



THE LORD MAYOR OF SYDNEY
COUNCILLOR FRANK SARTOR

A Message for Mamma Lena

It is difficult to express in such a short space the many achievements of Mrs Lena Gustin during her countless years of community work in Sydney.

Mamma Lena, as we know her, has been a distinguished voice in this city's Italian community since arriving with her family in 1956.

Apart from her voluntary activities, Mamma Lena's long involvement with radio and newspapers has given Italian people a sense of belonging in a new country.

I know from personal experience what it feels to be a newcomer to Australia. My parents were Italian migrants and four of my brothers and sisters were born in Italy. I was the first Australian born in our family but still knew what it meant to feel out of place - to be regarded as different.

Today my own sons share none of these experiences. They have grown up in a city and in an age which has embraced multiculturalism and have enjoyed the benefits of being "half-Italian".

It is in no small way due to the work of people like Mamma Lena and her husband Dino, that Sydney's Italian community has remained so strong, particularly during those early years of immigration. They have worked tirelessly for Italian people out of love for their own culture and their own people. Most importantly, they have provided Italian immigrants with information and assistance in learning the ways of a new country.

At 84, Mamma Lena continues to be an inspiration. She has, with Dino's support, consistently directed her passion into working for people. May they both be richly rewarded.

She is a living legend amongst Italians.