



Historical Bayswater

NEWSLETTER

PRESERVE - PROTECT - PROMOTE

**Amazing stories from our Bayswater neighbours:
MARIA AND JOE PADUANO**

As told by Maria and Joe Paduano to BHS Secretary Glen Cookson

While I have lived in Bayswater for the past 17 years, I have only known my near neighbours, Maria and Joe Paduano since 2021. I had regularly walked past their unique street frontage in Cobden Street since my retirement in 2019, but I had never spoken to Maria or Joe. It was a warm summer evening and Maria, and Joe were enjoying the shade of their tree lined and front entrance, abundant with plants and vines. I waved and they called me over.





After several months of spontaneous neighbourly chats, I became enchanted by the stories told by this friendly engaging couple who are what could only be described as the epitamy of a committed loving partnership. Maria and Giuseppe (Joe) are both from Torre del Greco a commune (municipality) of the Metropolitan City of Naples in Italy, with a population of c. 85,000. Joe was born on the 1 May 1938 and lived with his family only 300m from the sea. Maria was born on the 5 June 1943 and lived in the next street to Joe. In fact, Joe first meet Maria when they were children. Maria was one of 10 children, never went to school and had to start work at only 5 years of age.

Maria and Joe were both children during the 1939-1945 WW2. Joe can remember hiding under his house when the surrounding area was bombed. The post war period had left most of Europe impoverished. Joe recalls growing up without electricity and where lighting was supplied by cotton cords dipped in oil on a plate. Later there was the luxury of kerosine lamps. Life and making a living were very tough in those post WW2 days. At about 7 or 8 years of age Joe's father paid 500 Lira/week (A\$1= 1200Lira) for him to learn breadmaking. Joe did this for some time after school every Saturday and Sunday. He learnt how to make 1Kg loaves.



Wick and Oil Lamp



Kerosine Lantern

After finishing school in Grade 5 Joe started work selling fruit and vegetables. Joe would travel long distances by foot and a donkey cart to buy cheaper fruit and vegetables from local farmers. He would then take this into the city to sell. The most successful sellers were the best spruikers. Joe was a more reserved person and found this challenging.

In 1958, at the age of 20, Joe decided to take on fishing. This involved a 6-month period of work away from his home out at sea. It would also give Joe the skills and 'passport' to work on other larger boats. Before leaving he asked Maria if he could carry a small photograph of her with him. Joe explained that back in those days parents were not happy if people married outside of the Torre del Greco commune. Parents wanted to know the family of who their children were planning to marry. The community was strict, and boys couldn't even touch a girl. Having Maria's photo was as good as being married, only no touching. Thus, since 1958 Maria and Joe have been committed to one another in an amazing and loving 64 years partnership.

In 1959 Joe had the opportunity to work in Germany, where jobs were more plentiful and wages much higher. On arriving in Germany Joe found the living conditions rudimentary and challenging as he couldn't speak the language. He worked in the mines for 2 or 3 years, and as his language skills improved, he developed the confidence to ask for a job in a large bread making factory. After 3 years of doing production line tasks, he was given the opportunity to use his skills and knowledge of bread making and promoted to the 'supervisor' of the actual bread mixing machines. This involved mixing the required ingredients of different breads, brewing, and preparing for baking. He did this for a further 6 years, making a total of 9 years working in Germany.

Initially Maria stayed in Italy and continued communication via writing letters. Fortunately, Maria was able to join him in 1960 and now with her their first child, Vince. The German employment policy meant that Maria and Vince couldn't stay and so had to travel back to Torre del Greco. While Joe was able to travel back at the end of each year to visit his family, it wasn't enough to sustain a happy family. Eventually, Joe managed to rent a small house that accommodated Maria, Joe, Vince (born in Italy), Tony (born in Germany), and Joe's brother. Later Maria also worked in the same factory making cakes. Maria and Joe took turns looking after their youngest as Maria worked day shift and Joe worked night shift.



c.1958 Giuseppe getting ready for a fishing trip



c.1963 young mum Maria with Vince and Tony

In 1968 Maria and Joe decided to come to Australia. They rented a place in Maylands for 6 months before buying a basic asbestos house in Cobden Street, Bayswater. In 1970, their third child Anna was born at St Anne's Maternity Hospital (1958-1982) in Mount Lawley, and their youngest Tina, in 1971. 54 years later with some amazing and unique additions Maria and Joe are still there.



When Joe and Maria first moved into their new home they had no savings and lived from week to week on Joe's factory wage. Nevertheless money was put aside each week to slowly develop their home. Joe worked for a galvanizing factory for over 14 years, it was dirty, hard work and low paid. Nevertheless over that time, savings were found to brick veneer and extend their home to accommodate Maria and Joe's family of six, including their 4 young children.

After 14 and half years of loyal and dedicated hard work with the Belmont Galvanizing Company, Joe was suddenly sacked. Joe still carries the scars from his factory work. Galvanizing is the process of applying a layer of zinc on a steel substrate to provide galvanic corrosion protection. It is dangerous work requiring safety and protective gear. Joe often worked without a protective glass shield or helmet and needed to have regular breaks in the fresh air. He still carries the burn scars around his eyes. So why after nearly 15 years of service was Joe sacked by his employer? Joe believes as his employer had done to others, he was sacked to avoid paying 3 months long service leave after what was soon to be 15 years of continuous employment. Joe also believed he was tricked into believing that he was paying union fees each week when in fact he wasn't.



