



Club Garibaldi News

OCTOBER 2007

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Tanti Auguri a te, tanti auguri a te, tanti auguri Club Garibaldi ... tanti auguri a te!

Happy 125th birthday, Club Garibaldi, Wellington, New Zealand! 1882 > 2007!

On Saturday, 22 September 2007, Club Garibaldi celebrated its milestone 125th anniversary with a celebration dinner held at the clubrooms. Unofficially, we are the oldest, active Italian club in the world, outside of Italy, which is absolutely amazing!

A fantastic evening was enjoyed by 125 club members and official guests, namely, the Ambassador of Italy, Dr Liana Marolla, Dr Massimo Carnelos, Primo Segretario from the Italian Embassy, Monsignor Cao, the Pope's representative in NZ, from The Holy See in Wellington, Fr Geoff Broad, parish priest of St Francis de Sales Church, Island Bay, Cav Elizabeth Peek, President of the Circolo Italiano di Wellington, and David Clinton, President of Club Italia Nelson, and his partner Alison.

For those who did not attend, allow me to share with you, the format of the evening, on this very significant occasion. The clubrooms looked amazing: Fairy lights, were looped from the four corners of the ceiling into the centre, as well as around a huge hand painted poster over an entire wall, which read '125 Anni – Congratulazione - Club Garibaldi' – 1882 to 2007' with the Italian and New Zealand flag on each side. The tables were elegantly laid with black tablecloths and white place mats, flowers and candles, and green, white and red serviettes shaped into a sailing boat.

The festivities commenced in the early evening when Her Excellency the Ambassador of Italy, Dr Liana Marolla called in to greet the club community and to make a short speech before leaving for another appointment. In her absence, Dr Massimo Carnelos represented the Ambassador. After Fr Geoff said grace, a delicious entrée of fresh seafood was served at the table, followed by a buffet style second course which comprised of roasted meats and chicken, accompanied by vegetables and a selection of salads, followed by a variety of desserts.

After dinner the official part of the evening began with Paul Elenio, Master of Ceremonies, giving a superb speech on the club's achievements and history, after which the President of Club Garibaldi, Ginette Toscano Page spoke and proposed a toast to Italy. Both of these speeches can be read further on in this newsletter.

The beautiful celebration cake, made by Vice President Alfonso Basile, was duly cut by the club's three most senior members: Angela Panettieri (93 years young on 4 October), Vincenzo Di Mattina and Stella Criscillo who both celebrated their 92nd birthdays during the last few months. The cake was then cut up, and together with platters of cannoli, was passed around each table for the guests to enjoy with their coffee.

To commemorate this special occasion, Ginette and Alfonso presented guests with bombonieri - an apt and fitting fishing boat, decorated with ribbons in Italy's national colours, with sugared almonds attached at the back of it, in white netting.

Salvi Gaeta entertained the guests by strumming his guitar and singing favourite Italian songs, which was then followed by a rousing sing-a-long by members, of much loved popular songs. Then the dancing began until late!

All in all, a wonderful night was had by all. Of course functions like this do not just happen. A great deal of planning and hard work was done by a dedicated group of members: Many thanks and much appreciation to the following: Alfonso Basile, who made all the entrées, cannoli and celebration cakes, Maria Colucci, who made Italian dolci, Josephine and Martin Van der Donk, Jo and Salvi Gaeta, Jim and Lynda Marson, Rex and Avril Da Vanzo, Marie Barnao, Ginette and Robin Page, Lisa Devitt, Jane Di Mattina, Michael and Ratih Gaeta, and Matt Amitrano.

You will note that this month's newsletter is a couple of weeks early. I have worked long and hard to get it out before Robin and I depart for the United States. In my absence, the club will be the capable hands of the new Vice President, Alfonso Basile.

Ciao a presto
Ginette Toscano Page

NATIONAL CONFEDERATION INSTITUTE OF ASSISTANCE

Dear Italian Pensioners: INCA can help you!!!

