallmark. In 2024, the festival welcomed Mimmo Cavallaro, *Caulonia*'s most celebrated musical export, whose performance symbolized the powerful ties between homeland and diaspora.

Beyond the Feast, traditions are nurtured through weekly Mass at Mater Christi, family gatherings, and events like the *Pranzo Dell'Amicizia*, biannual lunches celebrating Calabrian cuisine and camaraderie. These rituals ensure that culture, language, and values are passed lovingly from one generation to the next.

Caring for Elders, Honouring the Past

One of the community's most profound achievements is the establishment of the House of Saint Hilarion, a culturally attuned aged care facility in Seaton. Conceived in the 1980s by community leaders who foresaw the needs of aging immigrants, the facility offers care that respects the food, faith, and identity of its residents. It stands as a testament to the foresight and compassion of the *Cauloniese* community.

Looking Ahead

As the Cauloniese story unfolds into its third generation, it remains a powerful example of how migration can preserve, not dilute, culture. In Adelaide, the echoes of Caulonia ring loud and clear, carried in song, prayer, and the laughter of families who never forgot where they came from. In the end, *Caulonia*'s story is not just about the past. It is a vibrant, living story that continues to evolve, reminding us that no matter how far we travel, we carry our roots with us.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.
2025

Caulonia

Reggio Calabria



Fractions (Municipality)

1. Carrubbara-Liserà — **2.09 km**
2. Strange — **2.86 km**
3. Sorgiulia — **2.96 km**
4. Cufò San Blasio — **2.98 km**
5. Percia — **3.01 km**
6. Piticanni — **3.17 km**
7. Gonnella — **3.26 km**
8. Ursini — **3.64 km**
9. Chiaravalle — **3.68 km**
10. Migliuso — **3.92 km**
11. Brothers — **4.05 km**
12. Croci — **4.08 km**
13. Popelli — **4.76 km**
14. Pezzolo — **4.77 km**
15. San Nicola — **4.85 km**
16. Focà — **4.88 km**
17. Tumba — **5.22 km**
18. Calabria — **5.39 km**
19. Ficara — **5.54 km**
20. Vasi — **6.14 km**
21. Caulonia Marina — **6.23 km**
22. Salincriti — **6.91 km**
23. Campoli Rupetti — **7.27 km**
24. Agromastelli — **7.86 km**
25. Campoli Cerasara — **8.09 km**
26. Baron — **8.82 km**



Saint Hilarion: Pioneer of Palestinian Monasticism and Patron of Caulonia and Adelaide

Saint Hilarion (c. 291–371 AD) stands as a luminous figure in early Christian history, revered as the founder of monasticism in Palestine. His life, marked by ascetic rigor, spiritual depth, and miraculous deeds, offers a compelling portrait of devotion and resilience in the face of worldly distractions.

Early Life and Conversion

Born in the village of Tabatha near Gaza to pagan parents, Hilarion's early years were shaped by intellectual pursuit and spiritual awakening. Sent to Alexandria for education, he encountered Christianity and was baptized at the age of fifteen. Inspired by the ascetic life of Saint Anthony of Egypt, Hilarion spent time learning from him before returning to Palestine to embrace solitude and spiritual discipline.

Life as a Hermit

Hilarion retreated to the desert near *Maiuma*, where he lived in a simple hut and adopted a life of extreme austerity. He fasted, prayed, and wove baskets to sustain himself, modelling his lifestyle on the Egyptian hermits. His solitude was not without struggle—he battled temptations and physical hardship yet remained steadfast in his commitment to spiritual purity.

Miracles and Ministry

Despite his desire for seclusion, Hilarion's reputation for holiness drew many seekers. He performed numerous miracles: healing the sick, exorcising demons, restoring sight to the blind, and even calming storms and repelling pirate ships with a gesture. His spiritual authority attracted disciples, and he eventually founded the first Palestinian monastery around 329 AD.

Journeys and Final Years

Seeking deeper solitude, Hilarion travelled extensively, through Egypt, North Africa, Sicily, Dalmatia, and finally Cyprus. His disciple Hesychius accompanied him, and even in remote regions, Hilarion's fame followed. He continued to work miracles and inspire devotion until his death in Cyprus at the age of eighty.

Legacy and Veneration

Saint Hilarion's legacy was immortalized by Saint Jerome in the *Vita Sancti Hilarionis*, a semi-legendary biography that emphasized his role in establishing monastic life in Palestine. His relics became objects of veneration, and his cult spread across Europe. Churches and monasteries bear his name, and his feast day is celebrated on October 21.

Patron Saint of Caulonia

Saint Hilarion is venerated as the patron saint of Caulonia, a town in Calabria, southern Italy, where he is known as Sant'Ilario. Though the exact path by which his relics arrived in *Caulonia* remains shrouded in legend, a relic, believed to be a bone from his arm, is still venerated there today. His patronage is deeply woven into the town's spiritual identity, and his feast day is celebrated with reverence and local devotion. The relic is embedded in a silver arm which is carried in procession each year.

Establishing the Feast in Adelaide

The Feast of Saint Hilarion was first celebrated in Adelaide in 1955, initiated by a group of Italian migrants from Caulonia and surrounding regions who had settled in South Australia after World War II. These families, most notably the Ciccarello, Costa, Fazzalari, and Lamberto families, formed the Society of Saint Hilarion to preserve their cultural and religious traditions. Drawing on their deep devotion and communal spirit, they established an annual celebration in the third week of October, which has grown into one of the largest and most beloved cultural-religious events in Australia. Today, the feast includes a five-day program of prayer, processions, and festivities, culminating in a vibrant Sunday celebration at Gleneagles Reserve in Seaton.

Conclusion

Saint Hilarion's life is a testament to the transformative power of solitude, prayer, and unwavering faith. In the barren wilderness, he cultivated a spiritual garden that continues to bloom in the hearts of believers. His story reminds us that sanctity is not confined to grand cathedrals or public acclaim. It often begins in silence, blossoms in struggle, and endures through love.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.
2025



Feast of St Hilarion October 16th Italy

On October 16th, 2016, in his beloved hometown of Caulonia, Ilario celebrated the feast of St. Hilarion—a day filled with tradition, devotion, and heartfelt connection to his roots



St Hilarion Statue being prepared for feast in Italy



A bone from Saint Hilarion's arm, encased in a silver reliquary, is preserved and venerated in Caulonia.

From Scissors to Saucepans: The Life and Legacy of Ilario Nesci

Early Life in Caulonia, Italy

Born on 21 February 1943 in Caulonia, a town in the province of Reggio Calabria, Ilario Nesci grew up in a large, close-knit family. His father, Luigi, was a construction supervisor, and his mother, Rosa, managed the household. Caulonia, with its twenty-four *frazioni* and two *località* (subdivisions) and vibrant artisan culture, shaped Ilario's early years. At age twelve, he began apprenticing as a hairdresser under his uncle, while also helping in his father's wine shop.

Migration to Australia

In 1959, at age sixteen, Ilario migrated to Australia with his family, joining two older brothers already settled in Australia. The journey aboard the *Roma* was memorable, especially for Ilario, who was seasick for most of the voyage. Upon arrival in Adelaide, he was immediately immersed in work. On his very first day, he was invited to help out in a local barber shop, marking the career as a Hairdresser.

Ilario quickly proved himself in the hairdressing trade. He worked first for an Italian barber, then for an Australian one, where his dedication earned him rapid promotions and increased wages. By age 20, he had purchased his own salon, Larry's Hairdresser, in Market Street, Adelaide. His clientele included judges, bishops, politicians, and media personalities, reflecting his growing reputation and charisma.

Transition to Restaurateur

In early 1969, Ilario made a bold career shift. When restaurateur *Enzo Clappis* moved on from *Buonasera Restaurant*, Ilario was invited by his cousin, *Ilario Lamberto*, to manage it. Though he had no formal culinary training, his people skills and business acumen translated seamlessly to hospitality. He took over the front-of-house operations and gradually shaped *Buonasera* into one of Adelaide's most beloved Italian restaurants. For nearly six decades, the restaurant has stood as testament to resilience and community spirit, remaining in continuous operations since its founding. In all that time, it's remained a place where stories are shared, friendships are forged, and the community gathers.

Building Buonasera: A Culinary Institution

Under Ilario's stewardship, *Buonasera* became a beacon of Calabrian cuisine and Italian hospitality. He expanded the restaurant multiple times, eventually adding a function centre that hosted weddings, fundraisers, and community events. Signature dishes like

Bauletti di Granchio, *Agnollotti Alla Panna*, *Panzerotti Alla Romana*, and Breast Cassata (a cheeky dessert with a humorous origin) became local legends.

He also introduced rare ingredients like *stocco* (dehydrated cod) and created innovative pasta dishes using beetroot, chestnuts, and crab. His commitment to handmade pasta and authentic flavours earned *Buonasera* a place in the prestigious *Ciao Italia* culinary registry in 1995, recognizing it as one of the few restaurants globally preserving traditional Italian cuisine.

Family and Cultural Legacy

Ilario's personal life mirrored his professional values: warmth, tradition, and community. He married Helen Martin, an Australian woman who embraced Calabrian culture so deeply she became fluent in the dialect and was beloved by Ilario's family. Together, they raised three children, Rosa, Luigi, and Mark, instilling in them a strong sense of Italian identity.

His restaurant became a cultural hub, frequented by politicians, celebrities, and members of the Italian diaspora. He hosted fundraisers for causes like Hands On South Australia and Riding for the Disabled, often donating food and staff time.

Honouring Heritage

Ilario's devotion to Caulonia remained strong. He preserved his childhood home there and visits annually. At *Buonasera*, he embedded cultural symbols into the décor, including a mosaic of Sant'Ilarione, Caulonia's patron saint, and historical photographs of the town. These gestures reflected his desire to keep his roots alive in his adopted homeland.

A Living Legacy

Now in his eighties, Ilario continues to operate *Buonasera* part-time, maintaining its reputation for excellence. His story is one of resilience, adaptation, and cultural pride, a testament to the immigrant spirit and the power of food to bridge worlds.

We pay tribute not only to a migrant whose journey reflects triumph over cultural and linguistic challenges, but also to a culinary institution that has become part of South Australia's evolving gastronomic heritage.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.
2025

Hometown



**Ilario family home in
Caulonia
After renovations
(2025)**

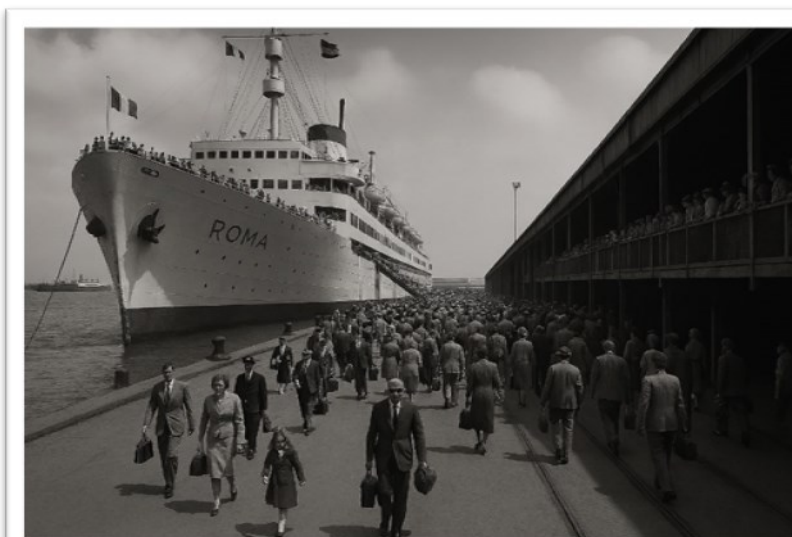


Departing Caulonia for Australia

"Our departure was unexpectedly interrupted when wharf workers went on strike, forcing us to board the Roma via small boats."



Ilario departed Italy on 13 June 1959, with parents and siblings aboard the ship *Roma*, arriving in Melbourne on 10 July 1959.



REFERENCE

O

757621

376

APPLICATION FOR ENTERING AUSTRALIA

T/n. ROMA	10-7-59	MELBOURNE
(Name of ship or identification marks of aircraft)	(Date of disembarkation)	(Port of disembarkation)
SURNAME or MAIN NAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	CHRISTIAN or OTHER NAMES (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	
Me NESCI	Ilario	

I, the above-mentioned person, being an alien who has entered Australia, hereby make application to be registered under the *Aliens Act* 1947-1952 as an alien and for the purpose of this application I hereby furnish the following information:—

Previous name or alias (if any) _____

Intended address in Australia brother - NESCI Vincenzo - 32 Stephen terrace - Gilberton S.A.

Nationality Italian Previous nationality (if any) _____

Birthplace { Town or City Caulonia } Date of birth 21/2/43 Sex M
 { Country Italy }

Marital status (State whether married, single, widowed or divorced) 8 M

Height 4 feet 4 inches. Colour of eyes brown Colour of hair brown

Marks or scars _____

Passport No. 7300024 or Certificate of Identity No. _____

Date of issue 19/5/59 Place of issue Reggio Calabria

By whom issued Police Date of last renewal (if any) _____

Visa number 59-26251 Place of issue Rome Type of visa migrant S.C. "Z"

Intended State of residence (if shown in visa) Vic.

Length of intended stay in Australia for good settlement

Name and address of nearest relative, friend or business connection in Australia MARRIED Maria Fazzolari

as above AT Campbellton

Name and address of employer (if any) ON 10-12-66

Occupation or profession Barber Intended occupation in Australia _____

Last permanent address overseas Caulonia Reggio Calabria

Full name of father NESCI Luigi

Full maiden name of mother LAMBERTO Maria

Details (if any) of accompanying wife or husband and accompanying children under the age of sixteen years

Name	Sex	Birthplace	Date of Birth
Wife or husband			
Children			

If previously resident in Australia, state last permanent address _____

Signature of applicant Ilario NESCI

Date of Signature _____



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Certificate of registration No. _____ issued

Signature of issuing officer [Signature]

Place _____

Date _____

Received the above-mentioned certificate of registration.

(SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT)

Date received _____

For instructions concerning the completion of this form see back hereof.

St 2150

Q

567

Rectangular Ship

Form RA 2

REFERENCE O 757622

374

APPLICATION

ENTERING AUSTRALIA

T/n. ROMA	10-7-59	MELBOURNE
(Name of ship or identification marks of aircraft)	(Date of disembarkation)	(Port of disembarkation)

SURNAME or MAIN NAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	CHRISTIAN or OTHER NAMES (IN BLOCK LETTERS)
Me NESCI	Maria

I, the above-mentioned person, being an alien who has entered Australia, hereby make application to be registered under the *Aliens Act* 1947-1952 as an alien and for the purpose of this application I hereby furnish the following information:—

Previous name or alias (if any) LAMBERTO
 Intended address in Australia son NESCI Vincenzo - 32 Stephen Terrace Gilberton S.A.

Nationality Italian Previous nationality (if any) _____
 Birthplace { Town or City Caulonia } Date of birth 17/9/909 Sex F
 { Country Italy }
 Marital status (State whether married, single, widowed or divorced) M
 Height 4 feet 8 inches. Colour of eyes brown Colour of hair brown
 Marks or scars _____
 Passport No. 7300020 or Certificate of Identity No. _____
 Date of issue 19/5/59 Place of issue Reggio Calabria
 By whom issued Police Date of last renewal (if any) _____
 Visa number 59-26249 Place of issue Rome Type of visa Migrant S.C. "2"
 Intended State of residence (if shown in visa) Vic.
 Length of intended stay in Australia for good settlement
 Name and address of nearest relative, friend or business connection in Australia UT. 1561 Sydney
as above
 Name and address of employer (if any) _____

Occupation or profession H.W. Intended occupation in Australia _____
 Last permanent address overseas Caulonia - Reggio Calabria
 Full name of father LAMBERTO Vincenzo
 Full maiden name of mother SACCO Maria Carmela
 Details (if any) of accompanying wife or husband and accompanying children under the age of sixteen years—

Name	Sex	Birthplace	Date of Birth
Wife or husband <u>NESCI Luigi</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Caulonia</u>	<u>5/12/905</u>
Children			

If previously resident in Australia, state last permanent address _____

Signature of applicant Lamberto Maria
 Date of Signature _____



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Certificate of registration No. _____ issued

Signature of issuing officer 10/7/59

Place _____

Date _____

Received the above-mentioned certificate of registration.

(SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT)

Date received _____

For instructions concerning the completion of this form see back hereof.

St 2150

The Beginning



**Luigi Nesci &
Rosa Lamberto
Ilario parents**



**Ilario and his brother
Vincenzo in Italy.**



**School Days with Professore
Piscioneri and best friends Carlo and
Angelo**



Ilario Nesci 1957



13th June 1959.

**The day the family left Caulonia, Italy
for Australia.**



**Early days in Australia having a
family photo taken in Walkerville,
with Luigi (Dad) Ilario, Teresa,
Giuseppe, Rosa (Mum) Nicola,
Valentino, Cousins, Gigi and Nick
Nesci**



**Early Years in
Australia. 1960**



**1964 :Ilario Outside the barber
shop Adelaide.**



**Memories from the 1960's Ilario,
Helen and Giuseppe**



Helen and Ilario Nesci.



EVERYBODY’S FRIEND: THE LEGACY OF ILARIO LAMBERTO

In the heart of Adelaide’s vibrant Calabrian community, the name Ilario Lamberto resonates with reverence and pride. Born in Caulonia, a picturesque town nestled between the mountains and the Ionian Sea in southern Italy, Lamberto carried with him not only the traditions of his homeland but a deep commitment to preserving them in his new home. Born in 1923, at the age of 27 he immigrated to Australia in 1950.

A Journey of Faith and Community

Trained as a primary school teacher in Italy, Ilario Lamberto’s journey to Australia was not driven by necessity, but by a heartfelt desire to visit his sisters, Erminia and Giulia, who had previously settled there. After working across agricultural and manufacturing sectors in Victoria and South Australia, he found his entrepreneurial stride in 1956, opening a travel agency on Gouger Street in Adelaide, directly opposite the bustling Central Market. The agency grew to become one of the largest and most trusted within the Italian community, a vital hub for migrants navigating their new lives.

Lamberto was known for his unwavering generosity and readiness to assist fellow Italians, whether they needed help with consular paperwork, legal matters, or financial support. His commitment to community extended far beyond business.

He is fondly remembered as one of the four founders of the Feast of Saint Hilarion. Established in 1955 the association was formed to honour Saint Hilarion, the patron saint of Caulonia. What began as a humble religious gathering soon flourished into a cherished annual tradition. Today, the celebration at Mater Christi Church draws thousands, featuring a six-day religious mission, a solemn procession, and a vibrant program of Calabrian food, music, and cultural performances, a living testament to faith, heritage, and community spirit.

