



**NEW
ITALY**

IL GIORNALE

CIAO E BENVENUTI AL GIORNALE INVERNO!

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Apart from maintenance and administrative work, the management committee of New Italy is always seeking ways to improve the site's attractions and amenities. With this in mind, I am happy to report that over the past year the following impressive list has been accomplished.

- The hall has been painted internally
- The Italian Pavilion has been refurbished, painted and new displays have been added with more to come
- Rogue trees have been pruned
- Carnevale Italiano car parking has been improved and extended
- A pole fence has been constructed along the Swan Bay Road
- Water collection, storage and drainage has been extensively repaired and updated
- The former staff car park has been levelled and turfed



Val Wills with piano accordion at Carnevale Italiano 2015!
Photo: Jimmy Malecki

From this strong base, we have an array of new projects in the wings. One intention is to refocus on the New Italy Museum, looking at innovative ways to tell New Italy's extraordinary story. We also hope to add a children's playground to the Complex site. The Centenary of ANZAC: New Italy's ANZACs project is well underway which will include the construction of an Honour Roll commemorating the 13 sons of New Italy who served in World War I. See the back page for details of this and other news of what's happening at New Italy Museum Complex.

The story of the New Italy settlement attracts and enthalls a broad range of people. We receive an increasing number of enquiries from a diverse range of community and historical groups, New Italy descendants and other visitors to the site with an interest in the story. The upshot of this has been a number of invitations to speak about the story. In recent months this has led to engagements in Sydney (COASIT - the Italian Family History Group), Lismore (CWA) and Brisbane (Papua New Guinea History Group). Feedback has been positive and is expected to lead to increased site patronage and an overall strengthening of our image.

Also we have had enquiries from people from the Bennaec village in Finistere, France – from where the Marquis de Rays came. Through them we are attempting to find descendants of the Marquis and extend our story in that part of the world. If this succeeds than the resultant publicity should be most exciting. One of our former committee members, Barry Sommerlad is currently visiting the region. We look forward to the results of his investigations on his return.

We hope you all had a wonderful time at this year's Carnevale Italiano! Look inside for a wrap up of what was a very successful event - and yes - we are already planning the next Carnevale Italiano! Put Sunday 10 April 2016 in your diaries!

John Barnes

NIMI FEATURE:



Top left to right: Fortunato Isgro; Tony Pantano leads the crowd; Simone Nicole; MC Dennis Dardengo and Lester Cooke; Carnevale Italiano appeals to all ages.

Left column from top: St Augustine's Mens Choir from Coffs Harbour; fantastic Carnevale masks; the best crostoli in the Southern Hemisphere; de Nardi's BBQ; mask making in the Pavilion

Bottom top to bottom left to right: Better organisation of food queues; dancing on the grass; the whip-cracker; Mayor Jenny Dowell and friends; Kevin Hogan MP; Fay Vecchiet, Frank Vanz, Lisabetta Vanz Nancy Casson and friend enjoy the day!
Photos: Jimmy Malecki

Carnevale Italiano is done and dusted for another year but where to now and what have we learnt?

I'm an outsider, I'm not Italian and have only lived in the region for 22 years but now find myself ensconced in this community. I was approached to co-ordinate the publicity in 2014 for this little yearly gathering and my role and respect for the joint has grown substantially since then.

One of the strongest points I recognise is the communities' support and love of this annual festival. **Carnevale Italiano** brings the Italian community together and opens it's doors to everyone interested in the history of this unique little gem in the heart of the Northern Rivers.

I think the event is so successful because it is run skilled, hardworking volunteers who believe New Italy Museum Complex is worthy of their time and input. People step up, take on roles they might not normally do in their everyday lives and to the best of their ability manage what can be a tricky environment to have approximately 2000 plus visit in one day. We don't always get it right; not having a space dedicated to dancing coupled with failing to discuss the change with **Fortunato Isgro** (so he could bring the right audio equipment) was one of the major problems this year. It also did not support **Tony Pantano's** performance, as

his interactions with the crowd are always a highlight. Next year we will reconsider the dance floor and ensure that we have the appropriate sound system for you to enjoy all our wonderful performers.

Carnevale Italiano is the major annual fund raiser for the Museum complex and so we need to get it right. Every year the costs for staging this event are increasing though the committee is very pleased with the patronage that the event receives. All profits raised go to the maintenance and improvements to the site. At our debriefing we identified the problems but also recognised how the changes we made from the previous year helped improve the layout.

