

Sorella Radio 1963-1984-1994



Club Marcom Rossley Park - Sunday 8th May 1994

It is ten years now since the 28th April 1984 when "Sorella Radio's Long Child Care Centre" in Fairfield was inaugurated. Today on the 8th of May 1994 at the Club Marconi we are celebrating two important events. Mother's Day - honouring the most loving person in our lives - and the TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF SORELLA RADIO CHILD CARE CENTRE on the 28th April 1984.

To build the Centre, I, Dino and our Committee fought 12 hard years in order to complete something that would benefit the community and be a tangible symbol of dedication and determination to be handed down to generations to



PROPOSED PLAN
by
ARCHITECT GINO VOLPATO
(This plan was considered
"too modern" by
Fairfield Council and rejected)

Mamma Lena's Message

come. We wanted an ALL ITALIAN centre but in this era of multicultural correctness this was not possible. However, the feel and the spirit - and some of the teachers - is Italian even if the children (from birth to pre-school) are from all nationalities.

To arrive at what is today the "Sorella Radio Child Care Centre" is a story of love, tears and hard work and, for the record, it is important that the story of how it came to be and why it is named what it is, be told.

In 1963 Dino and I created a radio programme called "Sorella Radio". This one hour programme - modelled on the long-running Italian version - was aimed at keeping the Italian community in touch with each other. In fact, many of the human stories and episodes which grew out of the programme are recorded in our book "70 Years of Memories in two Worlds: Italy-Australia".

In 1971 our dream of building a Child Care Centre took shape and Sorella Radio Welfare Fund committee was formed. The plans for the Centre were drawn up by the architect Gino Volpato and presented to the Italian community during a function we organized at the Club Marconi. However, these plans were considered "too modern" by Fairfield Council and rejected.

Time and time again the plans were submitted and rejected and it was only in 1979 that the Council finally approved the plans and the foundation stone laid.

On the 31st of October 1983 the "Sorella Radio Child Care Centre" unofficially opens. But not before years of back-breaking work. Often the funds ran out. Dino and a few other kind and determined souls knocked on doors and begged for the material necessary to keep building while working on the site themselves (no money to pay labourers you see). And when the Centre finally opens the Department of Education decrees that the first intake be 45 children (15 from birth to 2 years and 30 from 2 to 5 years).

Over the years the Centre and its children have given me moments I will cherish forever. I remember with immense pride and joy when the first head of the Centre, Mrs Watson, who although Australian, taught the children to sing in Italian and the children celebrated Italy's National Day with an "Italian Day". Just that made all the hard work and tears worthwhile!

The Centre has grown in popularity but so have its needs. When in 1985 we desperately needed a bigger garden where children could play, our prayers were answered when the house next door came on the market. To purchase the house, the "Mamma Lena Community Centre" committee was formed and Vicky Fontana was elected President. Unfortunately this was also the time when I had been hospitalized for a major bypass operation and could no longer continue with my beloved radio programmes. For the purchase of this property committee members Nick Scali, Mario Mura and Dino Gustin put up

the guarantees and the house became the "Mamma Lena Community Centre". The house allowed for the expansion of the Child Care Centre's garden.

The community's need for the Centre is now undisputed. Mrs Fontana's daughter Lorraine Vagli, who followed Mrs Watson as the head of the Centre, had to put 150 families on the waiting list every year. The idea of expanding the Centre has now become an urgent necessity. A project incorporating the "Mamma Lena Community Centre" and which would increase the intake to another 60 children was submitted to Fairfield Council last year. This plan was rejected on the grounds that it would create traffic jams and disrupt the neighbourhood. We are now back to the drawing board with a new, smaller project which, hopefully, will be accepted. Authorities willing, by the end of '94 beginning of '95 we may be able to unveil this new extension.

Mine and Dino's dream and ideals are now in the hands of two Committees: the Sorella Radio Welfare Fund and the Mamma Lena Community Centre. We hope to involve younger generations in all of this as they will be the ones entrusted with continuing the momentum, not just for the Italian community, but for all those in need. But for now, in the name of both Committees I thank all the members for the help and support given in the past and that which they will give in the future towards our dream. I thank the staff of the Centre for their dedication and I thank the Italian community and media but above all I thank Dino who has done what no other human being could do and lived the dream with me and made it his dream as well. I also thank my children Rosalba and Roberto who have, in their younger years, shared me with the community and my dream. A dream I hope will survive for many more years to come as a symbol of love towards humanity.

