ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY SA inc.

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 - 2026

Preserving Our Past • Sharing Our Stories • Building Our Future



ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

Preserving the stories of Italian migrants and their descendants in South Australia.

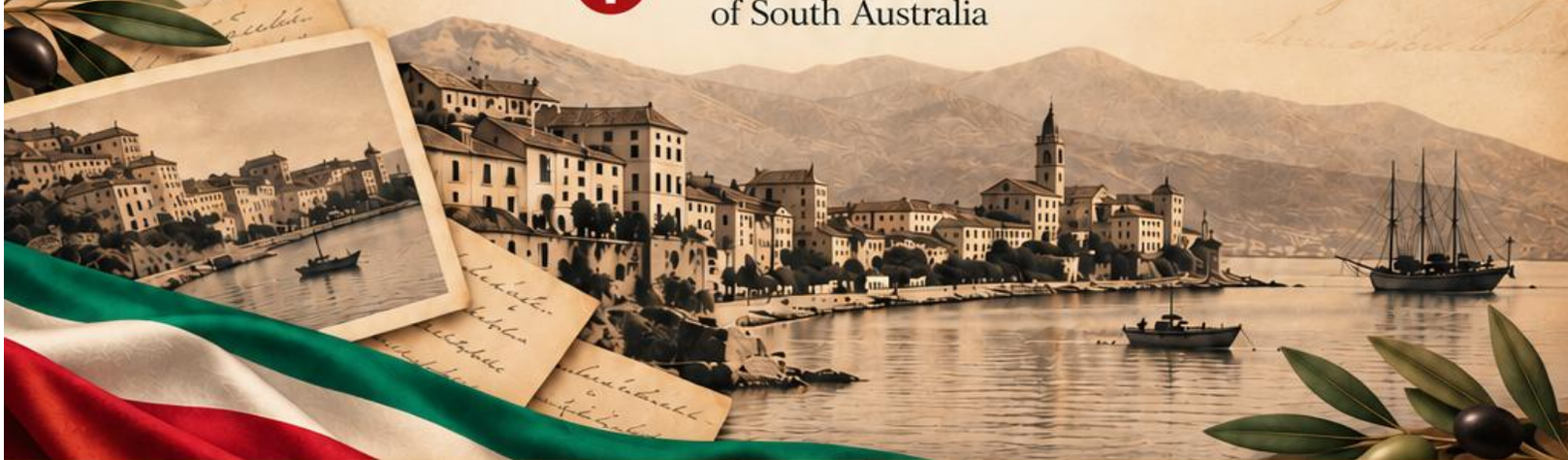
The Italian Historical Society of South Australia researches, records, preserves and shares the stories of Italian migrants and their descendants, celebrating their contribution to the cultural, social and economic life of South Australia.

Through publications, events and community engagement, we aim to keep these stories alive for current and future generations.

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Italian Historical Society of South Australia



Published in Australia by
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc
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Woodville SA 5011
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© 2026 Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc
Published 2026

Cover designed by La Panna D'Oro
Typesetting and Graphics by Jenny and Rosemarie Geracitano
Book designed by Artcol Media
Printed in Australia by Retail Ink

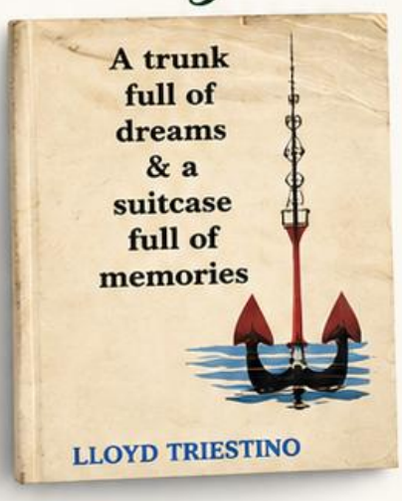
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Mission Statement

To collect, preserve, interpret and promote the history of Italians and document their contribution in South Australia.

Project



Oral History

Oral History

Is a picture of the past in people's own words.

History

"To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history?"

— **Marcus Tullius Cicero**

Our Mission

Preserving Our Past • Sharing Our Stories • Building Our Future

The mission of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. is:

‘To collect, preserve, interpret and promote the history of Italians and document their contribution in South Australia.’

This mission forms the foundation of the Society's commitment to safeguarding the history, experiences and achievements of Italian migrants and their descendants.

Italian migration has played an important role in shaping South Australia's cultural, social and economic landscape. Behind this history are the personal experiences of individuals and families who left their homelands, travelled across oceans and established new lives while maintaining connections to their language, traditions and cultural heritage.

The Society recognises that these experiences represent an invaluable part of South Australia's shared history. Through oral-history interviews, historical research, the collection of photographs and documents, and the publication of migrant stories, IHSSA works to ensure that these memories are not lost with the passing of generations.

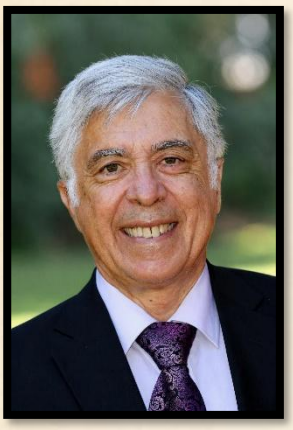
Our work extends beyond preserving the past. By making historical material accessible through publications, educational initiatives and community engagement, the Society seeks to strengthen connections between generations and encourage a greater understanding of the Italian Australian experience.

We believe that every story contributes to the broader historical record. Whether it reflects personal hardship, family life, employment, entrepreneurship, community involvement or cultural traditions, each account offers an important perspective on the lives of Italians in South Australia.



Through research, preservation and storytelling, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia remains committed to honouring those who came before us, recognising their contributions and ensuring their stories continue to inform and inspire future generations.

From the President



It is my pleasure to present the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Annual Report 2025-2026, a publication that reflects another productive year in the Society's mission to preserve, promote and celebrate the rich history, culture and heritage of Italians in South Australia.

Over the past year, the Society has continued to fulfil its commitment to documenting the experiences of Italian migrants and their descendants, while also exploring the broader historical, cultural and regional traditions that have shaped Italy and the Italian Australian community. Through lectures, publications, research projects, cultural events and community partnerships, we have sought to foster a greater understanding of our shared heritage and ensure that these stories are preserved for future generations.

This year has demonstrated the important role that history plays in strengthening community identity. Our publications and presentations have examined diverse aspects of Italian life, from regional histories, migration experiences and family traditions to the cultural practices that continue to connect Italian communities around the world. In doing so, we have highlighted not only the achievements of earlier generations but also the enduring contributions of Italian Australians to the social, cultural and economic life of South Australia.

The success of the Society depends upon the dedication and generosity of many individuals. I extend my sincere thanks to our committee members, volunteers, researchers, contributors, sponsors and members whose commitment, expertise and enthusiasm continue to sustain our activities. Their willingness to share knowledge, preserve family histories and support our programs ensures that the Society remains a vibrant and respected voice within our community.

I also acknowledge the many individuals and families who have entrusted the Society with their stories, photographs, documents and memories. These personal contributions form an invaluable part of our collective history and enrich our understanding of the Italian experience in South Australia.

As we look to the future, the Society remains committed to expanding its research and publication activities, preserving historical records and developing new projects that engage both current and future generations. By continuing to document our past, we strengthen our connection to those who came before us and provide future generations with a deeper appreciation of their cultural heritage.

On behalf of the Committee, I thank all who have supported the Italian Historical Society of South Australia throughout the year. I invite you to enjoy this Annual Report and to share in celebrating the history, achievements and ongoing legacy of our community.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
Italian Historical Society of South Australia
2025-2026 Annual Report
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Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

Introduction

The Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. was established in 2015**,** born from a growing awareness that the memories, documents, and lived experiences of Italian migrants in South Australia were at risk of fading as the first post-war generation aged. Community leaders, historians, and volunteers recognised that without a dedicated effort to preserve this heritage, an irreplaceable chapter of South Australian history would be lost. In response to this urgency, the Society formed with a clear and enduring mission: to safeguard the stories, photographs, artefacts, and cultural traditions that shaped the Italian presence in the state, and to develop a primary source collection of historical documents that does not form part of the State archives but remains within the custodianship of the community itself.

From its inception, the Society has worked to honour the journey of Italian migrants: their courage, labour, resilience, and the communities they built. Its objectives reflect a deep respect for both historical accuracy and the emotional truth of lived experience. The Society collects and preserves archival materials, promotes research and education, documents the evolution of Italian clubs and associations, and encourages families to share their histories. At its heart lies a desire to strengthen intergenerational connections, ensuring that younger generations understand the sacrifices and achievements that underpin their cultural identity.

To achieve this, the Society employs a methodology that blends archival practice, oral history, and community-based research. Photographs, documents, and artefacts are catalogued and digitised according to professional archival standards, protecting them for future study. Oral history interviews capture the voices, memories, and emotions that cannot be found in written records, preserving the nuances of migration, work, family life, and community involvement. Collaboration with clubs, regional associations, and families ensures that the historical record is inclusive, accurate, and grounded in community knowledge. This approach, rigorous yet deeply human, allows the Society to create a historical archive that is both academically reliable and emotionally resonant.

Over the years, the Society has undertaken a broad range of projects that reflect the diversity and richness of Italian life in South Australia. Its work encompasses migration and settlement history, the development of Italian clubs and regional associations, family history and genealogy, and an extensive oral history program. It has documented the stories of community leaders, club founders, women's committees, and everyday migrants whose contributions shaped the social and cultural landscape of the state. Exhibitions, public programs, and digitisation initiatives have further extended the Society's reach, making history accessible to schools, researchers, and the wider community.

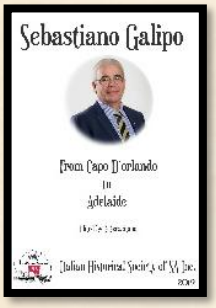
The Society's publications form an important part of its legacy. These include community histories, oral history booklets, journals, exhibition catalogues, and educational materials that illuminate the Italian experience in South Australia. Among its major works is *La Nostra Casa: The History of the Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc***.**, a comprehensive and richly detailed account of a significant regional club. Additional publications continue to emerge as the Society expands its research and deepens its archival collections.

Today, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. stands as a guardian of memory and a custodian of cultural heritage. Through its ongoing work, it ensures that the stories of Italian

migrants: stories of hardship, hope, community, and belonging remain alive, honoured, and accessible for generations to come.

Publications:

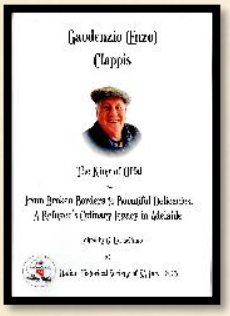
Whole of Life:



Sebastiano Galipo: From Capo D'Orlando to Adelaide
Story of Sebastiano Galipo who migrated at the age of 4 and built an enterprise from scratch to a nationally recognised company which has won many national awards.



Rita Bianca Palumbo: From Lo Stretto to Adelaide
Story of Rita Bianca Palumbo who migrated at the age of 10 and at 16 became the first Italian Secretary of the Good Neighbour Council Woodville. Has used her interpreting skills to assist the community and guided the Sicilia Social and Sport Club for 18 years as president

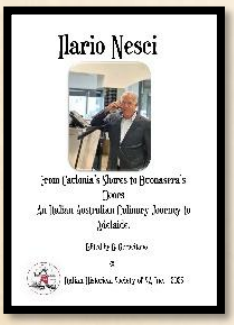


Gaudenzio (Enzo) Clappis: The King of Offal
From Broken Borders to Bountiful Delicacies: A Refugee's Culinary Legacy in Adelaide. The story of Enzo Clappis from a refugee's camp to the foundation of Buonasera Restaurant and establishment of Italian cuisine in Adelaide.



Andy Clappis: Crust to Creation

A Culinary journey of Andy Clappis, from humble loaves to artisan mastery. Story of Andy Clappis who continued the family culinary legacy and became a master bread maker.



Ilario Nesci: From Caulonia's Shores to Buonasera's Doors. An Italian Australian Culinary Journey to Adelaide

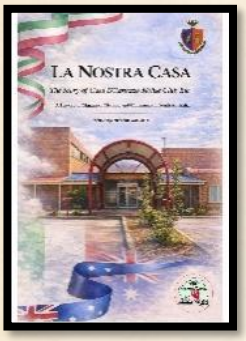
The story of Ilario Nesci who has guided Buonasera Restaurant for almost 60 years.

Community Organisations:



Radio Paesani: The Beginning of Community Radio in South Australia

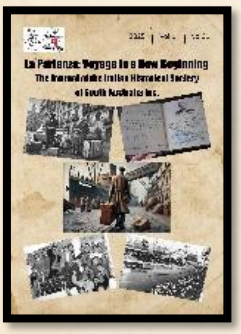
The Story of the establishment of Radio Paesani and the beginning Italian community radio in Adelaide.



La Nostra Casa: The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.

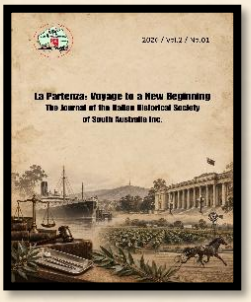
A story of the Abruzzese and Molisani migrants in Adelaide and the establishment of the Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.

Journal:



La Partenza Voyage to a New Beginning Vol 1

History of Italian Immigration and
Eight short stories on Italian
Immigrants in Adelaide



La Partenza Voyage to a New Beginning Vol 2

History of Italian Immigration and
Nine short stories on Italian
Immigrants in Adelaide

Hard copies of all publications are available in the State Library of South Australia and digital copies are available on the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc website www.ihssa.com.au

Follow us on Facebook for all the updates on further publications. Enquiries contact the Society:

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Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President © 2026

Committee Members 2025-2026



PATRON

Ernesto Pianelli – Consul of Italy



PATRON

Grd. Uff. Dr Carmine De Pasquale AM



AMBASSADOR

Cav. Sebastian Galipo



AMBASSADOR

Rita Bianca Palumbo



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Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano



VICE PRESIDENT

Chev. Giuseppe (Joe) Ienco OAM OSJ



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Giovanna (Jenny) Geracitano



TREASURER

Tina Dichiera



ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Rosina Peryk



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SOCIAL AND EVENT COORDINATOR

Silvana Zerella



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Cllr Dr Rachele Tullio



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Nella Santo



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Lorenzo Circosta



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Franca Circosta



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Angela Cutri



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Cav. Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM



COMMITTEE MEMBER

Anna Farrugia

Editorial Committee Members 2025-2026



EDITORIAL COMMITTE

Cav. Angela Scarino, Associate Professor Adelaide University



EDITORIAL COMMITTE

Laura Di Martino-Kempt



EDITORIAL COMMITTE

Mario Russo

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

President's Report 2025–2026

It is my pleasure to present the President's Report for the period December 2025 to October 2026.

This has been a productive and rewarding year for the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. Throughout the year, the Society has remained committed to its mission of researching, preserving, documenting and promoting the history and heritage of Italian migration and settlement in South Australia through oral history, publications, education and community engagement.

The reporting period has seen the Society undertake significant historical research projects, expand its oral history program, strengthen relationships with community organisations and educational institutions, increase its public profile, and continue building a lasting historical record of the Italian experience in South Australia. These achievements are particularly noteworthy given that the overwhelming majority of the Society's work continues to be undertaken by volunteers.

Publications and Research Activities

The Society has continued to advance its core mission of preserving, documenting and sharing the history of Italian migration and settlement in South Australia through an expanding program of publications, oral histories and historical research.

One of the Society's significant achievements during the year was the publication and release of *La Nostra Casa: The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.* This major community history project involved extensive research, oral history interviews, transcriptions, analysis, editing and publication. The project documented the establishment, development and contribution of one of South Australia's most respected Italian community organisations while preserving the memories of many of its founders, leaders and members.

The official launch of the publication was held on 2 May 2026 at the Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc. and attracted approximately 230 attendees. The event brought together many pioneers who contributed to the Club's development and demonstrated the strong community interest in preserving and celebrating our shared history. The publication has been warmly received and continues to serve as an important historical resource.

A major achievement during the year was also the completion and publication of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Vol. 2*, the second edition of the Society's flagship journal. Building upon the success of the inaugural volume, this publication brings together an outstanding collection of migration stories, biographies, family histories, community narratives and scholarly book reviews documenting the experiences and contributions of Italian migrants and their descendants in South Australia.

The preparation of this volume involved many months of work identifying contributors, conducting interviews, collecting photographs and historical material, researching and writing articles, and undertaking extensive editorial, design and production processes. The result is a

significant addition to the growing body of literature documenting the Italian South Australian experience and preserving stories that might otherwise have been lost to future generations.

The journal was officially launched on 10 October 2026 at a special function attended by members, contributors, community leaders, politicians, historians, researchers and supporters of multicultural heritage. The successful completion and release of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Vol. 2* represents one of the Society's most significant achievements during the reporting period and further strengthens its reputation as a leading organisation dedicated to the preservation of community history.

The Society also completed work on *A Community United: The Story of the Coordinating Italian Committee Inc.*, a comprehensive history documenting the first fifty years of one of South Australia's most significant umbrella organisations serving the Italian community. This major project involved extensive archival research and interviews with past and present presidents, committee members, welfare workers, volunteers and community leaders.

The manuscript has now been completed; however, publication has been deferred to allow the Board of the Coordinating Italian Committee Inc. to review the work prior to its release. The Society looks forward to publishing this important volume following completion of the review process and remains proud of the considerable research effort undertaken to preserve this significant chapter of South Australian Italian community history.

These projects reflect the Society's continuing commitment to ensuring that personal stories, community achievements and organisational histories are recorded, preserved and made accessible for future generations. Through its publications program, the Society continues to create lasting historical resources that contribute to a deeper understanding of the Italian experience in South Australia while safeguarding an important part of the State's multicultural heritage.

Oral History and Story Preservation

Oral history remains at the heart of the Society's activities.

Throughout the reporting period, numerous interviews were conducted with migrants, pioneers, community leaders, volunteers, educators, sporting figures and individuals whose experiences contribute to our understanding of Italian settlement in South Australia. These interviews form an invaluable historical record and provide future generations with direct access to the personal experiences of those who helped shape our community.

Particular emphasis was placed on documenting community 'firsts' and capturing stories that might otherwise be lost. The Society continued its Whole-of-Life program, preserving detailed personal histories and migration experiences that reflect the broader story of Italian migration and settlement in Australia.

As I have often remarked, whenever we bury a loved one, a whole library is buried with them unless we take the time to preserve their stories before they depart. The Society's oral history program seeks to ensure that these invaluable memories are not lost and remain available to future generations of researchers, students, families and community members.

Education, Research and Community Engagement

The Society continued to develop strong relationships with educational institutions, students, researchers and community organisations.

Assistance was provided to students and researchers examining the history of Italian migration and settlement in South Australia. The Society also participated in educational initiatives with Saint Michael's College, assisting students studying migration and oral history through interviews with senior members of the Italian community.

The Society participated in South Australia's History Festival through collaboration with the Fogolar Furlan Club, presenting *Small Suitcases, Big Journeys*, which explored migration experiences and demonstrated the value of oral history in preserving community memory.

Advice and support were also provided to individuals and community organisations undertaking local history, family history and migration research projects. These activities reinforce the Society's role as a recognised source of expertise in oral history and community heritage preservation.

Public Profile, Media and Advocacy

Throughout the year, the Society maintained a strong public profile through radio interviews, publications, presentations and community events.

Appearances on Radio Italia Uno and Radio Italiana 531 provided opportunities to discuss Italian migration history, regional Italian history, oral history and the Society's activities. These broadcasts helped raise awareness of the Society's work and demonstrated the important role history plays in preserving community identity.

Articles prepared during the year included *Reconstructing Community Through Memory: Oral History and the Founding of Centro Adriatico and Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.* and *Recent Activities of IHSSA*. These publications helped raise the profile of the Society's work within the broader oral history sector and highlighted its contribution to preserving and sharing South Australia's Italian migrant heritage.

In recognition of this work, the Society has been invited to present a paper at the biennial national conference of Oral History Australia, to be held in Adelaide in December 2026. The conference will provide an important opportunity to showcase the Society's achievements, share its methodologies and experiences in community-based oral history, and engage with researchers and practitioners from across the country. The Society will also exhibit its publications and other materials, further promoting its work and extending its reach within the national oral history community.

The Society's social media activities also continued to expand, increasing public awareness of the Society's projects, events, publications and historical initiatives. The Society's growing digital presence has become an increasingly important tool for community engagement and heritage promotion. Between 1 January and 18 October 2026, the Society published 58 social media posts, generating more than 102,000 impressions, 162,000 views and reaching over 90,000 people. Particularly strong engagement was achieved through posts promoting the Traditional Torrone

Making Afternoon, *Carnevale: Un Ballo in Maschera* and the Society's publication initiatives. These results demonstrate the effectiveness of social media in extending the Society's reach beyond its membership, attracting new audiences, promoting participation in events and publications, and strengthening public awareness of the contribution of Italians to South Australia's history and cultural heritage.

