



Newsletter December 2013

This last newsletter of 2013 is a mixture of celebration and sadness for the club.

The celebration is in the form of three special annual events – the end of year function for children studying the Italian language, the children’s Christmas party and the senior club members’ lunch.

The sadness reflects the loss of loved ones and in particular the death of long-standing club members Armando and Elsa Gilmoni within 10 days of each other. Read on for further details.

The Future of the Club

Following comments made in the September club newsletter and a discussion at the annual general meeting the executive committee has established a small group to discuss the future of the club.

The group consists of:

Vito Lo Iacano (chairman), Lisa Devitt, Ginette Toscano Page, Angelo Moreno, Catherine Monastra, Roberto Giorgoni.

The group is brainstorming ideas and concepts for ensuring that the club remains vital and relevant to its existing and potential members in the future. It is surveying some members. It will make recommendations to the executive committee in the new year.

Senior Members Lunch

Some 50 of our senior members (aged 60 and over) enjoyed a wonderful lunch and much conviviality at the annual senior members’ Christmas function held in the clubrooms at the start of December.

While attendance was down on previous years those who attended enjoyed a lovely three course lunch cooked by our esteemed chef and vice-president Alfonso Basile, a traditional singalong and each others’ company.

The lunch is one of the highlights of the club’s social events calendar and thanks go to members of the executive committee and other willing volunteers who set up the clubrooms, served the meal and cleaned up afterwards.



Iris Fruscalzo, Salve Toscano and Diane Toscano enjoy the festivities.



Ready for a sing-along (from left) Rosa and Luigi Furlani, Liberale and Marcella Zandegiacamo and Iris Fruscalzo.



Celebrating Christmas (from left): front – Anna Canderle, Emma Amitrano, Carmela Iaccarino; back – Lina Volpicelli, Antonina DeGregorio, Giuliana Earsman.



Party time: Josephine and Cav Salvi Gaeta (front), Rosalia Amitrano and Antonina Volpicelli.

Children's Christmas Party

About 20 club members' children celebrated Christmas together at the club with food, drink, a bouncy castle, the jolly man in the red suit and gifts for the festive season. It was wonderful to especially see the little ones entranced by Santa and gratefully accepting their special gifts. Thanks to Maria Colucci and Catherine Monastra and parents who volunteered their time to help.



Children enjoy a photo with Santa.

Children's Italian Language Class

By Linda Muollo

On Tuesday, 26 November, the children of the Italian Language classes had their end-of-year certificate presentations and party. Five groups of children took five groups of parents and nonni to share with them an interactive presentation. On the walls there were large pictures of the anatomy, food, animals, verbs, etc. which the children and adults had to help identify in Italian. It was an interesting exercise where both the adults and children learned something.

Caterina Costa from the club's executive committee attended the function and presented the children with certificates, thanks were given to retiring classes co-ordinator, Carmela Massa, and thanks also to our hardworking teacher Eloisa Ascoli. Carmela introduced me to the gathering as I will be co-ordinating the classes in 2014.

This was followed by a lovely party with food generously provided by the families. Thank you, Caterina Costa and Elizabeth Peek, President of Circolo Italiano, for attending the evening and a big thank you to Eloisa Ascoli, class teacher, for all her hard work during the year. All the children are returning next year so I look forward to seeing them all refreshed in February.

If you would like your child or grandchild to attend classes in 2014 or require any information, please contact me, Linda Muollo, 021 808 702 or email lindamuollo@hotmail.co.nz. Enrolments close on 3 February and classes start on Tuesday 11 February and follow the primary school terms, finishing in November 2014.



Students at the end of year party - back row: Carmela Massa (children's language classes co-ordinator), Dion Laney, Caterina Costa (club executive committee), Eloisa Ascoli (teacher). **Middle row:** Thomas Zande, Isabella Chait, Imilia Ruocco, Francesca Laney. **Front Row:** Oliver Aukett, Giovanni Noaro, James Capie, Jack McDiarmid, Grace and Charlotte Cinque, Lucia Noaro

Congratulations

To **David Monastra** who was awarded the Fitzgerald Award for services to the Catholic Church by Archbishop John Dew at the conclusion of the Year of Faith last month. David, who has an active role in the Miramar parish of Holy Cross and advises other church organisations, received the award which is made to people who have made an outstanding contribution to the life and mission of the Church in their pastoral area (in David's case, the Wellington eastern suburbs). David is a member of the club's building committee.