Be with us my friends. Love and help us in the future as you have done in the past.

Thank you... I hug you all. "Arrivederci".

MAMMA LENA



The First Committee of "SORELLA RADIO WELFARE FUND": G. La Paine, A. Taccari, L. Marchetto, Lenz Gustin, G. Calabro, L. Mantovani, D. Gustin and Mrs M. Coca (not in the picture).



Sorella Radio

COMMITTEE: Mamma Lena, Vicky Fontana, Gina Bortolin, Mario Mura, Tita Volpato, Lorenzo Marchetto, Angela Maicrana, Dino Gustin, Toni Nolosi.



Sorella Radio Child Care Centre

OUR STAFF: L. Vagli (Director), Maria Prskalo (Cook), Gladis Monoz, Angela Murgida, Janet Frish, Michelle Waters, Fina Pace, Jytte Nielsen, Kulie Davies, Lesa Moore, Luise Shields.



Mamma Lena Community Centre

COMMITTEE: V. Fontana, R. Marchetto, D. Gustin, S. Russo (Solicitor), M. Mura, R. Fedrigo, I. Scaglietti, R. Dabbene, G. Bortolin.



Sorella Radio Child Care Centre as it is today.



28th APRIL 1984 -
A MEMORABLE DAY:

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SORELLA RADIO CHILD CARE CENTRE:

Pictured: Hon. Janice Crosio; Dr Alvise Memmo, Consul General of Italy in Sydney; Mamma Lena; Hon. Dr Richard Klugman, M.P. at the official opening, April 28th, 1984.

L'Ambasciatore d'Italia M. Spatafora



Sono trascorsi 10 anni da quando il Child Care Centre "Sorella Radio" di Fairfield ha iniziato la propria attività a seguito della inaugurazione avvenuta il 28 aprile 1984.

Non sempre le celebrazioni commemorative sono giustificate; talvolta servono solo per cercare di ridare vitalità ad istituzioni che faticosamente tentano di trovare una perdurante ragione d'esser, che il trascorrere degli anni e le mutate condizioni ambientali hanno reso vieppiù evanescente.

Non è certo così per il Centro "Sorella Radio". Il crescente successo dell'iniziativa premia gli sforzi, le fatiche ed i sacrifici personali dei membri del Comitato presieduto da "Mamma Lena", che con passione e tenacia si sono adoperati per venire incontro ad un'esigenza quanto mai viva in seno alla comunità di origine italiana di Sydney: quella, cioè, di poter disporre di un servizio sociale, sotto forma di asilo-nido, che fosse vicino, con dedizione, sensibilità ed intelligenza, a quanti necessitavano di una mano amica che li aiutasse a superare difficili situazioni familiari, sociali, ambientali.

Un centro, in altre parole, ove i più piccoli trovassero appropriata accoglienza, comprensione e cura: opera, quindi, di alto valore sociale e umano, coronata da un successo tale che il Centro stesso necessita ora di ulteriore ampliamento per soddisfare la crescente domanda dell'utenza.

Si è in effetti in presenza di un'iniziativa che, nell'inserirsi a pieno titolo nel clima multiculturale dell'Australia di oggi, va a vanto ed onore di tutta la comunità italiana, a testimonianza dello spirito di solidarietà e del calore umano che di tale comunità sono e dovrebbero sempre essere i tratti caratteristici.

A "Mamma Lena", ed a tutti i suoi collaboratori di "Sorella Radio", il mio più sincero "grazie" per aver dato vita ad un'istituzione che ha offerto, e continuerà ad offrire, il suo valido contributo a mantenere vivi, nella comunità italiana di Sydney, i legami fra la società in cui sono inseriti i nostri connazionali e l'antica civiltà della terra da cui provengono. Formulo per il futuro i più calorosi ed affettuosi auguri di proficua attività, al servizio del bene di tutta la comunità italo-australiana.

Marcello Spatafora
Ambasciatore d'Italia

Il Console di Sydney Claudio F. De Nardis



"Il destino di ciascuno di noi risulta essere frutto di quello che noi costruiamo" dicevano gli antichi con profonda saggezza. Il destino di Maddalena Gustin, da tutti affettuosamente conosciuta come Mamma Lena, e di suo marito Dino, è quello di dare tutto loro stessi al servizio e al benessere della comunità italiana di Sydney. Ed i frutti si vedono: sono anche quelli dell'asilo di Sorella Radio dove crescono bambini di diversa origine in un ambiente gioioso e sereno.