Community Representation and Partnerships

During the reporting period, the Society was represented at numerous cultural, educational, government and community events.

These included Republic Day celebrations, community volunteer recognition events, Italian Presidents' Meetings, club anniversaries, cultural festivals, book launches, Oral History Australia events, educational seminars and meetings with community leaders.

The Society was also represented at official functions hosted by the Government of South Australia and the Consulate of Italy, including celebrations marking the 80th Anniversary of the Italian Republic and a reception welcoming the new Ambassador of Italy to Australia.

These activities strengthened relationships across the Italian community and enhanced opportunities for future historical projects, partnerships and educational initiatives.

Membership Growth and Engagement

One of the most encouraging developments during the reporting period has been the continued growth in Society membership. Membership numbers have increased steadily throughout the year and have almost doubled, reflecting growing community interest in the Society's work and its mission to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Italians in South Australia.

This growth has been driven by both a targeted membership recruitment campaign and the Society's increasing visibility through publications, community events, oral history projects and public engagement activities. Pleasingly, every function conducted by the Society during the year attracted new members, demonstrating the effectiveness of these events in connecting people with the Society's objectives and activities.

The launch of publications, educational presentations, cultural activities and fundraising events provided valuable opportunities to introduce the Society to new audiences and encourage greater participation in preserving community history. Many individuals who first engaged with the Society through these activities subsequently became members and supporters.

The Committee views this sustained membership growth as a strong endorsement of the Society's work and an indication of the community's commitment to ensuring that the stories, experiences and achievements of Italian migrants and their descendants are preserved for future generations. A growing membership base not only strengthens the Society financially but also expands the network of volunteers, contributors, researchers and supporters upon which the Society relies to fulfil its objectives.

Financial Management and Sustainability

The Society continues to operate according to the principles of accountability, transparency and prudent financial management.

While the majority of the Society's work is undertaken by volunteers, there remain significant costs associated with historical research, oral history recording, transcription, editing, graphic design, printing, insurance, website management, data storage, administration and event delivery. The Committee remains committed to ensuring that limited resources are managed responsibly and directed towards achieving the Society's objectives.

During the reporting period, financial procedures were reviewed and strengthened to ensure appropriate oversight of expenditure, financial reporting and record keeping. The President, Secretary and Treasurer worked collaboratively to improve financial processes and establish clearer procedures regarding the authorisation and payment of accounts.

The Society also reviewed its banking arrangements and corrected an account classification issue by transferring the Publication Fund account from a business classification to an appropriate not-for-profit classification.

The Society continued to strengthen community engagement through a number of successful social and fundraising initiatives during the year. A highlight was the Traditional Torrone Making Demonstration Afternoon, which attracted 64 participants across two sessions and raised $1,280 for the Society's Publication Fund.

Another successful event was *Una Serata al Cinema Italiano* (Italian Film Night), attended by 101 guests and supported by sponsors including Blackwell Funerals. The event generated a net surplus of $2,980 while promoting the Society's activities and publications.

Together, these events raised $4,260 for the Publication Fund, providing valuable support for future publications, historical research, and heritage preservation initiatives. The Committee extends its sincere appreciation to Social & Event Coordinator Silvana Zerella**,** event hosts, sponsors, volunteers, and attendees whose dedication and generosity contributed significantly to the success of these activities. Special acknowledgment is also due to Committee member Cav. Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM for her efforts in securing the ongoing sponsorship of Blackwell Funerals**,** whose support as a major partner continues to strengthen the Society's expanding program of public events and community engagement.

The success of these fundraising efforts reflects a broader trend of growing community support for the Society's mission. It is encouraging that donations to the Publication Fund have continued to increase at Society events, demonstrating the confidence that members and supporters place in the Society's work. Throughout its history, the Society has received very limited external funding, apart from assistance provided by the City of Charles Sturt and Multicultural SA for the purchase of equipment. Consequently, community generosity, donations, sponsorships, and fundraising activities remain the financial lifeblood of the Society, enabling it to continue its research, publications, oral history projects, and heritage preservation activities. The Committee is deeply appreciative of this ongoing support, which is essential to advancing the Society's mission and ensuring its long-term sustainability

Governance, Leadership and Organisational Stewardship

The Committee recognises that effective governance is fundamental to the long-term success, credibility and sustainability of the Society. As the Society continues to expand its activities, publications, oral history program, partnerships and public profile, it is essential that our governance framework evolves accordingly to support this growth and ensure accountability to our members, supporters, funding bodies and the wider community.

During the reporting period, considerable effort was devoted to strengthening the Society's governance, administrative systems, financial controls and risk management practices. The Committee undertook a comprehensive review of operational procedures and established formal processes relating to financial approvals, project management, records management, oral history protocols, publication standards and reporting requirements. These measures are designed to ensure consistency, transparency and accountability across all areas of the Society's operations.

Additional Governance and Cost Management Initiative

A significant governance matter considered by the Committee during the reporting period related to the long-term sustainability, affordability and ongoing viability of the Society's oral history and publication program.

In reviewing this matter, the Committee acknowledged that the Society's capacity to undertake its extensive research, oral history and publication activities is underpinned by the substantial voluntary contributions made by members, office bearers and volunteers. The Committee recognised that these contributions represent one of the Society's most valuable resources and have been instrumental in enabling the Society to fulfil its objectives while maintaining prudent financial management.

The Committee noted that the bulk of the research, oral history interviewing, historical investigation, writing and manuscript preparation associated with the Society's publications continues to be undertaken on a voluntary basis by the President and members of the Editorial Committee. These contributions constitute a significant in-kind commitment to the Society and substantially reduce the costs that would otherwise be incurred in producing publications of a professional standard.

The Committee also acknowledged the ongoing voluntary contribution of Social Media Coordinator Rosemarie Geracitano, who provides the majority of the graphic design services associated with the Society's promotional flyers, event advertising and social media content. This contribution enhances the Society's public profile and community engagement while avoiding costs that would otherwise place additional pressure on the Society's limited financial resources.

Against this backdrop, the Committee undertook a detailed review of the costs associated with the Society's core activities, particularly the research, interviewing, transcription, editing, typesetting, graphic design, document scanning, manuscript preparation and publication of Whole-of-Life Projects and Community Organisation Histories.

The Committee recognised that, if these services were sourced externally from professional providers, the financial burden on the Society would be considerable and could significantly limit

its capacity to fulfil its objectives of researching, documenting, preserving and publishing the history of Italians in South Australia.

Following careful consideration, the Committee concluded that a number of specialised functions could be undertaken internally while maintaining the high professional standards expected of the Society's publications. This approach would not only reduce project costs significantly but would also increase the Society's capacity to document a greater number of personal stories, family histories and community organisation histories.

Accordingly, the Committee entrusted the Secretary with undertaking a range of specialised tasks associated with the Society's publication program, including:

1. Transcription of oral history interviews;
2. Editing and proofreading;
3. Document and photographic scanning;
4. Graphic design;
5. Typesetting and page layout; and
6. Preparation of manuscripts for publication.

The Committee acknowledged that these activities extend beyond the normal responsibilities associated with the office of Secretary and constitute specialised professional services provided to the Society. Consequently, it was resolved that a modest fee, substantially below prevailing commercial rates and considerably lower than professional quotations obtained by the Society, be paid for these services when undertaken on behalf of the Society.

The Committee further resolved that this arrangement would apply only to Whole-of-Life Projects and Community Organisation History Projects. The preparation, editing and production of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning* and the Society's Annual Report will continue to be undertaken on a voluntary basis and at no cost to the Society.

The decision was made in accordance with Sections 35 and 55 of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)* and Clause 23(5)(a) of the Constitution of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. In keeping with the Society's commitment to transparency and good governance, both the President and Secretary declared a conflict of interest, withdrew from the meeting while the matter was under consideration, and took no part in the discussion or decision-making process. The matter was determined solely by the remaining Committee members.

As part of its deliberations, the Committee reviewed comparative costings between externally contracted services and the proposed in-house model. It was noted that the estimated cost of undertaking, processing and publishing a two-hour oral history interview using external professional service providers could be in the order of $18,218.80.

Under the Society's in-house model, the estimated cost would be reduced to approximately:

- $2,133 for a metropolitan interview; and
- $2,208 for a country interview.

The Committee noted that this represents a saving in the order of $15,000 to $16,000 per project while maintaining professional standards of research, documentation, publication and historical preservation.

In assessing these savings, the Committee further acknowledged that the financial benefits derived from the in-house model are complemented by the extensive voluntary contributions made by members and office bearers. The Society continues to benefit from the donation of professional expertise, specialist skills and significant amounts of volunteer labour, which collectively contribute to the delivery of projects at a fraction of their commercial cost. The Committee recognised that the value of these contributions extends beyond their financial impact and reflects a strong commitment to preserving and promoting the history and heritage of South Australia's Italian community.

The Committee concluded that this initiative represents prudent financial management and responsible stewardship of the Society's resources. By combining the efforts of dedicated volunteers with carefully targeted expenditure on specialised services where required, the Society is able to maximise the value derived from its limited financial resources and ensure that funds are directed towards preserving more stories, undertaking additional projects and expanding the Society's historical archive.

Most importantly, the substantial cost savings achieved through this model, together with the ongoing voluntary commitment of members and office bearers, will enable a greater number of migrant stories, Whole-of-Life Projects, family histories and community organisation histories to be documented and preserved, many of which might otherwise remain unrecorded due to financial constraints. The Committee believes that this approach provides a sustainable framework for the future growth of the Society's oral history and publication program while ensuring the continued preservation of South Australia's Italian heritage for future generations.

Conflict of Interest Management

The Committee recognises the importance of identifying, declaring and appropriately managing actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest. As a volunteer-based organisation operating within a close-knit community, it is essential that decisions are made transparently, ethically and in the best interests of the Society.

During the reporting period, the Committee reviewed its governance practices relating to conflicts of interest and reinforced the requirement that Committee members declare any personal, professional or financial interests that may influence, or be perceived to influence, the exercise of their duties. Where appropriate, members with a declared conflict were excluded from discussions and decision-making processes relating to the matter concerned.

The Society remains committed to maintaining the confidence of its members, supporters, partners and the broader community by ensuring that all decisions are made with integrity, accountability and impartiality.

Recognising its responsibility as custodian of historically significant material, the Committee also reviewed procedures governing the collection, use, preservation and publication of oral histories and archival material. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that interviews are conducted

ethically, appropriate permissions are obtained and historical records are preserved in accordance with accepted oral history and archival practices.

The Committee further examined the Society's exposure to operational and organisational risks. Investigations were undertaken into obtaining Public and Products Liability Insurance and Associations Liability Insurance to provide appropriate protection for the Society, its committee members, volunteers, participants and members of the public attending Society activities.

The Committee also commenced investigations regarding registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC), recognising the potential benefits of charitable registration, including enhanced governance, greater public confidence, improved eligibility for grants and long-term organisational sustainability.

Importantly, governance extends beyond compliance and administration. It encompasses stewardship of the Society's vision, reputation and legacy. Every interview conducted, publication produced and historical record preserved contributes to an enduring body of knowledge that will benefit future generations. The Committee remains committed to ensuring that the Society is governed with integrity, managed responsibly and positioned strategically to fulfil its mission well into the future.

Volunteers and Community Support

The achievements outlined in this report would not have been possible without the extraordinary contribution of our volunteers.

Committee members, researchers, interviewers, writers, editors, proofreaders, photographers, event organisers and supporters have collectively contributed thousands of hours to the Society's work. Their commitment enables the Society to undertake projects that would otherwise be beyond its financial capacity.

The value of their contribution cannot be overstated. Through their dedication, important stories are preserved, publications are produced and the history of Italians in South Australia continues to be documented for future generations.

I extend my sincere thanks to every volunteer, member, contributor, donor, sponsor and supporter who has assisted the Society throughout the year.

Looking Forward

As the Society moves into the coming year, it remains committed to expanding its historical collections, strengthening community engagement and continuing its important work of documenting the Italian South Australian experience.

Priorities for the next twelve months include progressing the publication of *A Community United: The Story of the Coordinating Italian Committee Inc.* following completion of the review process, expanding the Society's oral history archive, developing new publication projects including the collection of stories for *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Vol. 3*, digitising historical materials and encouraging greater community participation in preserving migrant stories and family histories.

As part of its ongoing commitment to preserving the history and experiences of South Australia's Italian community, the Society is continuing its oral history program through the Community Organisation History Projects and other interview initiatives. A number of interviews have already been recorded, and the Society currently holds at least six oral histories that have yet to be fully processed. During 2026-2027, the Society looks forward to processing and researching these valuable personal stories, with the aim of publishing and sharing them with the broader community. This work will ensure that important memories, experiences and community histories are preserved for future generations and remain accessible as part of the documented history of Italian migration and settlement in South Australia.

Financially and culturally, the Society looks forward to the *Ballo in Maschera* to celebrate *Carnevale* in February 2027. This event will showcase one of Italy's most enduring and iconic cultural traditions while also serving as an important fundraising initiative. Funds raised through the evening will support the Society's expanding program of activities aimed at preserving, documenting and promoting the migration history and cultural heritage of Italians in South Australia.

The successful completion and launch of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Vol. 2* demonstrate what can be achieved through the dedication of our volunteers, researchers, writers, editors and supporters. Together with our ongoing research and publication initiatives, this work reinforces the Society's role as a custodian of South Australia's Italian heritage and a leading contributor to the preservation of migrant history.

With a growing archive, an expanding body of published work and the continued support of our members, volunteers, donors and community partners, the Society is well positioned to build upon its achievements and ensure that the rich history of Italian settlement in South Australia remains accessible, understood and appreciated by future generations.

While much has been achieved, many stories remain to be told. Every interview, every publication and every project contribute to preserving an important chapter of South Australia's history.

As I often remind members and supporters, whenever we bury a loved one, a whole library is buried with them unless their story has been captured and preserved.

Together, we can ensure those stories endure.

Acknowledgements

As I conclude this report, I extend my sincere thanks to every volunteer, member, contributor, donor, sponsor and supporter who has assisted the Society throughout the year. Your commitment, generosity and enthusiasm continue to strengthen our ability to preserve, document and share the history and heritage of Italians in South Australia.

I also express my heartfelt appreciation to the members of the Committee, who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to advance the objectives of the Society. My sincere thanks go to Vice-President Chev. Giuseppe (Joe) Ienco OAM OSJ, Secretary Giovanna (Jenny) Geracitano, Treasurer Tina Dichiera, Assistant Secretary Rosina Peryk, Social and Event Coordinator Silvana Zerella, Social Media and Media Liaison Coordinator Rosemarie Geracitano, and Committee Members Angela Cutri, Anna Farrugia, Lorenzo Circosta, Franca Circosta, Cllr. Dr Rachele

Tullio, Cav. Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM and Nella Santo. Their commitment, professionalism and willingness to contribute their time, expertise and experience have been instrumental to the Society's achievements throughout the year. The accomplishments outlined in this report are a testament to their dedication and to the spirit of collaboration that underpins the work of the Society.

The success of our organisation depends upon people working together with a shared sense of purpose. It is through the collective efforts of committed individuals, working collaboratively and in harmony, that the Society continues to grow, achieve its objectives and build a strong foundation for the future.

On behalf of the Committee, I thank everyone who has contributed to the Society's success during the year and look forward to our continued work together in preserving and celebrating the rich legacy of the Italian community in South Australia.

Conclusion

The 2025-2026 year has been one of growth, achievement and renewed community engagement for the Society. Through our publications, oral history projects, community partnerships, events and growing membership, we continue to fulfil our mission of preserving and promoting the rich history and heritage of Italians in South Australia.

While we can take pride in what has been achieved, there remains much work to be done. With a growing membership base, dedicated volunteers and strong community support, the Society is well positioned to build upon its successes and continue safeguarding our collective heritage for future generations.

Together, we are building an enduring legacy that honours the sacrifices, achievements and contributions of Italians in South Australia and ensures that their stories, experiences and traditions remain accessible to future generations.

I commend this report to the members and thank you for your ongoing support of the Society.

Preserve the Past - Support the Future

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

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ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOA INC.

OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE 2025-2026

RECEIPTS				
Membership Fees				
2025-2026			$1,295.00	
2026-2027°			$1,230.00	$ 2,525.00
Donations				$ 2,895.00
Book Sales				$ 3,295.00
Grants				
	Multicultural SA		$4,978.00	
	City Charles Sturt		$2,900.00	$ 7,878.00
Events 10th Anniversary	Gala Dinner			$18,240.00
Sponsorship				$ 5,500.00
Miscellaneous				$49.00
Total Receipts				$40,382.00
EXPENDITURE				
Web Site Hosting			$884.57	
Domain Name			$48.29	
Transcriptions			$6,863.75	
Petrol Reimbursements			$550.00	
Meeting Refreshments (incl AGM)			$303.96	
Membership of History Institutions			$145.00	
Book Purchases			$103.90	
Postage			$73.55	
Stationary			$528.25	
Computer Equipment			$5,341.00	
Printer			$498.00	
Software (Canva)			$165.00	
Web Site Development			$2,900.00	
Microsoft Subscription			$219.48	
10th Anniversary Gala Dinner				
	Catering	$11,960.00		
	Band	$1,800.00		
	Anniversary Cake	$400.40	$14,160.40	
Printing			$3,976.50	
Media Wall			$448.68	
Merchant Fees (Bank)			$11.06	
PO Box Leasing			$287.00	
Society Badges			$866.25	

Certificate Frames	$141.50	
Miscellaneous	$154.76	
Transfer to Publication Fund	$5,000.00	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		$43,307.90
DECREASE IN FUNDS		$2,925.90

PETTY CASH RECONCILIATION

Opening Balance			$69.10
Petty Cash Imput		$0.00	
Less Expenditure			
	Meeting Expenses	$20.75	
	Postage	$18.65	
	Total Expenditure		$39.40
Closing Balance			$29.70

BANK RECONCILIATION

Opening Balance 1 July 2025		$26,628.34
Plus Receipts	$40,382.00	
Less Expenditure	$43,307.90	
Closing Balance 30 June 2026		$23,702.44
DECREASE IN FUNDS		$2,925.90

°Membership – 2026–2027
This section reports on membership payments for the 2026–2027 period that were received prior to the close of the 2025–2026 financial year.

Tina Dichiera
Treasurer
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ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYEMENT

PUBLICATION FUND

2025 – 2026

RECEIPTS		
Bank Charge Refund		$42.00
Sales – Whole of Life Ilario Nesci	$500.00	
Enzo Clappis	$30.00	
Andy Clappis	$30.00	$560.00
Donations		$120.00
Sponsorship		$100.00
Torrone Making Exhibition		$1,280.00
Transferred from Operational Account		$5,000.00
Total		$7,102.00
PAYMENTS		
Printing (Ilario Nesci)		$363.00
Bank Charges		$30.00
Total Payments		$393.00

BANK RECONCILIATION

Opening Balance 1 July 2025		$0.00
Plus Receipts	$7,102.00	$7,102.00
Less Payments	$393.00	$6709.00
Closing Balance 30 June 2026		$6,709.00
Increase in Funds		$6,709.00

Tina Dichiera
Treasurer
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ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE 2025-2026

CONSOLIDATED RECEIPTS

Membership Fees	$2,525.00	
Donations	$3,015.00	
Book Sales	$3,855.00	
Grants	$7,878.00	
Events	$19,520.00	
Sponsorship	$5,600.00	
Miscellaneous/Bank Charge Refund	$91.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		$42,484.00

CONSOLIDATED EXPENDITURE

Web Site Hosting	$884.57	
Domain Name	$48.29	
Transcriptions	$6,863.75	
Petrol Reimbursements	$550.00	
Meeting Refreshments (incl AGM)	$303.96	
Membership of History Institutions	$145.00	
Book Purchases	$103.90	
Postage	$73.55	
Stationary	$528.25	
Computer Equipment	$5,341.00	
Printer	$498.00	
Software (Canva)	$165.00	
Web Site Development	$2,900.00	
Microsoft Subscription	$219.48	
10th Anniversary Gala Dinner Expenses	$14,160.40	
Printing	$3,976.50	
Media Wall	$448.68	
Merchant Fees (Bank)	$41.06	
PO Box Leasing	$287.00	
Society Badges	$866.25	
Certificate Frames	$141.50	
Miscellaneous	$154.76	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		$38,700.90

CONSOLIDATED SURPLUS

Total Receipts	$42,484.00
Less Total Expenditure	$38,700.90
Nett Increase in Funds	$3,783.10

CONSOLIDATED BANK RECONCILIATION

Operation Account Opening Balance 1 July 2025	$26,628.34
Publication Account Opening Balance 1 July 2025	$0.00
Total Operating Funds	$26,628.34
Add Net Increase in Funds	$3,783.10
Total Closing Funds 30 June 2026	$30,411.44

COMPRISING

Operation Account Closing Balance 30 June 2026	$23,702.44
Publication Fund Closing Balance 30 June 2026	$6,707.00
Total Funds 30 June 2026	$30,411.44

Consolidation Note

The transfer of $5,000.00 from the Operational Account to the Publication Fund has been eliminated on consolidation and therefore does not affect the consolidated result or consolidated closing funds.