To **Matthew and Nathan Dicken** on their leadership accolades at St Bernard's College, Lower Hutt. Matthew has been head boy at the college in 2013, captain of the first XI and recently received a trophy for leadership and another for physical education. Next year he is studying a double degree in law and ecology and biodiversity at Victoria University. Younger brother Nathan has been named deputy head boy at the college for next year. He is a member of the first XI and is the North Island secondary schools athletics triple jump champion. Matthew and Nathan are sons of Virginia and Paul Dicken and grandsons of Ines (Menara) and the late John Rafferty.

Club Picnic

The club's annual picnic will be held at Cliff Bishop Park, Eastbourne (same as last year) from 11am on Sunday February 23. The club will provide barbecued steak and sausages and water melon. Please bring your own salads, eating utensils, shading etc.

Annual Bus Trip

The annual bus trip will take place in early February. Members are welcome to sign up for the trip which is always an enjoyable experience by contacting Maria Colucci, 383-8476. Non-members are welcome to join the trip but will pay an additional fee to be part of the holiday.

Newsletter

Members who would rather receive their copy of the club newsletter by email should email: clubgaribaldi1882@gmail.com

If you have news to share with members send to paulelenio@gmail.com

Italian Language Classes

A message from Circolo Italiano:

Enrolments in the 2014 Circolo Italiano di Wellington Beginners 1 classes are being accepted. The classes will be held at Club Garibaldi on Monday or Wednesday evenings. The classes commence on 10 and 12 February and finish in October 2014. Check the website: www.circoloitaliano.org.nz for more information.

To ensure a place in your preferred class it is advisable that enrolments be made by post or through the Internet prior to Wednesday 22 January 2014. **We cannot guarantee you a place if you leave enrolment until the General evening on Thursday 30 January (between 5.30 and 7pm).**

It is not necessary for Club Garibaldi members to join the Circolo and only the course fees need to be paid - \$200 for 30 55-minute lessons.

The textbook required is: **Buongiorno Italia (2005 edition)** for Beginners Stage 1 and 2. It is essential that each student has a copy of the relevant textbook. The textbook Buongiorno Italia (2005) can be purchased via:

[http://www.bookdepository.co.uk/Buongiorno-Italia-Course-John-](http://www.bookdepository.co.uk/Buongiorno-Italia-Course-John-Cremona/9780563519454)

[Cremona/9780563519454](http://www.bookdepository.co.uk/Buongiorno-Italia-Course-John-Cremona/9780563519454) . Approx. cost NZD\$24.12. Free postage worldwide.

Copies of **Buongiorno Italia** can also be purchased from Whitcoulls, 226-256 Lambton Quay (Education Section), Wellington.

The classes opening ceremony for **ALL** students will be at 6.30pm on Monday 3 February 2014 at Club Garibaldi.

Circolo Social Events

Monthly social evenings are held from March to November inclusive. Topics vary from time to time but they all have an Italian flavour. A light supper is served during or after the events. A small charge of \$5 towards the cost of the food/wine usually applies

Rest in Peace

The club and its members offer sincere condolences to:

Linda and Gary Low, Maria and Nandi DeCesare, Rochelle, Bede and Rory Gilmoni on the passing of Elsa and Armando Gilmoni

Jim Menara and family on the passing of his wife Bessie

Carolina Esposito and family on the passing of her brother in Italy

Armando Gilmoni



Armando Gilmoni – entertained crowds in Europe, on passenger liners and in events in the Wellington region.

Club Trustee Paul Elenio gave the following tribute at the funeral of Armando on behalf of the club:

I am honoured to say a few words about Armando on behalf of members of Wellington's Italian social organisation, Club Garibaldi.

I have known Armando for all the 40 years that I have been a member of the club and will always retain fond memories of this quiet, humble, gentle and dedicated man, husband and father.

