

poche parole ICS

the italian cultural society of washington, dc

May, 2008 Newsletter, Vol. XXIV, NO. 9

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear members of the ICS:

First I would like to express my appreciation for your having me as your President for six years, an unprecedented tenure indeed, but one that allowed me to achieve the milestones that I mention below. I would like to think that my tenure has granted much needed continuity for enrooting the philosophies and thoughts that have led our Italian Language Program and that have protected it and sheltered it in its adolescence, and assured a bright and very promising future.

Indeed my tenure has witnessed the flourishing of the teaching of Italian in many local Schools. This has resulted from the trust placed in the leaders of our Italian Language Program, Maria Wilmeth and Cesarina Horing, and their Faculty, by the Italian Government, including its Embassy; by the local school systems in Montgomery, Prince George's and Fairfax Counties as well as in the District of Columbia, and at times other counties, as derived from the jurisdiction in matters of language of the Italian Consulate. Further, I would like to think that my tenure has facilitated the recognition of teaching excellence by nationwide American organizations, such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, which has granted, through the application submitted by Roberto Severino and Maria Wilmeth, the sums of \$132,000.00 in 2004 and \$172,000.00 in 2007 for the Summer Institute "**The Art of Teaching Italian Through Italian Arts**" in Washington and in Rome. Twenty five teachers of Italian from all over the United States participated in each Institute. I have had the pleasure of witnessing these events and following the progress of collaborative programs between our local and Italian schools, including universities which have contributed to the teaching faculties of our summer institutes in Washington and Italy. A "Bravissimi!" to Maria and Roberto, for what they have been able to accomplish!

At one time, Washington, D.C., had its very own Little Italy! The area around Holy Rosary Church, at Third and F Streets, N.W., was once home to a vibrant Italian neighborhood, complete with frequent *feste*. In 1999, Washington's active and growing Italian community came together to revive the traditions of their ancestors, and D.C.'s Festa Italiana was born! The inaugural festival that year drew 1,500 of the metro area's Italian-Americans and those interested in Italian culture, and it has grown every year since! The three sponsoring Italian organizations in the D.C. metro area, FIERI DC, Holy Rosary Church and the Italian Cultural Society, which had joined forces on an ad hoc basis to stage Festa Italiana, later created the non-profit Festa Italiana Foundation (FIF). FIF now provides a more stable organizational structure to organize the only Italian Festa in DC each year. All three of the sponsoring organizations have equal representation on the FIF Board with the 3 principal officers of the Foundation being rotated among the organizations.

ICS EVENTS

Social Meetings start at 3:00 PM on the third Sunday of the month, September thru May at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Ave, Chevy Chase, MD (See map on last page)

MAY 18 Professor Don H. Doyle will discuss Giuseppe Garibaldi. His fascinating talk is entitled "Garibaldi's Question" See more on page 2.

Movie of the Month: Vittorio De Sica's "Ladri di Biciclette" (Bicycle Thieves) See description on page 2.

**FREE ITALIAN LANGUAGE LESSONS
FOR ALL LEVELS
FROM 2:00 TO 3:00**

ICS Board of Directors and their Responsibilities

Luigi De Luca, *President*
Andy Millunzi, *Vice-President*
Romeo Segnan, *Treasurer, Webmaster*
Cesarina Horing, *Membership and Italian Language*
Maria Wilmeth, *Historian*
Joe Onofrietti, *Film & Hospitality*
Ron Cappelletti & Olga Mancuso, *Fund Raising & Events*
Nick Monaco, Paolo Vidoli, & Luciano Vignola, *At Large*
Aldo Grossi, *Music & Hospitality*
Elio Grandi, *Emeritus*
Arrigo Mongini, *Editor of Poche Parole*
Aldo Bove, *Liaison in Italy*

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SENDING YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO
Arrigo.Mongini@Verizon.net**

Our email list is confidential and for ICS use only for this purpose and will not be revealed to others.

