

Obituary Trento Francesco Trasimeno

Trento was born on the 9th February 1927 in San Piero Patti, a rural community of then, some 6000 inhabitants located on the North Eastern coast of Sicily, to parents Fabio and Maria (nee Iucculano). He was the second born of five siblings: Nino (born 1925, dec 1998), Italia born 1932, Vittorio born 1937 and Giuseppe born 1940.

San Piero Patti is located in hilly terrain its economy is "Rural" pursuits which include cattle and their by products milk and artisan cheeses. Main crops include hazelnuts, olives and olive oil, grains as well as fruits cherries, citrus and grapes.

Trento's father didn't enjoy the best health, he died in 1952 at the age of 54 years of age (Trento then aged 25) leaving the two eldest siblings to fend for the entire family.

Trento's early memories included working from six years of age, watching over grazing cattle on behalf of cattle owners and then full time employment as a labourer, seasonal to the requirements of the various landowners from age of ten. Duties included cheese making (he often reminisced of exquisite provole, fresh ricotta that he contributed to), working at the Olive Oil refinery making olive oil, and the harvesting and threshing of grain, hazelnuts and other fruits as well as other field work.

Payment was mostly in produce: olive oil, cheeses, grain etc as cash remained a scarce commodity. All went back to the

family and the family in turn bartered for their other needs. I remember him telling me the barber would provide a number of haircuts in return for, say, a quantity of wheat.

Education, which was compulsory at the time, was completed to the equivalent of our Grade 5 primary school on a part time basis.

Stories of his teen years reflected his love for fun, music and dancing with his sweet heart Maria (my mother in law). The two were inseparable. He also spoke of the American occupation of Sicily, the Allies conducted aerial food drops and his enterprise peddling the chocolate and American cigarettes which were plentiful at the time.

He was called up to compulsory military service at the age of 21. Trento conducted his military training, coincidentally, at Trento in Northern Italy and served only 14 months due to the end of World War 2.

Post war Italy was economically depressed and provided little hope to its largely unemployed youth. Australia, at the time, was heavily promoting its need for additional migration. Trento registered his interest and, once approved, set about his new adventure. He married his sweet heart Maria, borrowed the funds (30% interest rate) for his travel to the New Land of opportunity and, with a heavy heart, left his wife and newborn three day old son Giuseppe (Joe) behind in San Piero. His commitment would be to work hard to reunite his family as soon as possible.

Trento arrived in Australia in September 1955 and immediately commenced work at his Uncle Carmelo Scaglione's market garden in Kalgoorlie . After some months, he felt his best opportunity was to find a better paying job and commenced work with West Australian railways at their transshipping yard in Parkston. The East West standard 4'6" gauge rail line ended at Kalgoorlie at that time and freight was transferred to the WA 3'8" rail system for forwarding to Perth.

Trento tirelessly worked double jobs, Westrail plus every available other day as labourer in the Market gardens where he would be paid cash between 10 shillings to a pound per day. Kalgoorlie at that time was self sufficient in the production of fresh foods, with in excess of thirty market gardens, an equal number of poultry farms and also four dairies & an abattoir.

He paid off his Italian debt and accumulated enough monies to pay the fair to Australia for his wife Maria & son Joe. The family was re united in March 1956.

The family initially rented a small house on Dugan Street in Kalgoorlie, and eventually took the opportunity of acquiring an established poultry farm, a 7 acre property at the corner of Emin and Wortley Street, Somerville, partly financed with a loan from an uncle.

Trento continued to work with Westrail whilst Maria took on the daily running of the poultry farm. Trento would contribute after hours selling eggs and fresh chickens, sourcing feed with regular trips to nearby wheat growing areas. The couple

started growing fresh vegetables as a sideline, for sale at the local produce markets. The market garden eventually took over and the poultry farm closed.

June 1959 Maria gave birth to the couple's second child Maria.

The couple's next venture was a piggery in West Kalgoorlie in 1965. The hard working family built this enterprise to a complement exceeding 1400 pigs. The pigs were sold to the local abattoir and other available markets.

Quite a story so far, when one considers the logistics and workload of this family unit, where every available minute of the day and evenings was committed to work and more work...

In 1968 the family was approached by WA State Government, and the piggery land fell within the requirements of the proposed standard gauge rail extension from Kalgoorlie to Perth.

The piggery was sold and Trento remained with Westrail transferring to the West Kalgoorlie terminal, he retired in 1992 at the age of 65.

The couple continued with their market garden till 2003. Trento and Maria were the last of the Kalgoorlie Market Gardeners. Kalgoorlie now relies on Perth for all of its fresh produce.

Trento and Maria reluctantly sold their property in 2003, leaving their beloved Kalgoorlie and moving to their latest

address at 27 Canning Street, Balcatta in order to be close to their two children and families.

It wasn't long before the two Green Fingers had converted all available land on their 900sqm block into the most productive garden in the street, growing all manner of seasonal vegetables to the highest qualities and standards, consequently providing a steady year-round supply to both family and neighbours.

Trento fell ill some 7 months ago. What was thought to be emphysema deteriorated to a more serious illness which ultimately took his life. He died peacefully at 7.30 pm Easter Monday, surrounded by his beloved Maria, children Joe and Marie, their spouses, children, his brother Giuseppe and sister in law Emilia, and friends. He was assisted by the professional staff at Bethesda palliative care.

Trento lived a selfless life. We will all remember him, treasuring our special memories. For me, my lasting image of my father in law will be the warm welcoming smile, outstretched hand and the immediate, "Let's have a beer."

I would imagine he is all about changing the drinks menu in paradise. His first motion will be to encourage St Peter and crew to introduce Aussie beer. After all, he would say, "Water is for frogs, beer the essential nectar of life."

Time ripe for market gardeners to say goodbye

THE owners of Kalgoorlie-Boulder's last market garden will pack up their crates and bid an emotional farewell to the city tomorrow.

Trento and Maria Trasimeno have decided to retire in Perth after running their market garden on Emin Street for the past 45 years.

The couple have been market gardeners since 1958, after coming to Kalgoorlie-Boulder from Sicily the previous year.

Mrs Trasimeno said it was a struggle when she first moved to Kalgoorlie-Boulder but she soon settled into the new lifestyle and learned to love it.

The family grew a wide variety of fruit and vegetables at the property, initially supplying the fresh produce markets that used to operate in the city and, more recently, local distributors.

The decision to leave was made last week, when the Trasimeno's accepted an offer on their property.

Mrs Trasimeno said she missed her son, daughter and six grandchildren and it was time to leave Kalgoorlie-Boulder behind.

She said she was sad to leave and would miss the close group of friends she had made.

She said the hardest part was leaving the house she and her husband built.

"It's very sad but things are getting harder for us as we get older," she said.

MEGAN SADLER



Sad farewell: Trento and Maria Trasimeno are leaving their beloved Kalgoorlie-Boulder market garden to retire in Perth. Photo: TONY HOLMES

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