The Italian presence in Australia, dates all the way back to before the First Fleet. Ever since the ship ‘Endeavour’, with captain James Cook in 1770, Italians have been flocking to our country for reasons including: obtaining a better life, finding work and building themselves a safer future.

The first rush was in the 1850’s with Victoria’s gold rush period, the second big influx not occurring until after World War II, with the number of Italians in Victoria peaking at 121,000 in 1971.

That brings us to today, with me, telling the story of my family and their travels to Australia. The only reason I am here today is because of my Nonna and Nonno’s desire to migrate to Australia for a better life for the both of them.

In Italy life is very different to Australia. Children leave home earlier to move overseas and make a living, to get a job or to study. Their study focus lies mainly in the fields of hospitality and tourism. School is only compulsory until 16 years of age. Although the rates of immigration from Italy to Australia have lessened, the reasons for Italians leaving Italy to come to Australia have stayed the same.