



ESTABLISHED IN 1882

# Club Garibaldi News

DECEMBER 2010

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Dear members,

Another year has gone by and in a few days time we will be celebrating Christmas. I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to each and every one of you for your encouragement and support over this past year.

Christmas is an enormously important and spiritual time for the Italian family, and in celebrating this joyous time, we come together and share love, food, traditions, religion and kindness for one another

During your Christmas celebrations please spare a thought for the families and relatives of those who were tragically killed in the Pike River Coal Mine. For them, Christmas will never be the same without their dearest loved ones.

Thank you also, to those who have conveyed their enjoyment in reading the monthly newsletters. To receive such positive feedback is encouraging as it takes me many hours to research and write items, before sending it to Melanie Federico for formatting (laying out) in preparation for printing. Heaps of thanks, Melanie!

I would also like to sincerely thank the Executive Committee for helping to make the club's year a stellar one! You are all great people and it is a pleasure working with such a dedicated, supportive and hardworking team.

As this newsletter is the last one before Christmas, on behalf of the Executive Committee members I would like to wish you and your loved ones *tanti auguri per un buon natale - ricca di molte benedizioni, amore, pace e di buona volonta'.*

Ciao a presto  
Ginette Toscano Page  
President



## **SENIOR MEMBERS' CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**

On Saturday, 27 November the club held its very successful 11th annual senior member's Christmas luncheon. This year 90 members attended, along with Donato Scioscioli, representing the Italian Ambassador, the Nuncio, Archbishop Balvo, Don Marinko from the Holy See, Fr Geoff Broad, Parish Priest of St Francis de Sales parish, Island Bay, and club member Cav Elizabeth Peek, President of Circolo Italiano di Wellington. The function began with a short speech from the club's President, Ginette Toscano Page, welcoming those in attendance, followed by Nuncio saying grace before everyone tucked into a sumptuous feast created by Alfonso Basile. This was served individually to each diner, along with an endless supply of wine, juice and chilled water.

The mouth-watering menu consisted of: Individual plates of antipasto consisting of a selection of Italian meats, salami, provolone cheese, olives, crayfish on whitlof with aioli, buffalo cheese and tomato. The main meal was aubergine risotto, chicken supreme stuffed with Italian sausage and topped with preserved lemon and caper relish, slices of Christmas ham and steamed asparagus, and finishing with individual dessert plates of Italian lemon cassata cake drizzled with berry compote – all washed down with copious amounts of red and white wine, juice and coffee.

Many thanks to the Mediterranean Trio: Salvi Gaeta, Armando Gilmoni and Robin Page who entertained everyone after the meal by playing a bracket of well-loved, old Italian favourite music and songs.

Special thanks and appreciation is extended to chef Alfonso and to the following outstanding members of the executive, their spouses and club members for their assistance in helping make this occasion so special. Without their help the Club could not hold such functions.

*Thursday:* Robin Page did a liquor stock take, before purchasing many litres of wine, juice, and soft drinks which he placed into the bar cupboards, and cooler display ready for serving.

*Friday night set up:* Ginette Toscano Page, Matt Amitrano and his daughters, Grace and Rebekah, Paul Elenio, Anna Quinn, Jim and Lyn Marson, Martin and Josephine Van der Donk, Rex and Avril Da Vanzo, Joe and Maryrose Basile, and Maria Di Leva.

*Saturday:* Ginette Toscano Page, Robin Page, Alf Basile and his daughters Sophia and Charlotte, Matt Amitrano and his daughters Grace and Rebekah, Paul Elenio, Anna Quinn and daughter Gabriella, John Cao, Josephine Van der Donk, Maria Colucci, Giuseppe and Maryrose Basile and Jonathan Basile.

Thank you also to those members who helped in some way ~ please accept this as a personal acknowledgement.

