

1969 - In this year two persons, more than any others, are remembered for being closest to us during these eventful years: The Australian historian, PHILLIP GEEVES, who stated that Mamma Lena was a "legend" and in his interview with the "Daily Telegraph" of 10 March 1969 describes Lena's tireless work for the Italian Community. Mr. KEARNS MLA who contributed two messages - one for the 10th anniversary of "Arrivederci Roma" and the other in commemoration of the Gustin's 20 years in Australia some six years later.



Philip Geeves is a Sydney-born historian and popular ABC broadcaster who has been credited with helping to create a wave of enthusiasm for Australian history. He admits to having a lifelong love affair with his native city and, although widely travelled, is still mystified that so many Australians go globe-trotting before seeing their own country.

FRIDAY, DAILY TELEGRAPH FEBRUARY 24, 1967

## 2CH helps migrants feel at home

SINCE its establishment, Station 2CH has occupied a pronounced niche of its own in Australian commercial radio.

This is not only because of its great variety of specialised programs for minority groups but because of its success in "foreign affairs."

Mr. Philip Geeves, 2CH program director, this week told the story of the station's language programs and excursions abroad.

Early in 1950, when Australia's immigration program was building to a pitch, the Federal Government contacted all radio and suggested something to make



"MAMMA LENA" (second from left), compere of 2CH's twice-weekly Italian broadcast, congratulates Luciana dal Caso, on gaining a trip to Italy for winning a Soccer "guess the winner" competition. Also pictured are 2CH Program Director, Mr. P. Geeves (left) and Mr. J. Galvani, of Qantas.

## 2CH helps newcomers

Sydney's 2CH radio station has probably done more to help the masses of migrants arriving every year than any other radio station in Australia.

At the request of the Department of Immigration, 2CH set up a foreign languages department to help migrants settle more quickly.

Today, 2CH devotes 15 hours a week to foreign language broadcasts, including Italian, Greek, and Lebanese, with a listening audience of more than 200,000.

Perhaps the best known personality in the foreign language department is Mrs. Lena Gustin who is affectionately called "Mamma Lena."

More than 150,000 members of the Italian community listen to "Mamma Lena" as she broadcasts in her copperplate Italian.

Lena Gustin is one of the very few women ever to have been honored with the Cross of Knighthood by the Italian Republic and she is the first Italian-Australian woman ever to be made a Member of the British Empire.

The Programs Director of 2CH, Mr. P. Geeves, said: "Mamma Lena" has become almost a legend to the Italian community.

"She gives them strength and courage when they first arrive in the country and even when they have been in Australia 15 years she still continues to help them."

"The idea of the programs is to help migrants get over their loneliness and nostalgia and this is what we achieve."

Each day more than 100 letters pour in from five States of Australia from migrants either wanting help or congratulating the radio station on their program.

Each year 2CH selects two migrants to revisit their homelands as first prize of a Soccer competition. The migrants, who are carefully screened, revisit their homelands as lucid ambassadors with all expenses paid.

For more than ten years now, 2CH has been helping migrants to help themselves and become Australian citizens.

That this paid dividends is apparent. Radio has not only captured back many of its listeners but has gained new ones. The ready availability and consequent wide popularity of transistor radios has much to do with this. Of course, but the real credit must go to broadcasters themselves for their adaptability in reorganising their programming to suit the changing needs and moods of the listening public.

The industry in Australia continues to show its vitality by the modernising of equipment and premises and increases in hours of service.

