



Large family says farewell

Obituary

Aurelia Tuia

Born: Tresivio, Northern Italy, June 16, 1911

Died: Donnybrook, April 21, 2008

AURELIA Tuia was born in the small village of Tresivio, Northern Italy in June 1911.

She was the seventh of eight children born to Giovanni Betti, a peasant farmer, and his wife Luisa.

Life was not easy in Italy at that time, but was made harder for the Betti family when Aurelia, at the age of eight, lost her mother, as well as an older sister a few years later.

Her father decided to join his two sons Joe and Vittorio in Australia and, with Aurelia and his grandson Les Betti (now of Albany), he set sail on the Regina Italia on Christmas Eve, 1927.

Because Les developed the measles, the family was quarantined in Mesina, later resuming their journey on the Prince of Udino and arriving in Fremantle in April, 1928.

Aurelia's father and Les travelled to Balingup and Aurelia found work in a wine saloon in Collie.

Here she met young Luigi Tuia, who had grown up across the valley in Italy and had migrated to Australia in 1918.

Luigi was cutting sleepers in Bridgetown at the time.

After several visits he declared he couldn't travel all that distance to visit her so they should get married.

In 1931, Aurelia and Luigi married in Bridgetown.

They lived and farmed on a property in Balingup taken on by Luigi and his brother Enrico, moving to the farm on King Spring Road in Thomson Brook in 1939, when the youngest of their four children, Lui, was only six weeks old.

It was here that Aurelia saw her children Ida, Elsie, Nino and Lui spend their childhood, go to school, reach adulthood and marry.

Hard work was the order of the day, but the Tuias prospered and were well thought of in the district.

Their home was a calling place for many of the Italians who lived in the area, with their wine and sausages being strong attractions.

The four children produced 18 grandchildren who were a joy to Aurelia.

She had a special place in her heart for each one of them and they all remember her with love and respect.

All received birthday and Christmas presents for many years and even the 36 great-grandchildren were remembered on special occasions.

At the time of her death, Aurelia also had five great,



great-grandchildren. The Brookhampton Hall was a social centre of the district and Aurelia and Luigi cut a fine figure on the dance floor.

In 1962, when they decided to leave the farm and move into town, a farewell party was held for them in this hall.

In his thank you speech, Luigi declared that the years they had spent in the area were the happiest of their lives.

Once the couple moved into their home in town, Aurelia became a keen member of the CWA.

She also helped out in the Red Cross shop and cooked for the Catholic ladies when they catered for functions.

She welcomed many visitors for meals or just a cuppa.

Aurelia loved her garden, especially her roses, and attended church regularly.

After Luigi died in 1980 Aurelia lived on in her little house until 1996, when it became necessary for her to move to Tuia Lodge.

Here she spent three happy years, but as her health deteriorated, she became a permanent resident of the hospital where she was cared for until her death on April 21.

She was farewelled by family and friends at a mass and is buried alongside her husband in the Donnybrook cemetery.