Tina Dichiera
Treasurer
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SOCIAL & EVENT COORDINATOR REPORT
2025 - 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This comprehensive report outlines the operational logistics, social engagement, and financial outcomes of our two recent major calendar events: the Torrone Making Demonstration and the Italian Film Night. Both events achieved outstanding community success, significantly expanded our public outreach, and combined to generate a substantial net total of $4,260.00 banked directly into the Italian Historical Society of SA Inc. Publication Fund with zero out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the Society.

PART 1: TORRONE MAKING DEMONSTRATION

1.1 Event Overview & Logistics



- Event Name: Traditional Torrone Making Demonstration Afternoon
- Host Venue: The private residence of our members, Sam & Anne Mercorella (Norwood, SA)
- Ticketing & Pricing: $20.00 per head inclusive of champagne and light refreshments including cheese & biscuits etc.
- Coordinator's Objective: To create an intimate, authentic culinary tradition masterclass that engages community interest, fosters cultural preservation, and raises awareness for the Society.

1.2 Attendance & Dignitary Engagement

The event was an absolute success. It proved to be so overwhelmingly popular that it required holding two separate sessions to safely accommodate the intense public demand.

- Total Turnout: 64 attendees combined across both sessions.
- Society Representation: The event was proudly attended by our President, Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano, alongside his wife Giovanna (Jenny) Geracitano – Secretary), as well as a strong turnout of our dedicated committee and general members.
- VIP Guests: We were delighted to welcome Mrs Connie Granozio, Council Member for the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters. Mrs Granozio expressed an immense interest in the Society's current preservation projects and heritage initiatives.

1.3 Operational & Social Outcomes

- Cultural Preservation: Attendees enjoyed a live, step-by-step masterclass in traditional Italian torrone techniques, actively keeping a beloved culinary heritage alive in South Australia.
- Membership & Digital Growth: The warm, social setting proved to be a highly successful recruitment touchpoint, directly resulting in gaining new formal members for the Society alongside a substantial influx of new followers on our Facebook page.

1.4 Financial Summary (Torrone Demonstration)

- Gross Revenue: $1,280.00 (64 attendees × $20 per head)
- Total Expenses: $0.00 *(Everything was donated)*
- Net Proceeds Banked: $1,280.00
- Special Acknowledgments: A heartfelt thank you goes to Sam & Anne Mercorella (and Sonia Mercorella for her assistance), who so generously opened their home and donated everything needed for the day. Because of their profound generosity, operational costs were zero, meaning 100% of the proceeds went directly into our Publication Fund.

PART 2: ITALIAN FILM NIGHT



2.1 Event Overview & Logistics

- Event Name: *Una Serata al Cinema Italiano* / Italian Film Night
- Date Held: Monday, 21 September 2026
- Venue: Palace Nova Eastend Cinemas (Rundle Street, Adelaide)
- Attendance: 101 invited guests and members
- Cultural Atmosphere: To highlight our heritage, the Italian and Australian flags were proudly displayed on entry. Guests also received written copies of information detailing the Society's history and our upcoming Masquerade Ball in February 2027.

2.2 Sponsorship & Refreshments

The financial success of this evening was fully driven by proactive community networking and corporate generosity:

- Major Event Sponsor: Through the fantastic efforts of Cav Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM, the Society secured a major $2,000.00 cash sponsorship from Blackwell Funerals. This contribution completely absorbed our venue overheads.
- Refreshment Sponsor: An Officeworks Store Manager generously sponsored the Society by donating individual bottles of water, which were given out to our 101 invited guests as a complimentary welcome gesture.

2.3 Guest Experience & Feedback

Despite a fairly long wait outside due to theatre scheduling issues, our guests remained in wonderfully high spirits and shared a lot of positive comments. Attendees explicitly noted how much they loved the welcoming atmosphere, the complimentary water, the proud national flag displays, and the useful informational flyers distributed by the committee.

2.4 Coordinator’s Observations & Venue Challenges

From a coordination standpoint, operations at Palace Nova Eastend did not go entirely according to plan. We experienced distinct trouble with venue management as we were unable to get into the theatre room on time. This unexpected delay kept our 101 guests waiting in the foyer. If the Society is to hold another film night in the future, we will need a lot stricter clarification, firmer guarantees, and clearer communication from cinema management regarding exact room access times and entry protocols before signing a venue contract.

2.5 Financial Summary (Film Night)

- Ticket Sales Revenue: $2,525.00
- Corporate Sponsorship (Blackwell Funerals): $2,000.00
- Total Gross Income: $4,525.00
- Less Venue Cost (Palace Nova Invoice): -$1,545.00
- Net Proceeds Banked: $2,980.00

PART 3: FINANCIAL RECONCILIATION SUMMARY

Event Name	Gross Income	Total Expenses	Net Profit Banked
Torrone Demonstration Afternoon	$1,280.00	$0.00	$1,280.00
Italian Film Night (Palace Nova)	$4,525.00	$1,545.00	$2,980.00
COMBINED RUNNING TOTALS	$5,805.00	$1,545.00	$4,260.00

Note: All $4,260.00 in combined net profit has been successfully deposited into the IHSSA Publication Fund to support future historical research, book prints, and archiving resources.

PART 4: COORDINATOR'S CONCLUDING OUTLOOK FOR THE YEAR

All in all, the year has been incredibly busy, active, and rewarding for our Social & Event calendar**.** Despite minor operational hurdles with commercial venue management at the cinema, the deep generosity of our community supporters: such as Sam & Anne Mercorella, Cav Teresa D'Acqua OAM via Blackwell Funerals, and our corporate partners at Officeworks, has completely protected the Society from financial risk.

More importantly, the wave of new members from our Torrone afternoon, our growing Facebook following, and the beautiful feedback from our 101 film night guests show that the public is highly enthusiastic about our work. We have built magnificent momentum, which we will now channel directly into planning our spectacular Masquerade Ball for February 2027.

I thank the president Mr Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano and the committee for having the confidence in me to allow me to organise these functions and I look forward to a wonderful night with our Masquerade Ball 6th February 2027.

Silvana Zerella
Social & Event Coordinator.
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SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT 2025-2026

Overview

During the 2026 reporting period, social media continued to play an important role in strengthening the public profile of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. (IHSSA). Through regular digital communication, the Society shared its activities, promoted cultural events, celebrated Italian Australian heritage and encouraged greater community awareness of its work in preserving historical records, family stories and traditions.

The Society's social media presence provided an accessible platform to connect with members, families, descendants of Italian migrants, community organisations and the broader South Australian public.

Between 1 January and 18 October 2026, the Society published 58 pieces of content, generating substantial visibility, engagement and audience growth. These results demonstrate the value of maintaining an active digital presence to support the Society's objectives and extend its reach beyond its immediate membership.

Social Media Performance

The following figures summarise the performance recorded in the supplied social media report.

- 102,080 impressions generated across published content.
- 162,174 views recorded.
- 90,598 viewers reached, as reported in the platform export.
- 1,353 interactions recorded across content.
- 1,603 reactions received.
- 433 shares, helping extend the distribution of the Society's content.
- 248 comments, reflecting audience participation and discussion.
- 53 saves, indicating that some content was retained for future reference.
- 155 net follows, representing growth in the Society's online audience.

These figures reflect the cumulative results recorded in the supplied export and demonstrate the potential of social media to increase awareness of the Society and its activities.

Content Highlights and Key Achievements

Several posts achieved particularly strong results during the reporting period, highlighting the value of content that combines cultural relevance, community participation and clear promotional messaging.

Torrone Making Afternoon

The Torrone Making Afternoon was the highest-performing post by impressions, generating 17,062 impressions, 161 interactions and 87 net follows attributed in the report.

This result demonstrates the strong appeal of activities that celebrate Italian traditions, food and intergenerational cultural knowledge. Such content provides an opportunity to connect audiences

with familiar customs while introducing younger generations and the wider community to the traditions that form part of Italian Australian heritage.

Carnevale: Un Ballo in Maschera

The Save the Date announcement for Carnevale: Un Ballo in Maschera generated 16,597 impressions and 170 interactions, with 29 net follows recorded.

The strong performance of this announcement highlights the value of promoting upcoming events through engaging, visually appealing content. Events that combine Italian culture, entertainment and community participation offer opportunities to attract new audiences and encourage involvement in the Society's activities.

Publication Launch and Community Recognition

A post published on behalf of the President and Committee generated 14,003 impressions and 127 interactions.

Content recognising the Society's achievements, contributors, volunteers and supporters helped communicate the importance of collective community involvement in preserving Italian Australian history. These posts also provided an opportunity to acknowledge the individuals and organisations whose contributions support the Society's work.

Other content throughout the reporting period supported the promotion of publications, historical information, radio appearances, cultural activities and upcoming events, contributing to a varied and informative online presence.

Audience Engagement and Community Reach

The reporting period demonstrated that social media could serve as more than an announcement platform. It enables the Society to encourage discussion, share community achievements and create opportunities for people to engage with their cultural heritage.

The 433 shares recorded across the reporting period were particularly valuable in extending the potential reach of the Society's messages beyond its existing audience. Shared content can introduce the Society to new individuals and families, including those who may not yet be members or regular participants in its activities.

The 248 comments and 1,603 reactions also demonstrate participation in response to published content. Together with the 1,353 recorded interactions, these results provide useful indicators of audience response.

The Society's online communication supports its broader mission by helping make historical knowledge, cultural activities and community stories more accessible to the public.

Supporting the Society's Strategic Objectives

Social media has contributed to the Society's broader objectives in several important areas.

Preserving Italian Australian Heritage

Digital content provides a means of sharing historical information, family stories, photographs, cultural traditions and the experiences of Italian migrants and their descendants. This helps maintain connections between generations and encourages continued interest in the preservation of community history.

Promoting Publications and Research

Social media offers an effective channel for promoting the Society's publications and highlighting the research, editorial work and personal contributions involved in documenting Italian Australian experiences. It also provides opportunities to direct interested readers towards purchasing publications and learning more about the Society's work.

Encouraging Participation and Membership

Promotional posts help communicate upcoming activities and invite members, families and the wider community to become involved. Increased online visibility provides an opportunity to strengthen existing relationships and encourage prospective members to engage with the Society.

Strengthening Community Partnerships

Acknowledgements of sponsors, volunteers, contributors and partner organisations help recognise the collaborative effort behind the Society's activities. Digital communication also provides a platform for celebrating these relationships and demonstrating the value of community support.

Increasing Public Awareness

The Society's online presence helps bring its work to a wider audience, supporting greater awareness of Italian Australian history and the importance of preserving the experiences, achievements and cultural contributions of Italian migrants in South Australia.

A Significant Milestone in Our Digital Journey

During 2026, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. proudly reached a significant social media milestone, growing its Facebook community to 1,500 followers.

This achievement represents an important step in expanding the Society's digital presence and strengthening its connections with the Italian Australian community and the wider public.

While the number of followers is an important indicator of audience growth, the true significance of this milestone lies in the opportunities it creates to share and preserve Italian Australian heritage.

Each new follower represents an opportunity to introduce someone to the Society's publications, historical research, cultural events, community activities and ongoing efforts to document the experiences of Italian migrants and their descendants.

The Society's growing online audience reflects continued interest in Italian history, culture and traditions, as well as the importance of making these stories accessible through modern communication platforms.

Throughout the reporting period, social media content celebrating cultural traditions, promoting events, recognising community contributions and sharing the Society's achievements helped strengthen its visibility and encourage participation.

Reaching 1,500 followers is also an opportunity to acknowledge the ongoing support of members, volunteers, contributors, community organisations and individuals who engage with and share the Society's content.

Their involvement helps extend the Society's message beyond its immediate membership, creating new opportunities for historical discovery, cultural connection and community participation.

Looking Towards the Future

As the Society's digital community continues to grow, social media will remain an important part of its communication and community engagement strategy.

The Society aims to build on this milestone by sharing more historical stories, highlighting its research and publications, promoting upcoming cultural activities and encouraging greater participation from younger generations.

The achievement of 1,500 followers reinforces the Society's commitment to ensuring that Italian Australian history remains visible, accessible and relevant in an increasingly digital world.

1,500 connections to a shared passion for preserving our Italian Australian heritage.

Conclusion

The social media results recorded between 1 January, and 18 October 2026 demonstrate that digital communication is an important tool in advancing the work of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

With 102,080 impressions, 162,174 views, 1,353 interactions and 155 net follows recorded, the Society has continued to build its online visibility and create opportunities to connect with the wider community.

The strong performance of cultural activities, event announcements and community-focused content highlights the value of presenting Italian Australian heritage in ways that are engaging, accessible and relevant to contemporary audiences.

Looking ahead, the Society will continue to use social media to promote its publications and activities, encourage community participation, strengthen partnerships and share the stories that form an essential part of South Australia's Italian Australian heritage.

By combining historical preservation with effective digital communication, the Society can continue to reach new audiences while ensuring that the memories, achievements and traditions of generations past remain accessible and valued by generations to come.

Rosemarie Geracitano
Social Media Coordinator
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Media Relations and Publicity Report 2025–2026

During the reporting period, 2025–2026, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. continued to strengthen its public communications and community engagement through the preparation and distribution of media releases highlighting significant historical publications, cultural achievements and community milestones.

Guided by the strategic direction of the Society's Media Liaison and Social Media Director, Rosemarie Geracitano, two formal media releases were developed to highlight significant publication launches and reinforce the Society's commitment to researching, documenting, preserving and sharing the history of Italian migration to South Australia.

These releases provided opportunities to acknowledge the contributions of Italian migrants and their descendants, celebrate the achievements of community organisations and recognise the individuals, volunteers and supporters whose dedication makes historical preservation possible.

1. La Nostra Casa – The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.

Media release issued: 22 May 2026 | Publication launched: 2 May 2026

The Society issued a media release congratulating Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc. on the official launch of *La Nostra Casa – The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc*., authored by IHSSA President Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano and published by the Italian Historical Society of SA Inc.

The publication represents an important contribution to preserving the history of the Abruzzese and Molisani communities in South Australia. Drawing upon oral histories, archival records, photographs and personal recollections, the book documents the experiences of migrants who established new lives in Australia while maintaining strong connections to their regional identities, cultural traditions and community values.

The media release highlighted the historical development of the Club, tracing its beginnings through the Centro Adriatico Club in 1967 and the eventual establishment of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc. in 1987. Emphasis was placed on the dedication of the founding generation, whose voluntary labour, fundraising and collective determination helped establish an enduring cultural and social institution.

The release also recognised the importance of community organisations as places of belonging, where language, traditions, friendships and cultural identities could be maintained and passed down through generations.

Acknowledgement was extended to the Club's President, Lucia Di Sante, Vice-President Angelo Primavera, the Committee, Foundation Members and all individuals who contributed to preserving the organisation's history.

Through this release, the Society demonstrated its commitment to supporting other Italian community organisations in documenting their histories and ensuring that their contributions to South Australia's multicultural heritage are recognised.

2. La Partenza Vol. 2 – Celebrating Italian Australian Stories and Achievements

Media release issued: 14 October 2026 | Launch venue: St Peters Banquet Hall

The second media release celebrated the launch of the Society's latest historical publication, *La Partenza Voyage to a New Beginning, Volume 2*, at the St Peters Banquet Hall.

The publication brought together personal histories, family experiences and accounts of achievement that reflect the diverse contributions of Italian migrants and their descendants to South Australian society.

The media release highlighted stories spanning agriculture, education, dentistry, law, public service and community leadership. These included the experiences and achievements of Grace Cocci, Cosimo Cutri, Dr Tony Ielasi, the Musolino and Giorgio families, Judge Pasquale Tiberio Pirone, Maria Russo, Paul Battistella, the Honourable Mario Feleppa OAM and the Honourable Carmel Zollo.

By presenting these accounts, the Society sought to demonstrate that Italian migration history extends beyond the challenges of settlement to encompass the lasting social, cultural, professional and economic contributions of successive generations.

The release also acknowledged the extensive work undertaken by the Editorial Committee, comprising Mario Russo, Laura Di Martino, Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano, Cav. Angela Scarino, Associate Professor Adelaide University and Rosemarie Geracitano.

Special recognition was extended to Society Secretary Jenny Geracitano for her considerable contribution to compiling the publication, coordinating documentation, typesetting stories and arranging photographs.

The media release further recognised the individuals and organisations whose generosity contributed to the successful launch, including:
Mayor Robert Bria, Mayor City of Norwood, Payneham & St. Peters for making the St Peters Banquet Hall available.
Cav. Angela Scarino, Associate Professor Adelaide University, who served as Master of Ceremonies.
Silvana Zerella and Lorenzo Circosta, for their valuable volunteer contributions.
Eclipse Real Estate, Urban Glow and PV Podiatry, for their sponsorship and support.
Frank Taddeo of Pasta Deli, for providing refreshments.
Antonio Dottore of Radio Italia Uno, for broadcasting the occasion and helping share the celebration with the wider community.

The release reinforced the importance of preserving personal histories before valuable photographs, documents and first-hand memories before they are lost. It also encouraged families to recognise the historical significance of their own experiences and consider contributing to the Society's ongoing preservation efforts.

3. Strengthening the Society's Public Profile

Together, these two media releases represented an important component of the Society's communication activities during the reporting period.

Both publications demonstrated the value of historical storytelling as a means of strengthening cultural identity, recognising community achievements and encouraging intergenerational connections.

The preparation of these releases also contributed to the development of a more structured and professional approach to the Society's external communications. By documenting significant milestones in a formal media format, the Italian Historical Society of SA Inc. established material suitable for sharing with community organisations, media representatives, supporters and other interested audiences.

The releases supported several important communication objectives: promoting the Society's historical publications, acknowledging community contributions, recognising partnerships and encouraging greater awareness of the importance of preserving Italian Australian heritage.

While the releases documented two distinct publication launches, both reflected the same purpose: ensuring that the experiences, sacrifices and achievements of Italian migrants and their descendants remain part of South Australia's recorded history.

4. Looking Ahead

Building upon the media communication activities undertaken during 2025–2026, the Society aims to continue developing its public relations and media engagement initiatives.

Future priorities include strengthening relationships with community media outlets, preparing media releases for significant events and publication launches, increasing awareness of the Society's historical research and encouraging greater participation from families and community organisations.

The Society also recognises the importance of maintaining consistent and professional communication across its website, social media platforms, newsletters and external publicity materials.

Through these initiatives, the Italian Historical Society of SA Inc. will continue working to ensure that the stories of Italian migrants and their descendants are not only preserved in publications and archives but are also actively shared with the wider South Australian community.

The two media releases prepared during the reporting period reflect the Society's continued dedication to preserving the past, celebrating community achievements and strengthening the connection between Italian Australian history and future generations.

Rosemarie Geracitano
Media Liaison / Social Media Director
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.
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Summary of Activities 2025 - 2026

During 2025–2026, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. continued to advance its objectives of researching, documenting, preserving and promoting the history, heritage and contributions of Italians in South Australia. Through its publication program, oral history activities, community engagement initiatives, cultural events, media participation and strategic partnerships, the Society maintained a strong focus on preserving historical records while fostering greater awareness and appreciation of the Italian Australian experience.

A major focus of the Society's activities during the year was the continuation of its research and publication program. Significant achievements included the publication of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning, Volume 2* and *La Nostra Casa: The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.*, both of which make important contributions to the documentation and preservation of migration stories, family histories and community organisation histories within South Australia's Italian community. The Society also continued its oral history and historical research activities, expanding its archive of community records, photographs and personal histories. As at 30 June 2026, the Society held at least six completed oral history interviews awaiting transcription, editing and publication, providing a strong foundation for future research and publication projects.

The Society further strengthened its standing within the oral history and local history sectors through the preparation of scholarly and community-focused articles, including *Reconstructing Community Through Memory: Oral History and the Founding of Centro Adriatico and Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.* and *Recent Activities of IHSSA*. These publications highlighted the Society's contribution to preserving migrant histories and community heritage and enhanced its profile within the broader oral history community. In recognition of this work, the Society was invited to present a paper at the biennial national conference of Oral History Australia to be held in Adelaide in December 2026 and will also exhibit its publications and promotional material at the conference.

Community engagement remained central to the Society's activities. The Society participated in South Australia's History Festival through the presentation of *Little Suitcases, Big Journeys*, which explored the experiences of child migrants from Friuli Venezia Giulia. It also supported intergenerational initiatives that brought together students and senior members of the Italian community to share stories, traditions and cultural experiences. These activities strengthened community connections, promoted cross-generational understanding and encouraged greater interest in family and local history.

