



SPRING 2021

IL GIORNALE

CIAO E BENVENUTI AL GIORNALE!

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is eerily quiet at New Italy these days with snap lockdowns and self-isolation. At least we know that everyone is abiding by the stay-at-home orders keeping us all safe. Even so, these are trying times. With few patrons calling in, the Café has reduced their hours to 10am – 2pm. Previously this was the busiest time of the day. The Glass Art Gallery has temporarily closed until things pick up. We closed our Gift Shop on the 23 July hoping to reopen in the middle of October after all our shop volunteers are fully immunised. The Museum and Pavilion have only been open when the Café is open. With very few patrons calling in our donations are reduced. All things considered, we have to be very cautious about powering on with our project list!

Meanwhile NIMI has been very busy planning. Large projects are temporarily on hold while smaller projects are being considered to make the site more appealing to the public. An **off-leash dog park** is one such idea. These days, more people are travelling with their dogs. A safe place to let them “stretch their legs” makes for a pleasant rest stop!

We have been busy working on a **grounds plan** as well (see below). We wish to visualise how the grounds at New Italy could be used now and in the future. The planned Heritage Walk, added shade trees, herb gardens, bush screening have been included in our ‘Action Plan’. We all agree that **the Park of Peace** is in great need of attention. First we will attend to the soil. Soil samples were sent for analysis and a report on

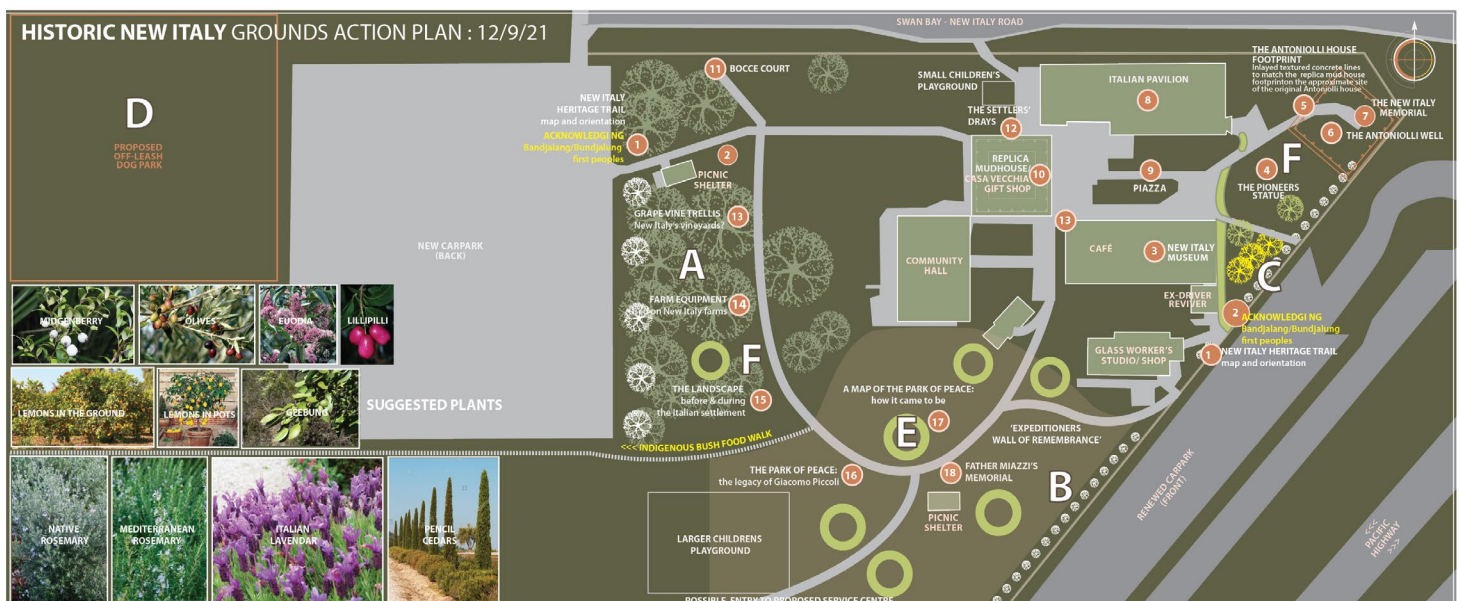
how to fix our soil has been advised. This will be attended to this spring so hopefully soon the health of our trees will improve. Stay tuned for more details.

The Community Hall's new hire rates, booking form and terms and conditions are now available on our website. While researching the hall hire, I delved into the hall's history to try to know more about its beginnings. Apparently the internal metal supports were from the dismantled Expo88 Italian Pavilion (Brisbane), leftovers from our Pavilion's construction. When it first opened, it was well-used for kitchen teas, parties, dances and concerts. Do you have any memories of events in the Hall? We have great plans for community and other events like monthly gatherings with guest speakers. We would love to see it be a lively space again.