On reflection, this is a story of why honesty, health and safety in the workforce is important. Fortunately, soon after Joe's galvanising employment was terminated, a friendly neighbour helped Joe secure a job with the Perth City Council. Joe worked on the cleaning night shift team from 11pm to 7am each evening for 10 years. Eventually Joe was able to claim a pension and continued working from his home property in Bayswater. Interestingly in what was a working life that turned full circle, being very similar to his early work experiences in Torre del Greco commune. Joe would regularly visit the old Perth Metropolitan Markets in Wellington Street. He collected excess fruit and vegetables and used this to feed his collection of home chickens and rabbits.



HISTORICAL NOTE: In 1926, the Metropolitan Market Trust was established under the Metropolitan Market Act to administer the new markets in West Perth which opened in June 1929 operating until 1989.

<https://perthmarket.com.au/corporate-information/history/>

Maria also worked outside the home to contribute to the family. Maria says she would be up very early to catch the bus into the city for her 6am cleaning job in St Georges Tce. Maria would return home by 8am, and get her eldest child ready for school. After her children came home from school she returned by bus to the city to finish her 4pm – 8pm cleaning job. Maria also worked for several years at a nearby glass bottle recycling factory to supplement the family income. The 'Joe and Maria' partnership continued working hard, creating and developing their own extensive backyard garden. What Joe and Maria have created together seems reflective of their relationship. The backyard of their Cobden Street home can only be described as a unique, marvellous, amazing, awe-inspiring and remarkable garden. Joe and Maria created a small home business, supplying exotic plants, vines and fruit trees including citrus and avocado. Visitors often described their garden as a 'paradise'. I recently got a lemonade citrus tree from Joe and look forward to enjoying its unique flavoursome fruit next season.



A truly unique and loving partnership

In conversation with Joe and Maria it is quickly apparent that they have a great partnership. Joe proudly tells me that he and Maria are always together. "We only go out and do things together. I've only been to the bank twice on my own. Maria does all the banking. We do shopping together and always go to the doctors and any appointments together. Since coming to Australia we have always been together." That means 54 years in Cobden Street Bayswater! This reporter's family has been in Slade Street for 17 years, so only 37 years to catch up! On another occasion Joe shared about his experiences growing up on farms and having a chicken run and pet rabbits. Joe has a close affinity with his pets and said he has never killed any for eating. He still has chickens, pet rabbits and a cat. In fact Joe has been a vegetarian for over 60 years and dislikes the taste and smell of any animal flesh cooking. Maria being a very understanding and considerate partner ensures that Joe is outside before cooking the occasional chicken.

Why we like living in Bayswater?

Maria and Joe say they like living in Bayswater because they have nice neighbours, it's a peaceful, quiet street and close to shops and everything.

What is the secret of a happy marriage?

After living in 3 different countries, having 4 children, 9 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren, Joe and Maria tell me that while there are inevitable ups and downs, that's life, it's important to give and take. When asked what makes a happy marriage, Maria thoughtfully said, "I'll tell you a story my mum told me, when there is a storm coming outside, and the door and window have been left open, someone has to be clever, and close them to protect what's inside". Whatever Joe and Maria do, it works, and it's a winner. The sparkle in their eyes, welcoming and friendly smiles say it all.

Hanging out with the grandkids!





Famous Italian Sayings About Love:

- Where there is great love there are always miracles
- Loving you is like breathing how can I stop?
- There must be something wrong with my eyes I can't take them off you.
- Did the sun just come out or did you just smile at me?



"TI VOGLIO BENE"



Photography by Glen Cookson

Joe and Maria first met around 1950, and over 70 years later, in 2022 still very much together, still smiling, a unique and inspirational Bayswater couple.

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- Maria and Joe Paduano
- Glen Cookson
- Bayswater Historical Society
- Wikipedia

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Note: Our Membership Year goes from 1 September - 31 August each year. A Membership Renewal notice is also attached for your convenience. If paying via EFT, please note member sub and your name. Thank you to all those members that have recently renewed their subscription. **The Society is run by volunteers and depends on membership fees and donations.** Contact the secretary if you can support our aims by contributing in any way you are able.

MUSEUM OPEN DAYS

Membership renewals can also be made in person at our **next Open Day, is Sunday 23 October, 1pm – 4pm.** The final Open Day for 2022 will be **Sunday 27 November, 1pm-4pm.** Bring your family and friends to find out more about our fascinating and hidden local Bayswater history. Did you know that Bayswater was one of two southern hemisphere sites for a worldwide scientific collaboration involving Russia, Germany, Japan, USA, Italy, Argentina, and Australia.



Photography by C Middleton

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The Bayswater Historical Society Inc. was formed in 1991. It is a non-profit organization which aims to preserve the history of Bayswater district; protect the records and objects relating to the area; promote public interest in and support for the preservation of historic records, buildings and sites. Halliday House is Bayswater's historic home and is used as the Society's base and museum. COVID-19 safety measures, including hand sanitising and wearing of masks indoors, must be adhered to by all visitors during Open Days.

Historical Bayswater is the society's newsletter and we welcome contributions, such as stories and photographs, relating to the history of Bayswater.