The Society's cultural and fundraising activities continued to provide opportunities for community participation while generating support for its publication program. Events conducted during the year included two Torrone Making Afternoons and *Una Serata al Cinema Italiano*. Together with donations received at Society functions, these initiatives raised $4,260 for the Publication Fund, helping to support future publications, oral history projects and heritage preservation activities. The Committee was particularly encouraged by the ongoing growth in donations received at Society events, reflecting increasing community confidence in and support for the Society's work.

The Society also maintained a strong public profile through media engagement and community outreach. Radio presentations and interviews promoted the Society's publications, oral history activities and historical research, increasing public awareness of the history and contributions of

Italians in South Australia. The Society further benefited from the support of sponsors, community organisations and local businesses, including the continuation of sponsorship from Blackwell Funerals, which assisted in the delivery of events, publications and community initiatives throughout the year.

Importantly, many of the Society's achievements during the reporting period were made possible through the substantial voluntary contributions of members, office bearers and supporters. The bulk of the historical research, oral history interviewing, manuscript preparation, editorial work and project coordination associated with the Society's publication program continued to be undertaken on a voluntary basis by the President and members of the Editorial Committee. In addition, much of the graphic design work for publications, promotional materials and social media communications was provided voluntarily by Social Media Coordinator Rosemarie Geracitano. These significant in-kind contributions enabled the Society to maintain a high level of activity, deliver projects of a professional standard and maximise the value derived from its limited financial resources.

Collectively, the Society's activities during 2025–2026 resulted in the publication of two major historical works, the continued expansion of its oral history and archival collections, the delivery of significant community and cultural events, the raising of $4,260 for future publication projects, and increased recognition of its work within the oral history and heritage sectors. These outcomes have strengthened the Society's capacity to preserve migrant stories, document community history, promote cultural heritage and engage future generations. The Committee acknowledges that these achievements were made possible through the dedication of its volunteers, the commitment of its members, the generosity of sponsors and donors, and the ongoing support of the wider community. Through these collective efforts, the Society continues to make a valuable contribution to preserving and promoting the rich history and heritage of Italians in South Australia.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
©2026



ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Post-Christmas Lunch at Buonasera

Good food, warm hospitality and wonderful company













Thank you to the Buonasera team for a wonderful lunch filled with laughter, stories and festive memories.

Buon cibo, bella compagnia!

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Poster Presentation to

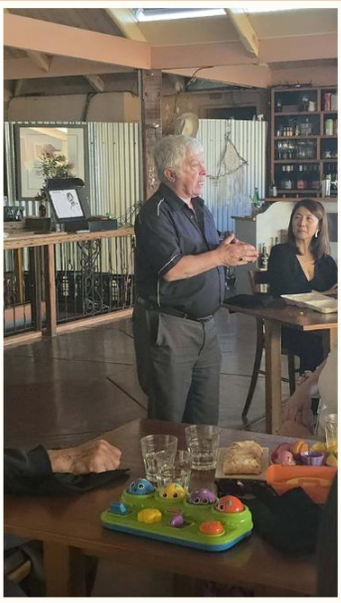
Enzo & Andy Clappis

Our Place, Willunga Hill • 11 January 2026











Celebrating Enzo & Andy Clappis and their contribution to our shared Italian food heritage.

A special occasion to remember.

Special Recognition and Appreciation

The continued success of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia throughout 2025–2026 is a testament to the dedication, generosity and commitment of a remarkable group of volunteers, Committee members, supporters and community partners. As a volunteer-led organisation devoted to preserving and promoting the history, heritage and cultural contributions of Italians in South Australia, the Society depends upon individuals who willingly contribute their time, expertise and enthusiasm in support of its objectives.

Over the past year, the Society has undertaken an ambitious program of publications, historical research, community events, cultural activities and heritage preservation projects. These achievements could not have been realised without the collective efforts of many individuals working both publicly and behind the scenes. It is therefore fitting that special recognition be given to those whose contributions have helped strengthen the Society and advance its mission.

Silvana Zerella (Social and Events Coordinator | Committee Member)

The Society extends its sincere appreciation to Silvana Zerella, whose enthusiasm, dedication and commitment have made a significant contribution to the Society's activities during the year.

Since joining the Committee, Silvana has embraced her role with energy and professionalism, demonstrating a genuine passion for promoting the Society's work and encouraging wider community participation. Her ability to engage with local businesses, supporters and community organisations has helped strengthen relationships that are essential to the Society's ongoing development.

One of Silvana's most notable achievements has been her success in securing sponsorship support from a number of local businesses, including Eclipse Real Estate, Urban Glow, PV Podiatry and Frank Taddeo of Pasta Deli. These partnerships contributed to the publication and launch of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning, Volume 2*, while also fostering greater community awareness of the Society's work.

Silvana also played a leading role in the organisation and promotion of *Una Serata al Cinema Italiano*, an event that successfully brought together members, supporters and friends of the Society to celebrate Italian cinema and culture while raising valuable funds for future publication projects. Her attention to detail, organisational skills and commitment to ensuring the event's success were greatly appreciated by both the Committee and attendees.

In addition, she coordinated a highly successful Torrone Making Demonstration that attracted sixty-four participants across two sessions and generated valuable funds for the Society's Publication Fund. The event not only achieved its fundraising objectives but also provided participants with an opportunity to learn about a traditional Italian confection and the cultural significance associated with its preparation.

Looking towards the future, Silvana has been instrumental in laying the foundations for the Society's celebration of one of Italy's most iconic cultural traditions, Carnevale. Through her initiative and leadership, planning has commenced for a Carnevale Gala Mask Ball, to be held on 6 February 2027. The event is intended to showcase the rich history, elegance and pageantry associated with Carnevale traditions while providing an opportunity for members and the broader community to participate in a uniquely Italian cultural experience. Her vision and enthusiasm have

already generated considerable interest, and the Gala Mask Ball promises to become a highlight of the Society's 2026–2027 calendar.

Silvana's willingness to volunteer her time, assist with numerous projects and contribute wherever required has made her an invaluable member of the Committee. Her efforts have enhanced the Society's ability to deliver meaningful cultural, educational and historical activities, and her contribution is sincerely appreciated.

Cav. Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM

The Society also records its sincere appreciation to Cav. Teresa Dall'Acqua Leonardi OAM, whose longstanding support and advocacy continue to benefit the organisation.

Teresa has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to preserving and promoting Italian heritage in South Australia. Through her extensive community networks and tireless advocacy, she has assisted the Society in building relationships and securing support for a range of initiatives.

During the year, Teresa played a significant role in securing Blackwell Funerals as a major sponsor of *Una Serata al Cinema Italiano*. This sponsorship provided valuable financial assistance and contributed to the success of the event. Her contribution reflects a longstanding commitment to supporting projects that preserve and share the history and cultural legacy of the Italian community.

The Society remains deeply grateful for Teresa's encouragement, guidance and continuing support.

Recognition of Committee Service

The effective operation of the Society depends upon a dedicated Committee whose members devote countless hours to planning, administration, financial management, communications, research, event coordination and membership services. Their work is often undertaken quietly and without recognition, yet it forms the foundation upon which all Society activities are built.

Giovanna (Jenny) Geracitano (Secretary)

Special appreciation is extended to Giovanna (Jenny) Geracitano, whose service as Secretary continues to be essential to the efficient administration and governance of the Society.

Jenny's attention to detail, organisational ability and commitment to maintaining high administrative standards ensure that the Society operates professionally and effectively. She is responsible for coordinating Committee meetings, preparing agendas and minutes, managing correspondence, maintaining official records and supporting the implementation of Committee decisions.

Beyond these formal responsibilities, Jenny serves as a vital link between Committee members, helping to ensure that projects proceed efficiently and that the Society's administration remains responsive to members' needs. Her commitment and professionalism are greatly valued and deeply appreciated.

Tina Dichiera (Treasurer)

The Society also expresses its sincere gratitude to Tina Dichiera, whose careful stewardship of the Society's finances provides a strong foundation for its ongoing activities and future development.

As Treasurer, Tina manages financial reporting, budgeting, banking responsibilities and compliance requirements with diligence and professionalism. Her prudent management of the Society's resources has ensured that funds are allocated responsibly and that financial obligations are met in a timely manner.

The Committee greatly values Tina's thoughtful advice and commitment to ensuring the Society's long-term financial sustainability. Her contribution plays an important role in enabling the Society to undertake publications, events and historical projects with confidence.

Rosina Peryk (Assistant Secretary)

Special recognition is afforded to Rosina Peryk, Assistant Secretary, whose dedication, reliability and willingness to assist have made her an indispensable member of the Committee.

Rosina provides valuable administrative support across a broad range of Society activities and works tirelessly to ensure the smooth operation of Committee functions. Her attention to detail and readiness to assist wherever needed have contributed significantly to the successful delivery of numerous projects and events.

Particularly noteworthy is Rosina's role in maintaining communication with members. Through her efforts, members remain informed about Society activities, publications, events and opportunities for participation. Her commitment to fostering strong connections between the Society and its membership has helped strengthen engagement and ensure that members feel connected to the organisation's work and objectives.

Rosina's dedication reflects the spirit of volunteerism that lies at the heart of the Society's success.

Rosemarie Geracitano (Social Media and Media Liaison Coordinator)

Particular recognition is extended to Rosemarie Geracitano, whose work as Social Media and Media Liaison Coordinator has significantly expanded the Society's public profile and strengthened its engagement with the broader community.

Under Rosemarie's direction, the Society has continued to develop its online presence through regular social media content, promotion of events, publication announcements and the sharing of historical information and community stories. Her efforts have enabled the Society to reach audiences beyond its traditional membership base and have attracted increased interest in its activities and publications.

Rosemarie has also played an important role in coordinating media coverage, developing promotional materials and ensuring that the Society's achievements and activities receive appropriate public recognition. Through effective communication and strategic promotion, she has helped raise awareness of the Society's important work within both the Italian Australian community and the wider South Australian public.

Her contribution has been instrumental in ensuring that the Society remains visible, relevant and connected to contemporary audiences while continuing to fulfil its historical mission.

Franca Circosta (Committee Member)

Special thanks are extended to Franca Circosta for recording video footage at many of the Society's functions and events throughout the year. Her efforts have helped preserve a valuable visual record of the Society's activities and cultural heritage for future generations.

The Contribution of the Committee

While individual contributions deserve recognition, the Society's success ultimately reflects the collective efforts of the entire Committee.

Throughout the year, Committee members have contributed countless voluntary hours to planning events, conducting research, preparing publications, maintaining archives, developing partnerships, supporting fundraising initiatives, responding to membership enquiries and promoting the Society's work. Their combined expertise, commitment and passion for preserving Italian heritage have enabled the Society to deliver a diverse and successful program of activities.

The Committee's willingness to work collaboratively and support one another has been a significant factor in the Society's continued growth and achievements. Their collective efforts ensure that the stories, experiences and contributions of Italian migrants and their descendants continue to be recorded, preserved and shared with future generations.

Appreciation of Members, Volunteers and Supporters

The Society also extends its heartfelt thanks to its members, volunteers, sponsors and supporters.

The strength of the Society lies in the active participation of its membership through attendance at events, support of fundraising initiatives, contributions to publications and encouragement of the Society's work. Members continue to play an essential role in helping the Society fulfil its objectives.

Special thanks are extended to the many individuals and families who have shared photographs, personal documents, oral histories, memorabilia and family records, enriching the Society's archives and supporting its research and publications.

The Society also acknowledges the generosity of its sponsors and community partners whose support helps make many of its activities possible and strengthens its capacity to preserve and promote Italian history and heritage

Conclusion

The achievements of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia during 2025–2026 demonstrate what can be accomplished through dedication, cooperation and a shared commitment to preserving our community's history.

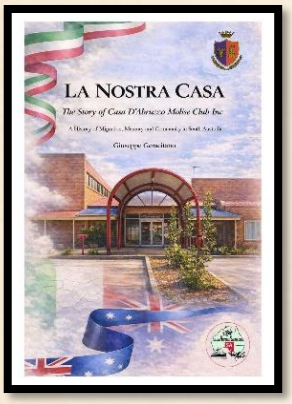
Whether through leadership, administration, financial stewardship, communications, event management, fundraising, research or volunteer service, the individuals recognised in this report have made outstanding contributions to the Society and its members.

On behalf of the Society, we express our sincere gratitude to all who have contributed during the year. Your commitment ensures that the stories, traditions and achievements of Italians in South Australia will continue to be preserved, celebrated and shared for generations to come.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
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La Nostra Casa: Migration, Memory and the Making of Community

The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc. and the Abruzzese-Molisani Experience in South Australia



One of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia's most significant publication projects undertaken during the year was *La Nostra Casa: The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Inc.* The publication documents the migration, settlement and community-building experiences of Abruzzese and Molisani migrants in South Australia, while also examining the development of one of the State's most successful regional Italian organisations. Drawing upon oral histories, archival sources, photographs and community records, the book demonstrates how migrants reconstructed community, identity and cultural continuity in a new country while making important contributions to South Australia's social and multicultural development.

A Homeland of Mountains, Villages and Tradition

The opening chapter situates readers within the historical and cultural landscapes of Abruzzo and Molise, regions characterised by mountainous terrain, agricultural economies and strong village identities. The book explains how generations of rural life fostered values of family solidarity, self-reliance, cooperation and religious devotion. Patron saints, feast days, parish life and community celebrations occupied a central place in local culture, while close social networks reinforced a powerful sense of belonging.

The chapter also examines the economic and social conditions that encouraged migration. Limited industrial development, fragmented landholdings, agricultural hardship and the destruction caused by the Second World War contributed to widespread emigration. For many families, migration to Australia offered the possibility of economic security and social advancement unavailable in their home regions.

Departure and Arrival

The second chapter explores the deeply personal nature of migration. Through first-hand accounts, migrants describe the difficult decision to leave parents, relatives and familiar communities behind. The narrative records the sacrifices required to finance migration, the emotional strain of separation and the uncertainty associated with beginning a new life on the other side of the world.

The chapter also documents assisted migration schemes established under post-war agreements between Italy and Australia. Upon arrival, many migrants entered physically demanding occupations including construction, manufacturing, brickmaking and roadworks, while women often found employment in factories or contributed to family businesses. Despite language barriers, unfamiliar customs and difficult working conditions, migrants gradually established homes, reunited families and built economic security through hard work and perseverance.

Recreating Community in Adelaide

Settlement patterns played a critical role in the formation of community institutions. Families often followed relatives and *paesani* to Adelaide's inner western and northern suburbs, particularly Prospect, Hindmarsh, Croydon, Torrensville and Welland. The book describes how these neighbourhoods enabled migrants to recreate important elements of village life.

Dialect remained widely spoken, while family traditions such as tomato-growing, winemaking, passata production and sausage-making became annual rituals that reinforced connections with the homeland. These practices provided cultural continuity while helping migrants adapt to Australian society. As families became more dispersed and younger generations increasingly embraced Australian identities, the need emerged for formal organisations capable of preserving traditions and fostering a sense of collective belonging.

The Birth of Centro Adriatico

The publication identifies the establishment of Centro Adriatico in 1967 as a pivotal moment in the development of the Abruzzese-Molisani community. The chapter highlights the leadership of Domenico Michele Colanero, whose home often served as a meeting place for newly arrived migrants and whose commitment to community organisation proved instrumental in the Club's formation.

Originally operating from private homes, garages and hired halls, Centro Adriatico rapidly became one of Adelaide's most active Italian organisations. Through picnics, dances, festivals and social functions, the Club provided friendship, support and opportunities for cultural expression while strengthening social networks amongst migrants from the Adriatic regions of Italy.

Culture, Identity and Public Visibility

A major theme of the book is the active preservation of regional identity through cultural participation. The Club organised folk-dancing groups, choirs, theatre performances and cultural exhibitions that celebrated Abruzzese and Molisani traditions. Members created traditional costumes and regularly participated in public cultural events.

Attention is given to the Club's participation in the National Italian Festivals of 1976 and 1978, where members proudly marched beneath banners representing their heritage. These events demonstrated both regional pride and the growing confidence of Italian Australians within multicultural South Australia. The chapter also highlights porchetta as one of the Club's signature traditions, symbolising hospitality, continuity and community.

Faith, Memory and the Cult of Saint Gabriele

Religion formed an essential component of community identity. This chapter examines devotion to Saint Gabriele dell'Addolorata, whose sanctuary at Isola del Gran Sasso occupies a special place in Abruzzese culture. Migrants brought this devotion with them to Australia, viewing the saint as a spiritual connection between homeland and diaspora.

The formation of the Committee of St Gabriel Inc. in 1984 marked a significant achievement. Supported by Father Luca Spinosi and community leaders, the committee organised annual feast celebrations and arranged for the importation of a statue of the saint from Italy. The arrival of the statue became a highly emotional and symbolic moment for the community.

The annual Feast of St Gabriel, held at St Paul's Retreat, Glen Osmond, developed into one of the largest Italian religious celebrations in South Australia. Combining Mass, processions, music, food and social gathering, attendance reached several thousand participants at its peak and became an enduring expression of community identity.

The Transition from Centro Adriatico to Casa D'Abruzzo Molise

As membership expanded, discussions emerged concerning the Club's identity and future direction. Through connections with Casa D'Abruzzo organisations in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth, community leaders including Bruno Ventura and Domenico Michele Colanero advocated for closer alignment with interstate organisations.

The adoption of the name Casa D'Abruzzo reflected growing confidence in regional identity. Subsequently, recognising the substantial contribution of Molisani members, a revised constitution was adopted and in 1981 the organisation formally became Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Incorporated. The change acknowledged both community demographics and the historic relationship between Abruzzo and Molise, which had once formed a single administrative region.

A Dream Larger Than a Club

Among the publication's most compelling chapters is the account of the decision to establish a permanent community home. Following the purchase of properties on Churchill Road, members initially considered developing a modest meeting place. However, discussions quickly evolved into a much larger vision.

Community leaders argued that future generations would require a permanent cultural home reflecting the sacrifices and achievements of the migrant generation. The decision to construct a purpose-built hall transformed the Club from a social organisation into a major community-building project requiring significant financial, organisational and volunteer commitment.

The Great Fundraising Campaign

Between 1981 and 1987, fundraising became the Club's central activity. The publication documents an extraordinary campaign involving every sector of the organisation. The Ladies Committee organised dinners, dances, raffles and social functions that generated substantial financial support while strengthening community relationships.

The Youth Group, established in 1982, organised discos, movie nights and social events that encouraged younger members to contribute actively to the project. Perhaps the most successful initiative was the Miss Abruzzo Quest, which mobilised entire families and extensive community networks. Contestants raised funds through dinners, fashion parades, picnics and other activities, generating both significant revenue and a strong sense of collective ownership of the project.

Building the Hall

Construction of the permanent Club facilities highlighted the remarkable skills and commitment within the membership. Many members worked in building trades and contributed expertise as bricklayers, steelworkers, joiners, labourers and tradesmen. Volunteer labour was frequently undertaken on weekends and after normal working hours.

The chapter records numerous challenges, including planning requirements, parking restrictions, soundproofing issues and financial pressures. Nevertheless, through ingenuity, persistence and

volunteer effort, the project was successfully completed. The resulting building became a tangible symbol of community achievement and collective endeavour.

The Opening of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise

The official opening on 11 October 1987 represented a defining moment in the history of the Abruzzese and Molisani community in South Australia. For those who attended, it symbolised decades of sacrifice, hard work and determination.

The opening celebrated not merely the completion of a building, but the realisation of a long-held dream. For the first time, the community possessed a permanent cultural home from which social, cultural, educational and religious activities could be pursued for future generations.

A Living Institution

Since its opening, the Club has remained a focal point of community life. Dinner dances, festivals, Sunday lunches, religious celebrations and special events have attracted strong participation and reinforced social connections.

The Club also embraced educational and youth initiatives. Italian language classes were established to encourage cultural transmission, while the creation of the AM Soccer Club provided opportunities for younger generations to participate in sport while maintaining links with their heritage. Although the soccer club later evolved independently, its origins lay within the broader mission of engaging young people in community life.

Legacy and the Future

The concluding chapter considers the challenges facing contemporary ethnic organisations. The children and grandchildren of migrants navigate multiple cultural identities, while changing work patterns and social expectations affect participation in traditional community organisations.

Rather than presenting a narrative of decline, the book argues that Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club's continued success reflects its capacity to adapt. Initiatives such as youth programs, family-oriented activities, cooking classes and facilities including Carmine's Playground demonstrate the Club's commitment to remaining relevant while preserving its cultural foundations.

Conclusion

La Nostra Casa demonstrates that the greatest achievement of the Abruzzese and Molisani community was not simply the construction of a clubhouse, but the creation of a lasting community. Through migration, settlement, cultural preservation, religious devotion, volunteerism and collective effort, successive generations established an institution that continues to enrich South Australia's multicultural society. The publication stands as an important contribution to the documentation of Italian regional migration and provides a lasting record of the resilience, vision and achievements of the Abruzzese and Molisani community in South Australia.