I hope you enjoy the sequel to the **New France story by John Barnes**. His experience in the New Guinea region has prompted some wonderful research adding intriguing episodes to the expeditioners' stories.

We have been invited to add to an exhibition about Italian migration to Australia in the new **Museo Nazionale dell'Emigrazione Italiana (MEI)** in Genoa, Italy. It just goes to show you that we are more than “just a few photos in a tin shed” but a keeper of important Australian pioneering history - a part of a larger international story. A big pat on the back to our museums team!

Gail Williams



- A OPEN PARKLAND**
- Chop down slash pines from eastern edge of back carpark.
 - Plant native shade tree varieties e.g. Eucodia, Lilli Pillis
 - Intersperse with small bushes e.g. Geebung
 - Children's playground - items of play equipment could be located throughout the parkland area rather than bunching them together
- B FRONT CARPARK INSIDE FENCE EDGE**
- Build up soil - fertilize first
 - Plant Lillipilli hedge
- C FRONT ENTRANCE**
- Build up soil - fertilize first
 - Plant lemons and olive trees
 - Raised garden beds - plantings of Italian and native herbs
 - Investigate installing a water feature
- D CREATE FENCED DOG PARK**
- 75 metres x 35 metres
 - Add 2 pool gates and 1 farm gate
 - Surround with 1.2metre high dog mesh fencing
 - Star pickets - 1 every 3 metres on 3 sides
 - Use existing fence poles on Swan Bay Road side as 4th side of fence
 - Remove barbed wire along Swan Bay New Italy Road's fence.
 - Add 1 park bench
- E PARK OF PEACE (APPROX SHADED AREA)**
- Fertilise site - contact Best Spread
 - Locate at meeting place of 4 paths - 'Expeditioners Wall of Remembrance'
 - Consider placement of low-maintenance garden beds throughout the Park of Peace e.g. surrounding one or more of the trees - to break up the linear appearance of the tree plantings.
- F HERITAGE TRAIL (SEE NUMBERED SITES)**
- Entrance to Acknowledge Country and welcome visitors in 3 languages - Bundjalung, Italian and English - at 2 sites; front carpark and back carpark
 - Objects along trail to house museum collection objects in gardens or on pebble floors
 - Plants suggested for tree groupings/garden settings - native rosemary and midgenberry
 - In the event the service station development proceeds, a welcome sign (in 3 languages) should also be placed near the point of entry from the service station.
- v. Consult with landscape architect and/or agronomist**
- vi. Consider change entrance to toilets to back. We could perhaps make a feature of the windmill in its current location.**
- vii. Run path from Park of Peace to Piazza - reconsider existing paths**



Queen Emma

Most of us are familiar with the story of the disastrous **Marquis de Ray's Expedition**, its failure, the desperate journey of its survivors from New Ireland to Australia and ultimately the establishment of New Italy. Now as you would know this survival/success story was made possible by the fortitude and perseverance of these survivors who are in many cases are numbered among our ancestors.

What is sometimes unknown is how this destitute group were assisted along the way. Below is one example of this.

In January 1880 the first of the New France settlers arrived unannounced in New Ireland on the *Chandernagore*. News of their arrival and attempt to colonise, alarmed James Farrell and his wife, Emma, who were nearby settlers/traders. They had arrived in the area in 1879 and settled on good land at Mioko, about 100km from the colonisation site. Initially they were shocked at the choice of site. When two more ships, *Genil* and *India* arrived with many more settlers later that year, they became aware of the Marquis de Rays colonists' grave situation. It was obvious that in spite of valiant efforts by the settlers the venture was doomed to fail.

This was confirmed by the Captain of a visiting British warship, *HMS Beagle*, and a Wesleyan missionary **George Brown** (who took surviving photographs of colonists from the India). **James Farrell and Emma (soon to be known as Queen Emma)** visited the settlement, giving lifesaving assistance and advised departure to the colonists. The prospect of feeding and medicating the colony of over 300 people was beyond the combined resources of the area and a decision was made by the colonists to sail the *India* to Australia. Farrell exchanged a supply of badly-needed ship's coal, for some of the unwanted goods of the expeditioners. These included two canons that later guarded Queen Emma's house entrance.

What became of these lifesavers?

George Brown (1836- 1917) was English by birth and after adventurously running away to sea he later decided to become a missionary in the Southwest Pacific. Linguist, recorder, photographer, pacifier, medical attendant, political adviser and teacher he spent 48 productive years in "the islands" before settling in Sydney and becoming the secretary of the Methodist Church Board of Missions.