**SAVE THE DATES
SUNDAY, JUNE 8
ANNUAL GALA AWARDS DINNER
SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 29
FESTA ITALIANA in DC
SEE PAGE 11 TO VOLUNTEER**

PROGRAM OF MAY 18

FI 2008 will mark the 10th Anniversary of the Festa with a lively celebration of authentic Italian - and Italian-American - heritage, culture and tradition. Festa Italiana has become a marker of the vitality of the Italian Community in the Washington Metropolitan area. It allows young and old alike to enjoy a day of Italian Culture, with highlights of a specific region of Italy each year, (Veneto in 2006, Emilia Romagna in 2007, and Rome and Lazio in 2008). There will be traditional foods, art, singing and music. Further, there is a procession in the streets of the neighborhood and tribute is paid to the Holy Rosary Church as the parish of the old neighborhood where the Italian community lived and thrived for a while in the early 1900s, before Federal buildings took over. I am proud to say that over the years, members of our Society have selflessly volunteered considerable time and effort, in cooperation with members from FIERI and HRC, to make these Festas a success. Please support FI 2008 by coming on Sunday June 29th. Also, this year ICS Vice-president Andy Millunzi, is again the President of the FI Foundation and he could always use the help of ICS members in staging the Festa. Please see the information sheet on page 3 of this Poche Parole.

Finally the third milestone under my watch has been the establishment of the Awards Program, which has permitted the recognition of exceptionally talented young students in the arts, the humanities and the sciences with scholarships totaling \$6-7,000 per year. Recognition usually goes to local university students and is not restricted (as is not our contributing membership) to any one nationality, but rewards the study of Italian Language as a special area of interest, the study and performance of Italian music as another area, excellence in craftsmanship in different media, and, of course, science, as well as the classics. It is fitting that we celebrate these young students at our gala dinner at the end of our social year. This year's Gala will be on Sunday June 8th at Tragara Restaurant as specified on page 11 in this Poche Parole.

Again here work by the Board is of the essence in securing the funds for the scholarships and awards. I would like to give special recognition to Olga Mancuso for untiringly working with me and other members of the board to make sure that the various fundraising events were successful.

Finally the fourth and maybe the most important milestone has been the acquisition of friends in the process. Whenever I see your faces at each social I am reassured that our Society will thrive for a long time to come.

And so I would like to thank you for your interest and support of our Society. "The Society", as Joanne Martin, one of its oldest and most affectionate members, who passed away two years ago at the age of 95, used to call it, will continue to do well for as long as you show an interest and are enthusiastic about its events. Remember that your Board members work hard and look for your smiles every time we meet at the Friendship Heights Community Center. I will certainly continue to see you there and hope to say Arrivederci in person at Tragara on June 8th!

All the very best to you and your families.

Luigi De Luca

Our speaker, **Professor Don H. Doyle** (B. A. University of California, Davis, 1967; Ph. D., Northwestern, 1973) is the McCausland Professor of History at the University of South Carolina and Director of ARENA, the Association for Research on Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Americas

Before coming to the South Carolina he taught at Vanderbilt University and the University of Michigan-Dearborn. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Rome, Italy; the University of Genoa, Italy; the University of Leeds, England; and at the Pontificia Universidade Católica, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2008/9 he will be the visiting Douglas Southall Freeman Professor of History at the University of Richmond.

Professor Doyle teaches a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses in U. S. history, including the introductory survey course, Faulkner and Southern History, and Nationalism in Comparative Perspective.

His book, *Nations Divided: America, Italy and the Southern Question* (Georgia, 2002), is a study of how two nations dealt with their "southern problem." His talk for the Italian Cultural Society is entitled "Garibaldi's Question" and will focus on the Lincoln administration's invitation to Giuseppe Garibaldi to join the Union Army as an officer in the summer of 1861. His paper on Garibaldi appeared in *Poche Parole* of October, 2007.