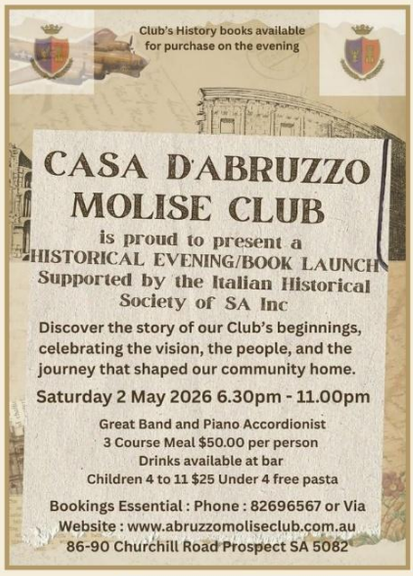
Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
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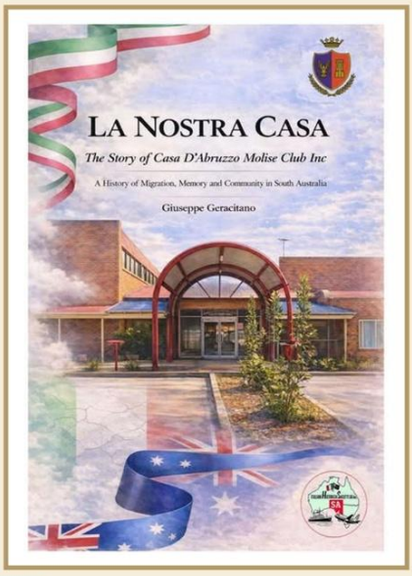
HISTORY BOOK LAUNCH

Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club Adelaide

2 May 2026

Celebrating the people, stories and heritage of our community.



















History researched and prepared by the
Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

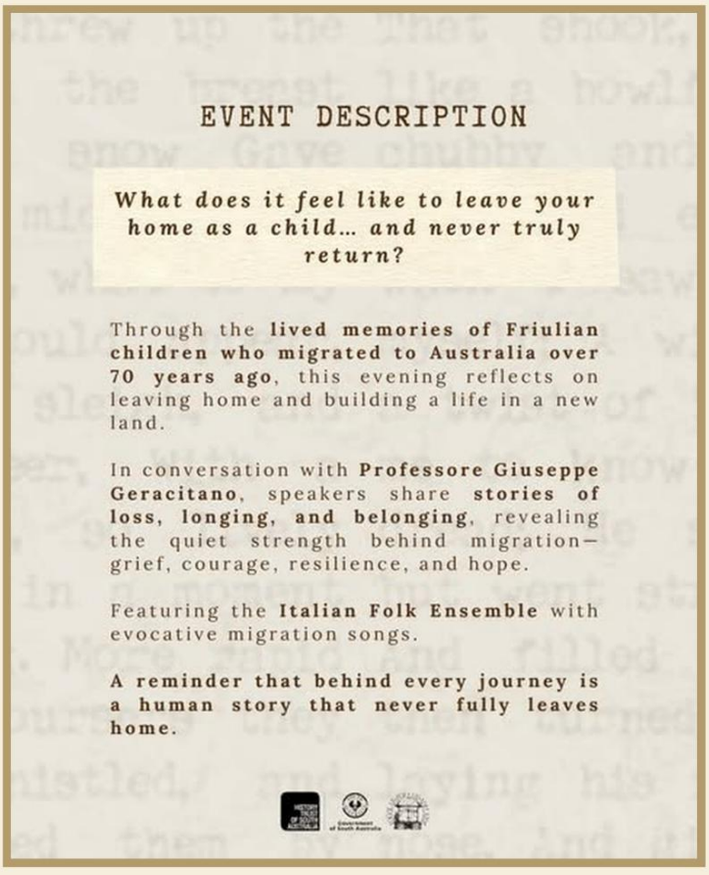
SA HISTORY FESTIVAL MONTH

Little Suitcases, Big Journeys

A Conversation

Childhood memories of migration, resilience and belonging.





Remembering 24 May 2026

Fogolar Furlan Adelaide

Marisa Baldassi, Nicola Ianera and Lorenzo Savio
shared childhood memories of leaving Friuli Venezia Giulia
and building new lives in Australia.

A conversation led by Professore Giuseppe Geracitano,
with migration songs by the Italian Folk Ensemble.

An afternoon of memory, resilience and belonging.

COMMUNITY MEMORIES

St Michael Year 10 Students with ANFE Community Care

Bringing generations together















Students and community members shared time, conversation and moments of connection.

COMMUNITY MEMORIES

Torrone-making Afternoon

Sharing skills, tradition and warm hospitality











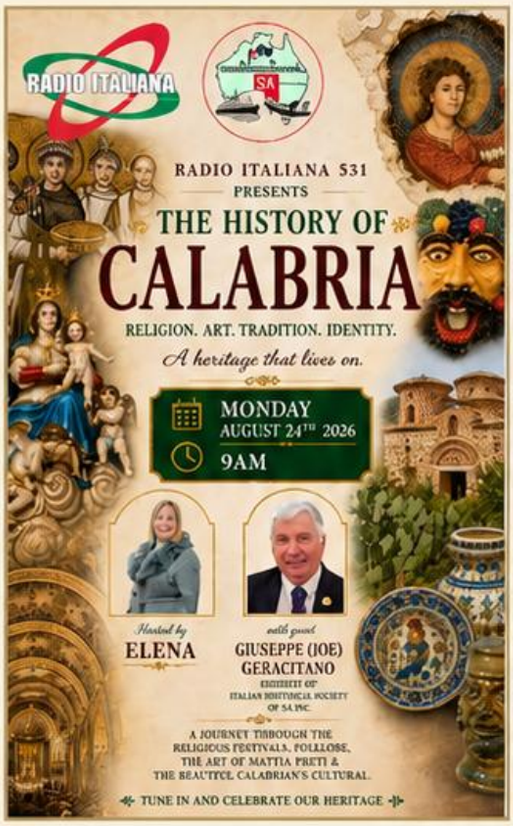
Thank you to Anne Mercorella for sharing the art of torrone,
to Anne and Sam for their generous hospitality,
and to Silvana Zerella for organising a wonderful afternoon.

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Sharing Our Heritage

Through community radio

Radio Italiana 531







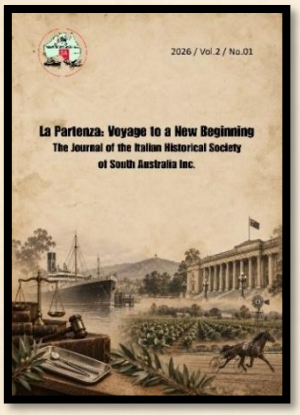
History, culture and conversation with Elena and our Society

Radio Italia Uno



Thank you for helping us share our stories and cultural heritage.

La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Volume 2



The publication and launch of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Volume 2* represents another significant milestone for the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc., reflecting its ongoing commitment to documenting, preserving and sharing the stories of Italian migrants and their descendants whose lives and achievements have helped shape South Australia. Building on the success of the inaugural volume, this second edition combines personal histories, community narratives, historical research and scholarly reviews to create a rich and enduring record of the Italian Australian experience. Through its pages, the journal highlights the courage, sacrifice, resilience and determination that have characterised generations of migrants while emphasising the importance of preserving these stories for future generations.

The significance of the publication was celebrated on Saturday, 10 October 2026, when the Society officially launched the volume at a special gathering attended by members, contributors, historians, researchers, community leaders and supporters of multicultural heritage. Among the distinguished guests were representatives of government, cultural institutions, community organisations and ethnic media. The Society was particularly pleased to welcome the Hon. Cressida O'Hanlon MP, representing the Premier, the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for Education, and the Hon. Michelle Lensink MLC Shadow Minister for Multicultural; Affairs, together with representatives of organisations that have supported the preservation and promotion of Italian heritage in South Australia.

In his address, Society President Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano reflected on the importance of recording migrant stories while those who lived them are still able to share their experiences. He emphasised that every story preserved becomes part of South Australia's historical record and contributes to a greater understanding of the sacrifices, achievements and aspirations of migrant families who helped build the State. He also acknowledged the many contributors, volunteers, researchers, editors and supporters whose dedication made both the publication and its launch possible.

Published in 2026, the journal brings together an impressive collection of migration stories spanning agriculture, law, dentistry, sport, business, politics, social justice and community service. While each narrative is unique, common themes resonate throughout the volume: family loyalty, cultural identity, perseverance, community spirit and a steadfast determination to create opportunities for future generations.

Among the volume's most compelling contributions is the story of Grace Cocci, whose family's migration from Sinopoli in Calabria to South Australia highlight’s themes of family separation, faith, perseverance and enterprise. Through her recollections, readers gain valuable insight into post-war migration, agricultural development and community life, while also learning how cultural traditions were maintained and passed to future generations. The story serves as a powerful reminder of both the hardships and opportunities experienced by many migrant families.

Equally inspiring is the biography of Cosimo Cutri, recognised as the first person of Italian background to drive harness racing horses in Australia and New Zealand. His journey from the Calabrian town of Sant'Eufemia d'Aspromonte to the racetracks of Australia demonstrates extraordinary determination and resilience. More than a sporting achievement, his story reflects

the growing acceptance and contributions of Italian Australians within mainstream Australian society.

The journal also chronicles the remarkable life of Dr Tony Ielasi, the first Italo-Australian graduate in Dentistry in South Australia. From the son of Calabrian migrants to a distinguished dental practitioner, academic and community leader, his story exemplifies the aspirations migrant families held for their children and illustrates the transformative power of education, hard work and professional excellence.

The important contribution of Italian migrants to South Australia's agricultural development is vividly explored in *From Benestare to Basket Range*. This comprehensive history documents the experiences of the Musolino and Giorgio families, whose hard work and determination established successful market gardening and orchard enterprises in the Adelaide Hills. Across several generations, the story demonstrates how migrants adapted traditional knowledge and skills to South Australian conditions while maintaining strong family and community networks.

A major highlight of the publication is the life story of Judge Pasquale Tiberio Pirone, South Australia's first Italian-born District Court Judge. Recounted through family memories by his daughter Cristina and historical records, the article traces his journey from rural Italy to the highest levels of the South Australian judiciary. His commitment to education, public service, justice and migrant welfare left an enduring legacy that continues to inspire today.

The journal also honours the achievements of Maria Russo, whose lifelong dedication to social justice, community service, education and volunteering has had a lasting impact on South Australian society. Her story exemplifies how commitment, compassion and civic engagement can strengthen communities and improve the lives of others.

The entrepreneurial spirit of Italian migrants is represented through the story of Paolo (Paul) Battistella, who arrived in Australia following the Second World War and later helped establish one of South Australia's leading commercial and industrial dry-cleaning businesses. His success reflects the innovation, resilience and business acumen that characterised many migrant families and contributed significantly to the economic development of the State.

Public service and political leadership are celebrated through substantial biographies of The Hon. Mario Feleppa OAM and The Hon. Carmel Zollo. Feleppa emerged as the first Italo-Australian member of the South Australian Legislative Council and devoted decades to migrant welfare and community development. Zollo's story traces her journey from migrant child to becoming the first Italian-born woman elected to the first Italian-born Cabinet Minister in South Australia. Together, their stories reflect the growing participation and influence of Italian Australians in public life.

Beyond its biographical content, the journal contains a substantial collection of book reviews examining important works relating to migration, identity and community history. These include reviews of publications by Maria Fantasia, Madeleine Regan, Gianfranco Cresciani, and Andonis Piperoglou and Francesco Ricatti. Collectively, these reviews encourage readers to engage more deeply with the broader themes of migration, belonging, resilience and cultural identity.

Particular attention is given to reviews of two major publications produced by the Society itself. The review of *Radio Paesani: The Beginning of Community Radio in South Australia* documents the pioneering development of Italian-language broadcasting and acknowledges the important role community radio played in preserving language, culture and communication within migrant communities. Similarly, the review of *La Nostra Casa: The Story of Casa D'Abruzzo Molise Club*

Inc. chronicles the history of one of South Australia's most enduring Italian regional organisations and highlights the commitment of generations of members who established and sustained the club as an important cultural home.

The launch itself highlighted the vital role community history plays in preserving experiences that often remain absent from official records. Through oral histories, family accounts, photographs and archival research, the Society continues to ensure that these important stories remain available to future generations of South Australians.

The Society expressed sincere gratitude to the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters for hosting the event and to Mayor Robert Bria for his valued support. Special thanks were extended to Dr David Sweet, who officially launched the publication, and to Associate Professor Cavaliere Angela Scarino, who served as Master of Ceremonies and guided the proceedings with professionalism and warmth. The Society also acknowledged the generous sponsorship of Eclipse Real Estate, PV Podiatry and Urban Glow, as well as the support of Frank Taddeo and the team at Pasta Deli for providing refreshments.

Particular recognition was given to Jenny Geracitano and Rosemarie Geracitano for their work in graphic design, typesetting and publication production. The Society also acknowledged the contribution of its Editorial Committee comprising Laura DiMartino-Kempt, Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano, Mario Russo, Associate Professor Angela Scarino and Rosemarie Geracitano, whose research, interviewing, writing and editorial efforts ensured the successful completion of the volume. Most importantly, tribute was paid to the individuals and families who generously shared their memories, photographs and personal histories.

Beyond the publication itself, *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Volume 2* reflects the growing impact of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. Since its establishment in 2015, the Society has emerged as a respected custodian of community memory, collecting oral histories, preserving photographs and documents, producing publications, supporting research and encouraging families to record their stories before they are lost. Through journals such as *La Partenza*, exhibitions, archival preservation projects and community histories, the Society has created an enduring historical legacy that ensures the courage, sacrifices, achievements and cultural traditions of Italian migrants remain recognised as an integral part of South Australia's story.

Ultimately, *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Volume 2* is far more than a collection of articles. It is a repository of memory, a celebration of achievement and a tribute to the generations of migrants whose courage, resilience and determination helped shape South Australia. The publication, together with its successful launch, demonstrates the enduring value of preserving community history and ensuring that the voices, experiences and contributions of Italian Australians remain accessible to future generations. As both a historical record and a source of inspiration, it stands as a significant achievement of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. and an important contribution to South Australia's multicultural heritage.

Hard copies of *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning Volume 2* are available for purchase through the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc., (copies may be ordered through the Society's web site) and may also be consulted at the State Library of South Australia. Digital copies are available through the Society's website at **www.ihssa.com.au**

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ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Our Editorial Committee Members

With sincere gratitude to our editorial committee members

Mario Russo • Laura Di Martino • Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano

Associate Professor Cav. Angela Scarino • Rosemarie Geracitano



















Thank you for your dedication, research and careful editing,
and for the time, knowledge and expertise you shared
to preserve our community's history for future generations.

Every story preserved is a gift to future generations.

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Our Guests & Supporters

Thank you for celebrating our shared heritage

















To our distinguished guests, contributors, families, members, friends and supporters: thank you for your presence, encouragement and generosity. Together, we celebrated the people and stories that have helped shape South Australia.

A memorable milestone, made special by our community.

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Our Contributors

With deepest appreciation for the stories you shared





















Your research, knowledge, experiences, photographs and family histories form the foundation of this publication and preserve our shared history.

Every story preserved is a lasting gift to future generations.

Growing Up Italian in South Australia

Childhood, Identity, Language and the Experiences of Second-Generation Italian Australians

Between Two Cultures: The Experience of Growing Up Italian in South Australia.

The history of Italian migration to South Australia is often told through the experiences of those who left their homeland in search of opportunity, security and a better future. Yet the migration story extends beyond the first generation. Equally important are the experiences of their children, the second generation, who were born or raised in Australia and who grew up navigating two cultural worlds. For many Italian Australians, childhood involved balancing the traditions, expectations and values of their families with the social environment of Australian schools, workplaces and communities. It was within this intersection of cultures that a distinctive Italian Australian identity emerged.

Italian migration to South Australia expanded significantly during the twentieth century, particularly following the Second World War. New arrivals often settled through networks of relatives, friends and paesani originating from the same towns, villages and regions of Italy. This process, known as chain migration, allowed migrants to establish themselves within familiar social environments while adapting to life in a new country. Communities formed around shared regional origins, language, religious traditions and mutual support. In Adelaide and regional South Australia, these networks provided assistance with employment, housing and social integration while enabling migrants to maintain strong connections with their cultural heritage.

For the children growing up within these communities, Italian identity was rarely confined to special occasions. It was embedded in everyday life. Family conversations, Sunday lunches, religious celebrations, visits from relatives, community gatherings and participation in ethnic organisations reinforced a sense of belonging. Grandparents often played a particularly important role in transmitting traditions, stories and values. Through these everyday interactions, children were introduced to customs that linked them to places many had never seen but nevertheless considered part of their heritage.

At the same time, these children were fully immersed in Australian society. They attended local schools, played sport with Australian-born friends and participated in the broader social life of the state. For many, childhood involved moving comfortably between two cultural environments. At home, traditional expectations often shaped behaviour, language use and family relationships. Outside the home, Australian social norms and values exerted their own influence. Learning to navigate these different environments became one of the defining characteristics of growing up Italian in South Australia.

Language and Cultural Identity

Language represented one of the most important links between migrant families and their cultural heritage. Unlike many national communities, Italian migrants did not necessarily arrive speaking a single language. Prior to widespread adoption of standard Italian, regional dialects remained the primary means of communication in many parts of Italy. Consequently, migrants

from Calabria, Sicily, Veneto, Abruzzo, Campania and other regions often brought distinct linguistic traditions with them.

Within many households, children encountered a multilingual environment. English was necessary for education and participation in wider Australian society, while Italian and regional dialects remained the language of family interaction, cultural expression and community life. Some children became fluent in multiple languages, while others understood Italian or dialect without speaking it confidently themselves. The ability to move between languages reflected the broader experience of living between cultures.

Language served purposes beyond simple communication. It carried memories, traditions and a sense of identity. Expressions used by grandparents, stories about life in Italy and regional sayings connected younger generations to family histories stretching back generations. For many Italian Australians, language became a tangible link to their ancestry and a means of preserving cultural continuity across time and distance.

Research highlights the continuing importance of language and ethnicity across generations. The Adelaide-based study undertaken by Marino (2020) examined three generations of a Calabrian-origin family and found that identification with Italian ethnicity persisted even as its meaning evolved. Rather than being inherited unchanged, ethnic identity was continually reshaped by new experiences, circumstances and social contexts.

This finding is significant because it challenges assumptions that migrant identities inevitably disappear through assimilation. Instead, Italian heritage often remains an important component of personal identity, although subsequent generations may express and understand that heritage differently from their parents and grandparents.

Family, Food and Community Life

The family occupied a central place in the lives of many Italian Australians. Strong family relationships provided support, stability and continuity during periods of adjustment and change. Family gatherings frequently brought together several generations, reinforcing kinship ties and creating opportunities for younger family members to learn about their heritage.

Food played a particularly important role in this process. Traditional recipes, seasonal celebrations and shared meals carried cultural significance extending far beyond nutrition. Preparing pasta, preserving vegetables, making tomato sauce, producing salumi and baking traditional sweets often involved collective family participation. These activities reinforced social bonds while preserving knowledge passed from one generation to the next.

For many children, food provided a tangible connection to regions of Italy they had never visited. The flavours, ingredients and culinary traditions of family life conveyed stories about ancestral villages, agricultural practices and local customs. A meal prepared according to a longstanding family recipe could serve as a living expression of cultural heritage.

Scholarship examining Italian food culture in Australia demonstrates the broader significance of these practices. Cammarano (2018) argues that Italian cuisine became an important site through which ethnicity, identity and social belonging were expressed and negotiated within Australian society. Food therefore functioned not only as a cultural marker within Italian

communities but also as a means through which Italian Australians contributed to the multicultural development of Australia.

Community organisations, sporting clubs, churches and cultural associations further strengthened these connections. Through festivals, dances, religious processions, language classes and social events, young people encountered others who shared similar backgrounds and experiences. These institutions helped sustain communal bonds while fostering a sense of pride in Italian heritage.

Challenges, Adaptation and Belonging

While many aspects of Italian Australian childhood were enriching and rewarding, the experience was not without challenges. Migrants arriving in Australia during the twentieth century often encountered prejudice, discrimination and pressure to abandon aspects of their cultural identity. These experiences inevitably influenced the environments in which their children were raised.

Some second-generation Italian Australians recall feeling different from their peers because of their surnames, accents, food or family customs. Others experienced conflicting expectations between the values promoted at home and those encountered at school or within wider Australian society. Balancing respect for family traditions with a desire for independence occasionally created tensions between generations.

Nevertheless, these challenges often contributed to the development of resilient and adaptable identities. Many young Italian Australians learned to draw upon the strengths of both cultures, combining family-centred values with opportunities available through Australian education, employment and civic participation. Rather than choosing one identity over another, they developed ways of integrating multiple influences into a coherent sense of self.

As the Italian community became more established and accepted within Australian society, perceptions gradually changed. Cultural practices once regarded as foreign increasingly became recognised as valued contributions to Australia's multicultural character. This shift enabled many second- and third-generation Italian Australians to embrace their heritage with greater confidence and pride.

