



WINTER 2018

IL GIORNALE

CIAO E BENVENUTI AL GIORNALE!

IN THIS EDITION:

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- Recent and upcoming events
- What's happening at New Italy

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As our readers and members would be aware our signature event *Carnevale Italiano* was cancelled in April 2017 because of the devastating regional floods. Then when considering a 2018 event we were advised by the Roads and Maritime Services that access to the site would be problematic because of highway construction activities.

With this in mind it was decided to scale down the size of the function from a district attraction to a minor local affair to celebrate New Italy's Anniversary Day. As it happened we enjoyed a very relaxed and successful mini anniversary that was attended by about 200 people.

This smaller event reduced overheads for traffic control, equipment hire and entertainment and so on. Also eliminated was the enormous personal safety and financial risk of staging the large and ever-expanding traditional event that has been *Carnevale Italiano* at the New Italy Museum site. However when the new car park goes in, and with the other changes that will go with the new car park, the site will be better prepared to cater for a large event.

The traditional *Carnevale* placed an enormous physical workload on our ageing volunteers. Without an injection of more volunteers, NIMI will struggle to hold a large *Carnevale* - the current situation is not tenable.

The success of our mini *Carnevale* or the 2018 Anniversary Day both socially and financially, has been reinforced by a recent second function.

Here I am referring to the Italian fashion parade organised by the New Italy Casa Vecchia Gift Shop held in our hall on Saturday 22nd April. This function, attended by some 110 visitors (mainly women), was an outstanding example of just

what can be done with our existing facilities without the risk of over stretching our resources through a lack of labour, congested parking, overcrowding and the mistakes that can happen with larger functions. This event was successful in many ways - also a great advertisement for New Italy and its dynamic gift shop.

The organising committee of women is to be commended for its initiative and, may I say, professionalism: Milan here we come!

The success of these two smaller functions has set us thinking that this could well be the way of the future, i.e. less = more. Smaller functions - more often. This new approach will have a strong influence on future events at the New Italy site.

Finally I report that at our May NIMI committee meeting a list of priority projects was compiled. Head of the list is a new sewerage treatment system to replace the existing grossly under-capacity facility that is little more than a domestic size.

The decision was further influenced by the proximity of the new car park (western side) to the sewerage irrigation area and the need to eliminate offensive smells in this locality - which is the case at the moment. Other items on the "to do" priority list (in approximate order of preference) are the Swan Bay Road layover, a lit pathway from the western car park, the enhancement of the site's eastern façade, an investigation into the establishment of an electric car charging station and the addition of solar power, a new kitchen in the hall, the development of the gifted 2 hectare area to the south of the complex and a children's playground.

It is plain to see from the above list, that our success is coming at a price.

John Barnes



While the highway upgrade at New Italy is well underway, work on the car park at the back of the New Italy site has just begun.

**newitaly.org.au • PO Box 5139 East Lismore, NSW 2480 • info@newitaly.org.au
• 8275 Pacific Highway Woodburn NSW 2472 • FACEBOOK Historic New Italy**

THE 'INDIA': A VESSEL UNFIT FOR PURPOSE

The story of the Italian immigrants who survived the ill-fated Marquis De Rays' expedition and eventually settled New Italy is well known. However little is known of the ship, the "India", that transported them from Barcelona to Port Breton in New Ireland, and then on to Noumea.

There are no photos of the "India" that would allow us to get a sense of what it would have been like to be aboard. What is known is that it was a ship powered by steam engines that drove a propeller –i.e. not a paddle steamer. There are differing accounts of the size of the vessel. A contemporary newspaper article refers to the vessel being "900 tons", whereas an article published in 2011 refers to the vessel being of "445 tons" [Metcalf, Bill. Utopian Fraud: The Marquis de Rays and La Nouvelle-France. Griffith University: Society of Utopian Studies, 2011]

Lloyds Register of Shipping has details of several vessels named "India". The ship in the register that is most likely to have been the vessel acquired by the Marquis for the expedition is described as being of iron construction, built at Dumberton in the UK in 1862, 1039 gross tons, 239 feet long with 2 decks and powered by 2 steam engines producing 142 horse power. The ship's owner in 1875 was the British India Steam Navigation Company and

a contemporary account of the "India" arriving in Noumea on 12 March 1881 refers to the ship being "... proved to be the British India Steam Navigation Company's India ...".