FILM OF THE MONTH

Ladri di Biciclette (Bicycle Thieves)

Antonio, an unemployed worker, gets a job posting flyers in the depressed post World War II economy of Italy. To keep the job, he must have a bicycle, so his wife Maria sells her wedding sheets to get the money to get his bicycle from the pawnbroker.

The bike is stolen, and Antonio and his son Bruno spend the remainder of the film searching for it. Antonio manages to locate the thief (who had already sold the bicycle) and summons the police, but with no proof and with the thief's neighbors willing to give him a false alibi, he abandons this cause.

At the end of the film Antonio, desperate to keep his job, attempts to steal a bicycle himself. He is caught and humiliated in front of Bruno, but the owner of the bicycle declines to press charges, realizing that the humiliation is punishment enough. Antonio and his family face a bleak future as the film ends, coupled with Antonio's realization that he is not morally superior to the thief.

ICS ANNUAL AWARDS APPLICATIONS

Applications are being sought for the following Awards:

1. **The Elena and Antonio De Luca Award** of \$1,000 to a scholar who has excelled in the study of Latin and/or Greek.
2. **The Fred La Marca Award** for studies in the Humanities in the amount of \$1,000 to be given to a person who has excelled in the Humanities.
3. **The Candida Di Croce Italian Language Award** of \$1,000 to be given to a scholar who has excelled in learning the Italian Language and shows promise of continued commitment to excel in the Language and Culture of Italy.
4. **The Vincenzo Palumbo Artisan Award** of \$1,000 to be given to an artisan who has distinguished him/herself in working with stone, wood, natural and synthetic fibers and other relevant media.
5. **The Ruggero Morigi Artist Award** of \$1,000 to be given to a scholar who has excelled in the Arts. Written reviews, recordings and/or photographs, etc. of work must be submitted to the Committee.
6. **The Young Scientist Award** of \$1,000 to be given to a scholar who has excelled in mathematics and/or physical or biological science.

Applicants should be no more than 25 years of age (except for Award No. 4, for which older applicants are accepted) by Friday, May 23, 2008, the post-marked date for receipt of applications. Materials to be included in the application are:

1. College transcripts when appropriate (not required for Award No. 4)
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. An essay describing why the applicant feels worthy of the award
4. A short biographical presentation of the candidate (curriculum vitae)
5. Anything that would demonstrate the ability of the candidate, including publications by and/or about the candidate, photographs, CD's, etc.

Applications must be postmarked no later than Friday, May 23, 2008 and mailed to:

**The Italian Cultural Society, Awards Section,
4848 Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814**

Selection will occur during the last week of May and awards will be presented at the gala dinner, which will take place in early June, as will be advertised in our newsletter Poche Parole. Attendance at the dinner is compulsory and awards will be reassigned if the winner is unable to attend except for exceptional circumstances as determined by the Awards Committee.

ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM

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**2008 ANNUAL GALA AWARDS DINNER
of the Italian Cultural Society**

SUNDAY EVENING, JUNE 8, 2008

6:00 pm.

at

TRAGARA

4935 Cordell Ave., Bethesda, MD 301-951-4935



Antipasti: Spanakopita, Chicken Brochette à l'Orange

Insalata Mista

choice of the following entrees and a glass of wine or soda:

- 1) Pollo alla Romana:** Breast of chicken with sweet peppers, wild mushroom, olives, touch of tomato sauce
- 2) Dentice Scarola:** Grilled red snapper on a bed of escarole, Yukon Gold potato, sun dried tomatoes, and chives
- 3) Medaglioni di Manzo alla Boscaiola:** Beef tenderloin with wild mushrooms shallots and Merlot

tea or coffee with Tiramisù for dessert

--- cash bar ---

\$60 per person, inclusive of valet parking and gratuity

**Cut here -----
Please return this portion with your check and selections. Make check out to the *Italian Cultural Society* and send it postmarked no later than May 24 to:**

*GALA
Italian Cultural Society
4848 Battery Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814*

No. of persons ___@ \$60 ___ plus additional donation to ICS Scholarship Fund ___ TOTAL \$ ___

	Chicken	Fish	Beef
Name -----	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Name -----	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name -----	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Telephone number in case we need to contact you: _____
- Sorry, I am not able to come and I enclose a check for \$ _____ as a contribution for the Scholarship Fund.