A Changing Sense of Italian Australian Identity

The experience of identity continued to evolve across successive generations. First-generation migrants often retained vivid memories of life in Italy, including personal experiences of migration, economic hardship, wartime disruption and regional traditions. Their children inherited elements of this legacy but interpreted it through the lens of growing up in Australia.

For second-generation Italian Australians, knowledge of Italy frequently came through family stories, photographs, visits from relatives and community traditions. While they may not have shared the migration experiences of their parents, many nevertheless developed a strong emotional connection to their ancestral origins.

By the third and fourth generations, expressions of Italian identity often take new forms. Heritage may be reflected through family history research, participation in cultural organisations, appreciation of Italian language and cuisine, or involvement in community commemorations. Although the nature of identification changes over time, a sense of connection frequently remains.

As Marino's research demonstrates, ethnicity is not a fixed or static concept. Instead, it is continually recreated and reinterpreted by individuals and communities. This ongoing process ensures that Italian Australian identity remains dynamic and relevant, adapting to contemporary circumstances while retaining links to the past.

Preserving the Stories of Italian Australian Children

The experiences of second-generation Italian Australians form an essential part of South Australia's multicultural history. While considerable attention has rightly been devoted to documenting the achievements and sacrifices of first-generation migrants, the stories of their children also deserve preservation and recognition.

Photographs, letters, diaries, oral histories, school records, community publications and personal recollections provide valuable insights into how children experienced family life, cultural identity and social change. These sources help historians understand not only the process of migration itself but also how cultural heritage was maintained, adapted and transmitted across generations.

Preserving these stories benefits both present and future generations. They reveal the complexity of migrant experiences and demonstrate how cultural traditions can endure while evolving in new environments. They also provide younger Italian Australians with opportunities to understand their family histories and appreciate the contributions made by earlier generations.

For the Italian Historical Society of South Australia, documenting the experiences of children who grew up within Italian migrant families represents an important contribution to preserving the community's collective memory. Their stories illuminate the ways in which identity, language, family and culture have shaped the Italian Australian experience across generations and continue to enrich South Australia's multicultural heritage today.

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From Fishing Boats to Family Businesses

The History of Italian Fishing Communities and Their Contribution to South Australia

Beyond the Migration Story: Building Communities on the Water

The story of the Molfettese fishermen is one of the earliest and most enduring examples of organised Italian settlement in South Australia. Long before the large migration waves that followed the Second World War, fishermen from Molfetta, a coastal town on the Adriatic coast of Puglia, brought maritime skills, entrepreneurial determination and strong family networks to South Australian shores. Their experience represents an important chapter in both the maritime history of the state and the broader history of Italian migration.

The Molfettese did not arrive as agricultural labourers or industrial workers. They were highly skilled fishermen whose livelihoods depended upon generations of accumulated maritime knowledge. Fishing was not simply an occupation but a way of life. In Molfetta, families had long relied upon the Adriatic Sea for their survival, and expertise in navigation, boat construction, net making and fish marketing formed part of a deeply rooted cultural tradition. When opportunities emerged in Australian waters during the late nineteenth century, these skills became valuable economic assets.

Chain Migration and the Formation of a Maritime Diaspora

One of the most significant aspects of the Molfettese migration experience was the operation of chain migration. Following the arrival of pioneers such as Vito Caputo during the 1880s, information about employment opportunities, fishing grounds and settlement prospects flowed back to southern Italy. Relatives, neighbours and friends subsequently followed those who had already established themselves in South Australia, creating a migration corridor between Molfetta, Port Pirie and Port Adelaide.

This migration pattern reflected broader trends in Italian migration. Rather than relocating as isolated individuals, migrants often relied upon trusted family networks that reduced risk and facilitated settlement. These networks provided accommodation, employment, financial support and social connections. The result was the creation of tightly knit communities that retained strong links with their place of origin while adapting to their new circumstances.

By the 1930s approximately 300 Italians, predominantly from Molfetta, were associated with the fishing communities of Port Pirie and Port Adelaide. Their presence transformed what had begun as temporary occupational settlements into established Italian communities with their own social, cultural and religious traditions.

Adapting Mediterranean Skills to South Australian Waters

The success of the Molfettese fishermen depended upon their ability to adapt traditional fishing methods to unfamiliar environmental conditions. While the Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent differed significantly from the Adriatic Sea, the practical knowledge acquired through generations of fishing proved highly transferable.

The fishermen brought expertise in reading weather patterns, locating fish stocks, maintaining vessels and repairing nets. Their success illustrates how specialised migrant skills contributed directly to South Australia's economic development. Fishing became more than a subsistence activity; it evolved into a commercial enterprise supplying local and interstate markets. By the 1920s fish caught in South Australian waters were reaching Adelaide, Melbourne and Broken Hill, creating commercial opportunities that extended well beyond local communities.

Historical accounts also suggest that cooperation among fishermen was essential. Equipment, labour and knowledge were frequently shared among relatives and fellow Molfettesi. Such cooperation reduced financial risk and strengthened community ties. This collaborative approach became one of the defining characteristics of the early Italian fishing industry in South Australia.

Family Migration and Community Building

As the fishing industry became established, migrant men were increasingly joined by wives, children and extended family members. Family reunification transformed Italian fishing settlements from occupational communities into enduring centres of cultural life.

Homes became places where dialect, food traditions, religious observance and family customs were preserved. Children grew up speaking both English and Italian dialects, navigating Australian society while maintaining strong connections to their cultural heritage. As occurred in many migrant communities throughout Australia, the second generation often acted as cultural intermediaries between their parents and wider society.

Over time, educational opportunities and economic advancement enabled younger generations to pursue occupations beyond fishing. While remaining proud of their maritime heritage, many entered trades, professions, retail businesses, hospitality enterprises and other commercial ventures. In this way, the story evolved from fishing boats to family businesses.

Faith, Tradition and the Madonna dei Martiri

Among the most enduring expressions of Molfettese identity has been devotion to the Madonna dei Martiri, the patron saint associated with Molfetta. Religious traditions accompanied migrants across the world and provided important sources of continuity during periods of adjustment and change.



The Molfettese community in Port Pirie has celebrated the feast of the Madonna dei Martiri since at least 1929. In 1932 a statue of the Madonna, created in Molfetta, was brought to South Australia. By the 1950s religious processions included the transportation of the statue aboard fishing vessels, replicating ceremonies held in the Adriatic port of Molfetta. These celebrations reinforced community cohesion while preserving an important cultural connection with the migrants' homeland.

Today, the annual Blessing of the Fleet remains an important reminder of the fishing origins of the community and highlights the continuing relationship between faith, maritime life and cultural identity.

From Fishermen to Entrepreneurs

The title *From Fishing Boats to Family Businesses* reflects a broader pattern evident across many Italian Australian communities. Economic success often began with physically demanding occupations requiring long hours, personal sacrifice and family cooperation. The savings generated through fishing enabled families to purchase homes, establish businesses and provide educational opportunities for their children. As successive generations became increasingly established in South Australia, many diversified into retail, hospitality, transport, construction, manufacturing and professional services, while remaining proud of their maritime heritage.

A notable example of this transition is provided by the Cappo family. Among the pioneering Molfettese settlers who helped establish South Australia's commercial fishing industry, members of the Cappo family were instrumental in developing the fishing economy of Port Pirie. Drawing upon generations of maritime knowledge inherited from their hometown of Molfetta on Italy's Adriatic coast, six Cappo brothers established a family seafood business in 1919**.** What began as a fishing and seafood enterprise built upon the skills of the early Molfettese fishermen soon developed into a successful commercial operation supplying fresh seafood to both regional and metropolitan markets.

The growth of the Cappo enterprise reflected the wider experience of many Italian migrant families. Through hard work, cooperation and a willingness to seize new opportunities, the business expanded beyond its original fishing activities. As South Australia's population and demand for seafood increased, the company broadened its operations and strengthened its position within the state's seafood industry.

During the twentieth century, the business gradually shifted its focus from its Port Pirie origins to metropolitan Adelaide. This evolution culminated in the establishment of operations on Glen Osmond Road, Parkside**,** where Cappo Seafood became one of South Australia's most recognised family-owned seafood businesses. The move symbolised the economic and social advancement achieved by many descendants of the pioneering fishing families, whose expertise developed from catching and selling fish directly from local waters to managing sophisticated wholesale and retail enterprises serving a statewide customer base.

The story of Cappo Seafood demonstrates how the entrepreneurial spirit of the early Molfettese fishermen continued across generations. The values that sustained the original fishing community, including hard work, family commitment, practical skills and commercial initiative, remained central to the success of the business. In many respects, the journey from a family fishing enterprise established in Port Pirie in 1919 to a prominent seafood company in Parkside mirrors the broader experience of South Australia's Italian community.

The evolution from fishing boats to family businesses was not unique to the Cappo family. Similar stories can be found throughout the Molfettese and wider Italian Australian community, where the foundations laid by early migrants enabled subsequent generations to pursue new opportunities while maintaining strong connections to their heritage. Their success illustrates how specialised occupational skills brought from Italy contributed not only to the development of South Australia's fishing industry but also to the creation of enduring family enterprises that have become part of the state's economic and cultural fabric.

Preserving a Maritime Heritage

The legacy of the Molfettese remains visible today through community organisations, family histories, photographs, religious festivals and surviving fishing vessels. One of the most important initiatives to preserve this heritage is the Port Pirie Molfettesi Fishing Boat Museum, which houses the restored fishing boat *Elizabeth* together with artefacts associated with the early fishing community. The museum stands as a testament to the contribution of Italian fishermen to South Australia's maritime development and serves as an important educational resource for future generations.

The preservation of oral histories, photographs, business records and family archives is equally important. These materials document not only the technical aspects of fishing but also the social and cultural experiences of migration, settlement and community formation.

Conclusion

The history of the Molfettese fishermen demonstrates that Italian migration to South Australia was about far more than economic survival. It was a story of community building, cultural continuity and intergenerational achievement. The experiences of families such as the Cappo family illustrate how maritime skills brought from Molfetta were transformed into successful businesses that continued to flourish long after the era of the pioneering fishermen had passed. From the fishing fleets of Port Pirie to the establishment of Cappo Seafood on Glen Osmond Road, Parkside, the legacy of these early migrants remains visible in South Australia's commercial, cultural and community life, providing a lasting testament to the contribution of the Molfettese pioneers and their descendants.

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Recipes That Travelled Across the Ocean

How Italian Migrants Preserved and Adapted Their Culinary Traditions in Australia

When Italian migrants departed their homeland for Australia, they carried far more than suitcases filled with clothing and treasured family photographs. They also brought memories, traditions, skills and knowledge that had been shaped by generations of life in villages, towns and cities throughout Italy. Among the most enduring of these cultural inheritances were family recipes, culinary practices and food traditions that connected migrants to their regional identities and family histories. For many, food became one of the most powerful ways of maintaining a sense of continuity during the often-challenging process of establishing a new life in an unfamiliar country.

The story of Italian food in Australia is therefore much more than a history of recipes. It is a story of migration, adaptation, resilience and cultural preservation. It reveals how families recreated elements of home in a new environment and how culinary traditions became a bridge between generations, linking memories of Italy with life in South Australia.

Food and the Migration Experience

Italian migration to Australia increased significantly during the decades following the Second World War. Thousands of migrants arrived from regions including Sicily, Calabria, Campania, Abruzzo, Molise, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and many others, each bringing distinctive culinary traditions shaped by local geography, climate, agriculture and history.

Food occupied a central position in daily life in pre-war Italy. Many families lived close to the land, relying upon home gardens, seasonal produce, local markets and traditional methods of preservation. Recipes were seldom written down. Instead, knowledge was transmitted orally through observation and participation. Children learned by watching parents and grandparents prepare meals, preserve vegetables, bake bread, make pasta and celebrate religious feast days. These culinary traditions formed part of a broader cultural system that linked food, family and community.

Upon arriving in Australia, migrants encountered a very different food environment. According to the research of Nadia Postiglioni, many immigrants arriving during the 1950s found Australian food unfamiliar, uncomfortable and at times disappointing. Migrants living in accommodation centres frequently struggled to obtain foods that reflected their cultural preferences and dietary habits. The absence of familiar ingredients often intensified feelings of displacement and homesickness.

For Italian migrants, the preparation of traditional foods became an important means of restoring familiarity and cultural identity. A simple meal could evoke memories of a village in Calabria, a farm in Veneto or a family home in Sicily. Food provided not only nourishment but also emotional comfort during periods of change and uncertainty.

Recreating Italy in South Australian Kitchens

One of the greatest challenges facing migrant families was the availability of ingredients. During the 1950s and 1960s, many products that Italians regarded as ordinary household staples were

difficult or impossible to obtain in Australian supermarkets. Olive oil, regional cheeses, cured meats and specialised varieties of vegetables were often unavailable outside major migrant communities.

As a result, families relied upon ingenuity and adaptation. Substitutions became necessary, recipes were modified and cooking techniques were adjusted to suit local conditions. Yet despite these changes, the essence of many traditional dishes remained intact.

Over time, migrants responded by creating their own food networks. Imported goods became available through Italian grocery stores and delicatessens established by enterprising migrants. Family members exchanged seeds, shared produce and distributed homemade goods among relatives and friends. What began as a practical response to limited availability evolved into a thriving ethnic food economy that would eventually influence mainstream Australian food culture.

Research undertaken by Tania Cammarano shows that Italian cuisine in Australia did not simply reproduce Italian food unchanged. Rather, Italian Australian food developed through a dynamic process of adaptation, negotiation and cultural exchange. The dishes prepared in migrant households reflected both inherited traditions and the realities of Australian life.

Gardens, Vineyards and Backyard Food Production

For many migrant families, one solution to the challenge of obtaining traditional ingredients was to grow them themselves.

Italian migrants played an important role in establishing market gardens throughout South Australia, particularly in areas with fertile soils and access to water. According to the History Trust of South Australia, Italians became prominent participants in market gardening districts near Adelaide, applying agricultural knowledge acquired in their homeland.

Even families living in suburban homes often transformed backyards into productive gardens. Tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant, capsicum, beans, broad beans, herbs and leafy vegetables flourished in these carefully tended spaces. Fruit trees were planted to provide figs, peaches, apricots, lemons and grapes.

These gardens represented far more than an economic necessity. They enabled migrants to maintain traditional eating habits while strengthening family bonds. Gardening knowledge was passed between generations just as recipes were. Children and grandchildren often recall spending weekends assisting parents and grandparents in cultivating vegetables, harvesting produce and preparing food for preservation.

The annual tomato bottling season became a particularly important event in many households. Families gathered to blanch, crush, bottle and seal hundreds of kilograms of tomatoes for use throughout the year. Similar traditions developed around winemaking, olive curing, preserving vegetables and producing homemade sausages and salumi.

These activities combined practical necessity with cultural expression. They reinforced family cooperation, preserved traditional skills and ensured that culinary traditions remained embedded within everyday life.

The Enduring Importance of Regional Traditions

Although outsiders often speak of ‘Italian food’ as though it were a single cuisine, Italy's culinary landscape is extraordinarily diverse. Historical political divisions, geographical barriers and

regional agricultural systems produced distinctive local food cultures that differ significantly across the peninsula.

For migrants, these regional identities remained important after arrival in Australia. Families from different regions preserved recipes that reflected their cultural backgrounds.

In Calabria, spicy foods, chilli peppers and preserved vegetables often featured prominently. Sicilian cuisine reflected centuries of Greek, Arab, Norman and Spanish influences, incorporating ingredients such as citrus fruits, almonds and seafood. Veneto's culinary traditions developed around rice, polenta and freshwater fish, while Abruzzo became renowned for lamb dishes, pasta traditions and mountain cuisine. Campania contributed famous dishes centred upon tomatoes, mozzarella and pasta.

Migration did not erase these differences. Instead, South Australian Italian communities became repositories of regional culinary diversity. Family recipes frequently preserved traditions that connected descendants to specific villages and provinces.

In some instances, regional recipes survived more faithfully in Australian households than they did in rapidly modernising parts of Italy. As younger generations seek to reconnect with their heritage, these recipes provide valuable insights into the agricultural practices, economic conditions and cultural traditions of earlier generations.

Recipes as Historical Documents

Historians increasingly recognise that recipes can be valuable historical sources.

A handwritten recipe book often reveals much more than instructions for preparing food. It may contain evidence of regional origins, household economics, seasonal food availability, migration experiences and changing family circumstances. Adjustments made over time can illustrate how a family adapted to life in Australia.

Recipes also reveal the role of women in preserving cultural traditions. While public histories of migration frequently focus on employment, organisations and community leaders, culinary knowledge was often transmitted within the domestic sphere. Mothers, grandmothers and aunts served as custodians of recipes and food-related traditions that helped sustain cultural identity across generations.

Photographs, notebooks and oral histories frequently demonstrate how culinary knowledge passed from one generation to another. A simple recipe can become a record of family history, preserving memories that might otherwise disappear.

Food, Memory and Identity Across Generations

The relationship between food and identity changes across generations. Research by Silvia Marino examining Italian Australian identity in Adelaide demonstrates that ethnic identity evolves over time while often remaining an important part of personal and family life.

For first-generation migrants, a traditional dish may evoke direct memories of Italy, childhood experiences and migration journeys. For their Australian-born children, the same dish may represent family gatherings, Sunday lunches and relationships with parents and grandparents. For later generations, it may become a symbol of heritage and ancestry that connects them to a family history extending across continents and generations.

Food therefore serves as a cultural language through which identity is expressed and transmitted. Even when language skills diminish or dialects disappear, culinary traditions often endure. A family recipe can preserve connections to heritage long after other forms of cultural knowledge have faded.

This helps explain why food remains one of the most visible and enduring aspects of Italian Australian identity. Through cooking and shared meals, families continue to celebrate their history while adapting traditions to contemporary circumstances.

Preserving Culinary Heritage for Future Generations

The preservation of Italian culinary traditions offers an important opportunity to document aspects of migration history that might otherwise remain overlooked. While demographic statistics, settlement records and organisational histories are essential sources, the everyday experiences of families also deserve recognition.

Recording recipes alongside migration stories, photographs and oral histories can provide future generations with a richer understanding of the Italian Australian experience. Such collections preserve not only ingredients and cooking methods but also the human stories associated with them.

For the Italian Historical Society of South Australia, the creation of a culinary heritage project would represent a valuable contribution to preserving the community's history. Family recipes could be accompanied by biographical information, photographs, regional origins, migration dates and personal recollections. Together, they would create a unique historical record documenting how traditions travelled across the ocean and became part of South Australia's multicultural heritage.

The recipes brought to Australia by Italian migrants were never simply instructions for preparing meals. They embodied memories, values and identities carried across continents and passed from one generation to the next. Through adaptation and perseverance, these traditions survived and flourished, enriching both Italian Australian communities and Australian society more broadly. Today, they remain a living testament to the experiences of those who left their homeland and recreated a sense of home in South Australia.

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The History of Carnevale in Italy

Behind the Mask: Tradition, Identity and Cultural Heritage

Carnevale remains one of Italy's most vibrant and enduring cultural traditions. Celebrated through masks, costumes, music, pageantry and public festivities, it reflects centuries of social, religious and artistic development. While Venice is perhaps the best-known centre of Carnevale, the festival has evolved differently across Italy's regions, creating a rich tapestry of local customs and identities. More than a festive occasion, Carnevale offers valuable insights into Italian history, social life and the ways communities have expressed creativity and belonging across generations.

Ancient Origins and Christian Traditions

The origins of Carnevale are complex and cannot be traced to a single historical moment. The festival developed through the interaction of ancient seasonal customs and later Christian observances. As noted by the Italian encyclopaedia *Treccani*, Carnevale became associated with the period immediately preceding Lent, the forty-day season of fasting and penitence leading to Easter. The traditional etymology of the word derives from the Latin *carnem levare*, meaning ‘to remove meat’, reflecting the dietary restrictions that were once widely observed during Lent.

Long before Christianity, however, communities throughout Europe marked the transition from winter to spring with celebrations centred on renewal, fertility and communal participation. Scholars have identified parallels between Carnevale and ancient festivals in which normal social conventions were temporarily relaxed and public revelry was encouraged. Roman celebrations such as Saturnalia are frequently mentioned in discussions of Carnevale's origins because they allowed ordinary social distinctions to be suspended for a brief period. While historians caution against drawing a direct line from Roman festivities to modern Carnevale, such traditions illustrate how societies have long used festivals to create spaces where everyday life could be temporarily transformed.

The enduring popularity of Carnevale reflects the successful blending of these ancient customs with Christian religious practice. For centuries, it became the final period of celebration before the austerity of Lent, creating a contrast between festivity and reflection that remains central to the festival's meaning.

The Power and Symbolism of Masks

No symbol of Carnevale is more iconic than the mask. Across Italy, masks have served both practical and symbolic purposes, allowing participants to conceal their identities and adopt alternative personas. This temporary anonymity created an environment in which distinctions of class, occupation and social status became less visible, enabling people from different backgrounds to participate in celebrations on more equal terms.