Gail Williams and her team coordinated the meal ticket idea which meant our volunteers headed by the beautiful **Julie De Nardi** serving **Americo Melchior's** delicious Italian food, did not have to deal with money. More signage could have helped people understand the system. **Leonie Lane and Lester Cooke** coordinated the Pavilion displays, tours and enquiries about New Italy genealogy. **Paulene and Emma Blackwood** with **Sophie Adams** coordinated the children's activities. **John Barnes and Peter Blackwood** are the strongmen behind the scenes. They organise, coordinate and ensure the grounds are at their best. **Ellen Barnes** puts time and energy into so many





little things that we would be lost without her. We had over 80 volunteers give time and energy into the event and we are sincerely grateful. **Too many to name but you know who you are – thank you.**

Simone Nicole was a highlight to many of us. She brought a tear to my eye and made me rejoice in being alive – the Italians have certainly written some of the world's most endearing operas.

This year we also welcomed the **St Augustine's Men's Choir from Coffs Harbour**. The choir started in the 1950's and has evolved over time. Mass is predominantly where you will hear them though they sing at Easter, Christmas and are well loved at funerals around the Coffs coast area.

Paul Griffin, the current conductor has been in this role for 38 years – a huge achievement.

As time goes on, we will need to work on breathing new life and meaning into the Museum Complex and its 'bigger than Ben Hur' day working on it's relevance to the broader community. At its heart Carnevale is a celebration of community and culture. Recognising and respecting our cultural background is important in an age that seems to push us further apart. I'm proud to be part of a community that recognises the first Australians alongside the unique history of some of our first refugees.

I will be managing the **2016 CARNEVALE ITALIANO** and welcome any input or feedback along the way so please email me with ideas. If you're interested then please get involved, we would welcome new blood to our monthly Carnevale Italiano meetings (starting August).

I feel blessed that so many passionate, warm, loving, hard-working and fun-loving people have welcomed me into their community. What's not to love about *The Italians*!

Aliison Kelly
Event Manager Carnevale Italiano
 aliison@internode.on.net

SUPPORTING PARTNER:

THE ITALO-AUSTRALIAN CLUB: LISMORE

New Italy Museum Inc gratefully thanks *The Italo-Australian Sports and Recreation Club* for their support at *Carnevale Italiano* and so much more over the years.

For as long as *New Italy Museum Complex* has been on its current site, the *Italo-Australia Club* has been its strong supporter. From the 1980s until today, teams of generous volunteers from the Club have contributed to *New Italy Museum Complex* in a variety of ways from the construction of its buildings, NIMI committee membership to fundraising and catering for Anniversary Days, Carnevale Italiano and other events.

The Italo-Australian Sports and Recreation Club is many things to many people. Sporting groups use the clubs facilities for soccer, bocce, bridge, martial arts, dance and live music. Function rooms enable weddings, wakes, seminars and many other special occasions and events. While a family friendly bistro features fantastic Mediterranean food, full TAB, KENO and a separate Poker machine area is available for players.

The club in Barrow Lane, North Lismore grew from a public meeting held in the North Lismore Church Hall on 20/11/1960. Over 70 people attended including a Mr Fiorelli, the president of Sydney's Marconi Club with some local business interests, offering guidance. The back of Tom Pagotto's shop in Woodlark Street was the venue for meetings until building was completed. The licensed clubhouse was opened 27/4/1963 and the auditorium was added in 1966. The community raised funds while voluntary work by local tradespeople made it possible. Today it is a popular Lismore venue for the Italian community and others.

The Italo-Australia Club is renowned for its wonderful dinner dances. Often fundraisers are for local charities and the Club's ongoing development, they provide opportunities to enjoy terrific Italian cooking and music by local and interstate performers. Recently \$75,000 was raised for the installation of a lift to enable the elderly and the disabled to enjoy the clubs events. More funds are needed for a disabled toilet.

Christmas in July is coming up soon at the club - Saturday 11/7/15 - \$40/head! Music by Fortunato Isgro. Proceeds to go to the Oncology Unit, St Vincent's Hospital, Lismore.

Contact **Julie de Nardi** - juliedenardi66@gmail.com

MAGICAL OUTDOOR THEATRE EVENT

RAILWAY WONDERLAND

Live on Lismore's iconic train station

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RAILWAY WONDERLAND ... special ticket offer

Take your seat under the stars and experience bringing life back to Lismore's iconic railway station as NORPA presents *Railway Wonderland*. The main character is an Italian immigrant who came to Lismore in the 40s as a proxy bride - the show is a magical ride across time to the present day and celebrates our community. *Railway Wonderland* sold out its first season in 2012. NORPA are thrilled to get it back on the tracks in 2015.

8PM 22 OCT – 7 NOV 2015 - LISMORE TRAIN STATION

Special limited offer for Friends of New Italy - \$42 tickets if you book before 30 August. Quote promotion code "ITALY" (all caps) when booking at www.norpa.org.au or over the phone on 1300 066 772.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NEWITALY...