LUISA AFFRICANO BORGIOTTI, A PROFILE

Luisa Affricano Borgiotti is a past president of the Italian Cultural Society and frequent participant in our Sunday social meetings. Luisa was born and raised in Rome, where she attended public schools and graduated from the Liceo Classico. She obtained a Laurea degree from the University of Naples in Modern Languages and Literature and went on to pass the "Abilitazione" exam, allowing her to teach English in the Italian school system.

She married, moved to the US in 1965 and raised a family here. Her two sons were born here but Luisa saw to it that they would absorb as much as possible of their Italian heritage by teaching them the language and an awareness of their cultural roots. She has taught Italian language and culture in a number of different schools in the Washington area, including Georgetown University, Catholic University, where she obtained a Master's Degree in Romance Languages, Northern Virginia Community College, and the Language Program of the Italian Cultural Society. Luisa has been a member of the ICS since 1981. The article published in Poche Parole when she became ICS president in 1994 stated that she wished "to strengthen the ICS commitment to be a link to Italy for the Washington area and to be for its members a source of information, involvement, access, and insight into the best of Italy, as found in the media, film, books, and the arts", an excellent mission statement that still captures the spirit of our organization.

Luisa was still a child when, towards the end of World War II, first the German army entered Rome after the fall of Mussolini's government in 1943, and in 1944 the American army entered Rome as liberators. As Jews, Luisa's family was particularly vulnerable to possible deportation by the Germans. As dawn broke on October 16, 1943 the family received word that her uncle had been arrested by the SS and quickly began to find a place to hide. Luisa and her little sister were taken initially to the apartment of a non-Jewish family, which called them their nieces, while Luisa's mother and grandmother went to a different house. After two weeks the family reunited and spent the next eight months hiding in convents or with relatives until the liberation of Rome.

That traumatic and sad experience has never been forgotten and it is easy to understand how memories such as these can remain forever in one's consciousness and perhaps even shape one's life goals many years later. Luisa is a member of the SAE (Società per le Attività Ecumeniche) and has become active in the Jews for Jesus movement. She recently translated into Italian a book by Paul Liberman entitled The Fig Tree Blossoms, Messianic Judaism Emerges, which is available at www.ildialoqo.org. She has written several more articles on this subject in local newspapers and magazines in Italy and the US.

Arrigo Mongini

LUISA AFFRICANO BORGIOTTI, UN PROFILO

(traduzione)

Luisa Affricano Borgiotti è stata presidente della Italian Cultural Society e partecipa frequentemente alle nostre riunioni della domenica. Luisa è nata e cresciuta a Roma, dove ha studiato nelle scuole pubbliche e dove ha passato l'esame di maturità al liceo classico. Si è laureata in Lingue Moderne e Letteratura presso l'Università di Napoli, e poi come insegnante "Abilitata" ha insegnato la lingua inglese per diversi anni nelle scuole italiane.



Dopo il matrimonio si è trasferita negli Stati Uniti, ed i suoi due figli sono nati qui, ma Luisa non ha tralasciato di far loro assorbire quanto più possibile della cultura italiana, parlare la nostra lingua e apprezzare le loro radici culturali. Luisa ha insegnato la lingua e la cultura italiana in diverse scuole nella zona di Washington, fra cui

la Georgetown University, la Catholic University, dove ha ricevuto il Master in Lingue Romanze, il Northern Virginia Community College, e, non ultima, la Italian Cultural Society. Luisa è iscritta alla ICS dal 1981. Nell' articolo pubblicato in Poche Parole quando è diventata presidente della ICS nel 1994 dichiarava che voleva "rinforzare l'impegno della ICS a rappresentare il legame con l'Italia per la zona di Washington e di essere per i suoi soci una fonte di informazioni, di partecipazione, e di accesso, a quanto di meglio offre l' Italia, attraverso la stampa, il cinema, i libri e le arti ", una meta eccellente che ancora oggi riflette lo spirito della nostra organizzazione.