INCA (National Confederation Institute of Assistance) is an Italian organisation that helps Italian pensioners in many different ways, in Italy and overseas. If you receive a pension from Italy and you need assistance in order to fill forms or with administration, INCA can help you, for free. For example, every year people receiving a pension from Italy need to complete and return a form called RED.

INSITUTO NAZIONALE CONFEDERALE DI ASSISTENZA

Cari Pensionati Italiani: INCA puo' aiutarvi!!!

INCA (Istituto Nazionale Confederale di Assistenza) e'una organizzazione italiana che aiuta i pensionati italiani in molti modi diversi, in Italia e all'estero. Se ricevi una pensione erogata dall'Italia e necessiti assistenza per completare formulari o pratiche amministrative, INCA puo' aiutarti, gratuitamente. Per esempio, ogni anno le persone che ricevono una pensione dall'Italia devono compilare un formulario chiamato RED e rispedirlo. Di solito esso arriva alla fine di Settembre o all'inizio di Ottobre.

BABY CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the following on the recent additions to their families –

Massimo and Viola Carnelos of the Italian Embassy, on the safe arrival of their daughter Allegra.

Emma and Michael Raymond of Kilbirnie, Wellington, on the safe arrival of their son Ricco Joe Herman Raymond. A grandson for Francesca Natoli of Island Bay.

7th ITALIAN LANGUAGE WEEK THROUGHOUT THE WORLD LA SETTIMANA DELLA LINGUA ITALIANA NEL MONDO

By Nina Cuccurullo

Please circle your calendars now for Thursday 25 October at 7.30 pm, as we will be celebrating Italian Language Week with a talk given by Paul Elenio on the Wellington Fishermen, Elizabeth Peek on the Perano Family, and Marco Sonzogni reading poetry. More information to follow in the next newsletter.

MELHOP TRUST AWARD



John Mollo

Congratulations to John Mollo, son of Teresa and Liberato of Island Bay, who is the second recipient of a study award from the Melhop Trust.

John plans to undertake a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration, majoring in Economics and Marketing, at Victoria University next year. John is in his final year of study at St Patrick's College, Kilbirnie, Wellington.

ITALIAN LANGUAGE WEEK EVENT 25 OCTOBER



The *Annual Italian Language Week*, now in its seventh year, aims to promote Italian language and culture around the world. This year's theme, chosen by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is *The Italians and the Sea*.

To celebrate the International Week of Italian Language 2007, we will be holding an event entitled 'The Italians and the Sea'. This event is hosted by Club Garibaldi and the Circolo Italiano di Wellington, in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Accademia Della Crusca and with the support of Dr Liana Marolla and the Embassy of Italy, Victoria University, Immagini Design and Wellington Trawling Company

Paul Elenio will be speaking on the Fishing Community of Wellington, Cav Elizabeth Peek will speak about her ancestors, the Perano whalers and Dr Marco Sonzogni will recite poems about the sea in Italian poetry. Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided. The evening will be held on Thursday 25 October at 7.30 at the clubrooms. We look forward to seeing you there to celebrate the contribution made by our ancestors.

Also to celebrate this event we are -

CALLING ALL OUR GARIBALDINI – YOUNGER CLUB GARIBALDI MEMBERS!

As part of the Italian Week Celebrations we are inviting our younger (school-age) club members to create pictures on the subject of the Ocean, which is the theme of the Italian Week, and in particular the Fishing Community ... so pictures of fishermen, boats, fish, Island Bay and Eastbourne would be great ... maybe the names of our fishes in Italian ... it will be up to the children to decide. The artworks will be placed on the clubroom walls for all to view.

Please use A4 sized paper and use paints as these are brighter than pencils or felts. Also indicate on the back of your painting your name and age and title of your painting. Please have all paintings delivered to Nina Cuccurullo, 21 Liffey Street, Island Bay, Wellington 6023, by Monday 22 October, as I will be laminating all the artwork and making signs for the names over Labour Weekend. Have fun!

UPCOMING EVENTS

ITALIAN MASS

The next Italian Mass will be held on Sunday 7 October 2007 at 11.30am at St Francis de Sales Church, Island Bay.

Mass is held every first Sunday of the month throughout the year.