## **FAMILY NIGHT**

The last Family Night for the year was held on Friday, 17 December. Once again, it was an outstanding success, with seventy adults and children, enjoying a relaxed family evening together. Special thanks and much appreciation to Alfonso Basile and Anna Quinn who cooked the delicious meal and dessert ~ as always, it was excellent! It is always a joy to hear the clubrooms filled with the laughter and noise of the children. The evening's raffles were won by Sira Ballara, who was lucky and won two prizes and Eloisa Ascoli. Many thanks to Matt Amitrano, Ginette Toscano Page, Joe and Maryrose Basile, and Jim Marson without whose assistance the evening would not have been possible. Thanks also to our young helpers who at every Family Night have sold the dinner tickets and the door and raffle tickets: Sophia and Charlotte Basile, Marco and Vincenzo Costa, Grace and Rebekah Amitrano and Gabriella and Julianna Quinn.

## **NEW MEMBER**

A warm welcome to new member, Angela Noaro of Lower Hutt.

## **A BIT OF HUMOUR IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL**

A wise old Sicilian priest told little Gianluca 'Listen, God is everywhere, trust me, He is absolutely everywhere!' Gianluca thought about this for a moment before grabbing a half-opened matchbox lying on the table. He quickly snapped it shut and declared excitedly 'Hah, I've got Him!'

## **CHILDREN'S' CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Ginette Toscano Page

This year the clubrooms boomed with the noise and excitement of 44 children of members, who with their parents, came to the annual Christmas party. As noisy as it can be, this event is most pleasurable as these young Garibaldini are the future of our Club. Once again, the air castle was a big hit, as was the face painting and balloons, which were shaped into wonderful animals and flowers. Most of the children had beautiful images painted on their faces, some with glitter ... from butterflies and birds to animal faces and flowers. Lunch was the usual children's fare: pizza, fish and chips, washed down with juice and lemonade, and followed by jelly and ice cream.

As always, the most exciting part of the party was the arrival of Babbo Natale, Father Christmas, carrying three sacks full of presents, raising the noise level even louder! After the children sat in front of Father Christmas, he asked a few questions about Christmas and suggested they should all sing 'Jingle Bells' before he gave out the presents. As always, it was a joy to watch the children's beautiful little faces, eyes shining with excitement, waiting with eagerness for their name to be called.

As it was also little Giovanni Noaro's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday we all sang 'Happy Birthday' to him.

All the children went home happy and very tired after a fun party! Special thanks and appreciation to the following people who helped on the day: Matt Amitrano, Anna Quinn and Ginette Toscano Page. Many thanks too, to Kevin Bull for lending a welcomed helping hand!

## **CLUB BAR PERSON**

Our bar person Sophia, is unfortunately leaving us. We need to find a new person to work behind the club's bar on Sundays, 3pm to 8 pm, and at club functions during the year. If anyone is available to do this work, please contact Robin Page. This is a paid position.

## **CONDOLENCES**

Deepest sympathy to the following members and their families:

Antonio and Teresa Cuccurullo of Island Bay, on the recent passing of Antonio's sister, Rosinella Gargiulo of Havelock North. Rosinella was also the aunty of Joe Cuccurullo, Gino Cuccurullo, Nina Cuccurullo, Paul Elenio, Antonietta Canzano, Joe Elenio, and their families.

## **SALVI GAETA – 70 YEARS YOUNG!**

Congratulations to Salvi Gaeta of Island Bay, who recently reached the wonderful milestone of 70 years young. Buon compleanno Salvi, Club Garibaldi wish you many more happy and healthy years to come.

## **SHARING NEWS**

We are looking for Italian items of interest, as well as special occasions to include in future newsletters. Please feel welcome to share them with your fellow members. Contact Ginette or Robin.

## **CHILDREN'S ITALIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES**

On Tuesday, 30 November, the children of the Italian Language classes had their end-of-year certificate presentation, concert and party. Delia Benazzo, the Cultural Officer from the Embassy of Italy, presented the children with their certificates. Also present were Cav. Elizabeth Peek, President of Circolo Italiano, and Ginette Toscano Page. The classes have been running for 15 years, and it is great to see Club members' children learning the Italian language. If you would like your child to attend classes in 2011 and your child's name is not already on the waiting list, please contact Sira Ballara.

## ANNUAL CLUB PICNIC



A date has been set for 2011 annual Club picnic. A reservation has been made for Sunday, 20 February 2011, from 11am onwards, at Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekakariki, with the reserve/cancellation date of Sunday, 27 February. In the event of wet weather, listen to NewstalkZB cancellation service. Put a big circle on your calendars, to remind yourself of this date. Once again, the club will provide the steaks, sausages and bread for the barbeque. All members and their families are welcome.

