

## Records relating to Italian migration held in Perth

The rush that followed the discovery of gold at Kalgoorlie in 1893 made Western Australia the main destination of Italian migrants to Australia during the 1890s. Throughout the twentieth century, the attraction of being the first Australian port of call for ships arriving from Europe meant Western Australia became the place of first arrival for a significant number of the more than 340,000 Italians who have settled in Australia.

The National Archives in Perth holds many records documenting the relationship between Italian migrants and the Commonwealth Government. Whether you are searching for a particular Italian person, or researching the broader Italian experience in Australia, this fact sheet will help you identify relevant records.

### Immigration

#### Passenger lists

All vessels arriving at or departing from Australian ports were required to submit a list of passengers. Lists of passengers arriving at or departing from the port of Fremantle are available for the period 1898–1971. Passenger lists for other Western Australian ports are also held. See *Fact sheet 56 - Passenger records held in Perth* for details of holdings.

#### Migration documents

These records, known as 'migrant selection documents' were completed for all intending migrants to Australia in the years since World War II who applied under assisted passage schemes. They consist of a number of documents (including a completed application form), and often include a passport size photograph of the applicant. *Fact Sheet 185 – Migrant selection documents held in Perth* contains details of migrant selection documents held by the Perth office.

#### General immigration matters

The general correspondence file series of the Western Australian Branch of the Department of Immigration contain valuable information about post-World War II migration schemes, and the welfare and resettlement of migrants in general. All items in one major correspondence series (K403) are listed on the RecordSearch database, which is also available in all research centres.

## **Naturalisation**

### **Citizenship Index**

The Department of Immigration Citizenship Index, which is held by all offices of the National Archives, lists all successful applicants for naturalisation in Australia since 1904. The index is arranged alphabetically. Entries include date of birth, date of arrival in Australia, and date of naturalisation for each applicant. The index also gives the number of the applicant's naturalisation file and an indication of the office of the National Archives in which it is held. Because the index contains information less than thirty years old it is not available for public access and our staff will need to consult it on your behalf.

### **Naturalisation files**

The files for the majority of people naturalised in Western Australia after 1951 are held by the National Archives Perth office. Files for the years 1904–1951 are held by our office in Canberra.

### **Naturalisation certificates**

Copies of naturalisation certificates for the years 1904–1937 are held in Perth. These certificates are arranged in numerical order. The certificate number can be identified from the Citizenship Index.

## **Alien registration**

Records are held for the two periods in Australia's history when the Commonwealth Government has required all 'aliens' living or entering Australia to register with local authorities: the period commencing in 1916 with World War I (as required under War Precautions Regulations 1916–1920) and the period from 1939 to the 1960s. Registration forms were gathered by Customs or Immigration officials, or by local police in the case of resident aliens. Sometimes these forms include photographs and fingerprints. The Perth office holds records for all people registered as aliens in Western Australia during both periods of compulsory registration. Over 13,000 migrants of Italian nationality were registered as aliens in Western Australia after World War II.

For further details see *Fact sheet 186 - Alien registration documents held in Perth*.

## **Civil Alien Corps**

Established in 1943, the Civil Aliens Corps provided approved aliens with the opportunity to contribute to Australia's war effort during World War II. The majority of corps members in Western Australia were Italians. See *Fact sheet 182 - Civil Alien Corps records held in Perth* for details of records held in Perth.

## **Internment during World War II**

More Italians than any other nationality were interned in Australia during World War II. The Perth office holds many records relating to people interned in Western Australia and internment in general. See *Fact Sheet 180 – Wartime internee, alien and POW records held in Perth*.

## **Records held by other offices of the National Archives**

Fact sheets have been prepared that describe holdings of records such as passenger records, migrant selection documents, naturalisation records, and wartime internee, alien and prisoner of war records in a number of offices of the National Archives. Consult these fact sheets to identify further records containing information relevant to the study of Italians or Australians of Italian descent. In particular, see the following Fact Sheets:

- *Fact sheet 100 - Records relating to Italian migration held in Sydney*
- *Fact sheet 236 - Records relating to Italian migration held in Brisbane*