A Pioneer of Italian Hospitality

Beyond his dedication to cultural preservation, Lamberto played a pivotal role in shaping Adelaide’s culinary identity. In 1966, he joined forces with fellow Italian migrant Enzo Clappis to establish *Buonasera Restaurant*, one of the city’s earliest and most cherished Italian eateries.

When Enzo Clappis relocated to the newly opened Burnside Village in 1969 to launch *Enzo’s Restaurant*, Lamberto invited his cousin, Ilario Nesci, to bring his natural charm and people skills to the management of *Buonasera*. Together, they ushered in a new era of multicultural dining in South Australia. Their restaurant was more than a place to eat, it was a vibrant gathering space where stories were exchanged, friendships blossomed, and the flavours of Calabria were lovingly brought to life.

Remembering a Pioneer

In 1986, at the age of 63, Ilario Lamberto died suddenly of a heart attack, but his legacy endures in every prayer offered to Saint Hilarion, every plate of Calabrian specialties served at *Buonasera*, and every story shared among elders and youth alike.

Ilario Lamberto offered Ilario Nesci the opportunity and challenge to take over Buonasera Restaurant, recognising his commitment to continuing the tradition and unique insight into the rich Italian heritage that Enzo Clappis had established.



Ilario Lamberto (cousin) with his family at Red Cliffs, Mildura, Victoria in 1960 — a treasured moment of togetherness and early memories.



Ilario Lamberto (cousin)

Born 1923 - died 1986



Ilario Lamberto (cousin)

Bust in front of Central Market.



Ilario Lamberto with brother in law Nick Piscioneri, and nephew Vince and his wife Margaret in Mildura, Victoria.

Buonasera Restaurant



**Giuseppe & Ilario
Nesci outside
Gouger Street Post
Office in 1974.**



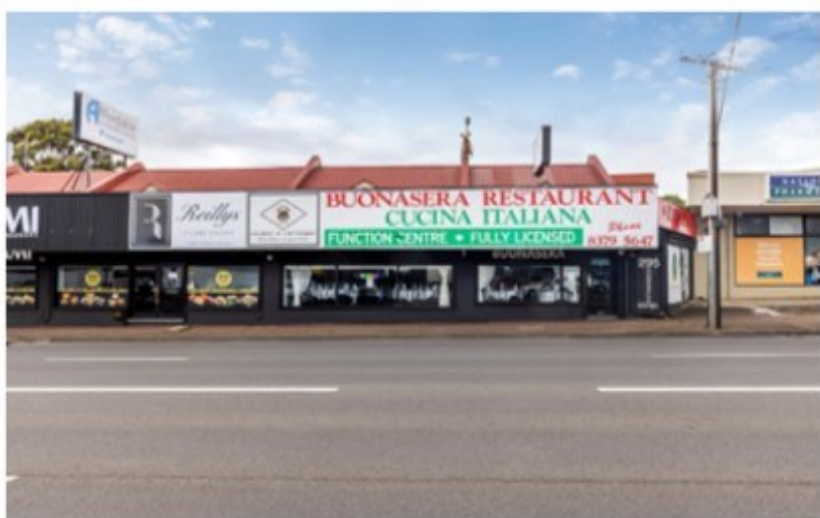
**Ilario engaging with guests and
capturing memorable
moments together.**



**With a gracious smile,
Ilario presents each dish
like a gift, rich with
aroma and crafted with
care, nourishing both
heart and soul.**



**Ilario with his brothers
Giuseppe and Valentino
(Lives in Italy).**



Buonasera Restaurant



At the front counter of Buonasera Restaurant, near the entrance and the softly glowing wine bar, a stone carving of Luigi Nesci with Ilario offers a timeless welcome—his presence etched in stone, greeting each guest with quiet grace as they arrive.

Mystery of a little pig stuck on a roof

PATRICK JAMES

THIS little piggy is balancing on the sign on the roof of family-operated Italian eatery Buonasera Restaurant on Glen Osmond Road.

And its appearance has left its owner Ilario Nesci scratching his chinny-chin-chin.

How on earth did it get up there? And why?

Mr Nesci went for his daily walk around the area and spot-



ted a plastic pink pig atop his front door.

"Pigs don't fly, but it's landed on my roof," Mr Nesci said.

He said he was "confused" to how it appeared on the roof of its restaurant.

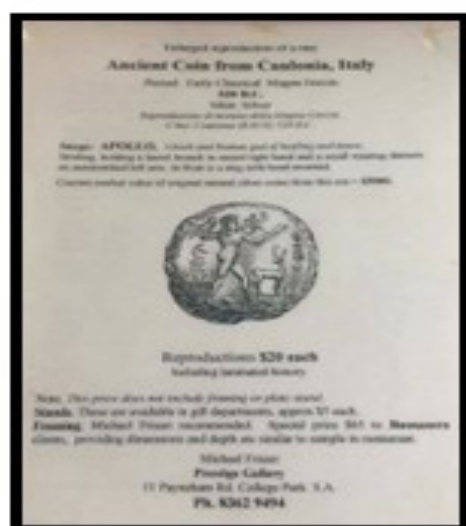
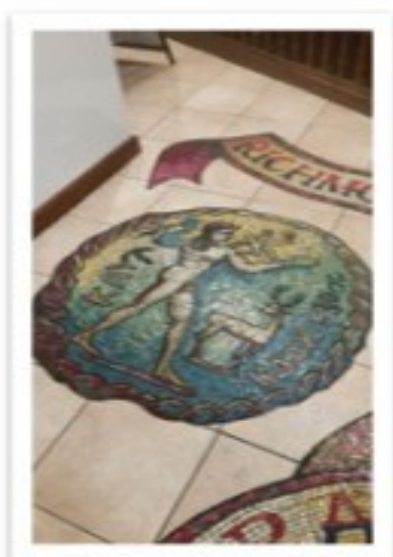
Finding humour in the odd situation, Mr Nesci said it would be more beneficial if it were a live pig.

"We don't even have pork on the menu," he said. "I wish it was real — I could've made sausages out of it."

He added that the pig was "professionally mounted".

Mr Nesci "wouldn't have a clue" who put the pig there and believed whoever did go out of their way to place it on his roof might have made a mistake, potentially intending to place it on another restaurant.

He has contacted the police, who have said he needs to go to a police station to make an official report about the unusual guest.



Inlaid in stone, the word “Buonasera” whispers a gentle welcome, guiding each step into the heart of Buonasera Restaurant.

**Mosaic reproduction of
Ancient coin from Caulonia
(KAUX) Italy 530 B.C Image of
Greek and Roman God of
healing and music.**





Buonasera Restaurant



Buonasera in the 1960– 1970



Staff serving patrons at the restaurant

Preparing for a function.





Framed by the timeless gaze of their father's sculptured bust, Giuseppe and Ilario Nesci honour a heritage etched in memory and marble.



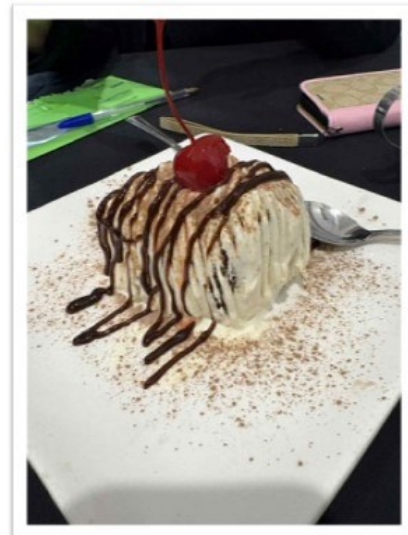
A selection of food prepared for the evening meals at Buonasera Restaurant.



Zucchini Flowers being prepared for the evening meals at Buonasera



**Bauletti
Homemade pillows
of pasta filled with
crab meat and
prawn in rose sauce**



Customers comment

**“Thank you for lunch
Ilario, amazing food as
usual. One of the best
dessert which has been
on the menu for 55 yrs
🍷 “**



295 Glen Osmond Rd Glenunga SA 5064 | ph: (08) 8379 5647 | fax (08) 8379 9311

Welcome to the Handson SA luncheon at Buonasera Restaurant

Mediterranean Antipasto

A fresh mix of avocado, prawns, squid, & baby bocconcini with prosciutto & melon

Antipasto alla Mediterranea

Un assortimento di avocado, gamberi, calamari, bocconcini con prosciutto & melone

First course

House made pasta gently wrapped around lightly minced pork fillet married with fragrant, ground hazelnut, sprinkled with melting mozzarella, accompanied by a field mushroom Neapolitan sauce.

Primo

Pasta fatta in casa ripiena di filetto di maiale con noci, mozzarella & salsa napoletana con funghi di bosco

*** Palate cleansing lemon sorbet—Sorbetto di limone rinfrescante ***

Main

Chargrilled Frenched lamb cutlets bathed in a white wine onion sauce, with seasonal vegetables

Secondo

Scottadito alla Romana in vino bianco con verdure di stagione

Traditional Sicilian Dessert

A light sponge muffin daintily filled with ricotta, citrus zest and roasted almonds, then topped with a toffee tower and drizzled with orange

Dolce Siciliano tradizionale

Pan di Spagna farcito con ricotta, mandorle tostate e ricoperto di zucchero caramellato ed arancio

Tea or coffee—Té o caffè

share
Y A L U M B A
AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST FAMILY OWNED WINERY



Ilario savours a plate of fettuccine all' Aragosta (lobster), its delicate ribbons bathed in a rich, ocean-kissed sauce. Each bite is a symphony of sea and spice, perfectly paired with a chilled glass of Pinot Grigio that dances lightly on the palate.



From left: Carmel Crispino, Joe Geracitano Jenny Geracitano, Ross Maio and Tony Pantano. 2016 in Adelaide preforming at Carnevale, having a meal with friends at Buonasera and catching up with Ilario



Ilario awarded the worlds best Ravioli .



Ilario and his cousin Ilario
Celebrating the Lunar
New Year, 2018.



In the grace of shared moments, we give thanks for the presence of Tony Pantano (dec), Carmel Crispino (dec), together with Ilario & Giuseppe Nesci, Vince and Lina Calo, Frank and Mira Sangregorio, Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM, Ross Maio, and Joe and Jenny Geracitano. Their light touched our lives, their love remains eternal—sacred memories, now held in the heart of God and forever in ours.

Special Family Moments in Australia and Caulonia



Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano, President of the Italian Historical Society of SA Inc., presents Ilario Nesci with a commemorative poster released in 2019—an illustrated tribute capturing a brief yet meaningful glimpse into his story and legacy.



Caulonia



Ilario Nesci, Luigi Nesci, (in the back ground photo) Giuseppe Nesci and Nicola Nesci.



In 2015, family gathered in Ilario's hometown of Caulonia, where laughter echoed through sunlit courtyards and stories flowed as freely as the wine. Around tables filled with homemade dishes and heartfelt memories, they shared not just a meal—but moments that lingered like the warmth of a southern Italian summer.



Siblings: Ilario, Teresa and Giuseppe Nesci.



Side by side, Ilario and Teresa Nesci embrace the beauty of shared memories, each moment a thread in the tapestry of their family's story.



Ilario cherishes the memories of celebrating with his beloved sister Teresa , brother Nick and family.



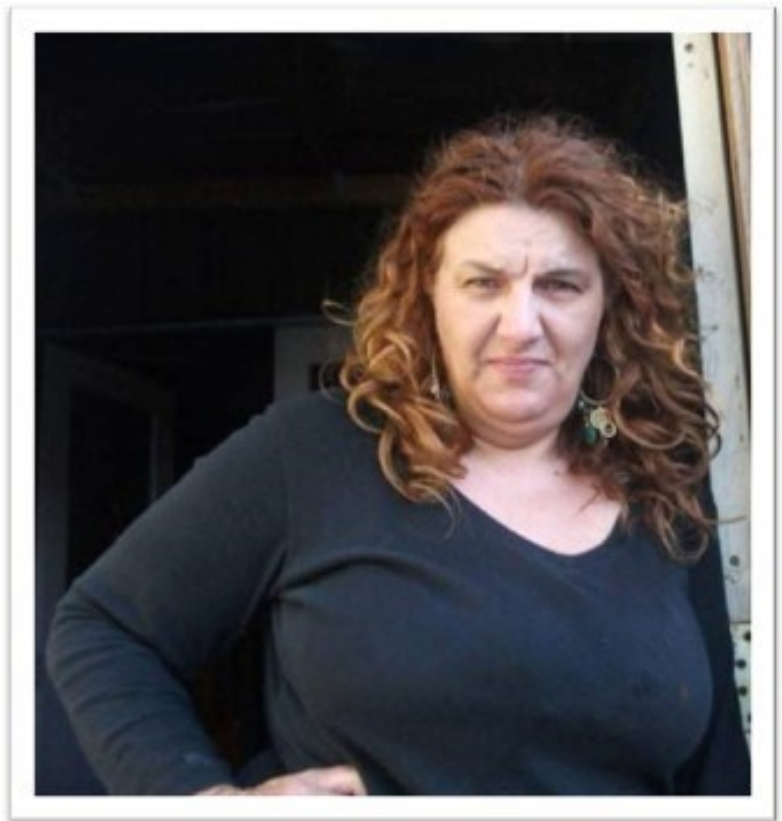
Ilario with his brother Valentino and family enjoying a meal.



Ilario and Mrs Paula Martin celebrating her 90th Birthday.



**Ilario Nesci and
his Son Mark**



Rosa Nesci (Daughter)



**Ilario with his Children:
Rosa, Luigi, and Mark**



**Luigi Nesci (son) helping out at
Buonasera Restaurant**



**Mark's special birthday in Caulonia
with family and friends by his side.**

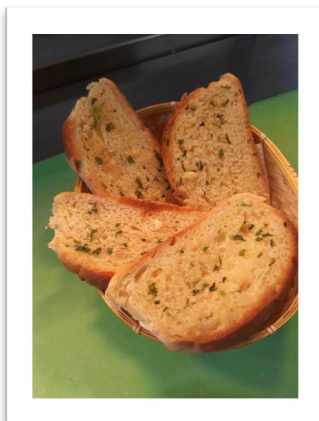
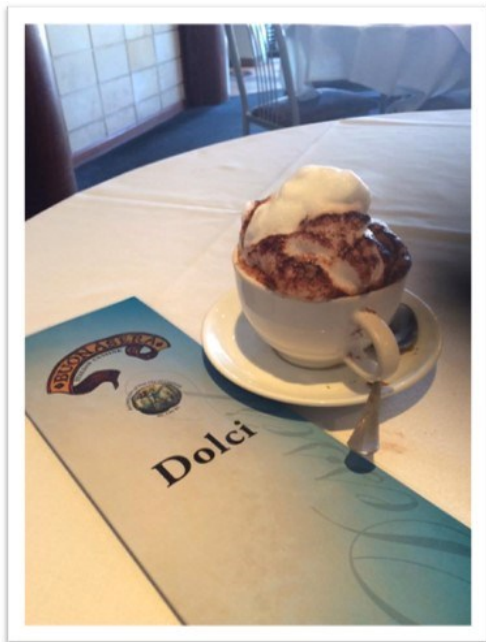


**Ilario and Mark taking a
moment to reflect on
preparations for the evening**



**Family moments in Caulonia on the
Terrace**

2025 Special Family Memories



Ilario with happy customers

**New location of
Restaurant Buonasera
Cuisine al fresco on the
wall of the Restaurant**



Giuseppe and Ilario Nesci

Buonasera Milestones: A Journey Through 25, 40 & 50 Delicious Years

25th Anniversary

Buonasera celebrates 25 years of success

He's known as the man with the warmly welcoming smile and a touch of genius in the hospitality industry- Ilario Nesci, former hairdresser, one-time manager and long-time owner of his Italian Buonasera Restaurant at 295, Glen Osmond Road, Glenunga.

It is ideally located for patrons from Adelaide, inner-city suburbs and Hills' residents for whom it is a short run to experience the highest standards of Italian food, change that moves to make guests more comfortable and an atmosphere that never alters.

A traditional recipe base with creativity comes from cooks Vita, Carmela and Diana, so long at Buonasera that they are considered part of La Famiglia.

Ilario's brother Giuseppe, travel agent of Nesci Travel, is at hand and when he is not at work as a Qantas flight attendant. Giuseppe's son Luigi. Ilario's son-in-law Sergio is versatile, and Vita's niece Aurora is a hostess with flair.

Buonasera has clients who have been returning for years because of the embracing reception and the excellent food.

Most popular dishes are Tripe Buonasera prepared in light tomato puree with potatoes. Osso Bucco beef shanks cooked in wine with onions and tomato Spaccatelle Alla Vita home-made pasta with broccoli ham spinach cream cheese.

Add to these Risotto Alla Carmela rice with veal chilli chicken olive oil plus an extensive menu with specialties from every region of Italy. The wine list includes fine South Australian imported Italian vintages. Expanded in recent years the restaurant now has a separate function room. So too have grown friendships between staff patrons.



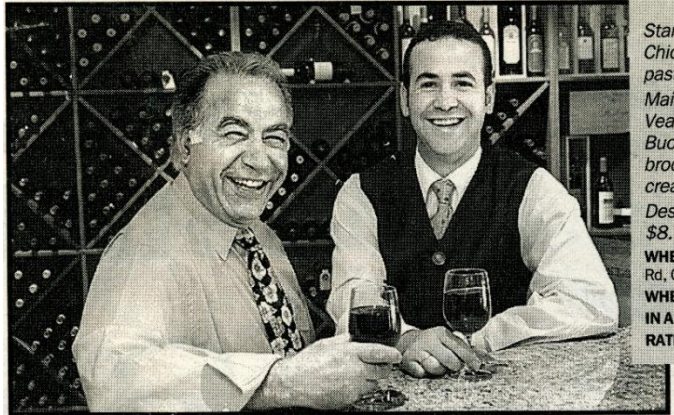
The best part of dining experience is that Ilario along with his brother Giuseppe can help create mood be it privately romantic or one which patrons would like to share laughter them. Buonasera Restaurant also friendly meeting place. It open Tuesday Friday lunch noon Tuesday Sunday diner 6 pm

Tel: (08) 379 5647

Accent on Life

Eating Out / Buonasera

It is revealing that so many of our durable restaurants have an Italian accent. My theory is that they are not just restaurants: they are comfort zones. It begins with the aroma, continues with



POSITIVE: Ilario Nesci and son Vincenzo.

