

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is really quite scary how quickly time passes! We hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas! Recapping 2022: while the first six months presented us with a few natural disasters, the second half has been more positive. We have been very busy, with a series of interesting visits and events, and the icing on the cake, some funding success!

In September, I had the pleasure of meeting **Paul Michaels, a retired ABC documentary maker**. He was making a documentary about the Marquis De Rays expedition and the settlement of New Italy. This delightful documentary was centred around the Sanotti family's annual tradition of salami making. We look forward to showing it in the museum.

In October, **Dr Pol Dalmau from the University of Pompeu Fabra** in Barcelona, Spain, and his wife visited us. Such a delightful couple! Pol shared his research at a well attended lunch in the New Italy Hall, providing a missing chapter about the expeditioners' stay in Barcelona before leaving on the 'India' for Nouvelle France in the South Pacific. A beautiful friendship has developed between Barcelona University and Historic New Italy. Pol is helping Jo Kijas compile this new material for our archives and to add our museum display.

In October we were to hold our **Morning Tea/Information Morning** but unfortunately it had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the weather. Mother Nature dealt us a cruel blow that day, putting everyone on high alert for a possible third flood for the year! The heavens opened and it poured. Luckily it did not flood! We have rescheduled to Sunday 12 February.

The **NIMI AGM** was held on Sunday 6 November and I am pleased to say no one has resigned from the committee. However we would love to welcome new people onto our committee. Maybe next AGM?

The **Park of Peace Working Bee** was a successful day and all trees were shown some T.L.C. It was disappointing that it was the same few old faces supporting the museum. Where are the younger descendants? This would be an ideal

time to introduce your grandchildren to their heritage and to help preserve this site that houses your families' stories. This Working Bee will take place on the second Sunday in November every year. So one for the new 2023 diaries: **Sunday 12 November 2023**. Make a day of it - bring a plate to share! We would love to see you.

On Monday 21 November we welcomed a return visit by the **Australian Alpini Association** to Historic New Italy. **President Giuseppe Querin** accompanied delegates from Italy including **Sebastiano Favera, President of the International Alpini Associations**. Special guests included the **Honourable Member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin** and the **Mayor of Richmond Valley Council, Councillor Robert Mustow**. It was lovely to show them our Alpini displays in the Pavilion and plans for the Pavilion upgrade. They generously donated a mannequin in full Alpini uniform to add to the display.

We have yet to hear if our Stronger Country Communities Fund grant application has been successful. If so it will enable the completion of the much anticipated **covered walkway at the front entrance**. Meanwhile the front of house - Glass Art Studio, ex Driver-Reviver (Dot's Spot) and the front of the Museum - has been re-painted. There is now a more unified look across the buildings at Historic New Italy.

We are thrilled by our success in the recent round of Creative Capital grant applications! On Saturday 26 November, members of NIMI and the Italian Pavilion Reference Group gathered with special guests in the Pavilion to hear the **Hon. Ben Franklin, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Arts and Regional Youth**, announce NIMI's receipt of **Creative Capital grant of \$250,000 for the Italian Pavilion renovation**. We look forward to putting this to good use in 2023-24!

Enjoy more photos overleaf.

Wishing you all a wonderful start to your year ahead! Seasons Greetings to everyone. **Look forward to seeing you at Historic New Italy in 2023!**

President - Gail Williams



Left to right: NIMI President Gail Williams with author, Anne-Gabrielle Thompson at Dr Pol Dalmau's talk in the New Italy Hall; Janelle Saffin MP and RVC Mayor Robert Mustow gather with Alpini members from several national and international associations; Hon. Ben Franklin, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Arts and Regional Youth announces our successful Creative Capital grant in the Italian Pavilion.



## RECENT EVENTS

### VISIT BY SPANISH HISTORIAN, DR POL DALMAU | SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER



Sant Sebastia square, Barcelona (circa 1880)



Top Left: Dr Jo Kijas, Virginia Dalmau, Dr Pol Dalmau and Peter Blackwood, New Italy Hall.

Top Right: Sant Sebastia Square where the Italian families were held prior to departure for Port Breton.

Left: Lunch in the New Italy Hall

Around 30 NIMI members and friends welcomed Dr Pol Dalmau, history professor from Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona and his wife, Virginia, to New Italy Museum on Sunday 9 October. Dr Dalmau's shared his research from a variety of sources including Spanish, French and Filipino archives in a highly informative talk about the Italian families who settled New Italy from 1882. This adds another layer to the story of New Italy. Part of that story encompasses the time when hundreds of hopeful Italian emigrants assembled in Barcelona in this warehouse in Sant Sebastia Square, waiting to embark for an island paradise in the South Pacific. Both historians, Dr Dolmau and Dr Jo Kijas will work together on this new material. NIMI looks forward to a continuing relationship and the development of a new display for the New Italy Museum.