SHARED LUNCH

The next shared lunch will be held at the Club rooms on Sunday 7 October 2007 at 1pm. All members and families are very welcome.



Please bring a plate.

TOMBOLA EVENINGS

The Tombola nights are held every 4th Tuesday of the month. **The next evening is on Tuesday, 23th October, at the usual time of 7.30 pm.** Please do come along and feel free to bring a friend.

ITALIAN FILMS

NO FILM FOR OCTOBER –

See programme for the Italian Film Festival 17 October - 31 October.

NOVEMBER FILM

At 7pm on 15 November 2007, the film **When do the Girls show up?** 2005, will be screened. This uplifting, semi-autobiographical new drama from Pupi Avati **A Heart Elsewhere**, is a touching tale of the soaring dreams and bitter rivalries of youth and what happens when boyhood bonds are tested. Duration 98 minutes.

A \$2 cover charge towards costs will apply.

THE CATHAY PACIFIC ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL

If you are a movie buff, the Cathay Pacific Italian Film Festival is not to be missed. This year's film festival will be the 12th year that it has been running, and screens for two weeks in 7 cities across New Zealand. All films are in Italian language with English sub-titles.



The gala opening for the Wellington festival will take place on Wednesday, 17 October, and will continue through to Wednesday, 31 October, at the Paramount Cinema, Courtney Place, Wellington. See the Dominion Post for details, or visit their website, from 31 August, for film synopsis and more: www.italianfilmfestival.co.nz

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 7th October (11:30am) - Italian Mass

Sunday 7th October (1pm) - Shared Lunch

Wednesday 17th October - Film Festival opening

Saturday 20th October - Aldo Cuccurullo Memorial Soccer Trophy

Tuesday 23rd October (7:30pm) - Tombola

Thursday 25th October (7:30pm) - 'The Italians and the Sea'

Thursday 1st November (7:30pm) - Circolo Social

Thursday 15th November (7pm) – Italian Film

A GLIMPSE INTO ~ ~ ~ CATANIA

By Angelo Cacciato

This month Catania is featured, the area where Dr Angelo Cacciato was born.

Catania is a beautiful town on the East Coast of Sicily. It lies at the foot of Mount Etna, one of the most active volcanoes in Europe. The town was destroyed by lava on two different occasions, and the volcano is still a threat with its eruptions. Occasionally, the town is covered by a mantle of black ash coming from the angry mountain, in a form of dark cloud obscuring the sun and obstructing the drainage systems.



Dr Angelo Cacciato

There are 500,000 people living in the town, however this number would rise to almost a million, if we account for the population of the satellite villages surrounding it.

According to history books, Catania has thrived since the Arabs colonised the island. The town has always had a strategic importance because of its location of being in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea. After the Arabs, the Greeks and Romans took special interest and made sure they could take advantage of the strategic position of the town. The culture available is of enormous value, and the influence of ancient cultures is demonstrated by the monuments. The Greek Amphitheatre is one of these. More recently, the Baroque architecture of the Cathedral and the main theatre has given the town the chance to be considered one of the most artistic places on the Italian peninsula.

Even now Catania is called the 'Milano of the South' because of its growing economy and the flourishing industrial site. Catania has one of the oldest universities in Italy dating back to the twelfth century. This university is highly rated in Europe as well as around the world, and is at the centre of an international exchange of students.

The town is the heart of the tourism on the island. Year round, there is a continuous pilgrimage of tourists from all over the world who come to explore the worrying mountain and the beautiful beaches of the Ionio Sea. The temperature is mild in winter and extremely hot in summer, when it reaches 46 degree! It is well known that Catania has been recently targeted by the German people, as their new residence in retirement, and in the last thirty years there has been a constant increase in the number of foreign residents. Catania is also well known to the American Navy. Some 5,000 sailors from the United States are located in Sigonella, the biggest air base in the Mediterranean Sea, which is situated 10 kilometres south of the town.