## AN ITEM OF INTEREST

### ITALY SECOND TO THE USA FOR EATING PIZZA!

ANSA – Milan, 22 October 2010

Although each Italian eats an average of 7.6 kg of pizza a year, they remain second to the Americans who eat 13 kg according to a recent report presented at a Trades Fair dedicated to the pizza industry. While they may not be the world's leaders for eating pizza, Italians do hold the record for pasta, 27.9 kg per capita a year! According to the report, there are 25,300 pizzerias in Italy, plus an additional 26,700 shops selling pizza by-the-slice, takeaway or home delivered pizza. The traditional pizzeria currently represents 40% of restaurants in Italy, up from 32.4% in 2001. The report said the annual turnover for the pizza sector, pizzerias and takeaways, amounted to over 6.9 billion euros, which jumps to 16.63 billion euros when the industrial production of frozen pizza is tallied in!

## ITALIAN MASS

On the first Sunday of every month the Mass is celebrated in Italian at the Church of St Francis de Sales, 175 Clyde Street, Island Bay, Wellington. Mass starts at 11.30am. Everyone is welcome and it would be good to see more members and their families attend, as we are very fortunate to have this opportunity in New Zealand. If you can help with a reading or the offertory, please contact Ida Basile. The Mass is celebrated by either His Excellency Archbishop Balvo or Reverend Marinko Antolovic from the Apostolic Nunciature.

**The next Mass will be on Sunday, 2 January 2011.**

## WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

I hope you enjoyed last month's tour of the interior of St Peter's Basilica in Rome! This month I have chosen another great area for you to tour – Pompeii, one of the most famous archaeological sites in Italy.

[www.panoramicearth.com/2072/Pompeii/Pompeii](http://www.panoramicearth.com/2072/Pompeii/Pompeii)

## BUILDING COMMITTEE

Many thanks to Building Manager, Vic Criscillo and committee members, Robin Page, David Monastra and Rex Da Vanzo for doing such a great job. Their combined expertise ensure the Club's premises are in good hands, looking after ongoing maintenance and renting of the other floors and car park.

## ANNUAL BUS TRIP – 2011



There are still some seats available for next year's annual bus trip to Hamilton. The dates have been set for **8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>** and returning on **11<sup>th</sup> February 2011**. This is always a great trip and thoroughly enjoyed by all those who go on it. If you are interested in coming contact (evenings) Maria Colucci or Salvi and Josephine Gaeta as soon as possible. Please remember that priority is given to club members after which it will be open to members' friends.

## BRAVO ROCHELLE GILMONI!



Rochelle Gilmoni, daughter-in-law of Elsa and Armando Gilmoni of Lower Hutt, completed her first ever marathon in the Big Apple New York City on Sunday, 7 November 2010, in 5hrs 01min. Months of training was rewarded with a medal and the status of being a 'marathon finisher'. The event was made all the more memorable by the 2.5million New Yorkers who lined the streets to cheer her and 44,000 other competitors along. Rochelle wishes to take this opportunity to thank Elsa & Armando for their unwavering support during the long months of training. Coming home from a 2-3 hour run to a plate of pasta was heaven and definitely helped achieve that medal. Thanks team Gilmoni x

## HISTORICAL AND TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS IN ITALY

The roots of modern Christmas started in Italy. Christmas was declared by Emperor Aurelian in 274AD to be celebrated on 25 December 25 every year. The early Roman Christians felt that it was important to create a feast day that takes place during the winter solstice, which is also the birth of the sun. Christmas season in Italy is traditionally celebrated 24 December 24 through to 6 January, or Christmas Eve through to Epiphany. This follows the pagan season of celebrations that started with *Saturnalia*, a winter solstice festival, and ended with the Roman New Year, the *Calends*.

Natale in Italy is a grand affair with lots of celebrating, visiting family and friends and of course, plenty of delicious food. It officially starts on 8 December, *La Festa L'Immacolata Concezione* or the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and officially ends on 6 January, the Epiphany - *La Festa dell'Epifania*, when the Three Kings were believed to have reached baby Jesus.