### LAST POST CEREMONY FOR PTE JOHN CAMINITI | 18 OCTOBER



The Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra stages a Last Post Ceremony each day at approx 4.45pm to honour one of the fallen who are listed on the Honour Roll at the AWM. On 18 October, Pte John Caminiti, 36th Inf. Bn. who was killed in action on 10 June 1917 was honoured in the Last Post Ceremony. John's grandchildren led by Mr Don Archer were in attendance and laid a wreath. John was one of the 13 young men who served

in the 1st AIF during WW1 and whose parents settled New Italy in 1882. Pte John Caminiti and Gnr Lorenzo Nardi were killed in action on the Western Front, another seven were wounded and two were decorated for gallantry. Their stories are on record at New Italy and their names are listed on an Honour Roll in the New Italy Museum.

**Lest we forget.**

### THE PARK OF PEACE WORKING BEE SUNDAY 13 NOVEMBER



Thanks to the volunteers who turned up and gave our trees some TLC! Happy trees = happy visitors in all shapes and sizes. **See you Sunday 12 November, 2023 - one for the 2023 diary!**

### 2022 NIMI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING | SUNDAY 6 NOVEMBER



From left to right: Lester Cooke, Leonie Lane (Vice-President), Gail Williams (President), Americo Melchior, Tina Sheehy, Robert Antonioli, Adrian Murgu, Peter Blackwood (Treasurer/Secretary) and John Barnes (Vice-President).

Photo Peter Derrett

NIMI's 2022 AGM was attended by 26 members and chaired by Dr Brian Pezzutti. In addition to the report on NIMI's finances (Auditor's Report), a comprehensive report on events, etc. during 2021-22 was presented by Gail Williams (President), and by other committee members on various facets of NIMI's operations - Pavilion and Museum, Casa Vecchia, Casa Serena and Membership. Dr Pezzutti thanked the outgoing committee members for their efforts. The outgoing committee members made themselves available for re-election, and there being no other members nominating to serve on the committee, the same members were re-elected.

### INTERNATIONAL, ITALIAN & AUSTRALIAN ALPINI ASSOCIATIONS LUNCH | MONDAY 21 NOVEMBER



Left to right: NIMI President Gail Williams with Giuseppe Querin; Alpinis and friends break into song after lunch; Alan Magnay, Giovanni Foltran, Ernesto Rubbo and Dan Jones receive thanks and medallions for their role in the distribution of white goods and furniture to flood victims collected by Alpinis in Wollongong and Sydney.

We wish to thank the International, National and State Associations of the Alpinis for many things. A special thank you to Giuseppe Querin for the donation of the Alpinis uniform with mannequin for Pavilion display and an original document

of early communications between NIMI and the Alpinis. Most importantly their generosity to the flood victims of the Northern Rivers during 2022 will never be forgotten. We look forward to lunching with you again next visit!



## ITALIAN PAVILION UPGRADE GRANT SUCCESS CELEBRATED! | SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER



Thirty-one people, including special guests, NSW Minister for the Arts, the Honourable Ben Franklin; Mayor of Richmond Valley Council, Robert Mustow plus the Member for Clarence Chris Gulaptis attended the announcement of our successful Creative Capital grant application. In the crowd were the sons of Floriano and Flavia Volpato, Nick and Luca Volpato with families. Floriano is well-remembered as the initiator of the Italian Pavilion in the early 1990s. He would have been very proud and thrilled by this event.

Much appreciation was given for volunteers' efforts and an on-going enthusiasm for this project plus other recent achievements. New Italy's survival after recent challenges was acknowledged and best wishes were offered for the future. Lester Cooke, representing the NI Museums group, outlined the Italian Pavilion Upgrade project, acknowledging participation of the Northern Rivers Italian Pavilion Reference Group.

I spoke of the importance of our attempts to preserve the history of Italian settlement on the Far North Coast and the huge potential of the New Italy Museum site. Joan Bortolin, the only person attending who had been involved with the site from day one in the 1980s, was honoured to cut the cake. Her late husband, Peter Bortolin, contributed greatly to the building of the New Italy Museum site and both participated in many celebrations at New Italy.

The morning tea was well-catered for by the attendees. People lingered and caught up with each other after the event. Ben Franklin told me that he had never been to the site before. He was most impressed and visited the gift shop. The event had a warm, supportive atmosphere and boded well for the future.

**John Barnes**

Clockwise from top: The celebratory gathering in the Italian Pavilion; Jada and Maya Volpato, the grand-daughters of Floriano Volpato; Ben Franklin with accordion player and good friend to New Italy, Val Wills; Joan Bortolin cuts the cake with Minister Ben Franklin.