The town represents the pulsating heart of a flourishing economy, by contrast the small villages along the coast and particularly the ones situated up in the mountains, have a slow pace of life, where the elderly population sit under the shadow of trees in the main square, drinking wine and playing cards! This relaxed approach to life, together with the healthy Mediterranean diet seems to be the secret of healthy living, with the average age being well into the eighties and nineties without medications nor visits to a doctor.

Like the rest of the Italy, there is a strong Catholic influence. More than 80% of the population is Catholic and until recently, because of the immigration policy of the Italian government, the town has seen the Muslim community growing considerably. The patron saint (la Patrona) of the town is S. Agata, and the official date for the celebration is 5th of February. During the festival all the offices, businesses and banks are closed. Huge crowds gather at the doors of the cathedral, waiting for the procession to start – that is, the statue of S. Agata is carried through the streets of the town. As it is an important occasion, delicious dolci and traditional cakes are made by the citizens, and fireworks are let off deep into the night.

So, what are you waiting for? Just book your ticket and spend your holidays in the land of the sun!

A BIT OF TRIVIA

By Ginette Toscano Page

ANSA - Milan, 20 August 2007

According to a recent study conducted by the Eta Meta Research group, Italians are easily distracted when they go on holiday! In one month alone, Italians lost 18 million euros on the beach!

The main loses include wallets and change purses, however, sunglasses, jewellery and watches, sandals and music players follow closely behind. This is followed by house and car keys, cameras and video cameras, diving gear and cell phones.

The study found that cell phones were the easiest to find, as owners could call their own number and locate the ring tone!

The beach personnel who were interviewed said they received complaints at least three times a day from the distracted bathers, especially in the morning when people arrived on the beach and later in the day, when they gathered their belongings to leave.

Once the holiday season is over, many Italian beaches are filled with 'treasure hunters', equipped with metal detectors, in the hope that they will strike it lucky!

MEMBER PROFILE

This month's member profile is on Jim Marson – the newest member of the executive committee.

My name is Jim Marson. I am 58 years old and have been involved with Club Garibaldi on and off, since I was a small boy.

My family all come from Meduno Di Livenza, a province of Pordenone, in Northern Italy. My father Sante, immigrated to New Zealand at the beginning of 1939, found employment and a house for the family, then sent for my mother, brother and twin sisters to come to New Zealand to live. Just before they were about to immigrate, World War 2 broke out. When Mum finally arrived in Wellington in 1947, I was the result of their happy reunion!



Lynda & Jim Marson

My wife Lynda is also a club member, and we have been married for 36 years, and have three adult children, who in turn have given us six terrific grandchildren.

I have been employed in the Printing Industry for over 40 years, and have also been involved with soccer over many years, doing the odd stint on various Junior and Senior Soccer committees.

It is a real honour for me to be elected onto the Club Garibaldi executive committee, and I will do my best to keep up the excellent high standard, the committee has produced, both now and over past years.

PAUL ELENIO'S SPEECH AT THE 125th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DINNER

Introduction speech:

Ladies and gentlemen, buonasera, good evening, benvenuti - welcome to this wonderful occasion, the celebration of 125 years of Club Garibaldi. It is my pleasure to compare this great evening in our club's history. On behalf of you all, I offer a particular welcome to our special guests:

Dr Massimo Carnelos from the Italian Embassy who has brought his father from Italy with him, David Clinton, President of Club Italia and his partner Aly, representing our sister club in Nelson, Monsignor Cao from The Holy See, Fr Geoff Broad, parish priest of St Francis De Sales in Island Bay, and our three special senior members: Angela (Lina) Panettieri, Stella Criscillo, and Vincenzo Di Mattina.

We will come back to them a little later. The format of this evening is fairly straight forward. In a moment I will ask Father Geoff to say grace. You will then be served at your table with your entrée. Following that, the main meal buffet will be available and I ask that you go to the buffet one table at a time, starting with the VIP table over here. There is plenty of food for everyone. After the main course we will undertake the formalities of the evening.

I will provide a few thoughts on the club's history and it's achievements over the last 125 years, a trip down memory lane if you like. Then I will ask the president of the club, Ginette Toscano Page, to speak and propose the toast to Italy. We will then sing the national anthem of Italy. Following the speeches and toasts we will cut the special 125th birthday cake and the honours will be done by Stella, Vince and Lina.

