

EXPO 88 LEGACY LIVES AT NEW ITALY

In 1989 the New Italy Bicentennial Museum and Café were opened and in the same year Italian Government officials from World Expo in Brisbane were invited to visit New Italy by Dr Floriano Volpato, the new President of the New Italy Centenary Committee. Dr Volpato had a vision that the site could accommodate an Italian Pavilion in much the same style as the Pavilion at Expo, which would tell the history of 200 years of Italian migration to Australia. After visiting the site the Italian government presented materials and contents from their Expo Pavilion to the New Italy Centenary Committee. This gift included a working model of Leonardo Da Vinci's self-propelled cart, structural steel, and other building materials. The Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, Mr Bill Hayden opened the Italian Pavilion at New Italy in May 1993.

Nestled in the luscious Richmond Valley of the Northern Rivers NSW, lies the New Italy Museum. This commemorates the New Italy settlement established in the late 1800s. The New Italy settlement was built upon dreams, dreams broken and dreams made. It is the story of a group of Italian immigrants who battled great odds, leaving an imprint of success and prosperity, helping to shape the Northern Rivers as it is today.

The New Italy Museum was developed as a tribute to the courage and strength of those pioneering families with the purpose to pass on to future generations their spiritual legacy.

The New Italy Museum also aims to celebrate the importance of Italian heritage to Australia and the contributions made by Italian's to the society and culture of Australia today. An important aspect of this is the legacy provided by the World Expo 1988 held in Brisbane.

The Italian Pavilion houses a veritable smorgasbord of information, paintings and photographs. The beautiful paintings were the work of Dr. Floriano Volpato, a well known local identity. Not only is there an interesting outline of the 20 regions of Italy, but additionally a very extensive overview from 1788 to 1988 of the contribution Australia's Italians have made. This information was made available by the courtesy of the Italian Historical Society and State Library of Victoria.

Mentioned are household names like Carla Zampatti, Pioneer Concrete, Transfield, Perfect Cheese, Grollo, Taranto, Melocco, to name a few who have helped transform and enrich our society. Even our eating habits have changed with the introduction of many delectable food items including Pasta and Pizza. The Pavilion itself, while presenting the stark modernity of today's architecture, upon entering it one is met with a vastly different style.

The Italian Pavillion offers a great resource for the community and visitors alike, offering an intriguing and educational display.

The New Italy Museum also has a new website, www.new-italy.com that offers interactive ffeatures similar to this site. It allows visitors (including descendants etc) to the site to upload their own stories and pictures regarding the New Italy settlement or Museum, ensuring that New Italy will remain a truly living heritage.

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[TOP] Front of the 'new' Italian Pavilion at 'New Italy'

[BELOW] Gift of working model of Da Vinci's 'self-propelling cart', from the Italian Pavilion at World Expo '88