Picture: GRANT NOWELL

that particular Italian ability to sell the sizzle as well as the steak and persists throughout a meal characterised by strong, positive but harmonious flavors served in quantities which leave you feeling replete and not a candidate for anorexia.

These virtues have been available in abundance at the Buonasera on Glen Osmond Rd, Glenunga, for almost three decades. In a business where

shelf life can be measured in months or, in the case of more spectacular casualties, even weeks, Buonasera had been a fixture when Ilario Nesci and his family arrived there in 1971. There have been changes since. The place has been progressively expanded so that it now comprises a series of rooms which attract function clients; a seating capacity of between 30 and 120 - organisers note.

High wide and handsome they are too. But the main room although refurbished remains what it has always been cosy inviting and full of aromas which would do credit to a perfumer A true family restaurant you can rely on excellence but it will be rare day when you are not greeted by Ilario treated to description dishes day so enticing feel like rushing past him heading for kitchen eat straight from pots pans.

The cooking is unabashedly mainstream southern Italian reflecting family's original homeland origins

Come winter hanker three soups hot sour Chinese mulligatawny Anglo-Indian minestrone Italian minestrone rich thick sprinkled parmesan will if graced one yearn an Italian mother My main course was inevitable Some years decades honest ago agony indecision asked could half osso buco half tripe Of course could In years since osso buco become staple pubs well as Italian restaurants Tripe still acquired taste many otherwise sophisticated tooth merchants

Here where served light tomato sauce place acquire Lili too winter peckish began plate gnocchi hearty chewy rich meat sauce From there simplicity crumbled cheese-topped veal bolognaise sauce creamy frothy marsala-drenched zabaglione intense coffee finish washed down Jim Barry Riesling wine reliable restaurant itself Very well trad

But whole point tradition becomes because staying power just like Buonasera continues walk tall among vintage restaurants Adelaide.

The Menu

Starters - Antipasto \$9.80; Chicken liver risotto \$11.50; Shell pasta with seafood and veal \$13.00

Mains - Seafood platter \$20.50; Veal parmigiana \$17.50; Steak Buonasera \$19.50; Pasta with broccoli, ham, spinach, cheese, cream \$16.50

Desserts - Gelati \$7.00; Tiramisu \$8.00

Restaurant Details

WHERE: Buonasera, 295 Glen Osmond Rd, Glenunga

Phone: (08) 8379 5647

WHEN: Lunch Tuesday–Friday; Dinner Tuesday–Saturday

IN A NUTSHELL: Italy on your doorstep

RATING (out of 10): Food: 8, Setting: 8, Value: 9

eating out / **buonasera**

Accent on life

It is revealing that so many of our durable restaurants have an Italian accent. My theory is that they are not just restaurants: they are comfort zones. It begins with the aroma, continues with that particular Italian ability to sell the sizzle as well as the steak and persists throughout a meal characterised by strong, positive but harmonious flavors served in quantities which leave you feeling replete and not a candidate for anorexia.

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which attract function clients; a seating capacity of between 30 and 120 – organisers note.

High, wide and handsome they are, too. But the main room, although refurbished, remains what it has always been, cosy, inviting and full of the aromas which would do credit to a perfumer. A true family restaurant, you can rely on excellence but it will be a rare day when you are not greeted by Ilario and treated to a description of dishes of the day so enticing that you feel like rushing past him and heading for the kitchen to eat straight from the pots and pans.

The cooking is unabashedly mainstream southern Italian, reflecting the family's original homeland origins. Come winter and I hanker for three soups, hot and sour Chinese, mulligatawny Anglo-Indian and minestrone, Italian. The minestrone is rich, thick and when sprinkled with parmesan will, if you

were graced with one, yearn for an Italian mother. My main course was inevitable. Some years – decades, to be honest – ago in an agony of indecision, I asked if I could have a plate of half osso buco and half tripe. Of course I could. In the years since, osso buco has become almost a staple in pubs as well as Italian restaurants. Tripe is still an ac-

quired taste for many otherwise sophisticated tooth merchants. Here, where it is served with a light tomato sauce, is the place to acquire it. Lill, too, was winter peckish and began with a grand plate of gnocchi, hearty, chewy and rich with a meat sauce. From there to the simplicity crumbed and cheese-topped veal with a bolognese sauce. A creamy, frothy marsala-drenched zabaglione and intense coffee to finish and all washed down with Jim Barry riesling, a wine as reliable as the restaurant itself. Very well, it was trad.

But the whole point of tradition is that it becomes so because it has staying power – just like the Buonasera, which continues to walk tall among the vintage restaurants of Adelaide.

TONY BAKER



POSITIVE: Ilario Nesci and son Vincenzo.

Picture: **GRANT NOWELL**

The Menu

Starters – Antipasto \$9.80; Chicken liver risotto \$11.50; Shell pasta with seafood and veal \$13.

Mains – Seafood platter \$20.50; Veal parmigiana \$17.50; Steak Buonasera \$19.50; Pasta with broccoli, ham, spinach, cheese, cream \$16.50.

Desserts – Gelati \$7; Tiramisu \$8.

WHERE: Buonasera, 295 Glen Osmond Rd, Glenunga, phone 8379 5647

WHEN: Lunch Tue-Fri; dinner Tue-Sat.

IN A NUTSHELL: Italy on your doorstep.

RATING (10): Food 8, setting 8, value 9.

Photograph of Ilario Nesci and Vincenzo Nesci (by Grant Nowell)

A Couple of Old Chums Revisited

By Sol Simon

Had I the inclination I could write a weekly piece about the new Italian joint in town. But it is not perversity which prompts me to bring a couple of old chums to your attention.

One of the marks of a good restaurant is that you head for it with a particular taste in the mouth, an anticipation of flavors. The menu may change—though there are very sound arguments for sticking with a good thing—but the essential kitchen taste stays.

So it is with Paganas in Hindley St. The discos, the porn-brokers and pubs all come and go in their various incarnations but at Paganas change is glacial.

Everything else, I hurriedly add, is warmly Italian. The chianti bottle decorations are unchanged; the solicitous service and crusty bread as unvarying; the kitchen is as tiny as ever and the menu is as crowded as ever still with its true daily specials.

One reason I like this place—aside from the bank of affection built up from years of experience—is that it is one of those places where you feel entirely comfortable eating on your own. You are not exposed to vulgar gaze.

The last time, a few days back, was like all other times. They opened with bowls of steaming minestrone with bags of cheese for topping. She followed on with an enormous rich and meaty wedge of lasagne.

I had the plate of liver and onions I craved and we wound up with coffee and the rest of an Elderton shiraz which not even that lasagne could defeat.

Buonasera at Glenunga is a different restaurant. The setting is slightly more formal, though there is nothing formal about the big hello all customers get from ilaro Nesci.

The place has recently been spruced up with its decor, the reason which was the excuse for a revisit. But we slid into our seats with the same expectation. We were not disappointed. I apologise if I seem unimaginative, but we had minestrone again.

Cancel that apology: The whole point of these encounters and reflection is that when a dish is good, a restaurant gets it right, a chap would be mad to stray. Besides, i did depart from routine afterwards. They serve chicken livers either as

first or main plates. They also know how to cook them—moistly, succulent with a sauce you can tell was made with wine.

She had the osso buco—which has become Buonasera's house speciality—beef shanks with wine, tomato and onions, which fell off the bone, and for a bonus, the marrow in the bone.

(Look out for tripe too, if you like that sort of thing, as I do it is gorgeous.)

We were probably not a pretty sight, but we saved the kitchen hands a lot of trouble by mopping up the plates with the remaining bread.

From memory, I reported that Buonasera's desserts are good—it has to be a memory since with the bread, vegetables, and a side salad we have not got that far in the past half dozen meals there.

Being diligent and inquisitive, I shall report to you on the latest of the unending sequence of new Italian eating shops around town.

But with temptations such as these old friends on hand, it has to be a conscientious decision.

Sol Simon's Guide to GOOD LIVING



Buonasera's ilaro Nesci

WHERE: Buonasera, 295
Glen Osmond Rd., Glenunga



Ilario Nesci at Buonasera - the renovations look great!

Savour the delights of Italy at Buonasera

Ilario Nesci at Buonasera - the renovations look great!

When you enter Buonasera Restaurant, you set foot into a 30-year history of fabulous

food, superb service and family tradition that has consistently made it one of the most popular restaurants in Adelaide. You will also step into the recently renovated Buonasera Restaurant, which has made a great restaurant into an even better one.

As part of the restaurant's 30-year anniversary celebrations, owner Ilario Nesci decided it was the right time to renovate. The new look uses a combination of pastel colours and wonderful wood highlights to create a consummately relaxing atmosphere for customers.

Highlights of the changes include the intricately detailed mosaics and foyer where Bacchus lies resplendent in a specially designed glass entranceway. The famous cellar is now located next to the bar so that every patron can observe the extensive range of premium wines available.

The reputation of Buonasera Restaurant has been built upon firstly, the fantastic food and secondly, the character and service of Ilario and his staff.

Ilario strives to maintain the perfect balance between quality and quantity in all dishes. This means that dishes are of freshest and finest quality and quantity is always a little more than you can manage to eat - no matter how much you want to finish. Ilario or his brother Giuseppe return to their hometown in Italy every six weeks or so to trial new recipes for their restaurant. Only dishes that have received consistent acclaim from regular customers will be added to main menu.

The result is people from all over Australia coming to savour their celebrated dishes such as Fegatini di Pollo, Osso Buco, Trippe Buonasera and internationally acclaimed Shell Pasta with Seafood.

The service and hospitality offered at Buonasera is full of charm and personality -a rare combination. Dishes are often named after favourite patrons once you have become a regular Ilario will sense your tastes and go to great lengths to ensure you are pleasantly surprised with his choices each time you dine.

Savour the delights of Italy at Buonasera



Ilario Nesci at Buonasera - the renovations look great!

When Ilario Nesci, Buonasera's owner, decided to renovate the restaurant, he wanted to create a new atmosphere for his 30-year-old establishment. The result is a modern, sophisticated dining room with a warm, inviting feel. The new look uses a combination of pastel colours and wonderful wood highlights to create a consummately relaxing atmosphere for customers.

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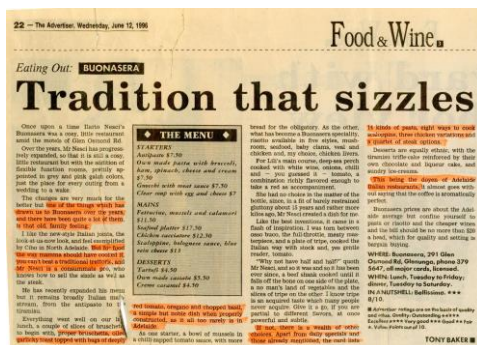
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Experience the old-fashioned service and exquisite dining at Buonasera for yourself. It is located at 295 Glen Osmond Road Glenunga. To book phone 8379 5647.

Adelaide Hills Weekender - July 1999 - page 13



Tradition that sizzles

Eating Out: BUONASERA

Tradition that sizzles

Once upon a time Ilario Nesci's Buonasera was a cosy, little restaurant amid the motels of Glen Osmond Rd. Over the years, Mr Nesci has progressively expanded, so that it is still a cosy, little restaurant but with the addition of flexible function rooms, prettily appointed in grey and pink galah colours, just the place for every outing from a wedding to a wake.

The changes are very much for the better but one of the things which has drawn us to Buonasera over the years, and there have been quite a lot of them, is that old family feeling.

I like the new-style Italian joints, look-at-us-now look and feel exemplified by Cibo in North Adelaide. But for food the way mamma should have cooked it if you can't beat traditional trattoria's Mr Nesci is a consummate pro who knows how to sell service as well as the steak.

He has recently expanded his menu but it remains broadly Italian mainstream from antipasto to the tiramisu.

Everything went well on our last lunch a couple of slices of bruschetta to begin with proper bruschetta oiled with garlicky toast topped with bags of deeply red tomato oregano chopped basil a simple but noble dish when properly constructed as it all too rarely is in Adelaide. As one starter a bowl of mussels' in chilli zapped tomato sauce more bread for the obligatory.

As the other what has become Buonasera speciality risotto available in five styles mushroom, seafood, baby clams', veal, and chicken livers my choice chicken livers.

For Lilli's main course deep sea perch cooked with white wine, onions chilli and you guessed it tomato, a combination richly flavoured enough take a red accompaniment. She had no choice in the matter of the bottle since in a fit of barely restrained gluttony about 15 years and rather more kilos ago Mr Nesci created a dish for me.

Like the best inventions it came in a flash of inspiration I was torn between osso buco the full throttle meaty masterpiece and a plate tripe cooked the Italian way with stock and yes gentle ready tomato.

"Why not have half and half" quote Mr Nesci said and so it was and so it has been ever since a beef shank cooked until it falls off the bone on one side of the plate a no man land of vegetables and the slice of tripe on the other. I know tripe is an acquired taste many

people never acquire Give it a go if you are partial to different flavors, at once powerful and subtle.

If not there is a wealth of other choices. Apart from daily specials and those already mentioned the card lists 14 kinds of pasta eight ways to cook scaloppine three chicken variations and a quartet of steak options.

Desserts are equally ethnic with the tiramisu, trifle cake reinforced by their own chocolate and liqueur cake sundry ice creams

This being the dozen of Adelaide Italian restaurants. It almost goes without saying that the coffee is aromatically perfect.

Buonasera prices are about the Adelaide average but confine yourself to pasta or risotto and the cheaper wines and the bill should be no more than \$20 head which for quality and setting is bargain buying.

WHERE: Buonasera 291 Glen Osmond Rd Glenunga phone 379 5647 all major cards licensed

WHEN: Lunch Tuesday Friday dinner Tuesday Saturday

IN A NUTSHELL: Bellissima

Value Points out 10

TONY BAKER

1996

The Tall Australian

Greetings in the name and by the Authority of TTA Investments Pty Limited.

To all whom these presents come: Know ye, that on this day

Ilario Nesci
of **Buonasera Restaurant**

is hereby commissioned for now and for all time to come an,

Honorary Tall Australian

with all the rights, privileges and emoluments appertaining to said status, and as such, shall hold and enjoy a place of high esteem in the minds and hearts of the citizens of Australia. And in recognition thereof has been presented with this certificate for services beyond the call of duty.



In testimony whereof, I have hereunto fixed my hand and caused the Great Seal of The Tall Australian to be affixed this,
the **28th day of September**
AD, **1998**

Rod Clayton,
Managing Director

Il ristorante italiano Buonasera di Glenunga, il più longevo di Adelaide e del Sud Australia, accoglienza impeccabile

Un successo lungo 40 anni!

Fondato dal padre Luigi e condotto dagli infaticabili fratelli Ilario e Giuseppe Nesci

ADELAIDE - L'occasione non poteva essere più felice. Il 16 aprile Ilario Nesci, titolare del Ristorante Buonasera al 295 Glen Osmond, Glenunga validamente assistito dal fratello Giuseppe, allei familiari e dalla infaticabile squadra di cucina, ha voluto celebrare i 40 anni di attività. E' difficile immaginare un altro ristorante in Sud Australia che possa vantare un simile primato non solo in termini di longevità ma anche e soprattutto per la costante e irriducibile attenzione nel presentare una autentica cucina italiana con varie specialità regionali: spicce deliranti della Calabria, la terra natale della famiglia Nesci.

Seidati intorno a un tavolo del Buonasera dove Ilario, attento e premuroso anfitrione del locale ci invitava ad assaggiare un vino rosso robusto che sorgeva da una bottiglia contrassegnata dal numero 40, tanti quanti gli anni che il Buonasera festeggia quest'anno, è quasi impossibile descrivere le embleme di ricordi, di avvenimenti, di situazioni e delazioni di cui è patteggiata la lunga storia del Buonasera.

Certamente il Buonasera di strada ne ha fatto, siamo in molti a ricordare di essere stati negli anni '70 quando il locale consisteva di una modesta stanza tutta grande. 40 anni dopo, grazie al successo accellerato da una clientela molto affezionata e alla lungimiranza di Ilario Nesci, il Buonasera vanta una serie di sale grandi e piccole dove può ospitare una chi desidera una cena intima a lume di candela sia chi vuole celebrare in stile con ricevimenti fino a 200 persone, cocktail bar e servizi da sala.

Un ristorante contrassegnato dalla costante e irriducibile attenzione nel presentare una autentica cucina italiana con varie specialità regionali soprattutto calabresi.

secondo cucina esclusivamente dedicata al ricevimento.

A proposito di cucina, il Buonasera dichiara orgogliosamente di continuare a mantenere una rigorosa cucina tradizionale italiana. La lista delle vivande elenca una serie di paste fatte in casa condite con salse tradizionali, carni e pesci freschissimi e dolci per i peccati di gola. Non stessi abbiano fatto venire alla radice deliziosi con pasticciotti assorti caldi e croccanti ed immergendoci nel ritmo della tradizione più autentica con la degustazione della sontuosa trippa calabrese, una specialità della casa.

40 anni di gestione del Buonasera hanno fatto di Ilario Nesci, validamente assistito dal fratello Giuseppe, una specie di enciclopedia sulla natura umana dei suoi clienti con i quali ha stabilito un rapporto di stima e di amicizia. Tra i tanti aneddoti ed episodi abbiamo ascoltato anche il caso di un signore anziano, cliente regolare e solitario, che per una serie di motivi si era estraniato dalla sua famiglia. Grazie all'interessamento attivo di Ilario e Giuseppe, trasformate per l'occasione in veri e propri investigatori, sono stati rintracciati figli, suoceri, nipoti e parenti vari che dopo

tanti anni si sono potuti ricongiungere con il padre perduto per celebrare degnamente con l'aiuto della cucina e della cantina, ottimamente fornita del Buonasera.

Hanno affacciato alla porta del locale per accorgersi che il Buonasera, oltre ad essere un tempio della gastronomia, è dedicato a Luigi Nesci, il padre di Ilario e Giuseppe, il patriarca che portò la famiglia dalla tormentata Italia del dopoguerra ad Adelaide e il cui busto è rimasto d'ora in poi al centro di ogni banchetto e di ogni evento. Come pure Calabro, l'antica Calabria, città fortificata che ha dato i natali a tutti i componenti della famiglia Nesci e che appare non solo

ad pavimento all'ingresso del locale sotto forma di prezioso mosaico ma anche in numerose rappresentazioni fotografiche nonché in acquedotti e quadri ad olio degli angeli più caratteristici di questo antichissimo luogo.

Complimenti al Buonasera e ad Ilario ed ai suoi di altri 40 anni di successo.