Queen Emma (1850-1913) was born in Samoa as Emma Eliza Coe, she was of mixed American and Samoan parentage. Emma was educated in San Francisco and Sydney. Attractive, intelligent, active, shrewd and later very wealthy, she settled in what is now the Rabaul area of PNG. Here she led a group that carved a trading, shipping and agricultural empire that stretched across the Pacific Islands to the northeast of Australia. She had four husbands: Forsayth, Farrell, Stalio, and Kolbe. She navigated the politics and economics of uncontrolled territories, the German administration,

A REVIEW OF STEVE CAPELIN'S 'PARADISO'

'Paradiso' has taken me on an amazing journey - the narrative captured my imagination from beginning to end as I travelled with the disillusioned and impoverished yet ever hopeful families to their promised Paradise.

I became a 'fly on the wall' as Lorenzo and Caterina discussed the advertisement offering a new and better future in a far off land. I was on the voyage witnessing the horrors at sea on the India, and the continual anguish of each family, until they reached a safe haven and welcoming glimmer of hope on Sydney's shore.

Two families were my ancestors and the narrative touched my emotions, I was in their shoes! Vincenzo and Caterina Nardi, and Lorenzo and Maria Spinaze were my great-great-grandparents.

Thank you Steve for putting a wonderful human touch to such an unbelievable event. Historical facts and figures are one aspect of the saga but you have eloquently exposed its human side. Congratulations and thank you for your book.

Rosemary Harrigan



Author, Steve Capelin talking about his book 'Paradiso' at *Books at Stones*, Stones Corner, Brisbane, recently.

'Paradiso' is available from:

- **AVID Reader Bookshop, Boundary Street, West End Brisbane** <https://avidreader.com.au/products/paradiso-3>
- **AndAlso Books** <https://www.andalsobooks.com/#/paradiso-a-novel/>
- **Casa Vecchia, New Italy Gift Shop** newitaly.org.au/new-italy-museum-complex/casa-vecchia-giftshop/

international finance and a large number of employed and supported relatives. Emma died in Monte Carlo.

Emma was ably assisted in her endeavours by a younger sister, **Phoebe Parkinson (née Coe)**. Born in Samoa in 1863 she ran the households, organised the labour, kept the books and willingly assisted her husband Dr. Richard Parkinson (1844-1907) who was an eminent German botanist, linguist, writer and scholar with ancestry links to the Danish, German and English royal families. A mother of 12 children, she unselfishly adjusted to the changed circumstances that followed the sale of "Emma's Empire", the untimely death of her husband in 1907 and the expropriation of her plantation after WW1. Following the Japanese invasion in 1942 she was initially confined to a village. Following the American bombing of Rabaul she was interned in a Japanese camp where she died of ill treatment in 1944. Her life story was the subject of an ABC documentary that was compiled by her great-grandson Max Uechtritz a well-known journalist and historian.

More about Phoebe to follow in the next 'Il Giornale'.

John Barnes

THE NEW ITALY COMMUNITY HALL - HOW TO HIRE



The opening of the Community Function Hall was in 1996 and coincided with a performance of 'Una Festa Di Nozze' by the South Australia Theatre Company Piccolo Teatro. Interesting features of the hall are the busts representing patrons at the Opera house in Milan. These were acquired, along with the interior of the Italian Pavilion, from the Brisbane Expo88.

It is a large space and includes a bar area, a raised stage, a drop down screen and a data projector. Options will be available for use of the kitchen once it is complete. The Community Hall is available for meetings, weddings, family reunions, mass, fashion parades, receptions and so much more accommodating up to 300 people (COVID19 conditions will apply). For more information on terms and conditions, hire rates and a booking form, go to our website newitaly.org.au/new-italy-community-hall-hire/. Feel free to contact us with any queries.

RECENT EVENTS

SERVICE STATION DA: COMMUNITY MEETING: SUNDAY 8 AUGUST



New Italy community members at meeting.

NIMI hosted a Q&A meeting on the recently lodged DA for the construction of a service station and restaurant complex at New Italy. More than 30 members of the New Italy community attended the meeting and put questions to representatives of the developer who were in attendance via video-link from Sydney. The questions touched on a range of issues including residents' concerns about the impact on Swan Bay New Italy Road, noise and light pollution. While the developer's representatives gave detailed answers to the various questions it was apparent that many of those in attendance remained concerned about the proposed development.

The DA is currently being examined by the Richmond Valley Council, Heritage NSW and Transport for NSW.

NEW ITALY MUSEUMS GROUP GOES TO MINYUMAI IPA: MONDAY 9 AUGUST



We had a lovely morning at Minyumai IPA experiencing the beautiful landscaping undertaken by the rangers, Mary and Maitland Wilson and others. We discussed plants and ideas for the New Italy Heritage Trail. It would be great to begin with Acknowledgement of Country signs that incorporate a welcome in Bundjalung, English and Italian at both carpark entrances to the Historic New Italy site.