Anthropologists and historians have long associated masks with rituals of transformation. During Carnevale, individuals could present themselves differently from their ordinary social roles, symbolically crossing boundaries that were otherwise rigidly maintained throughout the year.

Such practices reinforced Carnevale's reputation as a time when conventional expectations were briefly suspended.

The artistry involved in mask-making also contributed significantly to the festival's cultural importance. Venetian craftsmen developed sophisticated techniques using papier-mâché, painted cardboard, fabrics, gold leaf and decorative embellishments. Over time, mask-making evolved into a respected artistic tradition that combined craftsmanship, theatre and symbolism. Today, handmade Venetian masks remain among Italy's most recognisable cultural exports and continue to attract visitors from around the world.

Several traditional mask types became especially famous. The white-faced *Bauta*, often worn with a black cloak and tricorn hat, allowed complete anonymity and could even be worn while eating and speaking. The elegant *Colombina* covered only part of the face and was frequently decorated with elaborate ornamentation. The long-beaked *Medico della Peste* (Plague Doctor) emerged from seventeenth-century medical attire and later became incorporated into Carnevale imagery. Each mask carried its own social and historical associations, contributing to the festival's rich visual language.

Venice: The International Symbol of Carnevale



Although Carnevale is celebrated throughout Italy, Venice achieved international fame as the festival's most distinctive centre. During the medieval and Renaissance periods, the Republic of Venice was one of Europe's wealthiest and most cosmopolitan cities. Its extensive trade networks brought influences from across the Mediterranean and beyond, creating a fertile environment for artistic and cultural innovation.

Historical records indicate that masked celebrations were already sufficiently widespread by the late thirteenth century for Venetian authorities to regulate their use. Such regulations reveal both the popularity of masking and concerns regarding behaviour conducted under the protection of anonymity. Authorities occasionally restricted when and where masks could be worn, particularly in contexts where concealment might facilitate criminal activity or undermine public order.

At its height, Venetian Carnevale extended for weeks and sometimes months. The city hosted public spectacles, theatrical performances, acrobatic displays, musical entertainments and lavish balls. Nobles, merchants, artisans and visitors mingled in public spaces, often indistinguishable behind their masks. This temporary suspension of social divisions contributed to Venice's reputation as a place of mystery, elegance and theatricality.

Central to these celebrations were the *mascareri*, the specialised mask-makers whose workshops became an important part of Venetian economic and cultural life. Their craftsmanship ensured that masks were not merely disguises but artistic objects that reflected the sophistication of Venetian society. The city continues to honour this heritage through the modern Carnevale di Venezia,

which attracts thousands of visitors annually and showcases historical costumes, traditional crafts and cultural performances.

Regional Carnevale Traditions Across Italy

While Venice dominates international perceptions of Carnevale, every region of Italy has contributed distinctive traditions to the festival's history.

In Viareggio, Tuscany, Carnevale is renowned for its enormous papier-mâché floats depicting political leaders, celebrities and public figures. Since the nineteenth century, these satirical creations have provided a unique form of social commentary, demonstrating how humour and public criticism have become integral elements of Carnevale celebrations.

In Ivrea, Piedmont, the famous Battle of the Oranges commemorates a local legend involving resistance to oppression. Participants divide into teams and engage in a carefully organised orange-throwing contest that transforms the city's streets into a dramatic historical spectacle. The event illustrates how local historical narratives became embedded within Carnevale celebrations.

In southern Italy, particularly Naples, Carnevale traditions reflect centuries of theatrical culture and popular entertainment. The character of Pulcinella, originating in Campania, became one of Italy's most famous masked figures. With his distinctive costume, mask and comic personality, Pulcinella remains a powerful symbol of Neapolitan identity.

Throughout northern Italy, other regional characters emerged, including Arlecchino from Bergamo, Pantalone from Venice and Gianduia from Piedmont. These figures developed within the tradition of *commedia dell'arte*, the influential theatrical movement that flourished from the sixteenth century onward. Their stories, costumes and personalities helped establish a shared cultural vocabulary recognised throughout Italy and beyond.

Carnevale and Commedia dell'Arte

One of Carnevale's most enduring cultural contributions is its relationship with *commedia dell'arte.* This form of popular theatre relied upon stock characters, improvised performances and masked actors. Beginning in the sixteenth century, travelling theatrical companies performed throughout Italy and Europe, spreading Italian cultural traditions far beyond the peninsula.

Characters such as Arlecchino, Pulcinella, Brighella, Colombina and Pantalone represented recognisable social types. Audiences immediately understood their personalities and roles, allowing actors considerable freedom to improvise comic situations. The masks worn by these characters became visual symbols of regional identities and social commentary. Through theatre, Carnevale traditions were preserved and transmitted across generations, influencing literature, visual arts and performance traditions throughout Europe.

The Cultural Meaning of Carnevale

At its heart, Carnevale represents much more than entertainment. Historically, it provided communities with opportunities to celebrate collectively, strengthen social bonds and express creativity. The temporary adoption of masks and costumes encouraged participants to explore

alternative identities while reflecting on the structures and conventions that organised everyday life.

Carnevale also demonstrates how cultural traditions evolve while maintaining continuity with the past. Religious observance, civic authority, artistic expression and local customs all shaped the ways communities celebrated the festival. Each region adapted the tradition according to its own history, creating a uniquely diverse yet recognisably Italian cultural phenomenon.

The festival's enduring appeal lies in its ability to balance continuity and change. Ancient themes of renewal, transformation and communal participation remain evident, even as contemporary celebrations incorporate modern artistic forms and tourism.

Preserving Carnevale Heritage in Australia

For Italian communities outside Italy, Carnevale provides a valuable connection to cultural heritage and historical identity. Celebrations can introduce younger generations to traditional masks, regional customs, music, costume-making and the historical meanings associated with the festival. Such activities foster an appreciation of Italian history while strengthening community engagement.

For the Italian Historical Society of South Australia, Carnevale offers an opportunity to link cultural celebration with historical education. Workshops on mask-making, presentations on regional traditions, exhibitions of Carnevale imagery and discussions of *commedia dell'arte* could all contribute to a deeper understanding of Italy's cultural heritage. By exploring the origins and symbolism of Carnevale, the Society can demonstrate that cultural traditions are not merely festive entertainments but important expressions of history, identity and collective memory.

Carnevale endures because it speaks to universal human experiences: the desire for community, creativity, celebration and renewal. Whether expressed through the elegance of Venetian masks, the satire of Viareggio's floats or the theatrical characters of *commedia dell'arte*, Carnevale remains a remarkable example of how cultural traditions can preserve the past while continuing to inspire new generations



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The Sunday Lunch: More Than Just a Meal

Food, Family and Cultural Identity in Italian Australian Life

For many Italian families, Sunday lunch has long represented far more than an opportunity to share a meal. It is a social institution, a family ritual and a cultural tradition that brings together generations around a common table. Through the preparation and sharing of food, families exchange stories, reinforce relationships and maintain connections with their heritage. Within both Italy and the Italian diaspora, Sunday lunch occupies a special place in family life because it combines food, memory, identity and belonging.

Among Italian migrants and their descendants in Australia, Sunday lunch has often served as an important bridge between past and present. While recipes, ingredients and lifestyles may have changed over time, the practice of gathering family members for a shared meal continues to evoke memories of migration, family sacrifice, cultural continuity and community. What may appear to be an ordinary family gathering often reveals a deeper history of adaptation, resilience and identity.

Food and Regional Identity in Italy



Understanding the significance of Sunday lunch begins with recognising the central role food plays in Italian culture. Contrary to popular perceptions, there is no single Italian cuisine. Italy's culinary traditions developed over centuries within diverse regions shaped by geography, climate, history and local agricultural practices.

In the north, rich plains supported dairy farming, rice cultivation and cattle raising, leading to dishes such as risotto, polenta and regional cheeses. Central Italy became known for olive oil, cured meats and rustic breads, while the south developed cuisines based upon durum wheat, vegetables, legumes and seafood. Sicily's food reflects centuries of Greek, Arab, Norman and Spanish influence, while Sardinia preserves unique traditions shaped by its island geography. These regional distinctions were deeply ingrained in everyday life and became part of local identity. Families often identified as much with the cuisine of their village or province as with Italy itself.

When migrants left Italy, they carried these regional traditions with them. A family from Calabria might preserve recipes very different from those brought by migrants from Veneto, Abruzzo or Sicily. As a result, Sunday lunches in Italian Australian households frequently reflected regional identities that predated migration and sometimes even national unification itself.

The Sunday Table as the Heart of Family Life

Traditionally, Sunday was one of the few days when family members could gather without the demands of work, school or farming. The shared meal became an anchor point in weekly family life. Relatives would travel considerable distances to eat together, reinforcing kinship networks and maintaining family relationships.

Preparations often began early in the morning. Sauces simmered slowly for hours, bread was prepared, vegetables harvested or purchased fresh, and desserts arranged for the afternoon gathering. In many households the meal unfolded over several hours rather than being consumed quickly. Conversation, storytelling and social interaction were considered as important as the food itself.

A traditional Sunday lunch might begin with antipasti, followed by pasta or soup, a meat course with vegetables, fresh fruit and homemade sweets. Coffee, liqueurs and conversation often extended the gathering well into the afternoon. Every family developed its own customs, but the underlying principle remained consistent: the meal provided an opportunity for family members to reconnect and reaffirm their relationships.

For children, these occasions offered opportunities to interact with grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. They learned not only family recipes but also stories about earlier generations, local traditions and family history. In this way the dining table became a classroom in which cultural knowledge was passed from one generation to the next.

Migration and the Preservation of Tradition

The large-scale migration of Italians to Australia during the twentieth century transformed many aspects of family life, yet food often remained one of the strongest links to the homeland. Migrants encountered a vastly different environment in Australia, where familiar ingredients were frequently unavailable or difficult to obtain, particularly during the early post-war decades.

Research by Nadia Postiglioni has shown that many Italian migrants experienced significant challenges adapting to Australian food systems during the 1950s. New arrivals often encountered unfamiliar products and limited access to ingredients that had formed part of everyday life in Italy. For many migrants, food became one of the most immediate reminders of separation from home.

These circumstances encouraged remarkable resourcefulness. Families substituted ingredients, planted vegetables in backyard gardens and produced homemade food whenever possible. Tomatoes, zucchini, beans, capsicums and herbs appeared in suburban gardens across Australia. Migrants built wine presses, cured meats, preserved olives and developed extensive vegetable gardens that replicated aspects of rural life remembered from Italy.

In South Australia, many Italian families established productive household gardens and maintained food-preservation practices that reflected traditions brought from their regions of origin. Annual tomato sauce-making days, grape harvests, salami-making gatherings and olive processing became important family events, often involving multiple generations and multiple families working together. These activities supported the Sunday lunch table while simultaneously preserving cultural traditions.

The Role of Women and Family Knowledge

In many Italian households, mothers and grandmothers played central roles in preserving culinary traditions. Knowledge was often transmitted through observation and participation rather than written recipes. Younger family members learned by helping to roll gnocchi, shape pasta, prepare preserves or stir tomato sauce under the guidance of older relatives

Recipes were frequently remembered through experience rather than measurement. Instructions such as ‘a handful,’ ‘until it looks right,’ or ‘as your grandmother made it’ reflected a practical understanding developed over years of repetition. This informal method of transmission created strong connections between food preparation and family memory.

At the same time, culinary traditions were rarely the responsibility of women alone. Fathers, grandfathers and extended family members also participated in preparing food, growing produce, making wine, tending gardens and organising family gatherings. Sunday lunch was ultimately a collective family effort that relied upon cooperation across generations.

Sunday Lunch in Italian Australian Communities

As Italian Australians established themselves economically and socially, Sunday lunch evolved alongside changing family circumstances. Larger homes made it possible to host extended family gatherings, while increasing prosperity allowed families to access a wider range of ingredients and equipment. Yet the essential purpose of the gathering often remained unchanged.



For many first-generation migrants, Sunday lunch provided a familiar cultural space in an unfamiliar country. Speaking Italian dialects, sharing regional dishes and gathering with relatives created a sense of continuity with life left behind. For the second generation, these meals became an opportunity to maintain connections with parents and grandparents while balancing Italian traditions with Australian experiences.

Research by Sergio Marino examining three generations of an Adelaide family of Calabrian origin found that Italian identity persisted across generations even as its meaning evolved. This observation helps explain why the significance of Sunday lunch can differ according to age and experience. For grandparents, it may evoke memories of villages in Italy. For their children, it may represent family cohesion and cultural continuity. For grandchildren, it may be associated with cherished memories of cousins, grandparents and family celebrations in Australia.

Although work patterns, travel distances and changing lifestyles mean that not every family can gather weekly, the tradition remains remarkably resilient. Birthdays, religious festivals, anniversaries and special occasions often continue to centre on food shared around a family table.

Preserving Stories Through Food

The significance of Sunday lunch extends beyond recipes. Every dish has a story attached to it. A bowl of pasta may recall a grandmother's village; a tomato sauce recipe may represent generations of adaptation and family knowledge; a wine-making tradition may reveal a family's agricultural background before migration.

For historians, these everyday practices provide valuable insights into migrant experiences that are often overlooked in official records. Family photographs, handwritten recipe books, shopping lists, oral histories and recollections of Sunday gatherings reveal how migrants maintained cultural traditions while adapting to life in a new country.

The preservation of these stories is therefore as important as preserving the recipes themselves. Recording memories associated with food helps future generations understand how earlier family members overcame challenges, maintained traditions and created new lives in Australia while retaining connections to their Italian heritage.

Conclusion

The Italian Sunday lunch is much more than a meal. It is a living expression of family, culture and history. Through the preparation and sharing of food, generations have maintained relationships, transmitted knowledge and preserved memories that extend far beyond the dining table. For Italian Australian families, Sunday lunch has served as both a connection to ancestral homelands and a foundation for new traditions created in Australia.

For the Italian Historical Society of South Australia, documenting these experiences helps preserve an important aspect of migrant history that might otherwise be lost. The stories behind the recipes, the gatherings and the shared meals reveal how culture is not only celebrated at major events but also sustained through the ordinary rituals of everyday family life. In this sense, the Sunday lunch remains one of the most enduring and meaningful expressions of Italian Australian identity.

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In Memoriam

Remembering Luigi (Gino) Santo



With Respect, Gratitude and Fond Remembrance

It is with profound sadness that the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. acknowledges the passing of Mr Gino Santo, a valued member of our Society and a cherished member of the Italian-South Australian community.

On behalf of the President and Committee, we extend our deepest and most heartfelt condolences to Gino's beloved wife, Mrs Nella Santo, and the entire Santo family during this time of sorrow.

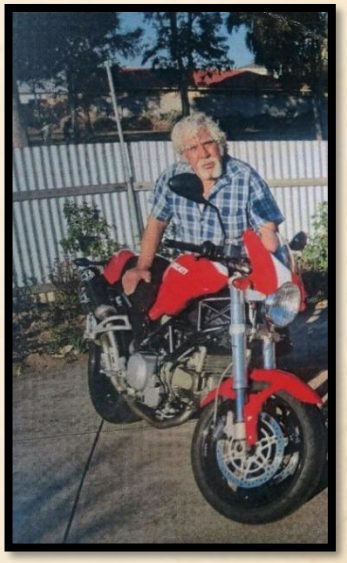
The passing of a member of our community is a reminder that the strength of our Society lies not only in the history we preserve, but also in the people who form part of it. Everyone contributes to the relationships, friendships and shared experiences that give our community its identity and sense of belonging.

Gino's association with the Italian Historical Society of South Australia was valued and appreciated. His presence and connection to our community will be remembered with warmth, respect and gratitude.

As a Society dedicated to preserving the lives and experiences of Italian migrants and their descendants, we recognise that history is shaped not only by significant achievements and public events, but also by the individuals whose lives, relationships and contributions strengthen the communities around them.

It is through these personal connections that our collective heritage continues to endure.

While Gino's passing leaves a sense of loss among those who knew him, his memory will remain in the hearts of his family, friends and the wider community. The friendships he formed, the moments he shared and the memories he leaves behind are part of a legacy that will continue through those whose lives he touched.



To Nella and the Santo family, we offer our sincere sympathy and support. May you find comfort in the love of family and friends, strength in the support of the community, and peace in the treasured memories of the years you shared together.

The Italian Historical Society of South Australia honours Gino's memory with appreciation for his association with our Society and with deep respect for the loss experienced by his loved ones.

He will be fondly remembered and respectfully honoured.

May he rest in eternal peace.

The Twenty Regions of Italy and Their Contribution to South Australia

As part of its continuing commitment to researching, documenting, preserving and promoting the history and heritage of Italians in South Australia, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. has identified the development of a major publication and community education project, tentatively titled *The Twenty Regions of Italy and Their Contribution to South Australia*, as a strategic initiative for future years.

The proposed project seeks to explore the rich historical, cultural and linguistic diversity of Italy and to document the contribution that migrants from each of Italy's twenty regions have made to the social, cultural and economic development of South Australia. Drawing upon historical research, migration studies and community histories, the publication will provide a comprehensive overview of the regional origins of South Australia's Italian community and the enduring influence of those regional identities on succeeding generations.

Although Italy has existed as a unified nation only since 1861, its regions developed over many centuries as independent kingdoms, republics, duchies, city-states and territories, each shaped by distinct historical experiences, geographical conditions and cultural influences. These regional differences gave rise to unique languages and dialects, culinary traditions, customs, folklore, architecture and social practices that remain important expressions of identity to this day.

The publication will examine each of Italy's twenty regions through a series of concise, illustrated profiles. These profiles will explore the influence of geography on regional development, highlight significant historical events and cultural achievements, examine regional languages and dialects, and document the distinctive cuisines and traditions that make each region unique. Iconic landmarks, notable historical figures and characteristic food traditions will also be featured, demonstrating how the natural environment and historical circumstances of each region contributed to the formation of distinctive regional identities.

A key focus of the project will be the relationship between regional Italy and South Australia. The publication will trace migration patterns from the various regions and document the important role played by migrants from regions such as Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Calabria, Sicilia and Sardegna in shaping South Australia's agricultural, horticultural, fishing, construction, manufacturing, commercial and community sectors. The project will also examine how regional traditions, language, cuisine and cultural practices were transplanted to South Australia and continue to be maintained by families, community organisations and cultural associations.

Beyond exploring historical events, this project also aims to encourage members of our community to reflect upon their own family histories. Every migration journey, family photograph, treasured document and personal memory contributes to our understanding of the Italian experience in South Australia.

We invite members, families and the wider Italian community to become part of this journey. If you have photographs, documents, family histories or memories connected to a particular Italian

region, we encourage you to share them with the Society. Your contributions may help preserve important stories and enrich future historical features.

The brief regional introductions presented in this Annual Report offer a glimpse of what is to come. Over the coming year, we look forward to exploring these histories in greater depth and celebrating the remarkable diversity of Italy and its people.

Twenty regions. Twenty unique histories. Countless stories connecting Italy and South Australia.

It is envisaged that the publication will serve several important purposes. It will provide descendants of Italian migrants with a greater understanding of their regional origins; assist researchers, students and educators interested in migration history and multicultural heritage; and contribute to a broader appreciation of the diversity that exists within Italy itself. The project will also complement the Society's oral history program by providing historical and cultural context to the personal and community stories already being documented through the Society's Whole-of-Life and Community Organisation History projects.

Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. believes that this initiative has the potential to become an important educational, cultural and historical resource. By documenting the histories, traditions and contributions of Italy's twenty regions, the project will preserve knowledge that is increasingly at risk of being lost as generations pass. It will also reinforce the Society's broader objective of promoting an understanding of the rich and diverse heritage that Italian migrants brought with them to South Australia and the significant contribution they have made to the State's development.



Preliminary research and content development have commenced through the voluntary efforts of members of the Society. Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. anticipates that further research, writing, community consultation and collection of supporting photographs and historical material will continue over coming years as resources permit. Once completed, the publication is expected to become a valuable addition to the Society's growing body of historical publications and heritage preservation initiatives.

Proposed Outcomes

The project is expected to:

- Produce a comprehensive publication profiling all twenty regions of Italy.
- Document the historical, cultural, linguistic and culinary diversity of regional Italy.
- Record the migration links between individual regions and South Australia.
- Preserve knowledge of regional traditions, dialects and cultural practices.
- Provide an educational resource for members, schools, researchers and the wider community.

- Complement the Society's existing oral history, research and publication programs.
- Strengthen understanding of the diverse regional origins of South Australia's Italian community.

Twenty Regions. Centuries of History. Countless Stories.

Italy is celebrated for its rich history, artistic achievements and cultural traditions. Yet the country we recognise today is the product of centuries of political change, with its regions shaped by different peoples, languages, kingdoms and republics.