Ritorniamo che il Ristorante Buonasera per festeggiare il 40mo anniversario organizza sabato 22 giugno una serata danzante con cena di 3 portate più vini inclusi. Il costo di partecipazione è di \$80 a persona. Per prenotazioni telefonare ad Ilario 83795647

GG

40th Anniversary

Buonasera Italian Restaurant in Glenunga: Adelaide's Oldest and South Australia's Longest-Running A Success Spanning 40 Years Founded by Father Luigi and Run by the Tireless Brothers Ilario and Giuseppe

ADELAIDE – The occasion could not have been happier. On April 16th, Ilario Nesci, owner of Ristorante Buonasera at 295 Glen Osmond Road, Glenunga, ably assisted by his brother Giuseppe, other family members, and skilled kitchen staff, celebrated 40 years since its opening. It's hard to imagine another restaurant in South Australia with such longevity and such consistent dedication to authentic Italian cuisine, especially regional specialties from Calabria, the Nesci family's birthplace.

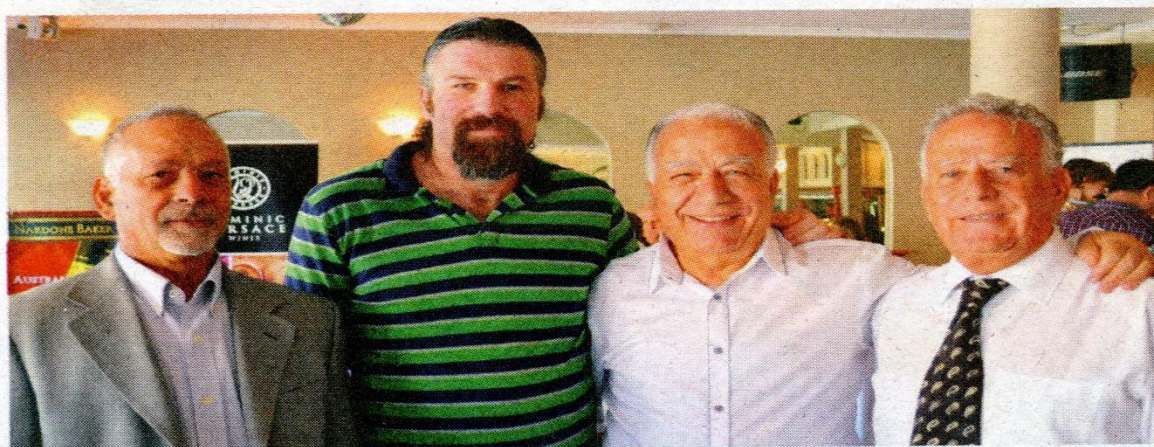
Seated around a table at Buonasera, with Ilario attentively overseeing every detail of service, was a local enthusiast who invited us to taste a robust red wine from a bottle marked "40" – as many as the years Buonasera celebrates this year. Among the gifts from patrons were stories, events, exclusions, and punishments – all part of Buonasera's long history.

Buonasera has certainly come a long way. Many remember it in the 1970s when it was just a single, modest room. Forty years later, thanks to a loyal clientele, Ilario Nesci now boasts a series of large and small rooms for intimate candlelit dinners or stylish receptions for up to 200 people, with a cocktail bar and a second kitchen dedicated exclusively to events.

Regarding the cuisine, Ilario proudly maintains a rigorous traditional Italian menu, including house-made sauces, fresh pasta, and fish. The Nesci family honours tradition while adding a personal touch. A rich past includes their signature dish, *trippa alla calabrese*, a house specialty for forty years. Giuseppe, described as a kind of human encyclopedia, has built relationships of respect and friendship with clients. Among the many anecdotes is the story of an elderly man, a regular customer who had become estranged from his family. Thanks to Buonasera's active interest, the occasion turned into a real investigation that helped reunite him with his children and grandchildren after thirty years, with help from the police and community information provided by the restaurant.

Congratulations on your first forty years of success!

Buonasera's 40th anniversary



Buonasera's Nick, Luigi, Ilario and Giuseppe Nesci. Owners, the Nesci family celebrated 40 years of business with family and friends at a special lunch held on Monday, April 16



Emma, Kylie, Nigel & Jack Cock with Fred and Kathy Caruso



Judi Cumming with grandson Jasper Searle



Lucia and Yolanda



Teresa Cavuoto, Melissa Lomman & Gail Price

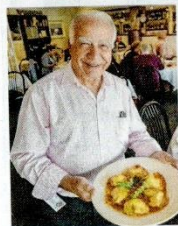


FOOD LEGEND: Buonasera Restaurant's Ilario Nesci.

Buonasera Restaurant's 50th Anniversary

Fifty of the best for food icon Buonasera Restaurant

KAYSEE MILLER



FOOD LEGEND: Buonasera Restaurant's Ilario Nesci.

Fifty of the best for food icon Buonasera Restaurant

KAYSEE MILLER

BUONASERA Restaurant is getting ready to say "saluti" to fifty years in Glenunga today. Ilario Nesci bought the Glen Osmond Rd restaurant in 1969 and, along with his brother Giuseppe, has run it ever since.

Buonasera has grown and changed over the years with Mr Nesci estimating he's redecorated the place at least a dozen times.

But, he says it is consistency in the authentic Italian food and service that has kept them going for the past five decades.

"We stayed with a traditional style and have never changed that," Mr Nesci says.

"We have things here and specials that are exclusive to us, nobody does these sorts of dishes anymore because it's too much work.

"The genuine, traditional

food with local ingredients is what keeps people coming back."

Always a family business, Buonasera started with just three staff, including Mr Nesci and his brother, and now employs eight people.

Mr Ilario and his staff pride themselves on making everyone who walks in the door feel like part of the family.

"There's been a lot of changes over the years but

we've followed our own path," Mr Nesci says. "People have been coming here for five generations and they're like family to us because we've created that environment here.

"I have customers here that came here as babies in their mothers stomach and they're still coming here today."

Mr Nesci has also had to overcome a terrible family tragedy when, in 2005, his wife, Helen, was killed by their

intellectually disabled son. Now at 76, Mr Nesci still works at the restaurant every day and has no plans to retire.

He says, put simply, the key to his success is hard work. "I don't think there is success in a business if you just want to be the boss and get your hands dirty."

Buonasera Restaurant is celebrating with an open house event from 11am to 3pm today.

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Ilario and Giuseppe, with special guest His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations at Buonasera Restaurant.





Celebrating 50 years of great Italian food

GLENUNGA

Kaysee Miller

Buonasera Restaurant has said “saluti” to 50 years in Glenunga.

Ilario Nesci bought the Glen Osmond Rd restaurant in 1969 and, along with his brother Giuseppe, has run it ever since.

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“We stayed with a traditional style and have never changed that,” Mr Nesci says.

“We have dishes here on our menu that are exclusive to us.”

“Nobody does these sorts of dishes anymore because it’s too much work.” With genuine, traditional food with local ingredients is what keeps people coming back. Always a family business, Buonasera started with just three staff, including Mr Nesci and his brother, and now employs eight people.

Mr Nesci can be found most evenings making every effort to welcome diners as they walk in the door feel at home.

“There’s been lots of other Italian restaurants, but we’ve followed our own path for 50 years,” Mr Nesci says.

“People have been coming here for five generations and they’re like family to us now.” The restaurant celebrated its milestone anniversary last month by inviting some of its long-time customers back for a special dinner. Mr Nesci says there are no plans to retire yet. “I’ll keep doing this until I’m not able to anymore,” he says. “It’s my passion.” The key to his success in business if you just want to be the boss and get your hands dirty.

Ilario Nesci and the founding of Buonasera Restaurant.



Buonasera Restaurant, founded in 1969, has celebrated its 50th anniversary. It has been the flag bearer of good, authentic Italian food. The man behind its development is Ilario Nesci and his brother, Giuseppe. Ilario Nesci was born in Caulonia, Provincia di Reggio Calabria, Italy in 1943. At the age of 13 he began his apprenticeship as a barber. He with his parents, two brothers and sister immigrated to Australia in 1959 at the age of 16. They were sponsored by his brother, Vincenzo, who had immigrated in 1954. On the same day that he arrived in Adelaide he began work as a barber in Market Street Adelaide, off Gouger Street, near the Central Market. In 1950s Gouger Street was the hub of Italian immigrant's life in Adelaide where Ilario Lamberto, Ilario's cousin, had his travel agency and there was an Italian surgery, Dr. George, and an Italian pharmacy, Ravesi Chemist. Ilario worked in this barbershop for a year before moving to another barbershop in Gouger St. where he worked for 5 years. In 1966, six years after arriving in Australia, Ilario bought the barber shop he had initially worked in and continued to work as a barber for a further six years. His brother, Giuseppe, was a tailor.

Ilario Lamberto in partnership with Enzo Clippis, an Istrian refugee, had bought Chef Fontana Restaurant on Glen Osmond Road and renamed it Buonasera Restaurant in 1969 and since he already was working in his travel agency Lamberto left Enzo to run the restaurant. In 1970 Enzo was lured to Burnside Village and Lamberto was forced to seek a new manager for Buonasera. Lamberto approached Giuseppe Nesci to manage the restaurant. Giuseppe declined and Ilario Nesci agreed to take on the responsibility. He would go to the restaurant at night after he closed the barber shop and the expectation was that he would not last long. The task of being a barber during the day and a restaurant manager proved too demanding and the long hours were a burden on a young family. Ilario had no previous experience in managing a restaurant. There were few Italian restaurants in Adelaide in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in fact, the two main ones were the Sorrento in Hindley Street and Asio.



Buonasera restaurant had a modest beginning seating 35 people. In his first year as manager, Ilario had the restaurant renovated giving it an Italian flavour decorating it with arches and mirrors. The clientele slowly increased and the restaurant built a reputation for good service, genuine quality ingredients, consistency and a place that made you happy. In 1980 Ilario bought the property that housed the restaurant and three other shops and began to expand the area occupied by the restaurant. This expansion enabled the restaurant to hold larger functions and soon the Italian community was able to hold celebrations for larger groups to include celebrations for Christenings, engagements, anniversaries, and so on.

Buonasera Restaurant has developed a reputation for the finest authentic Italian cuisine. It has maintained a menu with few changes and a long established staff. It has hosted a variety of celebrities drawn from local, national and international sources. International celebrities such as Luciano Tajoli, Claudio Villa, Yvonne De Carlo, Cheryl Ladd; national leaders such as Bill Hayden, John McLeay, Bill Sneddon, Mick Young; and local talent such as Ray Martin, Premier Don Dunston have graced the premises.



Buonasera Restaurant has become famous for its gourmet pastas all done in-house. Dishes such as pasta made with fresh beetroot filled with chestnuts and ricotta cheese with a choice of sauces to meet the client's taste; stuffed pasta filled with ricotta, broad beans, and pancetta; asparagus and ricotta cream with prawns and borlotti beans. The restaurant does not rely on qualified chefs but on "mamma's" home cooked model that has satisfied thousands of clients over the years.



The testimony that Buonasera Restaurant keeps on meeting the taste buds of its client is that of the original Italian restaurants of the 1960s and 1970s it is the only one left and has operated from the same premises for 50 years. Ilario has never regretted the move from barber to restaurateur and his easy manner and smiling face still greets each customer and makes everyone feel welcomed and special.



ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

TRANSCRIPT NOTES

This transcript is a verbatim record of the interview. Grammar has not been corrected, though punctuation has been added by the transcriber for readability.

- Repeated words have been deleted unless used for emphasis. Filler sounds such as “ahs,” “hmms,” and similar have been omitted.
- Non-English words—including names, places, and phrases—appear in italics.
- All non-English phrases are translated into English and enclosed in square brackets.
- Where further explanation is needed, the interviewer’s notes are also enclosed in square brackets.

Punctuation Conventions

- Single dashes (–) indicate pauses within a sentence.
- Triple dashes (---) indicate unfinished sentences, reflecting natural conversational speech.
- Round brackets () are used to denote emotions or actions.
- Square brackets [] indicate words or information not present in the original recording but added by the transcriber for clarification.

Speaker Identification

- GG – Giuseppe Geracitano, interviewer
- IN – Ilario Nesci, interviewee

The numbers in the left column represent the timeline of the interview.

Digital Interview

Of

Ilario Nesci



TRANSCRIPT

Interview Conducted by:

Giuseppe Geracitano

President

Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc

Recorded

Monday 30th September 2024

**INTERVIEW WITH ILARIO NESCI FOR THE PROJECT 'A TRUNK
FULL OF DREAMS, A SUITCASE FULL OF MEMORIES:
STORIES OF ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS TO SOUTH
AUSTRALIA, SECTION: A TAVOLA DINNING OUT.**

00:00:02 GG: Recording for the Italian Historical Society of SA, Incorporated for the project A trunk full of dreams, a suitcase full of memories. Category A Tavola Dining Out. Interviewed by Giuseppe Geracitano, president of the society. Interviewee Ilario Nesci recorded on Monday thirtieth of September two thousand and twenty-four [30th September 2024] at Buonasera Restaurant, two hundred and eighty-five [285] Glen Osborne Rd, Glenunga South Australia five thousand and sixty-four [5064]

00:00:42 GG: Good afternoon *Ilario*.

00:00:44 IN: Good afternoon, *Giuseppe*.

00:00:48 GG: Ilario, can I have your full name?

00:00:48 IN: *Ilario Nesci*.

00:00:51 GG: And date of birth?

00:00:54 IN: Twenty-first of February nineteen forty-three. [21st of February 1943].

00:00:57 GG: And the place of birth?

00:00:59 IN: *Caulonia*, Italy.

00:01:01 GG: Can I have your father's name?

00:01:04 IN: *Luigi Nesci*.

00:01:06 GG: And your mother?

00:01:08 IN: *Rosa Lamberto*.

00:01:11 GG: And can you remember the date of birth of your father?

00:01:17 IN: Fifth of December nineteen o five [5th of December 1905].

00:01:20 GG: And the birth date of your mother?

00:01:22 IN: Seventieth of September nineteen o nine. [17th of September 1909].

00:01:29 GG: And where was your father born?

00:01:32 IN: In Italy, *Caulonia*.

00:01:34 GG: *Caulonia Provincia di Reggio Calabria*. And where was your mother born?

00:01:40 IN: *Caulonia, Provincia di Reggio Calabria*.

00:01:44 GG: And have you got any brothers or sisters?

00:01:48 IN: Yes.

00:01:50 GG: Can you tell me their names?

00:01:51 IN: Their names: The first born was *Vincenzo*, who passed away, *Valentino*, who lives in Italy, [Francesco], *Giuseppe*, Teresa, my sister, myself and *Nicola*.

00:02:14 GG: So, it's a big family, and can you tell me what your father used to do in Italy?

00:02:23 IN: He was a supervisor with a with a big firm of constructions very good.

00:02:39 GG: And did your mother work?

00:02:42 IN: No home duty.

00:02:45 GG: And can you tell me a little bit about the place of your birth? A bit of the history.

00:02:54 IN: I was born at home in *Caulonia*, in the province of Reggio and a small town but not so small, we used to be eighteen thousand people with the suburbs and then at my time when I left it was eighteen thousand people.

00:03:18 GG: The whole community, including the *frazioni* [hamlets, a small, rural settlement, smaller than a village or town, and part of a larger municipality].

00:03:21 IN: And *Caulonia* has nine *frazioni*.

00:03:24 GG: Nine *frazioni*, that got a number, and what was the main activity in the town? What sort of work people do?

00:03:37 IN: Agricultures, and tradesmen, trades people.

00:03:46 GG: Now, *Caulonia* actually is built on a rock, so agriculture they would have had to go out into the fields.

00:03:57 IN: Yes.

00:03:59 GG: Your life in *Caulonia*, as a child, can you tell me something about it?

00:04:06 IN: Going to school at the age of six started school and then as you go along, my dad had a wine shop and I used to spend a lot of time in there as twelve, thirteen years old in the shop, in the wine shop, but at the sometime then I had to go on to hairdressing with my uncle.

00:04:39 GG: OK, let's go back to the school. Did you like school?

00:04:44 IN: Yes. I liked school.

00:04:47 GG: And at what stage did you start helping your father? And then what stage you went on to become a hairdresser?

00:05:01 IN: The age of twelve, I start spending time with my uncle who was a hairdresser and do my homework from school as well there because, as you know, over there we didn't have a backyard to play so we were getting in the way in the house and so mum sent us to learn a trade and do the homework while we were there with him.

00:05:31 GG: Did you want to become a hairdresser?

00:05:33 IN: Yeah, yeah, I loved it. Yes.

00:05:36 GG: And what about your brothers and sisters? What did they do?

00:05:42 IN: They all they all went to learn a trade. One was, gone to blacksmith or like gunsmith, you know, they used to make it. Another one went to a cabinet maker which then he went to the Fire Brigades. Another one was onto mechanic, another brother went to tailoring, so we all went to learn a trade.

00:06:16 GG: You all didn't learn to trade. What about your sister?

00:06:19 IN: My sister was going to the, with a nuns to learn to embroidery.

00:06:24 GG: If your father had a business, you all learnt a trade, what made the family decide to emigrate?

00:06:39 IN: Because we had two brothers already in Australia, the oldest, the first two, *Vincenzo* and *Valentino*, and then as you know, in the fifties there was a lot of migration to America, Australia. And we wanted to go to America because my father had two, three brothers there. But my mum wasn't very happy with it because she said if I have to migrate I want to go

to where my children are, which was fair. So, we decided to come as a family to Australia.

00:07:21 GG: What made your brothers emigrate first?

00:07:24 IN: Well, at the time there just after the war, there was no work, there was nothing. They were young and they came to Australia.

00:07:35 GG: Can you remember your trip to Australia? First of all, what ship did you come on?

00:07:43 IN: *Roma, Flotta Lauro*

00:07:44 GG: What year?

00:07:48 IN: Nineteen fifty-nine [1959].

00:07:49 GG: Do you remember the exact date?

00:07:52 IN: Yes, we left Italy on the thirteen [13th] of June, which was Saint Anthony's Day, I remember very clearly, and I remember there was a strike worldwide for the, for the, for the ships to come into the port. So, we had to go with a small boat to the big ship to in order to leave for Australia.

00:08:15 GG: Which port did you leave from?

00:08:18 IN: *Messina*.

00:08:21 GG: What age were you then?

00:08:23 IN: Sixteen.

00:08:25 GG: How did you felt about leaving Italy?

00:08:31 IN: I was excited. I mean, lived with friends or whatever, but I was excited.

00:08:37 GG: Did you have any other family in Italy that you left the home?

00:08:41 IN: Only brother, one brother left there.