Joan Kelly, Gail Williams and Jo Kijas with the Minyumai Ranger, Maitland Wilson at Minyumai IPA. Photo Leonie Lane

WOODBURN RFS BRIGADE – GET READY WEEKEND: SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER



The Woodburn RFS Brigade held an information day at New Italy Museum site out the front on the grass corner New Italy Swan Bay Road, an opportunity to have a chat and grab some information and a goodie bag for the kids.

It's time for all of us to be prepared for bushfire season. Get your plans in place!

UPCOMING EVENTS

WHEN THE GIFT SHOP REOPENS
MEMBERSHIP SUNDAYS
(2ND SUNDAY EVERY MONTH)
ALL MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE 10% DISCOUNT FROM BOTH
CASA VECCHIA GIFT SHOP & THE TASTES OF NEW ITALY CAFÉ
LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU !

DATE SAVERS
NIMI AGM
NEW ITALY COMMUNITY HALL
6/2/2022

ANNIVERSARY DAY
HISTORIC NEW ITALY
10/4/2022

CARNEVALE ITALIANO
HISTORIC NEW ITALY
16/4/2023

Facebook comment from a recent visitor:

Hey everyone! I visited New Italy awhile back with my boyfriend and we absolutely loved it. The history of the former colony was fascinating and the museums were incredible. I freelance write and submit places to Atlas Obscura, a travel website, and I added New Italy to the site!

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/new-italy?holid=1wAR2C11wM1h6CKCBk9EE7wYQOzL2ySDA7lvzouyH-uA-RL9azneN4AABGA>

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NEW ITALY...

THE CASA VECCHIA GIFT SHOP



Our lovely gift shop has been closed for the past 9 weeks due to COVID. Hopefully, we will be reopening with limited hours from the middle of October. COVID restrictions will apply and mask wearing is essential. Our shop is brimming with stock. We received a large shipment of Artisan Italian leather handbags from Florence just before lockdown. Gorgeous handbags in gorgeous colours! Get in early with your Christmas shopping just in case there is another snap lockdown....! **Follow us on**

Instagram #casavecchiagiftshop

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

ITALIAN PAVILION



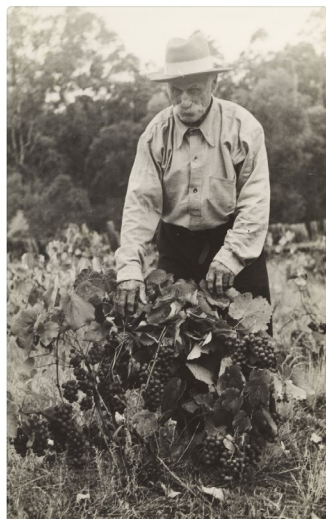
The 20 regions of Italy, as depicted in the Italian Pavilion will get a makeover. The structure of alcoves, inherited from Expo88 and Floriano Volpato's regional landscape paintings, will stay. However the information panels at the front of each region will have a new look: all bilingual, updated maps, 5 significant sites, 10 significant people (5 women/5 men) born in the region, food specialties, special regional relationships with Northern Rivers and last but not least, a list of people from our community

who were born in the Italian region. Do any NR residents come from Umbria, Emilia-Romagna, Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta or Basilicata? Getting there! With revised quotes for the Pavilion renovation, we will be clearer about the size of the grant application we need to be chasing. A very special thanks to all who have been assisting me with fresh information, donations of objects and wonderful stories. When done we will celebrate - COVID safely of course!

Leonie Lane • museums@newitaly.org.au

NEW ITALY MUSEUM

The CO.AS.IT Italian Historical Society in Victoria has included New Italy Museum in developing material for a project with a new migration museum that will be opening up in Genoa, Italy in 2022. The museum is called MEI - Museo Nazionale dell'Emigrazione (Italian National Emigration Museum). It will be a large, state-of-art exhibit telling the story of Italian migration and Italian communities all over the world - including Australia. We have been asked to provide biographies that illustrate the story behind and the nature of the settlement of New Italy and the Northern Rivers Italian community.



We have had a very short turnaround to package this material. From our Museum and Pavilion we have selected three 'biographies' whose life stories perhaps show something of the character of this place. They are Giacomo Piccoli, Dr Silvio Monti and Floriano with Flavia Volpato. Together they describe different journeys from Italy, being a part of the New Italy and larger Northern Rivers Italian community and their connections back to Italy.

Leonie Lane • museums@newitaly.org.au

Photos left to right: Giacomo Piccoli tending vines (New Italy Museum), Dr Silvio Monti (Monti family) and Floriano and Flavia Volpato at the Continental Club, Lismore (T.A. Moretti courtesy the Volpato family.)

DONATIONS newitaly.org.au > Donation page

NIMI is registered with ATO ~ Deductible Gift Recipient

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