Costruire qualcosa per le generazioni future è sempre impresa nobile e meritoria. Il destino di Mamma Lena e di Dino Gustin è quello di essere sempre presenti nel ricordo degli italo-australiani e degli altri come persone che hanno realizzato per gli uomini e le donne di domani.

Fabio Claudio De Nardis
Console generale d'Italia a Sydney

Janice Crosio MP



Dear Mamma Lena,

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Sorella Radio Children's Centre for having provided ten wonderful years of child care service.

As the Federal Member for Prospect I have been extremely proud of the fact that the Centre, which is located within my electorate, is an excellent facility which has continually catered for the needs of young children with very caring and qualified staff.

I well remember the day in 1984 when the Centre was first officially opened and certainly have appreciated the dedication and hard work that has been provided by so many people, guided by you, in raising the finance to build the Centre and bringing a dream to reality.

The children of our community are our future and their education and well being must be, I believe, the objectives for which we strive.

The hundreds of families who have had the opportunity of having their children in the Sorella Radio Child Care Centre during these last ten years are both appreciative and thankful for the excellent care provided.

On behalf of all of those may I say thank you to the Principal and Staff of Sorella Radio Child Care Centre on a job well done and again congratulations on your Tenth Anniversary.

Yours sincerely

Janice Crosio
Federal Member for Prospect

Tony Campolongo



Dear Lena,

It gives me great pleasure to extend my congratulations to you and your committee of Sorella Radio Child Care Centre in the occasion of the tenth Anniversary for the continued work in providing a great Centre for the Community of Fairfield.

Yours Sincerely,

Tony Campolongo
Deputy Mayor of Fairfield

PROGRAMME / PROGRAMMA

12.00 noon Opening

Welcome

Introduction
to the guests of Honour

All mothers will be presented
with a gift from Bruno Tava
of Tava International

Dancing with E. GIRIBALDI
orchestra and vocalist
LIVIANA and floor show
with the young dancers of
Graciela Yoia dancing school

Lunch

Singers in concert:
Peter Ciani and Ricky
Giuliano accompanied by
Maestro Antonio Gabriele

Dancing

Official Speeches

Bestowal of the
"Italian Heart"
created by Bruno Tava

Dancing and surprises

Cutting of the Sorella Radio
anniversary cake

Lottery

Closing (6.00 p.m.) with the
promise to meet next year for the
inauguration of the new extension
of the Sorella Radio Child Care

Ore 12: apertura

Benvenuto

Presentazione
degli ospiti d'onore

*Dono ricordo a tutte le mamme
offerto dalla ditta Tava
International
di Bruno Tava*

*Ballo con E. GIRIBALDI
e la sua orchestra
e la cantante LIVIANA e
spettacolo con i giovanissimi
ballerini della scuola di danza
di Graciela Yoia*

Pranzo

*Concerto con Petr Ciani e Ricky
Giuliano accompagnati
dal Maestro
Antonio Gabriele*

Discorsi ufficiali

*Consegna dei premi
"Cuore Italiano"
(creazione Bruno Tava)*

Ballo e sorprese

*Taglio della torta
del decimo anniversario*

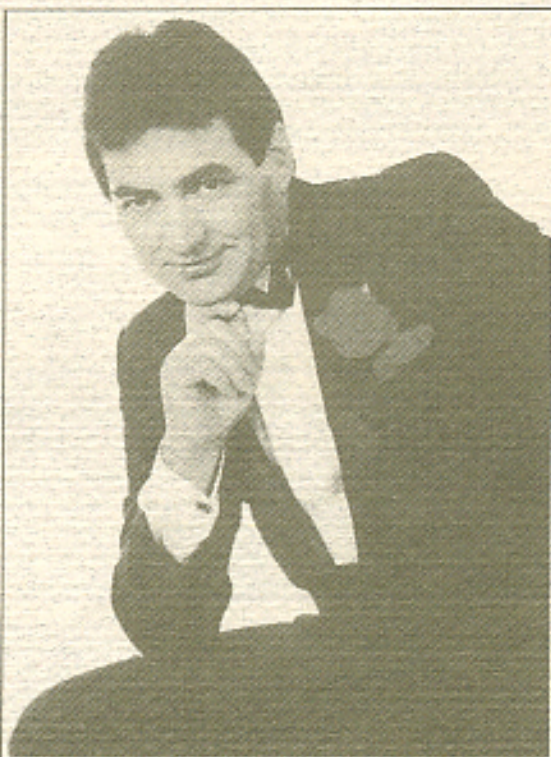
Lotteria

Ore 18.00:

*chiusura, con un arrispederci al
prossimo anno per l'inaugurazione
della nuova ala del Sorella Radio*

PETER CIANI and RICKY GIULIANO IN CONCERT

accompanied by prodigy pianist
ANTONIO GABRIELE



PETER CIANI



LIVIANA



ANTONIO GABRIELE



RICKY GIULIANO

The Little Stars

The Staff at our Pre-School Kindergarten speak: Italian, English, Greek, Spanish, Polish, Vietnamese.



We thank the following firms and individuals who have contributed to the success of the day:

Ringraziamo le seguenti ditte e privati che hanno contribuito alla buona riuscita di questa giornata:

PETER CIANI
 RICKY GIULIANO
 Maestro ANTONIO GABRIELE
 ENZO GIRIBALDI
 LIVIANA
 STEFANO DESIGNER JEWELLER
 BRUNO TAVA INTERNATIONAL
 NICK SCALI
 FERRERO Australia
 CASA ADAMO
 FRANK MENDUNI
 FRED MARETTA
 CASTORINA
 SORELLA RADIO COMMITTEE
 Club Marconi LADIES COMMITTEE
 JO MARIE (J. Ferrone)
 BRUNO TURCHINI
 PATRICIA and JOE FIN
 ARNALDO BELLO
 LA FIAMMA
 IL GLOBO
 IL MONDO
 SBS RADIO (Italian Programme)
 FONTANA DI TREVI
 VILLA ROSA
 EOLIAN HOUSE
 PANORAMA HOUSE (Italian Restaurant)
 EURO PHOTO (Franco Baldi)
 RADIO ITALIA

Sorella Radio Child Care Centre

GUESSING COMPETITION - S-R-L-A R-D-O

PRIZES:

- 1st 18K GOLD BRACELET WITH DIAMOND - Value: \$1,500.00
 Donated by STEFANO DESIGNER JEWELLER
 120 Rawson Street, Greenacre.
- 2nd PAINTING (ITALIAN MASTER) - Value \$800.00
 Donated by NICK SCALI
- 3rd \$600.00 VOUCHER. Donated by CASA ADAMO, Leichhardt
- 4th COFFEE TABLE - Value \$200.00. Donated by ALMA FURNITURE
 (Fred Marett), Leichhardt
- 5th IL PORCELLINO (miniature replica) - Value \$150.00
 Donated by F. MENDUNI GARDEN ARTISTRY, Summer Hill
- 6th ART OBJECT. Donated by JO MARIE (J. Ferrone)
- 7th LUNCH OR DINNER FOR TWO - Value \$100.00
 Donated by PANORAMA HOUSE, Bulli Tops
- 8th HAM - Value \$80.00. Donated by CASTORINA, Leichhardt
- 9th CASE OF WINE. Donated by FONTANA DI TREVI, Bankstown
- 10th CASE OF WINE. Donated by VILLA ROSA, Leichhardt
- 11th CASE OF WINE. Donated by EOLIAN HOUSE, Petersham

Tickets: \$1.00 each GOOD LUCK TO ALL !!! - A TUTTI BUONA FORTUNA!!!

Stefano
 Designer Jewellers

Tava
 International

FERRERO
 AUSTRALIA

FLASH BACK

In the years prior to the fulfilment of her dream, the Sorella Radio Child Care Centre, Mamma Lena was involved in many activities of the Italo-Australian community; Ethnic Radio, National Women's Auxiliary Council in Canberra, etc. Here we can only reproduce some of the thousands of photographs and newspaper clippings which show the extent of Mamma Lena's involvement with the community throughout the years.



cronache locali

Giovanissima cantante italiana vince
 il Minifestival Internazionale dei bambini

MINIFESTIVAL of the CHILD 1979

Posa della prima pietra
 dell'asilo di Sorella Radio

Consegnati all'Hilton i «Premi Italia»
 Full-house al ballo
 della radio italiana

Consegnato il "Premio Italia"

Sorella Radio 1963-1984-1994



Club Marconi Bossley Park - Sunday 8th May 1994