We are indeed, lucky in the club to have as vice-president Alfonso Basile who is head chef at the Wellington Club who has worked so hard to prepare the entrée, the cannoli and the birthday cake. Later in the evening we will enjoy some entertainment, including some of the old favourite Italian songs. A tremendous amount of work has gone into preparing for this evening and I hope you will acknowledge the time and effort that has gone into ensuring our celebration is a memorable one. Without further ado, Father Geoff would you please say grace.

Official Speech:

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that in typical Italian fashion you are feeling good and really full after that meal. But of course, there is much more to come! Our celebration of the club's 125 years is an important occasion, one to savour and remember, especially as we all of course, expect to be here for the 150th.

I was at the club's centenary function in August 1982 and was a member of the organising committee. It was a marvellous centennial ball, held in the old Majestic ballroom in Willis Street. There were nearly 500 people there and we enjoyed a wonderful night of food, wine and music. We had two bars so that there would be no waiting; we had wonderful food, fantastic music to dance to and speeches.

The speakers included the Italian Ambassador of the time, Giorgio De Andreis and the MP for Island Bay, former Cabinet Minister Frank O'Flynn and the MC was a man of great wit and great voice, Silvio Famularo. Then, as we do now, we must pay tribute to the founders of our club and to the many people who have kept the club going, through good times and bad.

The club was established in July 1882 as a workingmen's club and it was designed to provide a home and a haven for Italian migrants. They were few in number at the time in New Zealand for a variety of reasons, but all saw the need to meet and socialise occasionally and to support each other. The club was named after that great patriot and leader Giuseppe Garibaldi who, with his army of 500, did so much to unite Italy as one nation in the mid 19th century. It is interesting to note that the secretary of the first committee was a George Robertson, born in Livorno of a Scottish father, and fluent in Italian. The new club adopted the motto "Fratellanza, Educazione, Lavoro" – brotherhood, education, work. It was established as a friendly society in 1883.

Membership of the club was small in those early years, as low as 13 in 1894 and as high as 43 in 1892. The club established its rooms in Ghuznee Street, and early in the 20th century received an importing licence to bring in olive oil, wine and cheese, a practice the club continued until the 1960s. In the first 50 years the clubrooms were open every day, providing a place for members to meet, drink, play cards, bowls or billiards. There were two full-time barmen who also sold supplies of Italian wine and food, and there were many visitors' names in the visitors' book. The club went into recess for a short period during the Second World War when it was seen as disrespectful to New Zealanders for Italians to be socialising while Kiwi soldiers died fighting Italian soldiers a half a world away.

The club boomed in the 1950s and 60s, the venue of many great functions and occasions as members made full use of the facilities, including the ability to drink alcohol beyond the closing time of 6pm and, when the law was changed in 1966, beyond 10pm. They were fun times with huge bowls of pasta cooked up by a Volpicelli and songs led by another Volpicelli. The club archives have many photos of members enjoying themselves at the annual club picnic, often held on the rural property of one of our members at Tawa Flat, and at the glittering annual ball held in venues such as the Lower Hutt Horticultural Hall.

In the 1980s the club struggled to retain its membership in an ageing building that needed much upkeep. We are indebted to the committee of the time who worked so hard, with the benign leadership of the late Vince Criscillo, Vince Toscano and Liberato Vinaccia and also Fifi Esposito and Armando Gilmoni who are with us tonight. After several options to sell up and move, the club sold its property and in 1991 we moved to these premises which were formerly the Cricketer's Arms Tavern, a club facility that is the envy of most ethnic groups in Wellington.

I would like to conclude by mentioning that in March or April next year a documentary series about migrants, why they came here and what they found when they arrived will be screened by Television New Zealand. The first series this year included the Dalmatians, the Chinese and the Irish. One of the six programmes next year will be on the Italian immigrants. I was lucky or unlucky enough to be interviewed for this programme a couple of weeks ago. The camera was in my office at work for almost three hours and we covered a lot of ground. Of course with TV you speak for three hours and they use four minutes, probably out of context and through editing it making it misleading. One of the dozens of questions that I was asked by the interviewer was what makes Italians different from other New Zealanders.