00:08:44 GG: How come he stayed there.

00:08:46 IN: Because he was in the fire brigade and he had a, you know, had a good job. He was married and he didn't want migrate.

00:09:00 GG: Did he ever migrate?

00:09:03 IN: He had a good position.

00:09:04 GG: Did he ever migrate or did he stay in Italy?

00:09:06 IN: No, no, he always stayed in Italy. He comes to Australia, as a holiday.

00:09:12 GG: Do you remember the trip? Do you remember anything about the trip?

00:09:16 IN: I remember the trip very well; I was sick all the way as soon as we crossed the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal was just been opened in the, at the time, because he and as soon as we passed the Suez Canal when we, the ship had a bit of trouble, you know, like rough seas and I got sick all the way.

00:09:39 GG: That's in the Red Sea.

00:09:41 IN: I was sick all the way.

00:09:44 GG: I suppose you didn't really enjoy it.

00:09:48 IN: No, I didn't. My brother was, my brother enjoyed it because he didn't get sick. None of my family got sick except me, so I hate the sea.

00:09:59 GG: How long did it take you to get to Australia?

00:10:03 IN: Well, we left on thirteen of June and we got into Melbourne on the tenth of July.

00:10:12 GG: So almost a month.

00:10:14 IN: About twenty-six days or something like that.

00:10:16 GG: Was Melbourne the first port that---

00:10:19 IN: No, we stopped at Port Said, Port Aden and then Melbourne.

00:10:26 GG: Then Melbourne, So I didn't stop at Fremantle, straight to Melbourne. What was the first impression about Australia? What was the first impression of Victoria Docket in Melbourne?

00:10:41 IN: Not, not, not really much, you know, because we, we stayed overnight in Melbourne with his friend's place and then we left in the morning with a, with a train and, and then we arrived in Adelaide. And I remember that we, from the train, my, my brother picked us up and I, we went straight to his house. We had lunch, and then my cousin, whose name is Ilario *Lamberto*, he had a travel agency, and after lunch he said to me and my brother *Giuseppe*, he said, let's go to the office, he had a travel agency in Gouger St., and then we'll come back in the, you know, when we finish.

But in the meantime, you can look at the market, Central Market there. So, we went there and he parked his car into the back of a barber shop, which was a friend of his, and as we come through the back door from the backyard into the back door to the back door into the salon, there was quite a few people sitting there waiting to get a haircut and there was only one worker in there because the boss was out. And I remember clearly, my cousin said to me, how about giving him a hand? Isn't that what you're doing, what you've been learning back in Italy? I said yes. well, then give him a hand. So, I started working the someday I arrived, which was about one-thirty, two o'clock the someday I started giving him a hand. I had a job. We finished at six, six-thirty, and the next morning I was there at seven-thirty.

00:12:52 GG: How did you cope with the language?

00:12:59 IN: Phew, in the barber shop there was mostly, all the clients were Italians, so it was OK. But being a young man, there used to be a butcher shop next door which they were used to be in the backyard of the hairdresser shop to have their lunch, lunch break. And there was a, I remember, there was this English fellow who talking, and he talks to me how long you've been in Australia and I say few months. And I said oh, you're OK, you're picking up, and I said to where you from? He said to me England. I said, gee, you speak good English, for how long you've been here. He said three months, and you speak good English. I didn't know England was called, *Inghilterra* was called England. So, they all start laughing and then my, you know, little bit of mockery out of it. So, in the morning, the next morning, the owner there used to get the Advertiser [morning paper] and I looked at it and I saw this England, and I asked my friend who, you know, working together, I said, what's this word means? He said *Inghilterra*. Then I realised that, well, that's what the fellows were laughing for because *Inghilterra* is English. And then we, you know, it was a joke from then on.

00:14:40 GG: Can imagine, and apart from work, what was your life like, initially when you came, did you go out, have fun?

00:14:54 IN: It was, was good, the first, first year, we used to go out with some friends who already been here, we've go to Norwood Town Hall dancing, we've got to the city, we've go to the movies, you know, the usual things that we do. That's for the first year. The year after, when I started working for this other hairdresser, he said to me you need to learn English better, you know, because here we all Australians. And he said, I'm going to send you to the hairdressing trade school where you're going to mix with the people and they have classes in the night. And so, I went and served an apprenticeship with him only for a couple years. And doing so I picked up the language very well. That's how good and everything start to everything start to be much easier and fun. And while I was at the hairdressing, I met my wife.

00:16:20 GG: Before we get on to that, your first employer, was he Italian?

00:16:26 IN: Yes.

00:16:27 GG: So, what was his name?

00:16:29 IN: *Francesco Muscara*. Frank *Muscara*.

00:16:32 GG: How long were you there for?

00:16:34 IN: Twelve months.

00:16:35 GG: Your second employer was he---?

00:16:39 IN: Australian.

00:16:40 GG: He was Australian. Why did you change from your first employer?

00:16:46 IN: Well, the money was better, the pay was better, I was getting seven pounds [£7] a week as a sixteen-year-old, at seventeen when I went to the other fella he offered me ten pound [£10] a week which was three pounds [£3]. Was a lot of money at that time for seventeen-year-old and then stayed on there for five years.

00:17:16 GG: So, what was the general wage?

00:17:19 IN: The general wage, the general wages were thirteen pounds [£13] a week for a hairdresser.

00:17:28 GG: For a hairdresser.

00:17:31 IN: And I got that after three months I was there. I got the thirteen ponds £13] because I was working very hard. He recognised that I was very keen to work and to succeed, so he increased my pay to full wage. About six, seven months later I got twenty pounds [£20] a week.

00:17:58 GG: OK. So, what did you actually do in order to get that to get more money?

00:18:05 IN: Well, I was doing what I, sort of thought was the right thing to do, you know, like keep my sport clean, I help to do the, the owners, the boss, the cleaning the mirrors, the chairs, help doing the windows, which they never ask you to do it, but I offered you to do it. And he could see that I, and also, as you know, Fridays used to be Market Day and it would get very, very busy. We had four chairs going. At lunchtime we would stop to have lunch, like go in the backroom and, and look through the door and see people come in and the old man was working and I saw people sit at the

chairs, and while we were having lunch, I was, I never, I never pulled back, and I used to go out, leave my lunch on the table and go out and, and work. And the, the boss appreciate that because nobody else was doing that. And he, that's how I increased my pay because he saw that I, I was willing to, to work.

00:19:29 GG: And was this a nine to five job, Monday to Friday?

00:19:34 IN: No, I used to, I was supposed to start at eight-thirty but I used to get a lift every morning with my cousin because he used to stay with us and he used to get there at quarter to eight.

00:19:49 GG: This was Ilario *Lamberto*.

00:19:53 IN: Yes he used to get to the agency, but I was supposed to start at eight-thirty, but because I was there and the hairdresser shop was next door, instead of sitting down, I used to go in because the, the hairdresser shop was opening at seven o'clock, so I was there quarter to eight. I'll go in and start working. You know, I didn't ask for any money or didn't ask for nothing. I just thought I'd do, I'd do the right thing and, you know, rather sit down and do I work and he appreciated and that's how I got to---

00:20:28 GG: And did you have to work on the weekend as well?

00:20:30 IN: Saturday. Weekend I used to go and work elsewhere in the hills.

00:20:37 GG: What did you do?

00:20:40 IN: My brother-in-law used to look after some, I remember very well, Doctor Swine, He was the specialist, the head of the Children's Hospital, and he used to do his garden and he would do some retiring walls and do garden. I used to go with him and I used to get three pounds [£3] for the day, you know, doing manual work.

00:21:03 GG: So that three pounds were quite a bit of money.

00:21:09 IN: I used to keep that, I used to give the wages to my dad and keep the three pounds [£3] to going out, you know towards the house. You know the three pounds [£3] were the pocket money that I was making, plus haircuts at home.

00:21:27 GG: So, you were a busy boy.

00:21:29 IN: Oh yeah, I was, I was happy with it, with it financially and everything.

00:21:36 GG: Talking about your father, what did he do when he came to Australia?

00:21:40 IN: My father start to work at, my brother, my oldest brother used to work at the railway, South Australia Railway at Islington and he managed to get a job for my dad into the called the 'boggy shop', the mechanical shop [Carriage and Wagon Workshop]. It was, they all loved him and was working and so he worked there.

00:22:04 GG: Did he enjoy it?

00:22:05 IN: Yeah. Actually, the boss used to pick him up every morning.

00:22:10 GG: How did he cope with the language?

00:22:15 IN: Not very well, but he, was, my father was a man who communicates just with a smile.

00:22:26 GG: Did your mother work when you come to Australia?

00:22:29 IN: No, she had enough work to look after us, you know.

00:22:35 GG: She probably worked overtime.

00:22:37 IN: Cooking, ironing, and washing.

00:22:41 GG: Did your father keep that job for his working life or did he change his job?

00:22:47 IN: No, no, he, he was there until he passed away.

00:22:54 GG: When did when did he pass away?

00:22:57 IN: He passed away in nineteen-sixty-seven..

00:23:01 GG: And your mother?

00:23:03 IN: My mother passed away in nineteen-ninety-seven.

00:23:07 GG: OK, so you were working, you had money in your pocket, you went out. Tell me about some of the places you went and what did you do to for entertainment?

00:23:24 IN: For entertainment?

00:23:25 GG: Yeah, to have a good time.

00:23:28 IN: Used to go to the, you know, during Saturday, Sunday afternoon, used to go to the zoo or, or go to some, we used to go to the movies on Saturday night, if a singer was coming, you know, at a show like John O'Keefe [Australian rock singer], things like that. We used to go and see him and

we used to go to the ballroom dancing, you know, like or Norwood or the Windsor or the Palais Royal, you know, we had a busy.

00:24:02 GG: Had a very busy social life. Did you tend to go with fellow Italians or did you go with---?

00:24:14 IN: No, we were all friends which we knew each other from back home.

00:24:19 GG: So that mainly Italians,

00:24:21 IN: Yeah. Yeah.

00:24:22 GG: You were telling me that one of these occasions you met your wife or your future wife?

00:24:30 IN: Yes I was, as I said before, my boss said to me I want to send you to the hairdressing school which used to be in Twin Street, Adelaide off Grenfell St., and if I remember there was on the corner across from the hairdressing school was a manufacturer for children clothing. And my wife, girlfriend at the time, used to work there. And I met her through, from one window to the other, and then wait for her to come down and start talking blah, blah, and I remember we went to see, I asked her out to go and see John O'Keefe because he was coming to Adelaide. And that's How I met my wife.

00:25:32 GG: How did your parents feel about going out with a non-Italian girl?

00:25:37 IN: My parents were very happy with it, always said you've got to be happy. My father, my mother, said you've got to be happy with it. It's your life, so, if you think that's the right person, you do it. But when I asked my wife out to go to the show, she said to me you have to come and ask my mom and dad, for an Australian I was very surprised, I thought it was easy. So, I said it's not a problem, I come. So, I went to see her parents, which they used to live in Coglin St in Brompton. So, when I went in there, I remember like now, go to the door, knock on the door, my wife came to the door and I see this fella standing on a chair panting the ceiling, the ceilings were very high, that tells you how big this man was. Jesus. I said what? What am I doing here? You know this fella? So anyway, I said, and that day we went to, remember there's a show on television called The Seventeenth, it was like Bandstand [live television show featuring modern bands in Adelaide in the 1960s]. Called the Seventeenth, the Channel Seven I think it was, and I had a friend through the hairdresser who was the cameraman, Tess Bravo, who gave me tickets and so was live. So, we went to the, to the Seventeenth that they did dancing and we were dancing on television. We were, I was on television.

00:27:41 GG: you were on television---

00:27:44 IN: With my girlfriend, so that's the first time that I took her out, after I went to meet the parents.

00:27:52 GG: So how old were you then?

00:27:57 IN: Sixteen, Seventeen, seventeen and a half.

00:28:00 GG: How old was your girlfriend?

00:28:03 IN: She was fourteen.

00:28:04 GG: And the name of your girlfriend?

00:28:07 IN: Helen.

00:28:08 GG: Helen and surname.

00:28:10 IN: Martin.

00:28:12 GG: Very English name.

00:28:15 IN: Cornwell.

00:28:17 GG: So how long did you go out for?

00:28:19 IN: I went out five years before I got engaged, in the meantime, by that time my wife was speaking fluent Calabrian and Italian, but mostly Calabrian. When I thought I was serious about it and I was in love with her, I said, I took her home very early age, we used to be at Walkerville at the time, I took her home to my mother and I said teach her, my mother already knew her, you know, and she loved her, you know, and everything, I said teacher everything. So, she started teaching her how to cook, *cassarola* [Calabrian dialect for pot], *brocca* [Calabrian dialect for fork], all Calabrian and within two years the language was not a problem.

00:29:26 GG: Not a problem.

00:29:28 IN: And over the years, she used to talk to her mother, she forgot, she used to talk to her mother in Calabrian. And the mother said, what are you talking about? Oh, in Italy they thought she was from---

00:29:43 GG: That's very unusual actually, because it's usually the other way around that you have to learn English in order to communicate.

00:29:51 IN: She learned Calabrian dialect so that so that people from *Caulonia* which they come here, for matter of fact were *Lamberto's* brothers' children,

which there were school teachers in Italy and everything, they come to Australia for holiday to see their brother wherever and they start talking to my wife and my wife said, they were talking, joking around and my wife said '*va a settiti allu pezolo*', [go and sit on the step] and the girls from Italy, 'what are you talking about? What is '*pezolo*'? You don't know what a *pezolo* is? You don't. You don't know?

00:30:42 GG: *U scaluni* [Calabrian dialect for step].

00:30:44 IN: Where you sit on the on the step.

00:30:48 IN: Or, and then she said they don't know. They didn't know. There was the old *Calabrese*, which nobody speaks. And, and I said, and if you know, if you're not comfortable, '*va settiti a miniano*', *u miniano* is the landing, you know, a bit wider. The language was no barrier for her.

00:31:15 GG: Very good, but plus your cousins were, because they were schoolteachers they only knew Italian.

00:31:23 IN: And then moved from *Caulonia* as children to the city.

00:31:29 GG: That explains it, probably very little *Calabrese* [Calabrian dialect]. So that sounds very, she must have really loved you to learn another language.

00:31:42 IN: So much that I'll give you a little story. You remember *Vare* or *Marino* [Italian grocery store] in Norwood? You don't. It's an Italian grocery. We're talking about nineteen-sixty, sixty-three, sixty-five. I was married, So, my father used to go to this grocery in Norwood because we live on the Parade Norwood and the Parade up at the top there where I still live there, and they would go, my wife would go with my father, to the shop and to do the order. So, anyway, one day my wife went by herself and there was all these Italian, Neapolitan women in the store. And my wife, she's red hair, freckles, she doesn't look like Italian, and she start to order. We used to buy a box of spaghetti, so much of this, so much of that, that's the way we used to do it.

00:33:00 GG: That would have been San Remo?

00:33:03 IN: So, at one stage these Italian women there, they started, gee, they say, they say Italian s, look Australians, they, they do too, you know, they didn't think she understood. Anyway, at one stage she said she, she said to Mr *Marino*, she said, Mr *Marino*, '*mi dati mezzo kilo i sarde salati*' [Calabrian dialect, 'give me half-a-kilo of archives'] in Calabrian. All these women look at each other. They're blush, like I said, because you never know. There was one particular thing that Marino said. Mr Marino said, 'good on you' *signora*.

00:33:55 GG: I suppose I would have got a shock.

00:33:57 IN: They did.

00:33:59 GG: When did you get married?

00:34:04 IN: I got married in nineteen-sixty-five [1965].

00:34:07 GG: Can you describe what went on, and sort of---

00:34:15 IN: If you remember the weddings, they used to be the antipasto, cigarettes on the table. They used to put on, and half a chicken. So, I got *Tony Turko*, he used to do weddings and he did the wedding. I invited my family, which was eight of us, it was just close, and her relatives, which there were another fifty or something. I just invited them and we had this wedding and there was the for them, there was the wedding of the century because they never went to a wedding where they have antipasto to have half a chicken, the desserts and this and whatever they want. They were, they were talking about for years and years and years. All our relatives were talking about it. So got married at Walkerville Town Hall.

00:35:31 GG: Did you get married in a church? Was she Catholic?

00:35:36 IN: She wasn't a Catholic, but she became a Catholic because she want to, I mean, they never went to church or they had no regional, they were, they were Methodist or something. But she wants to, and she went to West Terrace, the Bishop's house, and I remember Father Faulkner who then was the bishop. Prepared her for the, to get baptised and we did that at the cathedral, was big, big show there the cathedral and then she became Catholic.

00:36:24 GG: How did her parents react?

00:36:27 IN: Nothing there was very, at the beginning, I don't think they were happy that she was marring an Italian, but the Italians, they weren't happy that their children marry Australians. But I was lucky that my mum and dad, they were a very open mind. My father was a very open mind and my mother got affectionate very quick. My mother was a woman who, was a person who had never had a bad word for anybody and she kept like a person straight away, my father was as a matter of fact, they were treating her like a queen, they treated my wife like a queen.

00:37:10 GG: That's very good---

00:37:12 IN: My whole family did.

00:37:16 GG: And so, did her family embrace you?

00:37:25 IN: Yes, my father-in-law was very happy with me. My mother-in-law, not so much, but till, till they saw what I, what I was and how I looked after her and I looked after them as well because I, they used to come to my house. They never went to the other one, the other daughter's house, everything. So, they used to come to my house twice a week, Thursdays and, and my mom used to cook for them. Beautiful half kilo steak scotch this and that, and it's funny that one of my father-in-law's friends, was a plumber, he said your father-in-law loves you a lot. In the pubs where they used to go and drink, they would talk about he says, 'at my son-in-law house it's always Christmas day, we go there on a Sunday or Thursday on the table we don't have to wait for Christmas to have the turkey or have the duck. He was very, very good to me. I mean, but I was good to them.

00:38:56 GG: Well, you have to treat them right for them to treat you right.

00:39:01 IN: I Respect. I want my parents to be respected, so I respected.

00:39:07 GG: How did your friends reacted when they found out that you were going out with an Australian girl?

00:39:14 IN: My friends?

00:39:20 GG: Your friends weren't surprised?

00:39:23 IN: No, why would they be surprised? I won't say any names, but one woman, I remember I went to see her at the hospital, one woman from my hometown, and my mother was with me, and they start talking about, you know, the son was married to a girl from north Italy and I was gone out with an Australian, you know, and I was there and I knew and I said you don't even know what is it? He had trouble. I never had any problem.