Armando gave of himself to the Italian community that makes up the membership of the club without ever expecting any reward or recognition.

He was secretary of the club for more than 20 years and for a number of years afterwards was, like me, a trustee of the club.

During that long period of service not once would anyone remember any form of grumpiness, unpleasantness or anger from Armando – it was not of his nature to show any frustration or disappointment.

Armando was reliable, efficient and productive. There was never any politics or drama.

His service crossed more than a generation – he worked with club notables such as Vince Criscillo, Giovanni Strati, Vince Toscano, Gerry May and Salvi Gaeta – and he was there to help celebrate the club's centenary in 1982 and the 125th in 2007.

He preferred to be in the background, doing the many chores required of him.

I did feel sorry for him one year when he chaired the annual general meeting of the club at the old building in Wakefield Street.

Our club has had its share of colourful and outspoken members who like to hear the sound of their own voices at such occasions. Poor Armando struggled to get heard amid the din of people talking loudly over each other.

I am not sure if we had a gavel available at the time but, believe me, having chaired these meetings myself, if he had no one would have blamed him for using it as a weapon rather than just to try and gain order.

Such was his commitment to the club that his election as a life member some years ago was fitting recognition, even if he deserved to have a much greater accolade that could have been bestowed by the Italian government.

I thought I knew Armando fairly well but realised there was so much more to the man when I had two hours with him in 2011 while writing the second edition of the book *Alla Fine Del Mondo, Till the Ends of the Earth*.

We all knew of his musical talents. His piano accordion was never far away and the music he played on it reminded everyone of Italy and, for many members, their home thousands of miles away.

He played at club functions, festivals, events and was always ready for a quick song when he and Elsa went on the annual club bus trip.

He was a key member of the Mediterranean Trio which occasionally became a quartet and sometimes with even more players, entertaining crowds wherever they were sought.

But it was only in the interview at his house in Naenae that I heard the story of his family of travelling troubadours, parents and children, entertaining people all over Europe at circuses, concerts and other events, that his musical background became known to many of us.

Later the dashing young Armando entertained on board ocean liners and on one of these he met the Kiwi-born Italian Elsa and the rest, as they say, is history.

It was appropriate then that in his last years Armando found another group of keen listeners to his music when he entertained diners at the Mediterranean Food Warehouse in Lower Hutt. He and Grant Quinn made a formidable pairing, playing and singing favourite old songs from yesteryear and some wonderful and memorable Italian songs.

When visiting Armando I discovered that he was a keen and productive tomato grower in the ample space behind the house in Naenae and, in the traditional manner, I left for home with a generous bag of his finest produce.

During his 50-plus years in New Zealand worked as a machinist, photographer and printer. Many years ago I met someone who worked with Armando at the printing plant. This colleague of Armando had very kind words to say about his work ethic and dedication to his job.

A few of us knew Armando as the Man from Genoa, a little bit like a character in a James Bond movie, the man who had shortened his name to accommodate Kiwis who couldn't pronounce it. In that he was no different to the late Gerry May, a long time servant of the club who changed his name for the same reason.

At the club every Sunday afternoon Armando would play bowls and then cards. He was an essential presence at the club as we had to have a duty manager who had done the required course under the licensing regulations which Armando had willingly completed some years ago.

He was a bit of a mediator and peacemaker as sometimes the Italian passions were raised over something as simple as how far the bowl was from the jack. Knowing Armando's personality he probably found some of the excessive emotion unnecessary and over the top but he never showed his feelings – maybe he just had a moan to Elsa on the way home.

A few weeks ago some of us attended the funeral of another long time club personality, Janie Di Mattina, not far from here. After the service the most common question of Elsa and Linda was how Armando was getting on. The concern for his health and a speedy return to the club that was very much part of his life was genuine.

It was with surprise, sadness and a feeling of loss that we greeted the news that Armando had died. Elsa, we join with you in grieving the loss of a true Italian gentleman. Please accept our condolences on his passing. We will cherish his memory.

May he rest in the peace of Christ.

Buon Natale

The executive committee wish all members best wishes for a peaceful and joyous Christmas and for good health and happiness in 2014.