## HISTORIC NEW ITALY GETS A FACELIFT AND NEW SIGNS



A big thank you to Jim Barnes and his workers, Terry Pirlo and Chris Bertoldi, Booyong Design and the Lismore Sign Shop.

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND DATE SAVERS

### HISTORIC NEW ITALY MORNING TEA GET TOGETHER - 10AM TO 12 NOON, SUNDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2023



Come and find out about Historic New Italy, its history, facilities and its many exciting projects. Brief tours and talks will be available through the Museum, Pavilion and the grounds. Enjoy a chat, a cup of tea and sample some delicious cakes with us. Hosted by NIMI - volunteers who keep your Museum site functioning and keep your history alive! Interested in helping us at Historic New Italy - come along and find out more. Your support and input is always appreciated! **All Welcome!**

### BEYOND VENICE - 6-MIDNIGHT, SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY: TICKETS FROM JULIE 0493 631 611



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**ANNIVERSARY DAY**  
**11-3 SUNDAY**  
**16 APRIL**  
**A DAY OF FUN, FOOD, MUSIC AND FAMILY**





# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NEW ITALY...

## THE CASA VECCHIA GIFT SHOP



Food is central to most family gatherings in all cultures. Italian people say, “our food is the biggest expression of our culture”. Going way beyond simple nourishment, Italian food culture is about pride and identity. Discussions about how certain dishes are cooked can be serious and involved. The cookbooks that we sell in our gift shop unravel the secrets of many Italian food traditions. We happen to be very well stocked with them at the moment. I believe those purchased as gifts often do not leave the hands of the purchaser when they realise the secrets revealed within. Buon appetito! **Gail Williams • [giftshop@newitaly.org.au](mailto:giftshop@newitaly.org.au)**

## ITALIAN PAVILION

To say that we are excited about our successful application is an understatement! Thank you Create NSW. However, as a very wise member of the Pavilion Reference Group said, “Now the real work begins!” An overview of the Pavilion project follows:



**Stage 1 of the New Italy Italian Pavilion upgrade** is the Pavilion's renovation. This has been estimated to cost \$400,000. The **Create NSW Creative Capital grant of \$250,000** will partially fund this. **NIMI is currently seeking donations and fundraising to fill the balance of \$150,000. All contributions are welcome!** The renovations will include the addition of 2 awnings (over the Piazza Entry and at the revised Pacific Highway Entry), external drainage, re-cladding the exterior and lining the ceiling, following the style of the recently upgraded New Italy Museum (2016-2019).

**Stage 2** will be the design, fabrication and installation of the 3 strands of thematic displays within the Pavilion.

**1. 'Migration Stories'** forms a timeline down the spine of the building, depicting chain migration through the decades of the C20th starting near the Piazza Entry with the New Italy Sulky (connections from New Italy) and a Departure/Arrival wharf/cargo net and finishing at the Pacific Highway Entry with displays dedicated to Expo88 and the making of the New Italy Museum site and annual celebrations.

**2. The Regions of Italy** are based in the balustraded alcoves inherited from Expo88. The first to be refurbished will be Veneto. The arches and alcoves will be unaffected by the renovation.

**3. Northern Rivers Italian Community displays** – Faith, Brides, Businesses, Cafés, Salami making, the Clubs, and Events, Farming communities, Banana growing, Sugarcane cutting, Kitchen gardens, Kitchens, Wine/Grappa making, Olive growing, Grocery and Fruit shops. These are based in the archways inherited from Expo88. A large wall map encapsulating the spread of the NR Italian community will feature near the Piazza Entry. Chris Bertoldi and Terry Pirlo have supplied us with 13 plinths for these displays. **Our first Pavilion meeting and working day in 2023 will be Monday 30 January: 10am - 3pm.**

**If you would like to join the Italian Pavilion Reference Group or simply receive updates, please contact us.**

**Leonie Lane • [museums@newitaly.org.au](mailto:museums@newitaly.org.au)**

## NEW ITALY MUSEUM



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The New Italy Museum

The New Italy website - <https://www.newitaly.org.au> - is being upgraded. A virtual tour of the Museum and later the upgraded Pavilion will allow people to experience the site before, during and after visits to Historic New Italy. A big thank you to webmaster Ross Fraser and Lester Cooke for their ongoing work here. **Leonie Lane • [museums@newitaly.org.au](mailto:museums@newitaly.org.au)**

MARIO LANZA SAYS  
**N.I.M.I.  
NEEDS  
YOU!**



**JOIN / RENEW NIMI Membership** <https://www.newitaly.org.au/about-us/membership/>

**BECOME A VOLUNTEER** [info@newitaly.org.au](mailto:info@newitaly.org.au) • 0484 267 632

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**'IL GIORNALE'** Autumn 2023: content 25/2/2022 • [museums@newitaly.org.au](mailto:museums@newitaly.org.au)

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