CENTENARY OF ANZAC PROJECT UPDATE



Relatives of Giacomo Piccoli, Kevin Hogan MP, Peter Blackwood (NIMI Secretary) and John Barnes (President) plant a tree in the Park of Peace at Carnevale Italiano remembering the 13 New Italy descendants who enlisted in WW1.

A small group took a short break from the festivities at Carnevale Italiano to plant a tree in the Park of Peace in memory of the young men who enlisted in the 1st AIF during WW1. We were honoured that Dr Bill Nardi was in attendance to plant the cypress pine – Dr Nardi is the nephew of Gunner Lorenzo Nardi who was killed in action at Lindenhoeck on 22 August 1917. Also in attendance was the Hon Kevin Hogan MP who has been very supportive of our Centenary of Anzac project. We are now in the process of liaising with the families of the 13 men from New Italy's original Italian settlers who served with the 1st AIF, and we are looking forward to seeing as many family members as possible attend our special Unveiling Ceremony at the New Italy Museum Complex on Saturday 14 November 2015.

Enquiries: Peter Blackwood, Centenary of ANZAC Project • info@newitaly.com.au

THE NEW ITALY MUSEUM



Evelyn taking photos of Carnevale visitors in the newly installed sulky display. Photo Leonie Lane.

Carnevale Italiano was an opportunity to expand New Italy's genealogical records with Evelyn and I working together in the Italian Pavilion at the genealogy and sulky display. Many families took the opportunity to update family records and have their photos taken to commemorate their experience of the day. The family records, listing the thousands of known descendants of the original settlers of New Italy, are published on our website on this page http://newitaly.com.au/?page_id=1517

We are refocussing on the New Italy Museum, looking at improving the infrastructure, and at how we can better tell the New Italy story through its displays. Grant applications are underway and plans are being developed to take these ideas forward. If you are interested in getting involved in this important process or helping with corrections and/or additions to the incomplete family records, please get in touch. We value your input.

Enquiries: Lester Cooke, Museums Co-ordinator. • webmaster@newitaly.com.au

THE ITALIAN PAVILION



The Pezzutto families in front of the display about internment of Italian families during WWII featuring the story of their uncle Enrico Pezzutto's internment. Photo Leonie Lane.

At Carnevale Italiano, new displays in the Italian Pavilion included the New Italy sulky display, the ocean voyage display centred around the model of the Galileo Galilei passenger liner, the building of the New Italy Museum Complex display and a developing display about the local Italian community experience of WWII. A big thank you to the Pezzutto families who travelled from the Illawarra to lend New Italy their family archives and also to visit us at Carnevale! These displays will be added to over time as extra material is gathered.

Additional displays are being planned around Italian food - growing it, preparing it and enjoying it. A focus for one display will be an Italian wine bottle corker that has generously been loaned to New Italy Museum Complex by the Fraccaro family from Koonorigan. Interested? Want to get involved? We would love to hear from you!

Enquiries: Leonie Lane, Italian Pavilion Co-ordinator • booyongd@bigpond.net.au

THE CASA VECCHIA GIFT SHOP



Italy is renowned for great design and style. Casa Vecchia Gift Shop continues to source innovative products for sale that showcase both these qualities. Presently, the shop has become quite colourful with a range of brightly coloured silicone watch bands with mix or match watch faces to make a bold statement! We have also sourced Italian crafted fountain & ballpoint pens in bright colours or spots with matching leather cases. Only the Italians would think of a streamline case to protect these little gems! For the sporting fans we now stock blue Italia jackets and mini soccer balls.

On the home front we have the quirky No Fly Zone bottle tops from local ceramicist John Stewart. An excellent way to prevent flies venturing in between sips while you attend the barbie or pizza oven! Pop in to see our growing range of New Italy Design jewellery handcrafted especially for us or just pop in to say "Ciao"!

Insect-proof ceramic bottle tops are a great souvenir with two different twin packs with New Italy imagery. Photo John Stewart

Enquiries: Gail Williams, Casa Vecchia Gift Shop Co-ordinator • giftshop@newitaly.com.au

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO IL GIORNALE?

Email stories, tourist tips to Italy, recipes etc.

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INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Peter Blackwood (Secretary)

info@newitaly.com.au • 0414 673 933

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LESTER COOKE

Lester is a descendant of the Bazzo and Roder families and has a fascination in New Italy's early settlement history. With great skills in all things electronic, Lester applies these talents with good humour to many aspects of New Italy. He manages the New Italy Museum Complex website and its ongoing collection of genealogical material. Lester also fossicks for gold. We think he IS gold!