I spoke about family and mutual support, about wonderful and tasty meals – and how we talk about the next one before we've even finished eating the current one – about how we are passionate, emotional, demonstrative, noisy and nosey, loud! None of those words captures the essence of what it is to be an Italian New Zealander. And maybe we shouldn't try to categorise it in any way. As the Australian Italian comedian Joe Avati would say, 'Hey, we're Italian, get over it!'

Finally, I want to finish with a story. Believe me when I say that if you Google to find an Italian joke the search is not easy and the results are rather poor. If you're like me you are sick of the stereotypes around the mafia and Italian tanks having one forward gear and four reverse. And of course, with a diplomat and a priest in our circle today we need to be careful about our selection of stories. So here goes

Mrs. Cerutti comes to Wellington to visit her son Antonio for dinner, who lives with a female roommate Maria...

During the course of the meal, his mother couldn't help but notice how pretty Antonio's roommate was. She had long been suspicious of a relationship between the two, and this had only made her more curious.

Over the course of the evening, while watching the two interact, she started to wonder if there was more between Antonio and his roommate than met the eye. Reading his mum's thoughts, Antonio said: "I know what you must be thinking, but I assure you, Maria and I are just roommates."

About a week later, Maria came to Antonio saying, "Ever since your mother came to dinner, I've been unable to find the silver sugar bowl. You don't suppose she took it, do you?" Well, I doubt it, but I'll e-mail her, just to be sure." So he sat down and wrote;

Dear Momma, I'm not saying that you did take the sugar bowl from my house, and I'm not saying that you did not take it. But the fact remains that it has been missing ever since you were here for dinner. Love, Antonio

Several days later, Antonio received a response e-mail from his Mum which read...

Dear Son, I'm not saying that you do sleep with Maria, and I'm not saying that you do not sleep with her. But the fact remains that if she was sleeping in her OWN bed, she would have found the sugar bowl by now. Love, Mamma

And now I want to call on Ginette Toscano Page, president of Club Garibaldi, to address you.

GINETTE TOSCANO PAGE'S SPEECH

Thank you Paul.

Dr Massimo Carnelos, Monsignor Cao, Father Geoff, Elizabeth Peek, David Clinton, Aly, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First, let me join Paul in welcoming you all to this special celebration of 125 years. In many ways this evening is a tribute to the founders of the club and the many men and now women – our parents and grandparents – who have kept the club going for such a long time.

We are indeed lucky, to have people with such foresight and perseverance to develop the club and ensure that it continues to be vital and relevant in the 21st century even though times now are very different to when they came to New Zealand to build una buona fortuna, a better life. Let us think for a few moments about those early immigrants and the challenges they faced.

They came to Wellington for many different reasons and from different parts of Italy. What united them and led them to found and promote Club Garibaldi was an unbreakable bond to the country and family they had left behind to travel to the ends of the earth. They came to Wellington between the 1870s and the 1960s and settled mainly in Island Bay and the Hutt Valley. Families also built homes in Makara, Johnsonville, Horowhenua and of course where it all started with the Russo brothers, in Eastbourne. They arrived speaking virtually no English and went into labouring jobs and struggled to establish themselves, feed their families and eventually build homes and businesses.

They were entrepreneurs and one of their very good ideas was to buy a building to house clubrooms, the latest of which we are in tonight. In Australia Italian clubs thrive because of the large number of Italians from many regions that are members of them, and who use the pokie machines that fund so many of their clubs' activities. We don't have anywhere near those numbers of members and we are not into pokie machines. But we are lucky to be sustained financially by the property investment of our forefathers as the rents we earn from this building and its surrounds, keep us in good financial health. Italian immigrants who settled in early Wellington are still spoken of highly today, due to their resolve to work hard, support each other and establish themselves in a new and foreign land.