The "India" left Barcelona in July 1880 with 339 immigrants aboard. It seems to have been well provisioned, although conditions on board would have been cramped and conducive to the spread of illness. Notwithstanding the 10 deaths that occurred while still in the Mediterranean Sea, the voyage via the Suez Canal, Sri Lanka and Singapore to New Ireland was described as "without incident".

The metal hulled vessel with its steam engines would have required continual attention to counter the effects of sea water corrosion. This attention would not have occurred – when the decision was taken in February 1881 to leave Port Breton for Noumea the engines failed and continued to fail causing the short journey to take almost 3 weeks. On approach to Noumea, the engines again failed and the "India" was at risk of being wrecked on a reef – only a "fortuitous breeze" saved the vessel.

"India" was in such poor condition that it was incapable of being sailed to Sydney. It was eventually sold for scrap to redeem some of the costs incurred in Noumea.

RECENT EVENTS

ANNIVERSARY DAY 2018

The 137th anniversary of the arrival of the New Italy settlers in Sydney was celebrated at New Italy with a pasta lunch provided by Americo Melchior and friends in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. With the new shade cloth over the piazza providing a cool place to eat and mingle with old friends and family, musical entertainment by Val Wills, the Sing Australia choir from Ballina and our talented local buskers. Families caught up with each other and enjoyed all the recent changes that have happened at Historic New Italy. As well it was great opportunity to renew memberships and do some retail therapy at the Gift Shop!



OUR FASHION PARADE A GREAT SUCCESS!

The weather was perfect on Saturday 21st April for our first fashion parade at New Italy, hosted by the **Casa Vecchia Gift Shop**. The Prosecco was flowing and the sumptuous Italian fare offered was enjoyed by all. The models strutted their stuff along a canopied catwalk to beautiful mandolin music. They were dressed by **Etika** boutique, Keen Street Lismore - lovely Italian linen clothing and Italian felt hats. Accessories were provided by both **Etika** and **Casa Vecchia Gift Shop**. A good day was had by all! Many thanks to Janette King, owner of Etika for her generous support of this event.



Top: The community hall looking resplendent for the Fashion Parade.
Centre: Our wonderful models!
Below: Carmen and the girls



KEEP UP WITH US VIA SOCIAL MEDIA.

We have not 1 but 2 Facebook pages (soon to be joined as one). So why not like us - twice! Remember to share us with your friends and family.

NEW ITALY

<https://www.facebook.com/NewItaly/>

HISTORIC NEW ITALY

<https://www.facebook.com/historicnewitaly/>



UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY SPIRIT SISTER CITIES *Lismore & Conegliano*

LISMORE FRIENDSHIP FESTIVAL presents

2018 Piazza in the Park

Featuring DOMENICO & THE LATIN MAFIA BAND

10am ~ 3pm
SUNDAY 24 JUNE
SPINKS PARK LISMORE

BRING A BLANKET OR CHAIR
NO DOGS PLEASE

lismorefriendshipfestival.com.au Lismore Friendship Festival @friendshipfestivalismore

Activities include: Bocce, Dancing, Italian Food, Kid's Activities, Raffle & Prizes, Tug-o-war, Prosecco, Salami Wheels, Italian Goods, Italian Cars & Bikes.

FREE ENTRY



NEW ITALY COOKBOOK ANYONE?

For many years there has been talk of putting together a New Italy cookbook. Our book 'Salami, Shortbread and Parrot Pie: stories of Multicultural New Italy' (available at the Gift Shop) has established that New Italy was and is more than an Italian farming community. So maybe the recipes could reflect that fusion. What do you think? If you are interested in submitting recipes please contact us by mail or email.