00:40:23 GG: Well, the reality is that the northern Italians were just as foreign to *Calabrese* than Australians were.

00:40:32 IN: Treat them like this too so, but that's no, I had no problem for, everybody, everybody loved my wife. Everybody, friends and everybody, they were looking forward. First thing, ring your wife with this, with the Princess Helen.

00:40:52 GG: And when you got married, did you go and get your own house? Did you live with your parents?

00:41:02 IN: When we got, when I got married, we were still living with my parents. As I said before, we bought the house, my brother Joe, myself, my father, my father bought the house and we got three mortgages because my father said I will not pay rent, even though we were living with my brothers, they

are the oldest brother, but we need a bigger house. So, as I said earlier, we bought a house in December, we arrived in July. So, it wasn't, but we took three mortgages in those time there and we put all money, like I work, my brother Joe work, he was tailor, right? My dad work and we, and we lived, and the deal was with my wife, as a matter of fact, my mother-in-law said to me when I said we'll get married, so where are you going to live? I said I got a house. So, she said, what about? I said the house I'm living in it, which is with my mum and dad and my brothers and my sisters. Still all in one house? One house, one kitchen, separate bedrooms. This is true, So I said, at least we've got a house. Anyway, my wife said mum, I'm happy, you know. So, we moved. So, my father, my mother, one bed, because it was big house. It was big house, very big house, rooms seventeen by eighteen, big rooms and my dad, my mum one room, my brother the other room, myself in another room. And the other room was my brother Nick and my brother Valentino. Because Joe was married as well. So, he was with his wife in one room, me and my wife, and all my father, my mother, and Nick was into another room and we still had the lounge, but we ate together. And so, after my brother Joe moved, so was just myself. Then my dad passed away. So was my mother there. Then eventually the house come to me and I renovated it. Like I said, my, my mother went to Italy and then, yeah, we, we had kids and the deal was between myself, my brother and the wives, we called the wives together, and my mother was still there. I said, well, I said, we've got to live here is a family. By that time, we had a little daughter and he had a daughter. She said, three girls. We were living in there. See if the kids fight, don't interfere with the kids to fight between youths, all right, because kids that talk to each other, right? So, no hard time here. When we come home, we won't see smiling, all right. So, it was we had no issues whatsoever. Two sister laws and a mother-in-law, single brother.

00:45:09 GG: The whole three, the whole three women got on well.

00:45:13 IN: My mother was, she couldn't complain by that she was doing everything.

00:45:19 GG: So, what, did you cook family meals or did each one---?

00:45:26 IN: No, family meals. We all sit down together. No, each. No, there was one shopping food.

00:45:39 GG: And did the whole three women cook?

00:45:40 IN: Yeah. And then and weekends, as I said, my mother-in-law, father law was coming, or Joe's in laws were coming. We all get together. There's no problem. There was no, there was no, no hard feelings, no, no problems.

00:45:58 GG: That that is very unusual that.

00:46:01 IN: That's why even my children and my brother's children, they all got on very well together.

00:46:10 GG: OK, talk about children. How many children have you got?

00:46:15 IN: How many?

00:46:17 GG: How many children did you have?

00:46:20 IN: I have three.

00:46:21 GG: Their names?

00:46:22 IN: Rosa, Luigi and Mark.

00:46:24 GG: OK. And dates of birth.

00:46:28 IN: Rosa's first of May nineteen sixty-six; Luigi, thirteenth of November nineteen sixty-eight; then Mark fifteenth of August nineteen seventy-eight

00:46:47 GG: In the house, what language were you speaking?

00:46:55 IN: Calabrian.

00:46:58 GG: And your sister-in-law what background was she?

00:47:01 IN: Italian, *Caulonia*.

00:47:03 GG: So, they were all *Calabrese*, and the children spoke *Calabrese*. And how did, if they spoke *Calabrese*, no English, when they went to school, how did they cope?

00:47:19 IN: All right, good.

00:47:22 GG: Which school did they go to?

00:47:24 IN: My children went to Marryatville, Norwood.

00:47:30 GG: Marryatville, and primary school.

00:47:32 IN: Primary school. Marryatville.

00:47:35 GG: And were there a lot of Italians in that school?

00:47:41 IN: Always Italians there. Greeks and Italians.

00:47:44 GG: How did they feel when I went to school? Did they say I'm *Calabrese*?

00:47:50 IN: They had no problem.

00:47:53 GG: So, they had no problems with the language. So, you were still a barber at that stage. You were still a barber at that stage? Take me through---

00:48:12 IN: When my kids were born, the two, the older ones, I was a barber. I had my hairdresser shop in the city. Mark was born; I was in the restaurant.

00:48:29 GG: OK, let's go back to your working life. You start off working for an Italian barber, a year later you went on and worked for the Australian barber and you were there for five years. What happened after that?

00:48:46 IN: I bought the business; I bought the hairdressing shop that I worked the first year I come to Australia.

00:48:53 GG: So, you became self-employed.

00:48:56 IN: Yes

00:48:57 GG: And did you have people working for you?

00:49:01 IN: Yes, I was 20 when I started my own business, I got married at twenty-one.

00:49:10 GG: So, a very young age now. You mentioned that you had the barber shop in the city. That would have been that one.

00:49:16 IN: Market St.

00:49:18 GG: What do you call that barber shop?

00:49:22 IN: I changed the name to Larry's Hairdresser. Larry's Hairdresser. It used to be called Supreme Court Hairdresser because all the lawyers and the things here.

00:49:33 GG: Because it's near the Supreme Court.

00:49:34 IN: They're all around there. Matter of fact, I, my clients were all the, my clients were all the, a lot of police, a lot of judges, lawyers. I used to be also, my client, I used to cut Sir Mark Oliphant's hair, the Governor, Sir Mark Oliphant, he had a very, very hard hair to do. My clients used to be Bishop Kennedy, Bishop Gleason, the Archbishop Beovich at the time, because I'm going back many, many years, the Town Clerk, Mr Ireland. I used to have a lot, a lot of good clients. I had a good, I had a good business.

00:50:31 GG: So you, you'll be able to converse with them, was the conversation interesting?

00:50:44 IN: A lot of conversation with them, you know, had a lot of connections.

00:50:58 GG: So, you've had a very good business? A good clientele. How long did you have the shop for?

00:51:06 IN: The hairdressing shop was from nineteen to, nineteen sixty, sixty-five, from sixty-five to seventy.

00:51:25 GG: Seventy [1970]. So, what made you change?

00:51:34 IN: My cousin, *Lamberto* [*Ilario Lamberto*], who used to have the travel agency around the corner from my hairdressing shop. Come one day and because he bought the *Buonasera* [Restaurant], which used to be *Chef Fontana* before become *Buonasera*, and somehow the man has given up the restaurant. So, he asked *Lamberto* to buy it. So *Lamberto* sort of said I'm a travel agent what I want a restaurant for. So, he said but help me out because I needed to get out. And so *Lamberto*, Mr *Lamberto* did buy the shop, you know the restaurant, but he had to get somebody to run it. So, he end up getting a man, *Enzo*, *Enzo Clappis*.

00:52:37 GG: *Enzo Clappis* was the part owner.

00:52:39 IN: The manager at the time, was the manager, him and he got *Tullio Vezzani* as a chef who was a journalist for the *Globo* [Italian language newspaper from Melbourne]. So, he put a combination of *Enzo* and *Tullio* and then they come up with a new name with a *Buonasera*. So, from that time, which was mid-sixties [1960s] sixty-eight, sixty-nine, it becomes *Buonasera restaurant* and then after a few years *Enzo* took charge of it. He listed from Mr *Lamberto* as a full owner himself. And then of course, *Enzo* went to start a new venture in Burnside Village [*Enzo's Restaurant*]. So that's when *Lamberto* come to me and said if I want to run the restaurant. Actually, he didn't ask me, he asked my brother, *Giuseppe*, and *Giuseppe* said no, he was a tailor next door to my hairdressing shop. So, at that stage I just come in and said I'll do it, you know, just for fun, and he took me on. So, he said I'll pick you up tonight and we'll go to the *Buonasera* and see if you like it. So, we come here in the night and then I come the next night. During the day I was doing my shop, my hairdresser shop, and in the evening I would come to try it out. So, I liked it, but I wasn't too, you know, evening, you know, and so on. But then I didn't want to come out of my word, so I stuck to it and that's why I'm here today.

00:54:40 GG: Let's go back. So, it was *Enzo Clappis* who was the chef?

00:54:51 IN: No, *Enzo Clappis* wasn't the chef, he was the manager.

00:54:53 GG: He was the manager

00:54:55 IN: At the front of the House---

00:54:57 GG: *Tullio Vezzani*?

00:54:59 IN: *Tullio Vezzani* was a man from Northern Italy, but he used to be the agent for the *Il Globo* in South Australia, but he also was a taxi driver, so at this stage Mr *Lamberto* got *Enzo* for the front of the house and *Tullio* for the kitchen.

00:55:22 GG: Was *Tullio* a chef?

00:55:27 IN: I couldn't tell you; he was a chef at the time. I don't know what he was doing.

00:55:31 GG: I remember *Vezzani* very well, but I remember he's a journalist. So, you had absolute, apart from the help that you gave to your dad in the *cantina* when you were---

00:55:49 IN: I had no experience.

00:55:51 GG: You had no experience

00:49:52 IN: Except going out eating on a Saturday night with my girlfriend.

00:55:58 GG: So how did you feel? How did you feel about moving into a new venture?

00:56:03 IN: Didn't worry me because as far as I to have to do is to deal with the people at the front, not cooking, you know, hairdressing or barber shop, all you do is talking and find out, and I and get the news first hand, so therefore the conversations were there, all I had to do what about how to do with the people and to give them service and to get them to like me.

00:56:39 GG: So, in front of house.

00:56:41 IN: Front of house.

00:56:42 GG: When *Enzo* left, what happened to the people that were working here at the restaurant? Did they stay? Did I move?

00:56:55 IN: No, they went with him at Burnside Village, where the original *Enzo* came in, the first *Enzo's* restaurant was *Enzo Clappis* at Burnside Village. At that time Burnside Village was just finished new, you know, so it was, was a brand-new venture. And, and so with *Enzo* there was a couple chefs which they went with him, with him, two ladies, one was *Maria* and the other one, it was two *Marias* actually I think one was from *Nola* [suburb in Naples] Italy and the other one from *Cosenza*. But there was one left who stayed behind.

00:57:55 GG: Who stayed behind?

00:57:56 IN: *Pina Pioco*, *Pina* from *Cosenza* too. So, then we got another person to work and so we start from there with the two. We only used to sit thirty-five people. It wasn't a big restaurant.

00:58:15 GG: So where was the restaurant?

- 00:58:19 IN: Under some roof but three doors up for we are now, two ninety-five Glen Osmond
- 00:58:25 GG: At that stage was the building owned by *Lamberto*.
- 00:58:35 IN: No. The building was owned by a person, a man called Mr Waterman, which then he sold it. He sold it and *Lamberto* didn't want to buy it, but Stratos from, he used to be the manager for wines, Patrice Wines, he bought it, at some time he bought a block at the back of the restaurant of this building which he went on opening a restaurant called 'Cork and River Steakhouse' and of course we were paying rent to him. There were six shops here. There was the restaurant, there was an antique shop, there was a saddlery, there was a post office. There were six shops.
- 00:59:34 GG: At that stage, what was the restaurant business like in Adelaide? Were there be a lot of Italian restaurants?
- 00:59:41 IN: No, there was a, at that time there, there was *Sorrento*, if I can recall, in Hindley St., there was, a little bit later. then come the *Clemente* [*Da Clemente* Rundle St], then there come the *La Mensa*. There was quite a few, lot of restaurants, but not many Italian restaurants at the time. At the time of the beginning of the *Buonaserà*, there was maybe for *Florentino*, *Marina Pizza Bar*, but there were probably half a dozen altogether Italian restaurants.
- 01:00:34 GG: Was it very common for people to go out to dinner in the sixties [1960s]? What sort of people come to dinner?
- 01:00:43 IN: Oh yeah, there were most, most of them were like Australian and European, as you know, the Italians didn't want to go, they stayed home, you know, at the time. So, but we had a good little business at the time. And then of course, years later, they started this coming when the Italian Chamber of Commerce came in, Mr *Nocella*, the president of the *Ciao Italia* was called. He was, how would you say, they represented all the, they tried to market all the Italian restaurants in the world and the main office was in Rome. But what they were doing, they were going around the world into cities and towns, whatever, and try all these Italian restaurants. And then if they would qualify to the, to the original traditional cuisine, they would put them in this book, which was, and there was an Italian restaurant in Chile, there was a restaurant in Argentina, in America and Australia, all over the world. And then Adelaide they put up, they end up having about twelve restaurants that participated.
- 01:02:28 GG: But before we get on to that, about was year was this?
- 01:02:32 IN: It was seventy-five, seventy-six [1975, 1976].
- 01:02:46 GG: OK. Now we'll continue with that in a minute. When you initially came, the clientele that used to come to *Buonaserà* did they still come or did they follow *Enzo*?
- 01:03:00 IN: Som came. I have to say the majority followed *Enzo*, but, business dropped quite a bit at the time, but I just persevered and you know within twelve months, year

and a half, I got back to normal with new clientele, some that you know that were coming here, some that were going there, you know, but you know, we build up the clientele again.

01:03:45 GG: The menu, what sort of menu did you have?

01:03:47 IN: I never touched the menu for years. I left menu as was, as I said before, the cook one of the cooks had here, so the menu was all OK. And *Enzo* did a completely different menu when he went there, then slowly, slowly we've had some specials, as the specials were coming and they kicked on. I would take something off with the old menu and replace with the new menu.

01:04:22 GG: Do you remember what was on it on the old menu?

01:04:26 IN: There was *Osso Buco*, *Trippa*, which we still have today, but there was the *Bistecca Buonasera*, there was a soup or *Stracciatella*, *Minestrone*, *Zuppa Pavese* and then *Spaghetti Marinara*, *Calamari*, traditional, but not too much of homemade pasta like we have today.

01:04:56 GG: The people that came to the restaurant, what sort of background did they come from?

01:05:04 IN: Oh, they were all sorts, but also we had a lot of doctors, lawyers, businesspeople, insurance people, car dealers. It was that time where business was good, where there was there could claim it on tax.

01:05:26 GG: What was the reaction to Italian food?

01:05:30 IN: Good, good.

01:05:33 GG: Did they prefer to Italian food?

01:05:38 IN: Ah yeah.

01:05:41 GG: You said that slowly you changed the menu. What sort of things did you introduce? What special did you introduce?

01:05:53 IN: I introduced seafood, I introduced Flounder, you know, then what you call *Sogliola* [Atlantic Sole], stuffed *Calamari*, I introduced homemade pastas like which we still do today and nobody else does this particular dishes here, maybe because the ingredients are too expensive or it doesn't pay to have somebody to make it for you. I don't know what others will do, but our pasta is all handmade and we do like such as *Bauletti*, we call it, it's a ravioli family same as ravioli family, *Bauletti* which is ingredients paste of crab meat, blue, blue swimmer crab meat, *Gambari*, prawns, and we use local seafood all South Australian with other ingredients in it of course. We do *Agnollotti Alla Panna*, whatever sauce they prefer, and that's a feeling from *ricotta*, chicken, cheese, we do *Panzerotti Alla Romana*, name of *Panzerotti Alla Mediterranean*, which is another ravioli filled with the broad beans, *ricotta*, *pancetta* and peas, and then sauces is optional but the best one is with the *calamari* in butter pasta, garlic sauce,

called Mediterranean because all these ingredients are really from Mediterranean area.

01:07:53 GG: Is all this made in-house?

01:07:56 IN: In-house, we still do it.

01:07:59 GG: Where did you get your inspiration to do these new pastas?

01:08:05 IN: Well, I had the, over the years, I had the new cooks, I would say, I don't call them chefs because I like, most of the time all my cooks have all been women. A couple of times I had a man there but offense to men but with the women, they put more love into their food, you know. And anyway, and I had one, over the years, I had *Carmela*, which was with me for thirty-six years, I had *Vita*, she was twenty-eight years. So, as you see, my staff stayed with me and I still got staff from twenty years now. And they all had their own thing from home. But then we created other things which they never made before. In a little while I give you an example of what I just did now come back from Italy. And then I had *Lucia*, which was very good, pasta which I named one of dish *Risotto Alla Lucia* [rice with spinach, chicken, *pancetta*, and shaved *parmigiana* cheese]. I used to name a dish after the cook their speciality, there was a *Rigatoni Alla Carmela*, *Spacatella Alla Vita*, *Risotto Lucia*, *Multinella Maria* [invotini]. So, I always named of each one of them, which made them very proud and more enthusiastic to get into the thing. It's today, after fifty-five years, we still got these dishes on the menu.

01:09:55 GG: They must be very popular.

01:09:57 IN: They are, they are, people come just for these particular dishes here.

01:10:03 GG: Are there any other restaurants in Adelaide making this type of food?

01:10:09 IN: No, nobody, even today you don't see, they do *Linguine* with crab [*Linguine Alla Scoglio*] it's like a marinara, but like the actual ravioli. We have many, we have *Zucotti*, we have the ravioli with, made with fresh beetroot so the pasta is reddish, that's a very popular dish is still going strong and it's got chestnut, very unusual, chestnut *ricotta* cheese. But it's dual sauce with that is big taste inside because you tip the cheese over the chestnut with the *ricotta*.

01:11:07 GG: They're very exotic for the dishes.

01:11:09 IN: We've got the former governor, Mr Hieu Van Lee [Honourable Hieu Van Lee, Governor of South Australia 2014 – 2021], he comes with his family just for this and he can mix, you know, he's can one dish or one dish or the other two of these for that. And they're all shared together. They still come today.

01:11:25 GG: Which Governor?

01:11:28 IN: The former Governor of South Australia, Mr Hieu Van Lee.

01:11:34 GG: Over the years you must have had a lot of people come in, what are some of the standout people that you remember?

01:11:50 IN: My restaurant, I remember like film stars. We had Cheryl Ladd, which she's from Italian origin, from *Puglia*, Cheryl Ladd which married Alan Ladd's son. She used to do Charlie's Angels. We had Yvonne De Carlo, we had Michael Bolton [American singer-songwriter], we had *Claudio Villa* [famous Italian singer] and *Luciano Tajoli* [famous Italian singer]. Local talent, *Tony Pantano* [popular Italian Australian singer]. We had the Prime Minister here at the time where the when the Cyclone Tracey in Darwin [Hon. Gough Whitlam, Prime Minister of Australia, from the Labor Party of Australia 1974]. And I remember right now the restaurant was small at the time. and this particular night they come down, they went to Darwin, then they come down. There was Mr Snedden [Hon. Billy Snedden, Leader of the Opposition from the Liberal Party of Australia] at the one table with his Liberal Mr. John McLeay, and at another table I had, how you pronounce his name, Mr Hayden [Hon. Bill Hayden, from the Labor Party of Australia], and at another table with Mr. Young, David Coombe [Hon Mick Young, Hon David Coombe both from the Labor Party of Australia], David Coombe if you remember put the slogan 'It's Time' [Labor Party of Australia slogan for the 1972 Federal election] and they won the election at that time.