One of the most popular Italian Christmas traditions is preparing a nativity scene also known as the *Presepio*. Just like most households in other countries have a Christmas tree, similarly, every Italian household has their own unique *Presepio*! The cribs, which are usually handed down from generation to generation, can be very detailed, or as small and simple as one desires. Cribs always contain figurines, usually made of wood, clay or plaster of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, along with a donkey and an ox. *Presepios* are proudly displayed throughout Italy, in cities, towns and villages.

Another Christmas decoration in Italian homes is the *Ceppo* (the Tree of Light) which is a pyramid structure designed to hold three to five shelves of different items. The *ceppo* generally holds Christmas gifts on one or two shelves (representing the gifts of man), sweets, fruit and nuts on another (representing the gifts of the earth), on another shelf a small nativity set (the gift of God) adorned by candles (this is why it is called the Tree of Light). On top of the *ceppo* an angel or star is placed, and ribbons, greenery and sparkly ornaments are hung around the frame.



Although *Babbo Natale* (Father Christmas) and the giving presents on Christmas are becoming more common, the main day for gift giving is Epiphany, the 12th day of Christmas, 6 January, when the three Wise Men gave Baby Jesus their gifts. In Italy, presents are brought by *La Befana*, who arrives in the night to fill children's stockings. More on *La Befana* further along in this article. Another interesting difference is that Italian children write letters to their parents expressing their love for them rather than to Father Christmas!

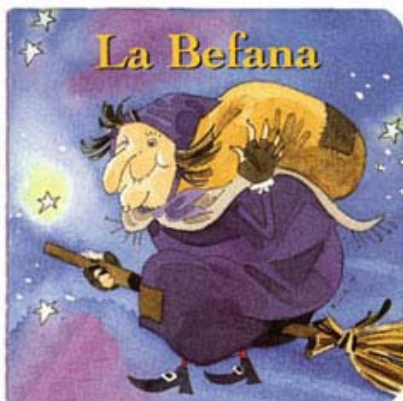
When the first star appears in the evening sky on Christmas Eve, every family sets lighted candles in their windows to light the way for the Christ Child. Candles are also lit around their *Presepio* and pass the figure of the Baby Jesus from person to person, before placing it tenderly in the manger. It is very common to play *Tombola* on Christmas Eve with all

the relatives, including the children, united around grandparents. Traditionally, a meatless dinner is eaten on Christmas Eve featuring fish or seafood, vegetables, salads, antipasto, bread, pasta, and sweets.

A very old tradition, which is part of the Christmas celebrations in many Italian households takes place after the Christmas Eve meal – it is the *Urn of Fate* where every member of the family takes turns to draw a wrapped present out of a large ornamental bowl. Usually the mother tries her luck first, then the other family members in turn. If you get a present with your name on it, you keep it; otherwise, you put it back and try again. After the meal has been eaten and a lot of fun had, everyone walks through the torch-lit streets to celebrate Midnight Mass.

Christmas Day is reserved for Church, family, and feasting. Some Italian children receive gifts from Baby Jesus or from Babbo Natale, then everyone sits down to a big Christmas dinner, which often includes poultry or roasted meat, Panettone, a yeast cake filled with fruit, and Panforte, a dense honey cake spiced with cloves and cinnamon, along with sweets such as cassata, or other sweet dishes from the area or region of Italy the family are from.

Unlike the Christmas custom that is followed in the many other parts of the world, the main exchange of Christmas gifts in Italy takes place on the Feast of the Epiphany. This takes place on 6 January and is on the night preceding day that Italian children hang up their stockings in anticipation of gifts. Here again, Italian tradition, paves away from the rest: the bringer of gifts is not the Babbo Natale, Father Christmas, but a refreshingly different female character known as *Befana* – an authentic witch, with broom and all.



*La Befana*: The Italian legend, is the story of a sad old woman who has lost the loves of her life, her only child and husband. She is sad and lonely. One winter's night three visitors in royal robes knocked on her door announcing that a King had been born in Bethlehem. They were going to visit the Baby, and asked if she would like to travel with them, towards the bright star. La Befana declined, since she has no gifts to bring.