DONATIONS ARE IMPORTANT TO US

As a volunteer-run organisation, we are reliant on the good will of others. Your generous cash donations keep us going!

They can be made to New Italy by

- New Italy Museum Complex on-site donation boxes
- New Italy website has an easy to use Donation form - <http://www.newitaly.org.au/about-us/donation/>
- Our Facebook page provides a link to that page
- Cheques can be sent to New Italy Museum Complex, PO Box 5139, East Lismore NSW 2480
- Bequests

WE THANK YOU IN ADVANCE

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NEW ITALY...

MUSEUM UPGRADE UPDATE ... JUNE 2018

We are very pleased to report that we are up to stage 5 on our Upgrade Plan. A full version of this plan will be available on both our website and Facebook pages. Stage 5 includes the development of the Community, the School, the Church, the New Italy ANZACS and Remembering New Italy displays. We also await the outcome of our grant application for a heritage fabric display cabinet from Museums and Galleries. This cabinet will be purpose built locally and be able to house our precious silk and other heritage fabrics safely in the midst of the Museum layout.

For the Community photo essay display, we are currently looking for photos of our settler families. We have many families represented in the photographic archives, however some are missing. We will put out a call via our website and Facebook pages when we identify our missing families.

We have been fortunate to receive another significant object donation to the museum collection. Built at New Italy by one of the original New Italy settlers, Angelo Roder, a pine desk has been gifted to the Museum. It will be a part of the Home display in the Museum. Angelo Roder used the pine desk at New Italy and at his subsequent homes in the Northern Rivers area. It has since been in use by the Roder/Perry/Coronakes families. We wish to thank Nina Perry and family for their generosity.

Leonie Lane, Museum • booyongd@bigpond.net.au • 0423733569



Left: Angelo Roder's desk being delivered to New Italy Museum.

Centre: Not only are the family cabinets a rich source of family photographs used in the Museum displays, they are also important displays within themselves celebrating intergenerational family stories. Here the Buoro and Rosolen cabinets await information panels and captions.

THE ITALIAN PAVILION



Following the Pavilion report from the last *Giornale*, plans are in place to have a stall at the upcoming *Lismore Friendship Festival: Piazza in the Park* where maps will enable the gathering of the spread of Italian farming and business communities across the Northern Rivers area. The additional information will update the maps that are currently housed in the Italian Pavilion at New Italy. We look forward to seeing you at the Festival, Spinks Park, 10am ~3pm Sunday 24 June. Look for us and our maps next to the NI Gift Shop stall. See ad on page 3 of this newsletter.

Leonie Lane, Italian Pavilion • booyongd@bigpond.net.au • 0423733569

THE CASA VECCHIA GIFT SHOP



We get lots of interesting items in the gift shop. This unusual Italian glass jar was sold through our shop the other day and we are keen to know what it was used for! It stood about 20cm tall and had three glass divisions within it. All we could think of is that it could be used as a decorative display of pickled vegetables in each segment. Have you seen one of these jars in use or know its history?

We will have our stall at the Lismore Friendship Festival in Spinks Park - see ad p.3

Gail Williams • Casa Vecchia Gift Shop • giftshop@newitaly.org.au

NEW ITALY NEEDS YOUR HELP MAKE A DONATION

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BECOME A MEMBER

www.newitaly.org.au/about-us/membership/

CONTRIBUTE TO 'IL GIORNALE'

Spring 2018 edition: content due 17/8/18

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Contact Peter Blackwood (Secretary)

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE: GAIL WILLIAMS

Gail grew up on the family dairy farm at New Italy and heard many stories of her family's engagement between Italian and non-Italians. Since returning to live on part of the family farm she has been very active at the New Italy Museum site. Not only is she a valued committee member she has designed and managed what has become New Italy's success story - the Casa Vecchia Gift Shop! It has assisted recent upgrades at New Italy.