01:13:47 GG: Was an election victory.

01:13:49 IN: By the way they were my clients in the hairdressing shop, Mr. Young and David Coombe. They used to come every morning for shaving. That's how they followed me up hear.

01:14:02 GG: Did many people from your shop followed you hear?

01:14:06 IN: Yeah, there was, there was, what's his name, we had Bob Francis and we had the, all the people from Five double A [Bob Francis radio broadcaster with radio stations 5AD from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s and from 1985 to 2013 was the longest serving host on 5AA]

01:14:37 GG: Five double ..

01:14:41 IN: There was Cunningham and Ken Cunningham, Cornes [Ken Cunnigham and Graham Cornes both sports commentators on 5AA]

01:14:53 GG: Was that Graham Cornes?

01:14:56 IN: Graham Cornes Yeah. It was so many. I had the, I had Bishop Kennedy was coming here, Faulkner [Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, Catholic Archbishop of Adelaide] was coming here, by the way, I used to cut the hair too. So, it's a lot of, lot of, lot of people, which I can't even recall because I never took the thing to take photos and put them on the walls. And it didn't matter because for me they were like any other clients, you know, I treat them certainly the same.

01:15:33 GG: And well, so far you've talked---

01:15:35 IN: And of course, later on, Joe Geracitano from the Italian Historical Society [of South Australia]

01:15:49 GG: So far you talked about politicians, celebrities, the Italian community, what sort of people came from the Italian community?

01:15:59 IN: Oh, I had, Doctor Masero [Cavalieri Dr. George Masero, President of the Dante Alighieri Society in Adelaide] used to come here a lot, the Italian consulate, you know, there was Rubens Fedeli [dr. Rubens Fedeli, Consul of Italy in South Australia] before then *Paolo Massa* [Consul of Italy in South Australia] and they all used to come here. I remember one day that Mister *Lamberto* come for lunch with *Paolo Massa*, which was the Italian Consul at the time and Mr. *Pisano*, you remember Mr. *Pisano* used to have Pisano Motors and that particular day, I used to have a place in Moonta Bay, so on the weekend I was there and next door to my house was a fisherman. And I remember that when I arrived there and I saw him outside filleting some red mullet and feed the cats. And I said, Bob, his name was Bob, what are you doing? He said just feed the cat, I said stop it, I'll buy from you. He said, no, you can have them. I said, all right, I'll have them, I go to the supermarket, I buy cat food for you, but I'll take them with me. So, I said, don't fillet them, leave whole, you know. So, red mullet was different fish you couldn't see it here before, you know. So anyway, I had that was about a kilo and a half. And of course, the next day on Monday, I come back to Adelaide, I brought them back with me. Tuesday we opened the restaurant and this day we had, as I said, *Paolo Massa*, the Consul, *Lamberto*, *Pisano* and *Joe Emanuele* [prominent Italian Australian developer in South Australia] at the time. And they said to me, what's special today? I said *Grilia Alla Livornese*. They laughed. They said where you get them from, you know, you can't get them here. I said, can't I? So, I went in the kitchen, I put them on a plate raw, you know, like live, I put them on a plate and fresh run them underwater so they look nice and shiny, they were fresh and I took this beautiful red little mullet there and they opened their eyes and I said how many you want. I cooked a lot and that's how the first time that the *grilia* were done. And I also remember that, remember swordfish, it wasn't available here. You couldn't find swordfish here and so Anna from Angelakis Brothers [seafood merchants from Greek background] one day come there, said *Ilario*, guess what I got? I said, what do you got? He said swordfish, oh go away, and he said, really I have, I said, well, where you catch it? It comes from Fiji, swordfish from Fiji. I said, all right, I have two, three, four kilos, but I want from the lot you know, like, and that the next day I had the swordfish on the menu as a special. And then we did *carpaccio* with the swordfish.

01:19:47 GG: Can you explain what *carpaccio* is?

01:49:49 IN: *Carpaccio* is like the Japanese sushi, you know, its raw fish, you know, but you, you marinate it and then you cut it very, very fine and marinate and you serve it. Like you serve Atlantic Salmon, smoked salmon.

01:20:08 GG: Sounds delicious. At what stage did the restaurant expand? It originally you had thirty-five---

01:20:17 IN: yeah ok. in 1980. I'll tell you how it happened. I was, by that time I was living next door, a couple of doors up from the restaurant, because I'm bought a house on Glen Osmond Road, and one Sunday morning I got a phone call from a friend, *Armando Caristo*, and he says to me, *Ilario*, what's the building like there? I said, I don't know, it's not mine, I said why? It's on the market, So Stratos, who bought

this building, he put it on the market, but he never approached me if I want to have a first option. So, I couldn't believe it. I have no lease at the time. The lease expired, you know, and by that time *Lamberto* had passed away. So, I got up---

01:21:30 GG: Can I just stop you it here, *Lamberto* did he passed away in Australia or did he go back to Italy?

01:21:36 IN: No Australia, but they took him back to Italy, they took his body back to Italy. So, I got up and I come to have a look, the signage, I tell you that I was shaking like the water, said what I'm going to do now, you know, they sell, they kick me out, no lease. So, this was on, this was on a Sunday morning, so on Tuesday I come to work, I was very, very worried and I had a table of six people, one was a Commonwealth Bank manager. Mr Point was his name, Pointer, and he saw me a little bit worried, you know, he said, Larry, what's wrong with you? I said nothing, come on, you know you're off. He said there's got to be something wrong. I said yes, it is. Maybe I won't be able to serve you food anymore, like he said why is that? They're selling the building and I got no lease. And he said what's the problem, he said buy it just like that. Buy it. I said, oh yes, buy it, with what? I said I only got five thousand dollars in my bank, you know. And he said that's OK, that'll be enough for the paperwork. He said I will send somebody to have a look at the building this afternoon. So, he finished lunch at about three-thirty, so he went back, five o'clock nobody come, quarter to six nobody come. And I rang him up. I said nobody come. He said, oh yes, they did come, they just look from outside the building. He said come Monday, he said, we'll, following Monday, we'll do the paperwork, I'll give you the whole lot, I'll give you one hundred percent. And the time was three hundred and ten thousand dollars [\$310,000] just on the, the security of the building and of course my house, you know, but he didn't really want the house. He said don't need. But I said no, you do whatever you have to do, you know. So, he got me the whole, the whole lot and, and that's how we started there, there was the new price there. I bought the building, then next door there was an antique shop, and I said, you know, when, when it came to lease, whatever I put up, ten dollars, I put up for them and they said they couldn't afford it, you know, ten dollars. I said my money was working, you know, I said well I'm sorry, and then, you know, things gone up I got to pay, anyway they went. So, straight away I got on to, a lot of friends in the building business and we open up next door, we open up another room which knocked a couple of windows. And we did another room for seventy people, so seventy plus thirty-five it's one hundred and five. And then a little bit later, you know---

01:25:28 GG: Did you have a clientele at that stage to expand?

01:25:31 IN: Yes, within six months, everything was paid for, because see, the paper, The Advertiser [morning paper in South Australia], the Sunday Mail, they really, they really got me a good reviews and If you remember there was a recession in the eighties, nineties (1980s, 1990s) was a recession, I can't remember exactly, and when we open up the room, the Sol Simeon, nobody knew who he was, at the time, the food critics, you know, used to write in the Sunday Mail, he wrote, gave me a review on the thing, you know, on the Sunday Mail. And he says, while restaurants are closing down in this recession *Ilario* at *Buonasera Restaurant* spread his wings. Everybody was coming, like I said, six months and then later

another shop become empty and another shop become empty, which I make the function room put a new kitchen, function room and we will do the only restaurant that had a function room which would hold up to one hundred and fifty people. There were function centres, but not restaurants, which after they become popular, everyone opens up another room or something for function. But we were the only one and we used to do functions every Sunday and sometime every Saturday lunch, which I didn't want too anywhere. Saturday in the evening you've got to be open. And then we become *Buonasera Function Centre*, become very, very popular. There was so many. I can't tell you how many weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, christenings.

01:27:54 GG: And the people that came to book for functions, where did they come from, were they from the Italian community or---?

01:28:03 IN: From all, all over, Australians, Italians, mainly Italians, because you know Italians, they like to have their eightieth birthday, their sixtieth anniversary, the Christenings. We used to, sometimes we used to do two or three, you know, one in the little room, one in the other room and one in the function room.

01:28:28 GG: Can you remember some of the people that held functions?

01:28:34 IN: We had the functions here for the, we had the functions here for the for the Mr Downer. I remember Mr Downer so from the Liberal [Hon Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs 1996 – 2007], I think they had all the politicians that come in. We had even Sebastian Galipo; his mum and dad they would not have a function unless it was *Buonasera* always. And of course, Sebastian used to bring a lot of people here. As a matter of fact, he's the one who introduced the governor that I was telling you, he introduced him to my restaurant.

01:29:24 GG: OK, over the years how did the, did the menu change over the years or did it remain static?

01:29:35 IN: Say maybe I have on the menu now, or the old, the old the old menu, I might have about four or five things, the rest is all changed, OK, like I said mainly homemade pasta, we concentrated on that because cost well---

01:29:57 GG: We got back in the sixties [1960s], we need to go back at that stage how, the licencing rules, what were you allowed to do as far as alcohol is concerned?

01:30:13 IN: You had to close the bar, you know, like we used to have like a little cage that you couldn't get after say ten o'clock, he couldn't do that. But the licence, we had a full licence and then I ended up getting an entertainment licence as well which could go, that was twenty-four hours a day.

01:30:37 GG: Well, and when did you get that?

01:30:40 IN: Oh, and when I done the alteration here, the renovation repair in nineteen ninety, nineteen eighty-seven.

01:30:54 GG: Do you remember how the licence was changed during the time?

01:31:00 IN: There was, we always had a full licence, so there was no change except the time that you had to stop serving alcohol at a certain time, but which now evolved. Run through it to two o'clock in the morning, we can do it and then open again.

01:31:24 GG: OK, well, let's move on to some of the fundraisers that you have conducted.

01:31:30 IN: I used to do quite a lot of it. I did one for Hands On SA, which is a sort of workshop for disability, we did the one for the Dead Cot Syndrome, you know the babies, we did, I used to do about two or three a year donated the whole lot. The staff would work for free and I would put the food and everything and the drinks, you know, and we did that for horse riding for the disabled only because my son was involved. We did for Cancer Foundation because I had the room at the time. I had function room and everything, but the most popular one was the one we did for Hands On SA, which at the time we did an auction and the auction raised thirty thousand dollars plus the ticket, which was about one hundred people and there was one hundred dollars a head and it was organised.

01:33:19 GG: What was Hands ON SA?

01:33:20 IN: It was sort of shelter workshop for disability kids, they call it disability and then go there and it's funded by the government and it helped them buy equipment and things like that.

01:33:27 GG: And were these invited people or that just anybody who want to buy a ticket?

01:33:34 IN: Anybody could buy a ticket, we advertise it and people who sold the ticket formed a table. Making tables of ten, my clients as well, but we ended up getting a full house.

01:33:57 GG: Who did you get to do the auction?

01:34:00 IN: *Nick Fazzalari*, he's well known for that, he is good at it.

01:34:05 GG: You remember the last one you did, when you did the last one?

01:34:10 IN: The last one was for the Riding for the Disable.

01:34:18 GG: You remember the year?

01:34:19 IN: It would have been, this one was twenty-twelve. It would have been about sixteen years ago.

01:34:35 GG: Yeah, that would make it---

01:34:37 IN: They helped to buy---

01:34:39 GG: two thousand and fourteen---

01:34:41 IN: Horses and things because my son was doing.

01:35:14 GG: Ilario earlier you mentioned *Paolo Nocella* and *Ciao Italia* and I said we will talk about that later. Now, could you explain what *Ciao Italia* was and how *Paolo Nocella* was involved?

01:35:33 IN: There was a, *Ciao Italia* originated in Rome, Italy, which is called *Accademia della Cucina Italiana Nel Mondo* [Academy of Italian Cuisine in the World]. What it is all about is that they go around through the whole world and find whether have Italian restaurant traditional. And so, what they do, they hold a dinner and then you create your own menu from local area where you're from. And so, *Paolo Nocella* was the president for *Ciao Italia* and he approached me and said if I would like to participate in, put on a dinner with different dishes, traditional dishes from Calabria. And they went to two other three other restaurants. Anyway, we hold one at *Buonasera* and I had to produce this menu, which there was Italian Consul, there was the Mayor, there was a whole lot of people and they had different types of, and then they voted and we qualified for the, for the, for the book to be, to take a place to Adelaide in Australia for the Italian restaurants and then they released this book which I have somewhere and it's we, we did the recipes that we did on the night and it was publicised and we become a member of the *Accademia* of the Italian Cuisine, which in Adelaide was about at the time we end up at eleven, eleven Italian restaurants.

01:38:01 GG: OK. Can we go back, what year was this approximately?

01:38:12 IN: let me think..

01:38:16 GG: So, in the meantime, whilst you're thinking about the year, you said that there were eleven all up, who was?

01:38:25 IN: There was *Buonasera* of course, there was *Casa Mia* in Melbourne Street, *Mario Suma* was the owner there. There was *Rigoni*

01:38:47 GG: That was *Caon* [Caon brothers who had opened *La Cantina* Restaurant in Hindley Street and had closed in 1966. *Giacomo Caon* went on to open *Rigoni* Restaurant in Leigh Street Adelaide].

01:38:50 IN: *Giacondo*.

01:38:53 GG: *Giacondo Caon*.

01:38:53 IN: There was *Capriccio*.

01:39:00 GG: Yeah *Capriccio*.

01:39:00 IN: *Capriuccio* restaurant *Francesco Scuteri*. There was *Balanzone*, North Adelaide.

01:39:19 GG: *Balanzone*.

01:39:24 IN: There was *Sorrento*. [*Sorento* Restaurant in Hindley Street, Adelaide]

01:39:29 GG: That's *Benizzi* [*Ettore Benizzi*, refugee from Istria post-World War II who also owned *Ettore* Restaurant at Port Road Hindmarsh, Adelaide.]

01:39:30 IN: We had the letterhead with all the restaurants. By the way, all these restaurants that they were in there today is only two still going, *Buonasera* and *Capriccio*, the rest all finished and retired. Just can't. Can't think of anymore.

01:40:14 GG: So, this was based on using the authentic ingredients.

01:40:19 IN: We had, to qualify we had to produce a typical recipe of the area. I did quite a few things which---

01:40:35 GG: Do you remember what you served?

01:40:44 IN: We started, we had some, you know, when you get the olives and you get the one which they sort of very mature, you know, like, and, and we do that with the, with the anchovies, you know, it's anchovies and olives and it, it was just, they said put it in the middle---

01:41:16 GG: They are fried. Fried black olives with the anchovies.

01:41:21 IN: And chilies and then we did like *Fritelli di bianchetto*, you know whitebait [fritters of whitebait], we did that and we passed them around, we did eggplant *fagioli* [beans] like *crochetti* [croquettes], and then we did *Stocco e Patate* [dried cod fish and potatoes, traditional Calabrian dish], little bites *assegini* [little tastes], I got it somewhere---

01:42:07 GG: So was it a sit-down menu or was it or was it a finger food or---

01:42:12 IN: No, sit down, sit down. If my brother comes with a book because we got a book that we had, the one we produced on the book. I can't remember exactly. It's been forty years ago yeah.

01:42:39 GG: Yeah. Well, we can fill in the dates if you don't remember. So how long was that membership for? Was it for a year? Did that come back to review it or what?

01:42:57 IN: That's going for years, they went to Sydney, to Melbourne, they moved around the whole of Australia. The other one, which was in the next edition was *La Casalinga*. That's right. *Casalinga* was also a member of the *Ciao Italia*, which they retired at the cross there. *Casalinga* from Unley Rd, which was *Enzo Scipione*. And then they went to Sydney and they showed, every year was the book coming out and it shows a new member, you know, qualified for.

01:43:48 GG: They did a book about every year, did at any stage did I come back to have a look? Whether you continue with those recipes or once you were in the book, you remained in the book.

01:44:03 IN: No, no, they weren't doing that. They just go around other places.

01:44:10 GG: That's a nice way to see the world.

01:44:13 IN: Yeah, they all go on other places Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and so on.

01:44:23 GG: And did people that came to the restaurant, did they, were they conscious of the fact that you were part *Ciao Italia*?

01:44:34 IN: Yeah, they had the letterhead, they had in the paper in the *Globo*, one year we hosted the Italian cuisine with the, I don't know if I will tell you the thing about the Italian cuisine with the Australian ingredients. We had big night. We had the whole, the Italian Consulate, the Adelaide Mayor [Lord Mayor], Burnside Mayor. We had to create a menu, but with all ingredients of Australia, and it was, we had to do, just for example, *Zabaglione* with the emu eggs, we had to, we used the kangaroo meat to make a dish. We used the *croccodillo* [crocodile] to make another dish. We had the chef from the Australian organisation and the Italian combined. We did that also, I think I gave you the, showed you the certificate that they gave us..... We had; we had about one hundred and twenty people that night.

01:46:50 GG: Were they invited people or were they members of the public?

01:46:54 IN: No all invited. We invited them.

01:47:01 GG: You wouldn't remember the date.

01:47:03 IN: I got, as a matter of fact I got the all the things in the container because when we shifted put everything all the certificates there. Are you sure I didn't give it to you those things?

01:47:21 GG: No, I haven't got the certificates.

01:47:29 IN: Have you got a moment?

01:47:32 GG: Yeah, sure.

01:47:36 IN: Maybe, maybe I can get a hold of it.

01:47:37 GG: Ok, let's go back to the year that *Ciao Italia* put you in the book, do you remember the year?

01:47:45 IN: Nineteen ninety-five.

01:47:48 GG: Nineteen ninety-five. So that went on for how long?

01:47:56 IN: Well, it's still existing today, but they don't usually come back.

01:48:03 GG: You celebrated your fiftieth in two thousand and nineteen.