The next day, a shepherd arrived, also going to see the new King, and invites La Befana to join him on his journey. Again she declines, as even the shepherd had a gift to bring! La Befana opened a chest holding two treasures she held most dear: a doll that her baby used to hold and kiss, and a piece of wool from the wedding dress she wore when she married her beloved husband.

Although these items had given her a lot of comfort over the years, she decided it would be better for the doll to be given to the Christ Child. She dyed the wool a regal purple, and made a cape to bring for the baby. Not long after La Befana set off alone on her journey, however she could not find her way, and was lost. During her travels, she saw many other babies and young children, and always left them sweets, as she continued to look for the one special child. Alas, it was all in vain! La Befana continues to travel, leaving gifts to good children however, if the children were naughty throughout the year, they are left pieces of coal! Nowadays *carbone dolce*, a rock candy that looks remarkably like coal is left in the place of real coal! La Befana is celebrated all over Italy to this day.

## BABY CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the following on the additions to their families:



- Giovanni & Beverley Mollo, a daughter, Eugenia Ngaweherua Mollo. A granddaughter for Cataldo and Eugenia Mollo of Lower Hutt.
- Franco & Dayna Colucci of Gisborne, a son, Raffaele Henare Colucci. A grandson for Maria Colucci and a great-grandson for Raffaele and Lucia Esposito of Island Bay.
- Paul & Bernadette Martini of Christchurch, a daughter, Olivia Mary Martini. A granddaughter for Giovanni Martini of Runanga, West Coast.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday, 2 January (11.30am)

Italian Mass

8–11 February 2011

Annual Club Bus Trip

Sunday, 20 February (11am)

Annual Club Picnic

## CIRCOLO ITALIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES 2011

Enrolments in the 2011 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 7 and 9 February and finish in October 2011. Check the website: [www.circoloitaliano.org.nz](http://www.circoloitaliano.org.nz) for more information. Before completing an enrolment form please telephone President Elizabeth Peek on (04) 475 9781 or email: [president@circoloitaliano.org.nz](mailto:president@circoloitaliano.org.nz). If there is a place in your preferred class you can then post your application and cheque to Circolo Italiano di Wellington, PO Box 9706, Wellington 6141.

To ensure a place in your preferred class it is advisable that enrolments be made by post or through the Internet prior to Friday 21 January 2011. **We cannot guarantee you a place if you leave enrolment until the General evening on Monday 30 January (between 5.30 and 7pm).**

The Classes Opening Ceremony for **ALL** students will be at 6.30pm on Wednesday 2 February 2011 at Club Garibaldi. It is not necessary for Club Garibaldi members to join the Circolo and course fees are offered at the reduced rate of \$165 for 30 fifty-five minute lessons. The textbook required is: **Buongiorno Italia (2005)** for Beginners Stage 1 and 2. The textbook is available from Whitcoulls Bookstore, (Information Counter) 312 Lambton Quay, Wellington. A 10% discount is available on proof of enrolment in a Circolo course. It is essential that each student has a copy of the relevant textbook.

### 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 \$4 towards the cost of the food/wine usually applies. Garibaldi House is the usual venue but other venues may be selected during the course of the year. Further information on the topics and venues will be made available with the monthly Circolo Newsletter and will also be advised to the Executive committee of Club Garibaldi. Club Garibaldi members are very welcome to attend all Circolo Italiano social functions.

### CIRCOLO 2011 COURSES ENROLMENT FORM

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Full name (Mr,Mrs,Miss,Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

Postal address and email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. (home): \_\_\_\_\_ (work): \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription to Circolo Italiano: Single: \_\_\_\_\_ Couple: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student under 18/Superannuitant/Member Club Garibaldi:

Classes enrolment: Beginners Stage 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Monday 5.30 - 6.25pm  
 (tick) \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday 5.30 - 6.25pm

Have you studied Italian before? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

For what reason are you studying the Italian language \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose cash/cheque for \$\_\_\_\_\_ to confirm my enrolment in the course selected.

I understand that my course fee(s) cannot be refunded.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## SENIOR MEMBERS' CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON 2010



## CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE CLASSES 2010





# SENIOR MEMBER'S CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON 2010



# CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY 2010