Before Italian unification in 1861, the territories of modern Italy had experienced vastly different histories. The regional system established under the Italian Republic developed much later, with the ordinary regions becoming operational in 1970

As part of our continuing commitment to researching, preserving and sharing Italian history, the Italian Historical Society of South Australia is preparing a new historical series exploring all 20 regions of Italy.

The following introductions offer a glimpse into the extraordinary diversity of Italy's regional heritage.

The Twenty Regions of Italy: History, Language, Cuisine and Connections to South Australia

Valle d'Aosta - A Crossroads of Alpine Civilisations

Nestled in the north-western Alps, Valle d'Aosta has historically served as a crossroads between Italy, France and Switzerland. In antiquity, the region was inhabited by the Salassi before Roman conquest and the establishment of Augusta Praetoria, modern Aosta, in 25 BCE. In later years the region formed part of the House of Savoy and retains a strong alpine identity. French and Franco-Provençal influences remain evident in local culture and language. Traditional cuisine reflects its mountain environment, featuring Fontina cheese, fondue, polenta and cured meats. Migration to South Australia was relatively limited but included skilled tradespeople and professionals who contributed to post-war settlement and development.

Piemonte - The Birthplace of Italian Unification

Piemonte (Piedmont) played a pivotal role in the unification of Italy during the nineteenth century. Turin, the regional capital, served as the first capital of the Kingdom of Italy, while the House of Savoy led the Risorgimento movement. The Piedmontese language belongs to the Gallo-Italic linguistic family. The region is renowned for Barolo and Barbaresco wines, white truffles, hazelnuts and traditional dishes such as bagna càuda and agnolotti. Piedmontese migrants formed part of South Australia's early Italian community and later contributed to commerce, agriculture and professional life.

Liguria - Maritime Trade and the Republic of Genoa

Historically dominated by the powerful Maritime Republic of Genoa, Liguria developed as one of the Mediterranean's great trading regions. The Ligurian language reflects centuries of maritime and commercial contact with other Mediterranean cultures. The region is famous for pesto alla Genovese, focaccia and seafood cuisine. Many Ligurian migrants were attracted to South

Australia's fishing, maritime and horticultural industries, bringing with them strong seafaring traditions and entrepreneurial skills.

Lombardia - From Roman Mediolanum to Industrial Italy

Lombardia (Lombardy) has been an important political and economic centre since antiquity. Milan, known to the Romans as Mediolanum, became one of the principal cities of the late Roman Empire. The region later experienced Lombard, Frankish, Visconti, Sforza, Spanish and Austrian rule. Today it is Italy's economic powerhouse, centred on Milan. Local linguistic traditions include Lombard dialects that developed independently over centuries. The region is noted for risotto alla Milanese, ossobuco, polenta and a rich cheese-making tradition. Lombard migrants have been active in South Australia's business, manufacturing and professional sectors.

Trentino-Alto Adige / Südtirol - A Heritage Between Cultures

This alpine region reflects a unique blend of Italian and Austrian heritage. Formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it became part of Italy following the First World War. German and Ladin remain important minority languages alongside Italian. The cuisine combines Alpine and Mediterranean influences, including speck, dumplings, venison dishes and apple strudel. Migrants from the region contributed significantly to South Australia's agricultural, horticultural and wine industries.

Veneto - The Legacy of the Venetian Republic

For over one thousand years Veneto was dominated by the Republic of Venice, one of history's great maritime powers. From the Middle Ages until 1797, Venice controlled important territories in the eastern Mediterranean and northern Italy. Following periods of French and Austrian rule, Veneto became part of the Kingdom of Italy in 1866. Venetian remains one of Italy's most distinctive regional languages. The region is renowned for risotto, polenta, seafood dishes and Prosecco. Venetians represented a large regional group to migrate to South Australia after the Second World War, making substantial contributions to agriculture, construction, manufacturing and viticulture.

Friuli-Venezia Giulia - Roman Roads and Medieval Cities

Located at the intersection of Latin, Slavic and Germanic Europe, Friuli-Venezia Giulia has a long history of cultural exchange and border change. Aquileia was an important Roman city, while later centuries brought Frankish, Venetian and Habsburg influence. The political history of Trieste and the eastern borderlands was particularly affected by the two World Wars, and the changing frontiers of twentieth-century Europe Friulian is recognised as a distinct regional language, while Slovene and German minorities are also present. The region's cuisine reflects both Adriatic and Central European influences. Friulians formed one of the most significant regional migration groups to South Australia and established enduring cultural and community organisations.

Emilia-Romagna - Roman Roads and Medieval Cities

Historically divided between the Duchy of Parma, the Papal States and other principalities, Emilia-Romagna has long been one of Italy's most prosperous regions. Emilia-Romagna takes part of its name from the ancient Roman Via Aemilia, constructed in 187 BCE. Cities including Bologna, Parma, Modena and Ravenna developed distinctive political and cultural traditions. Ravenna served as a capital of the Western Roman Empire and later as an important centre of Ostrogothic and Byzantine rule, while Bologna became home to one of Europe's oldest

universities Emilian and Romagnol linguistic traditions remain important markers of local identity. Often regarded as Italy's gastronomic capital, the region is famous for Parmigiano Reggiano, Prosciutto di Parma, tortellini, tagliatelle and traditional balsamic vinegar. Migrants from Emilia-Romagna made notable contributions to South Australia's food and wine industries.

Toscana - The Etruscans and the Renaissance

Toscana (Tuscany) was the heartland of the ancient Etruscan civilisation before its incorporation into the Roman world. During the Middle Ages, the powerful city-states of Florence, Siena, Pisa and Lucca emerged as centres of trade, banking, maritime commerce and artistic achievement. Toscana occupies a unique place in Italian history as the cradle of the Renaissance and the homeland of literary giants such as Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca and Giovanni Boccaccio. The Florentine dialect formed the foundation of modern standard Italian, giving the region enduring linguistic significance. Renowned for its rich agricultural traditions, Tuscan cuisine emphasises simplicity, seasonal produce and high-quality ingredients, including olive oil, legumes, rustic breads and grilled meats. Migrants from Tuscany made valuable contributions to South Australia's agricultural development and to its professional, commercial and cultural life, helping to shape the State's economic and social fabric.

Umbria - Ancient Peoples and Medieval Spirituality

Known for its mountainous and rural landscapes which led to be known as the 'Green Heart of Italy', Umbria takes its name from the ancient Umbri, one of the peoples of pre-Roman Italy. Roman expansion brought the territory into the Roman state, while medieval cities developed their own political and religious traditions. Assisi became internationally significant through the life and legacy of Saint Francis, born in the late twelfth century. Linguistically it belongs to the central Italian language area. Cuisine centres on truffles, olive oil, pork products and legumes. Migration from Umbria to South Australia was more modest than from some other regions but nevertheless contributed to the broader Italian community.

Marche - From the Piceni to the Papal States

Marche traces its origins to the ancient Piceni, who inhabited much of the region prior to Roman expansion, while Greek settlers established Ancona, which developed into an important Adriatic port. Following Roman rule, Marche experienced centuries of shifting medieval political authority, marked by the emergence of prosperous communes, lordships and ecclesiastical territories. From the late Middle Ages, much of the region came under the influence and administration of the Papal States, remaining so until its incorporation into the Kingdom of Italy during the nineteenth-century unification process. Marche has retained distinctive central Italian dialects, cultural traditions and strong regional identities. Its cuisine reflects both coastal and inland influences, featuring seafood, olives, cured meats and the celebrated *vincisgrassi*, a rich baked pasta dish regarded as one of the region's culinary icons. Migrants from Marche made a significant contribution to South Australia's development, establishing themselves across metropolitan and regional areas, particularly in agriculture, viticulture, small business and rural industries.

Lazio - The Heart of Ancient Rome

Lazio occupies a central place in both Italian and European history. It was here that Rome evolved from a small ancient settlement into the capital of the Roman Republic and later the Roman

Empire, exerting a profound influence on the development of Western civilisation. Following the decline of imperial authority in the West, Rome emerged as the centre of the Papal States and the spiritual heart of the Roman Catholic Church for more than a millennium. The city was incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy in 1870 and became the national capital in 1871, symbolising the completion of Italian unification. The region surrounding Rome therefore represents the historical core of both the ancient Roman world and the papal territories. Linguistically, Romanesco and related central Italian dialects continue to shape regional speech and cultural identity. Lazio is celebrated for its influential culinary traditions, including iconic dishes such as *carbonara*, *amatriciana* and *cacio e pepe*, which have become synonymous with Roman cuisine throughout the world. Migrants from Lazio made significant contributions to South Australia's economic, religious, professional and community life, establishing enduring connections between the region and the State.

Abruzzo - Mountain Communities and Ancient Italic Peoples

Abruzzo has been shaped by its rugged Apennine landscape and the ancient Italic peoples who inhabited the region, including the Marsi, Peligni and Vestini. Following Roman conquest, Abruzzo became integrated into the Roman world before passing through a succession of medieval kingdoms, feudal lordships and administrative jurisdictions. From the late Middle Ages until Italian unification, the region formed part of the Kingdom of Naples and later the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. For centuries, Abruzzo was characterised by mountain villages, pastoral agriculture and the seasonal practice of *transhumance*, in which shepherds moved their flocks between the highlands and coastal plains. The region's relative geographic isolation contributed to the preservation of distinctive dialects, cultural traditions and a strong regional identity. Abruzzese cuisine reflects its pastoral heritage, with renowned specialties including *arrosticini*, lamb dishes, saffron from the L'Aquila area and a variety of handmade pasta. Migrants from Abruzzo established one of South Australia's largest and most influential Italian regional communities, making significant contributions to agriculture, business, community life and cultural heritage through the creation of numerous organisations that continue to play an active role today.

Molise - The Legacy of the Samnites

Molise preserves important connections to the ancient Samnites, whose determined resistance to Roman expansion gave rise to a series of major conflicts during the fourth and third centuries BCE and left a lasting mark on the history of central and southern Italy. Following Roman rule, the region became part of the succession of medieval and early modern kingdoms that shaped southern Italy, including the Kingdom of Naples and later the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. After Italian unification, Molise was administered jointly with Abruzzo before being established as a separate Italian region in 1963. Despite its administrative independence, Molise retains strong historical, cultural and linguistic ties with its northern neighbour. Characterised by rolling hills, mountain villages and a deeply rooted rural heritage, the region has preserved distinctive dialects, traditions and community customs. Molisane cuisine reflects its agricultural and pastoral foundations, featuring lamb, handmade pasta, artisan cheeses and a rich variety of seasonal produce. Although one of Italy's smallest regions by population, Molise contributed a significant migrant presence to South Australia through chain migration and strong family and community networks, playing an important role in the State's social, cultural and economic development.

Campania - Greek Colonies, Pompeii and Naples

Campania has been shaped by a succession of influential civilisations, including the Etruscans, Greeks, Samnites and Romans, which contributed to the region's rich cultural and historical heritage. As the heartland of Magna Graecia, Campania was home to some of the most important Greek colonies in ancient Italy, while cities such as Cumae, Pompeii and Herculaneum attest to its prominence in the classical world. Under Roman rule, the region became one of the most prosperous and culturally significant areas of the Empire. In later centuries, Naples emerged as a major political, economic and cultural centre, serving as the capital of the Kingdom of Naples and subsequently the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The Neapolitan language, one of Italy's most widely recognised regional languages, remains a powerful expression of the region's identity and heritage. Campania is renowned worldwide for its culinary traditions, including pizza, mozzarella di bufala, seafood dishes and the rich tomato-based cuisine that has influenced food cultures far beyond Italy. Migrants from Campania have been prominent within South Australia's Italian community since the nineteenth century and today constitute the largest regional Italian migrant group in the State, making substantial contributions to its economic, social, cultural and community life.

Puglia - A Gateway to the Eastern Mediterranean

Puglia (Apulia) occupies a strategic position along the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, making it an important crossroads between Italy and the eastern Mediterranean for thousands of years. In antiquity, the region was inhabited by peoples including the Dauni, Peucetii and Messapians, before becoming an integral part of the Roman world. Over subsequent centuries, Puglia experienced successive periods of Byzantine, Norman, Swabian, Angevin, Aragonese and Spanish rule, each leaving a lasting imprint on its culture, architecture and traditions. Its rich medieval heritage is exemplified by landmarks such as Frederick II's Castel del Monte, reflecting the region's complex historical development and its role as a meeting point of diverse civilisations. Influenced by Greek, Byzantine, Norman and Spanish cultures, Puglia has preserved a range of distinctive dialects and minority linguistic communities that contribute to its unique regional identity. The region is renowned for its cuisine, characterised by exceptional olive oil, *orecchiette* pasta, fresh vegetables, seafood and a strong tradition of simple, seasonal ingredients. Pugliese migrants made significant contributions to South Australia's agricultural, horticultural and fishing industries. In particular, migrants from Molfetta formed the first concentrated regional Italian migrant community in Australia, establishing important settlements in Port Pirie and Port Adelaide and playing a pioneering role in the development of South Australia's fishing industry and maritime enterprises. Their legacy remains an important part of the State's Italian heritage.

Basilicata - From Ancient Lucania to Modern Italy

Basilicata, historically known as Lucania, traces its origins to the ancient Lucani, an Italic people who inhabited the region before its incorporation into the Roman world. Situated between the Tyrrhenian and Ionian seas yet dominated by rugged mountains and inland plateaus, Basilicata developed a distinctive character shaped by both its geography and history. Following Roman rule, the region passed through periods of Byzantine, Lombard, Norman, Angevin and Aragonese influence, reflecting the complex political evolution of southern Italy. Among its most remarkable historical sites is Matera, whose ancient cave dwellings, known as the Sassi, provide a unique testimony to thousands of years of human settlement and adaptation to the natural landscape. Geographical isolation for much of its history contributed to the preservation of strong local

traditions, distinctive dialects and a deeply rooted regional identity. Basilicata cuisine reflects its rural and pastoral heritage, featuring handmade pasta, lamb, peppers and other locally produced ingredients. During the post-war migration era, many migrants from Basilicata settled in South Australia, where they made significant contributions to industry, agriculture, small business and regional communities, enriching the social, cultural and economic life of the State.

Calabria - From Magna Graecia to Migration

Calabria has been shaped by its strategic position between the Tyrrhenian and Ionian Seas, making it a crossroads of Mediterranean civilisations for more than two millennia. In antiquity, the region hosted some of the most important Greek colonies of Magna Graecia, including Sybaris, Kroton, Locri and Rhegion, whose cultural, political and intellectual achievements left a profound and enduring legacy. Following Roman conquest, Calabria experienced successive periods of Byzantine, Lombard, Norman, Angevin, Aragonese and Spanish rule, each contributing to the region's distinctive historical and cultural character. Ancient Greek influences remained particularly strong in parts of southern Calabria, where elements of language, traditions and cultural practices continued to survive for centuries.

Historically, Calabria was characterised by rural communities, strong family networks and a resilient regional identity. From the late nineteenth century onward, migration became a defining feature of Calabrian life, with large numbers seeking opportunities overseas. Calabria was among the principal regions of origin for Italians who settled in South Australia, particularly during the post-Second World War migration period, making its history especially significant to the work of the Society. The region is renowned for its rich culinary traditions, including chilli-based dishes, *'nduja*, cured meats, seafood and other products reflecting its Mediterranean environment and agricultural heritage.

Calabrians formed the second-largest Italian regional migrant group in South Australia, and have made substantial contributions to the State's business, agricultural, industrial and community life. Within this migration story, people from Caulonia have been especially prominent, establishing extensive family and community networks that played a vital role in shaping many South Australian Italian communities. Their enduring contribution remains an important part of the State's social, cultural and economic heritage.

Sicilia - A Crossroads of Mediterranean Civilisations

Sicilia (Sicily) has experienced one of the most diverse and influential histories in the Mediterranean world. Owing to its strategic position at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and the Near East, the island became a meeting place of civilisations and one of the region's most contested territories. Ancient Sicilian communities interacted with Phoenician and Greek settlers, while successive periods of Roman, Byzantine, Islamic, Norman, Swabian, Angevin, Aragonese and Spanish rule each contributed to the island's distinctive cultural character. Among the most significant chapters in Sicilian history was the Norman Kingdom of Sicily, which became renowned for its unique blending of Latin, Greek and Arabic traditions in government, architecture, scholarship and daily life.

These centuries of cultural exchange shaped a rich and enduring regional identity that remains evident in Sicily's language, customs and traditions. Sicilian, one of Italy's most significant and widely spoken regional languages, continues to reflect the island's complex historical heritage.

Sicilian cuisine is equally renowned, featuring iconic dishes such as *arancini* and *cannoli*, together with citrus fruits, seafood and a diverse range of recipes influenced by centuries of Mediterranean cultural interaction.

Migrants from Sicily have played an important role in South Australia's Italian community since the nineteenth century, contributing significantly to agriculture, commerce, industry and community life. Through their entrepreneurial spirit, family networks and strong cultural traditions, Sicilians helped shape many of the social, economic and cultural institutions that continue to enrich South Australian society today.

Sardegna - The Ancient Nuragic Civilisation

Sardegna (Sardinia) possesses a distinctive history shaped in large part by its geographical separation from mainland Italy and its strategic position in the western Mediterranean. During the Bronze Age, the island was home to the remarkable Nuragic civilisation, which constructed thousands of stone towers known as *nuraghi*, creating one of Europe's most distinctive prehistoric cultural landscapes. Over subsequent centuries, Sardinia experienced the influence of Phoenician, Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, Pisan, Genoese and Aragonese powers, each contributing to the island's rich historical and cultural heritage. In the modern era, Sardinia became part of the Kingdom of Sardinia, which played a pivotal role in the movement for Italian unification and ultimately provided the constitutional and political framework from which the Kingdom of Italy emerged.

Sardinia possesses one of Europe's oldest and most enduring cultural identities, preserving linguistic and cultural traditions that predate modern Italian national development. Sardinian (Sardu) is widely recognised as a distinct Romance language and remains an important expression of the island's unique heritage. The island's cuisine reflects both its pastoral and maritime traditions, featuring renowned products and dishes such as pecorino cheese, *pane carasau*, seafood and roasted meats.

Sardinian migrants made significant contributions to South Australia's agricultural, pastoral and business sectors, while maintaining strong regional traditions and community networks. Through cultural associations, social organisations and the preservation of language, customs and heritage, they have played an important role in enriching the multicultural character of South Australian society.

South Australian Connection

The migration of Italians from all twenty regions has enriched South Australia's social, cultural and economic development. Particularly strong migration streams from Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Abruzzo, Molise, Calabria, Campania, Sicily and Sardinia helped shape many of the state's community organisations, cultural traditions, industries and family networks that continue to flourish today

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Carnevale Comes to Adelaide: A Celebration of Italian Heritage, Tradition and Community

Few celebrations capture the spirit, colour, and vitality of Italy quite like Carnevale. For centuries, towns and cities across Italy have come alive with music, masks, costumes, parades, and festivities as communities gather to celebrate one of the most cherished events on the Italian cultural calendar. From the grand canals of Venice to the villages of southern Italy, Carnevale is a joyful expression of creativity, community, and tradition that has been passed from generation to generation.



Perhaps best known for its magnificent masks and elegant masquerade balls, Carnevale has its roots in medieval and Renaissance Italy. The wearing of masks allowed people from all walks of life to set aside social distinctions and join in an atmosphere of celebration, laughter, and friendship. Today, the tradition continues to enchant people around the world, serving as a vibrant reminder of Italy's rich cultural heritage and love of bringing people together.

The Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. is proud to bring this timeless tradition to Adelaide with its inaugural *Carnevale: Un Ballo in Maschera* (Mask Ball) on Saturday, 6 February 2027. Inspired by the elegance and mystery of the great Italian Carnevale celebrations, the evening promises to be a spectacular celebration of culture, heritage, and community, as highlighted in the Society's promotional flyer.

Guests will be invited to embrace the magic of Carnevale by attending in formal attire and masquerade masks, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of the famous Venetian balls. The evening will feature exceptional food, music, entertainment, dancing, and plenty of opportunities to connect with fellow members of the community while celebrating the traditions that have shaped generations of Italian families.

More than simply a social event, the Carnevale Mask Ball is an opportunity to honour the enduring contribution of Italian migrants and their descendants to South Australia. It reflects the Society's ongoing commitment to preserving and sharing the stories, customs, and traditions that form an important part of our multicultural heritage.

Whether your family arrived in Australia generations ago or you simply appreciate Italian culture, the Carnevale Mask Ball promises an unforgettable evening filled with elegance, tradition, and celebration. The Society warmly invites members, supporters, friends, and the wider community to join together and experience the wonder of this iconic Italian heritage festival.

Vivi la Magia del Carnevale! Come and celebrate the beauty of Italian culture, the strength of community, and the joy of keeping treasured traditions alive for future generations.

Proceeds from the event will assist the Society's Publication Fund to capture, preserve, and publish migrant stories, recognising that whenever a loved one passes without sharing their story, a lifetime of knowledge and experience is lost forever.

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