01:48:12 IN: We celebrated our first twenty fifth anniversary in the function centre we had a, which we had all the personalities here from the newspaper, the Italian Consulate, the mayor of Burnside from Adelaide. We had, that was the first one, and then we did our thirtieth, and then we did the next one was fortieth, which was big one as well. On our fortieth birthday we had all day from, on a Monday was, we do food right through the day from eleven o'clock to three o'clock, but

we end up being here till six, six-thirty cooking, open house for the public, for everybody. We had over eight hundred, nine hundred people. People couldn't get a park.

01:49:17 GG: And that was for the fortieth.

01:49:19 IN: Fortieth.

01:49:20 GG: And the fiftieth. So, you've been in business for now fifty---

01:49:36 IN: Fifty-five years.

01:49:39 GG: Fifty-five years. So, what's the future?

01:49:39 IN: The future? I am eighty-one, or eighty-two. Retiring? No. I feel, apart from, you know, everyone's problem arthritis here arthritis there, you know, but I feel pretty good, and so what I would like to do is instead of retiring, I probably, Christmas coming up, after Christmas, I probably will only open three days a week so I can still keep an interest in it. And I need to spend time home with my family, whatever I got left. And I come say Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Friday lunch. So, we get all our friends that are used to coming here and you know and getting them together. But it'll be Friday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. And of course, if I have a little function up to fifty people, I can do it anytime.

01:51:01 GG: Because you may have moved from---

01:51:02 IN: I've moved from two-ninety-five to two-eighty-five, which is now, we sit about, about thirty-five, forty people. But if I need a function, we can accommodate fifty people.

01:51:20 GG: How has the restaurant business changed over the years? What do people really expect in general?

01:51:31 IN: Dramatically, hard times, hard times.

01:51:36 GG: It's due to the---

01:51:40 IN: Due to the expenses of, running expenses like gas, electricity, tax here tax there, water rates, all, all this is, it's make impossible, and of course with wages and not, nobody wants to work for the, for the award rates. So, you have to do something to keep. But it's OK for me. I feel sorry for others, but for me it's OK because, as I said, I'm here and it's small, I don't need a lot of staff. I need to go in the kitchen and help out I can do that, be at the front, I do that. So, I'm hands on and therefore I'll keep, and lucky I don't have to pay rent.

01:52:47 GG: OK, you were talking about you being in front of the house. Have you ever actually gone to the kitchen and cook?

01:52:55 IN: Yes, since I come back here. But since I come to this small place, yes, but you know, just to give them a hand, that's all.

01:53:06 GG: And I also noticed that one of the waiters is your brother Giuseppe.

01:53:14 IN: My brother just comes to socialise, give me a hand, you know, just to be with me.

01:53:20 GG: So, when did when did he retire from being a tailor?

01:53:25 IN: Oh, it's many, many years ago, because he was, after tailoring, he put his own business as a travel agent, he travelled, which he had for quite a while to, he sold, he sold to *Lamberto Travel*. The new owners of *Lamberto Travel*.

01:53:48 GG: And after he retired, he came here regularly to help you?

01:53:53 IN: He just spent time with me.

01:53:54 GG: Did your family help you out in the restaurant?

01:54:06 IN: No, my son used to work here, he used to give me a hand to work here, but that's the oldest son. But then unfortunately he had some problem with diabetic and his had a couple of toes amputated. So, he could not stand here. See in restaurant you got to stand on your feet all the time and then he had a mild stroke. So now no, my family was because my son was a hairdresser.

01:54:39 GG: He followed in your footsteps.

01:54:41 IN: He, he had my shop for a while, you know, then my brother.

01:54:46 GG: When you changed from a hairdresser to the restaurant, what was your family's reaction? What was your wife's reaction?

01:55:01 IN: Oh, I mean, it was different. It was, I, you know, I used to be home at six, six-thirty. Then when we come to the restaurant, things changed. But you know, had a young family and everything. Well, my wife was very, very, very understanding. Matter of fact, she started doing some desserts for me from home where we come with a Log *Buonasera*, the *Breast Cassata* all done at home. And then she used to do the laundry for me at home. So, she was very, very but helpful and participated.

01:55:47 GG: So, she helped without being here, being in the restaurant. *Breast Cassata*, that's an interesting item, can you tell me a little bit about it?

01:55:58 IN: That's a funny story you want to know do you?

01:56:03 GG: Of course.

01:56:06 IN: As I said, the restaurant used to be very small at the time and the Sturt Football Club, the boys, they used to come to eat on a Wednesday night. They used to come to eat at the restaurant, there were six or eight of them, and I remember that I went to them after they finished the meal, I said would anybody like some dessert? And they said no, no, we're full. I had a girl which I won't say the name, I had a girl, she said to me, you don't know how to serve dessert. I said, they said they don't want any. She said watch this and we at the time we had the home-

made cassata. So, you remember when the fashion of the cat suit was on, you sure you want me to say this? The cat suit was on and not like for the women and with a zip at the front, so she said, she was well built this girl, so she said to me, watch this, she undone the zip a little bit. She went to the table; she put the hands, one-on-one on top one on the other, and she went over and said, would any of your boys like a breast? They all looked, he said, I'll have one, oh alright she said I'm going to run out of breast. Anyway, from that night on it was named the *Breast Cassata*. A table was sitting next to it, to this table, two people, they said, we will have one too. So, it became a *Breast Cassata* because it looked like it had a little cherry on the top. No, no, you'll make me a naughty boy now.

01:58:11 GG: No, no, of course not. We don't want to make you more important, but it's a very interesting story how some of your names on the menu started. Yeah, well, I know that we've had *Breast Cassata* and it's the best *Cassata* we've had, so we can vouch for its authenticity and beautiful taste. OK. So, you said the future is basically you're going to work three days a week so that we still can enjoy the delicacies of *Buonasera Restaurant*.

01:58:58 IN: You can still come here and have your *Agnollotti* and *Bauletti*.

01:59:02 GG: Yeah. I must admit that the *Agnolotti* are my favourite.

01:59:08 IN: I brought a new dish from Italy.

01:59:11 GG: Yeah, you were telling me about that.

01:59:11 IN: Very unusual because I never heard before even there, but this year I was in Italy with some friends and they went to *Mammola* [*Mammola* is a town in Calabria, Italy located about 70 kilometres southwest of *Catanzaro* and 60 Kilometres northeast of *Reggio Calabria*, renowned for its culinary tradition, especially for its smoked *ricotta* and stockfish], which is a place for stockfish, you know, like the cod, you know the---

01:59:34 GG: Before you tell me about the fish, can you tell me a little bit about *Mammola*? I mean people that listen to the recording---

01:59:43 IN: *Mammola* is another, another town not far from *Caulonia*, from my town and people go there, they specialise into this *Stocco* and they're doing so many ways. So went there a couple times they have a *Stocco* salad, they have with a fried, they have with a sauce, they have in many, many ways, but I never heard of the *ravioli* with this, filled with the *stocco*. So, this, this year go there my friend went to buy some *Stocco* there, we used to cook in my house and he bought the *ravioli*, not cooked, and he said to me, *Ilario*, that's what I found the *stocco* in the *ravioli* and we, actually he cooked it, you know, with the sauce and I was very, very disappointed with it. Some of the *ravioli*, they didn't even have much in it that were poorly filled, but the flavour wasn't there. But I thought, you know it came in my mind, I said I'm sure I can do better than this when I go back to Adelaide. I know my cook how she's good with the pasta. So, this one last week we tried it and I come, and I found out I can buy some *stocco* which come from Italy, which was ready, it's frozen, but it was already filleted and everything. So, I

said to the cook, I said that, OK, now what are you going to do? You want to make the pasta, but we want to cook this the someway we cook normal, the *stocco* with potatoes and olives and you know the way we do it, the sauce, and then blend it and filling with all the flavours of the potatoes, which the other one, in Italy, was just a *stocco* was just white, grey. So, we did it. I haven't put it out yet to the people, but we did the three different sauces to see which one is the best. We did with the Neapolitan, you know, tomato sauce, it was too strong, we did with rosé sauce, a bit better, but I did with the butter sage, butter sage, burnt butter sage and it's beautiful. It can taste the *stocco*, you can taste the ingredients, the olive and everything. So next week it will be as a special to the clients.

02:02:54 GG: Can you describe *Stocco*?

02:02:58 IN: The *Stocco* is a cod, is a cod fish like Ling fish. You know, you can buy Ling fish here fresh, but it's not the something *Stocco*. I think they bring it from cold country like Sweden, Denmark and they dry it, they gut it out and all you see the whole fish and it's like timber. So, what do you do, you, you have to cut it with a, with a saw and then put in water and change the water three, four times a day. In Italy, what they do before they used to do like that, but then after what they did, what do you call it, *i vasche*

02:03:47 GG: Vats.

02:03:48 IN: Yeah, vats with the running water, all the time, from one to another to another, so without changing the water, it's running all the time till it becomes back to the natural fresh food you know fish. And, and of course this particular fish, while you process it, you know, to come back to thing it's a smell that you will never eat it. You know, if it's not, I'm not going to have that, but wait till it's finished.

02:04:20 GG: And traditionally it's just then you cook it with potatoes.

02:04:24 IN: The traditional one is either you do, you can do salad cold, you can do in white sauce, you know, like, but I mean, I like with tomato and olives and potatoes. But then you can get the *pancisca*, we call it, you know, which is what do you call---

02:05:02 GG: The ribs?

02:05:03 IN: No, no, no ribs *la pancetta* [belly]. No, like the very thin cuts, very thin. It's, it's, you know, the inside, you know, but it's got a very soft and then it's got a flavour. That's all right with nice type of *linguini*, *pancisca*.

02:05:27 GG: Yeah, because I, I don't think any other restaurant actually has got *stocco* on its menu. I haven't seen it.

02:05:34 IN: I don't know, but I will, I will have it as a special. Won't be on the menu, but it will be as special.

02:05:43 GG: Very good. OK, so we've gone the full circle from birth to almost retirement or semi-retirement, overall, what, how do you feel, you came to the age of the sixteen, how do you feel about Italy and about Australia?

02:06:12 IN: While I'm in Italy, I forget Australia, because I'm there to enjoy myself and the only connection I have is with my family. First time is in there. When I'm in Australia I forget about Italy. Not forgetting way that you forget because it's over, but I mean I, I'm not, I'm just myself to where I am. My home is where I am.

02:06:45 GG: So, you call both Italy and Australia home?

02:06:50 IN: Yes

02:06:51 GG: And you feel that the move from Italy by your family was a good thing?

02:06:58 IN: Yeah, well, I can't complain. I don't know because should, you know, we we're all happy here. Not saying that we wouldn't done OK over there. It was, as I said earlier, we all went to learn a profession. you know, a trade and therefore we weren't well off, but we weren't bad off. So, who knows? Maybe if I wasn't in Australia, I could have been maybe in my hometown, or I could have been in Milan or I could have been in *Torino*. I don't know. I don't know, but if you had to migrate north or Australia, I prefer here. The only reason that you're migrant up there, for them, and you're migrant over here. Only here they love you, you know.

02:07:56 GG: And in Milan?

02:07:58 IN: Well, I don't know, it's a settler is always a settler, you know.

02:08:01 GG: So whichever way you moved it was foreign to what you were used to.

02:08:12 IN: I never, I never, ever, ever had any problems in Australia from day one. I never had any problem. I used to learn English by mixing with people making mistakes and I didn't care I make a mistake, people used to laugh when I would say something, but you don't learn by mistakes.

02:08:31 GG: So, do you feel that you're Italian or you're Australian or what?

02:08:35 IN: I'm Italian. You can't, when you, when you grow up to sixteen years old, you're, you're Italian. You, you still got the, you formed your life in the in the first fifteen years. You can never forget the background. People say I don't remember and they come here when they were eighteen or nineteen. Well, there must be something wrong with them because they must have had much of a childhood.

02:09:05 GG: And what about your children, how do they feel?

02:09:11 IN: They feel like they're Italian, they speak the language and they've been there many, many, many, many times.

02:09:21 GG: The one thing we haven't recorded is the fact that you didn't go back to Italy or to *Caulonia every year*---

02:09:28 IN: Every year. My first trip was exactly on the day sixteen years later, I come when I was sixteen, my first trip there was I was thirty-two, and I went there, my brother, I said to my brother as we were entering the town, I said, we went and I said, drop

me here, I want to walk home. So, I start walking and remembering everything, see the shops, see this and that. And then I remember I've got to a stage, it used to be a tailor shop, a tailor shop, but this time, sixteen years later, there was a, a deli [delicatessen], you know, deli, grocery. And there was these two ladies in there, two sisters. and they used to, I remember them very well because they used to do the shirts for, for us, they used to do, the mother, the two sisters they were dressmakers, and they used to do dress for my mother, but they used to do the shirts for their kids, you know, for us kids. And I saw them in there and I went inside and I played a trick on them, you know, of course, this man thirty-two years from sixteen, you know, and I'm going there very serious, they're talking, they looked at me. I said *buongiorno* [good morning/day], they said *buongiorno*, and then I go on the shelves and I might wipe some dust off, and they said, *cosa c'è?* what's wrong? I said, I'm from the health authority, health inspector, I said, this is not, you know, and they went all funny and white, you know, and I said, Jesus, what I've done here. They got scared, you know, I said *signorina Lina* and *Pina* [Miss Lina and Pina], they were *Lina* and *Pina*. I said, don't you recognise me? They said no, but I said, come here, I took him outside and I showed my house because I was there, that my house was there. Remember I used to live there? Then straight away when they put two and two together, they said, you *L'ario*, you know, *Ilario*. They said, you almost gave us a heart attack. So, from then on, I went to, I went every year except when the COVID, I missed a couple of years

02:12:31 GG: You mentioned the house that you lived in, do you still got that house?

02:12:35 IN: Oh yes, yes. In the nineteen ninety I took with me my wife and my youngest son. The two older kids had already been there, but I took my wife with me. Otherwise, I was married to an Australian girl and as I said earlier that she could speak the language. So, went there and we stayed in the Piazza. My uncle of my auntie which migrated to America, then they come back to it and passed away there, there was a house there which there was their house and my house was already people in there and we stayed there. But my wife said to me, where did you used to live? I said, I took her there to have a look from outside, said I would love to see the inside. So, I took her, a knock on the door, I said, look, can my wife, I used to, I was born in in here. Then my wife said to me, you come all the time, why don't you fix you, you know, get your house and fix them, and that's how started, I fixed the house and I bought a house, I bought a room, which was adjacent to that, with a nice terrace, so I open up a wall there. So, my door there.

02:14:15 GG: When you are not there, what happens to the house?

02:14:18 IN: Its locked.

02:14:20 GG: What is *Caulonia* like today, like a *frazione Caulonia Marina*, what's *Caulonia* like today?

02:14:30 IN: *Caulonia* hasn't changed at all. It's what has been all time except that there's no, the life that there used to be in the fifties and the sixties where on a Sunday, for example, you couldn't walk in the town because everybody was coming there, for, they used to bring goods like food and wheat and chestnuts and things. They used to be the market, you know what they call the market. And there used to be

a lot of people, a lot of, *Caulonia* was at the ground floor, there was not one place that didn't have either a wine shop, a blacksmith, a tailor, a shoemaker, cabinet maker, you name it, I mean, it's all the trades people for that.

02:15:32 GG: And now?

02:15:34 IN: And now it's none, not, not trades, no, no. So now they're all garage, like magazine, and the majority close.

02:15:51 GG: OK, is there anything else you want to add?

02:15:59 IN: You've got to have the questions.

02:16:03 GG: I think I've asked the ones that I'm interested in. Thank you very much for the interview, I will process it.

02:16:23 IN: This has been good to me. Australia has been good to me to, to my family, I mean. But as I said, I like both. I got, I got to keep the connection from Italy, maybe because I got my own place there, and I feel good, and I feel independent, and I've got everything I want there, like here. So really the hard work has paid out. You know, to me.

02:17:00 GG: I mean is there any of the friends you knew as a child still there?

02:17:08 IN: Some of them, some of them passed away. You find some in that photo there. I got still got a friend which I haven't been able, I've been connected on through Facebook this and that, but I haven't been able to, they never come there at the time that I'm there. I've got a friend who is magistrate retired in *Livorno*. He went there; we were sitting next to each other in school, got another one in Rome, he is retired politician, you know, my friend Angelo who was very close, he was a painter, you know, an artist in painting, he passed away a couple of years ago. I haven't been I've seen Angelo but I haven't been able to see these others, and one is in Western Australia and, talked to him on the phone but see but I've got a lot of friends there which---

02:18:17 GG: Well, if you go here, you'll probably make friends. You know, you're very much into your heritage, the heritage of *Caulonia*, of Italy. What have you done in your restaurant to show the connection between what you serve, and the décor, and *Caulonia*?

02:18:41 IN: Well, first I, first of all I start with pictures on the walls from *Caulonia* like photos from *Caulonia* enlarged. As you know, *Caulonia* was a walled city with the four gates which they used to lock, in the old time they used to close, so nobody could get in or get out. And I had them all around the restaurant. Then when I renovated, I come up with the idea of putting a mosaic on the floor at the entrance, which I had some research on the Internet. And then I acquired a coin four hundred and thirty BC, which we put as a mosaic on the, on the entrance of the restaurant. And that mosaic where there is this coin which is ancient Greek with Apollo. And then what I did, I extended the mosaic was with a branch of olive tree which is symbolised as, as you know *Sant'Ilario* [patron saint of *Caulonia*] is what, the symbol is the olive tree which they there is a legend of

that every year they used to burn this olive tree at the, the convent where *Sant'Ilario* did his penance and used to burn it in the night, in the morning it was all fresh again. So, I did that on the floor at the entrance of the restaurant.

02:20:52 GG: Right. And *Sant'Ilario*, you mentioned a couple of times, what is the significance of *Sant'Ilario*?

02:21:00 IN: *Sant'Ilario*. Well, the story, the full story I don't know, but it's saint was Palestinian, which he went through apparently, he was Prince and gave all his wealth away, and he went to the desert to some penance and then he went through Italy, through Sicily and to Calabria, and it became the patron of *Caulonia*.

02:21:30 GG: And so yeah, all *Cauloniese* [people from Caulonia] have a devotion to *Sant'Ilario*?

02:21:37 IN: He is our patron.

02:21:38 GG: And the mosaic, you have shifted, you've changed---

02:21:46 IN: I've moved, instructed under no circumstances to be destroyed, they can cover with the carpet or whatever they want, but not to take off, because I want that into the building.

02:22:01 GG: OK, thank. Thank you for that, *Ilario*.

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Section: A Tavola – Dining Out

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