In the case of my family, my mother Maria Grazia (Grace) Zino emigrated to New Zealand as a 10 year old girl in 1924, with her mother and young brother Giuseppe (Joe), to join her father who was already here. Not long after their arrival, the Zino family became active members of Club Garibaldi. The earliest photo I have seen of my mother at a club function is printed in the publication *Alla Fine Del Mondo*, taken at the Masonic Hall, Island Bay, as part of a large group of club members with the then Italian Consul at a National Day celebration ... there she is a mere slip of a girl, no more than 11 years old, sitting beside her mother, my Nonna, Nunziata. Mum was a member of Club Garibaldi for nearly 74 years, until she passed away.

Just after my parents married in 1936, my father Vincenzo (Vince) Toscano, who up until that time had been living in Sydney, became a member of Club Garibaldi. Mum and Dad fully immersed themselves into club activities, enjoying immensely the camaraderie of their paesani. Growing up, I remember my parents going to the dances which were held most weekends at the club ... a warm and welcoming place, to catch up with fellow Italians ... the clubrooms would be buzzing with music,

noise, chatter and laughter... and as the evening began to fade, it somehow always ended up with the members singing their favourite songs from back home.

As Paul mentioned earlier, in the 1980's the club struggled to retain its membership in an ageing building ...my father Vince Toscano, was one of the six men who worked very hard to build interest in the club among a generation of younger people who had been born in New Zealand. If it had not been for these men, we would not be enjoying the fruits of their toil tonight. Over the years Dad served on the executive committee and held the office of Vice President for 4 years, from 1976-1980, until he passed away.

In 1995 we were able to celebrate the contribution that our forefathers have made to Wellington through a fantastic exhibition at the Petone Settlers Museum, called *Alla Fine Del Mondo*, and the book of the same name. For many of us, seeing the collection of artefacts at Petone and reading the book brought back emotional memories of our families. The exhibition and book was our chance to demonstrate to the wider public a slice of Italy, and this was accompanied by our first Italian Festival on the Petone waterfront. Since then we have had 13 festivals, all bigger than the previous ones, hugely supported by Italian New Zealand businesses and with thousands of people turning up on the day.

However, the club is not just about one day of the year when we show off the best in Italian food, wine and entertain people regally. At the club's heart is the socialising on a Sunday over bowls, cards or a conversation, the wonderful commitment our members' children show in the Italian language classes, the annual picnic, tombola evenings, the shared lunches, the Christmas party for children and the Christmas luncheon for our senior members, and the annual soccer game against our friends from Club Italia in Nelson.

Our club has enjoyed many successes and membership continues to grow. We have managed to reverse the decline of the 1970s and 1980s as people realise that there continues to be an important place for a club that nourishes and promotes Italy and its descendants in Wellington, culturally and socially. This was reinforced for us with our involvement through the community group in the development and showing of the Te Papa exhibition *Qui Tutto Bene* which finished earlier this year.

We continue to work hard - those who volunteer to serve on the club's executive committee and sub-committees, planning events such as this one, a major piece of work. I want to thank all those volunteers, spanning 125 years, who have made Club Garibaldi what it has been and still is today – a small slice of Italy far from the mother country. I would like you to charge your glasses, stand and join me in drinking a bumper toast to the land of our heritage, the land of our forefathers, Italia!

CONGRATULAZIONE – 125 ANNI



Ginette, John Iona, Paul



Elizabeth & Martin



Maria, Josephine, Paul



Lina, Robin, Bettina



Penny & Trudy



Ines, Anita, Faye



Marcus, Denise, Raoul



Italian Ambassador & Ginette



Joe, Jim, Robin, Matt, David



Fr Geoff, Linda, Fifi, Elsa, Lisa in front



Ginette's speech



Salvi, Ginette, Alf, Antonio



Lisa & Salvi



**Teresa, John, Iona, Paul.
Front: Libby, Joe, Maria, Josephine, Maria**



Mons Cao, Ginette, Fr Geoff



David, Luigi, Fifi, Maria



125 Celebration Cake



Penny, Alf, Wendy, Vince, John, Trudy,
Linda, Matt, Peter



John & Luciano



Smile for the camera!



The Girls!