Luisa era ancora una bambina quando, verso la fine della seconda guerra mondiale, nel 1943, l'esercito tedesco ha occupato Roma dopo la caduta di Mussolini, e poi nel 1944 l'esercito americano, ha liberato la città. Essendo ebrea, la famiglia di Luisa era particolarmente vulnerabile alla possibile deportazione da parte dei tedeschi. All' alba del 16 ottobre 1943, la famiglia è stata informata che uno zio di Luisa era stato arrestato dalle SS e rapidamente la famiglia ha cominciato a cercare dove nascondersi. Luisa e sua sorella sono state ospitate inizialmente da una famiglia non ebrea, che fingeva che fossero le loro nipoti, mentre la mamma e la nonna sono andate altrove. Dopo due settimane la famiglia si è riunita e ha passato gli otto mesi seguenti nascosta in dei conventi o con parenti fino alla liberazione di Roma.

Quella traumatica e triste esperienza non è stata dimenticata ed è facile capire come tali ricordi possano sempre plasmare e forse anche formare le mete della vita molti anni dopo. Luisa è socia della SAE (Società per le Attività Ecumeniche) ed è attiva nel movimento Ebrei per Gesù. Recentemente ha tradotto in Italiano un libro di Paul Liberman intitolato Il Fico Fiorisce, il Giudaismo Messianico Emerge, disponibile da www.ildialoqo.org . Ha scritto diversi altri articoli su questo argomento in varie pubblicazioni locali in Italia e negli Stati Uniti.

ai

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*Pino Cicala's web page is rich with information
on Italian and Italian-American events in the
DC area*

ITALIANATE ARCHITECTURE IN THE U.S.

*by Terry Necciai
(part two of two articles)*

Americans recognize the Italianate style. It appears in all parts of the country and is an important element in the American psyche because of the iconic importance of Main Street business districts and inner city "brownstone" residences. However, the proper name of the style and the connection to Italy are usually lost on the average person. There is an odd habit in the United States of lumping many nineteenth century architectural styles together and calling them "Victorian." Although the Italianate style was popular in the middle of Queen Victoria's very long reign, it has little to do with the queen herself (this was after all, long after the events of 1776). In fact, in the 64 years of Queen Victoria's reign, the United States experienced a rapid evolution of architectural fashions, beginning with stylistic innovations intended to differentiate American buildings from those of the Great Britain. By the 1850s, however, the British were introducing revival styles in their buildings. Americans took some of their cues from Britain, but in the case of the Italianate style, the prototypes the British were pointing to were in Italy.



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L'ARCHITETTURA "ITALIANATE"

NEGLI STATI UNITI

Terry Necciai

(Secondo di due articoli, tradotto da Paolo Vidoli)

Gli Americani riconoscono lo stile "Italianate". È presente ovunque nel paese ed è un elemento importante nella psiche americana per la sua importanza stereotipata dei centri commerciali cittadini e delle residenze "brownstone" dei centri città. Comunque il nome dello stile ed il suo collegamento con l'Italia sono in genere ignorati dal cittadino medio. C'è una strana abitudine negli Stati Uniti di raggruppare stili diversi del diciannovesimo secolo e chiamarli "Vittoriano". Sebbene lo stile Italianate fosse molto comune verso la metà del lunghissimo regno della regina Vittoria, esso ha poco a che fare con la regina stessa (questo era dopo tutto molto dopo gli eventi del 1776). Negli Stati Uniti ci fu una rapida evoluzione nella moda architettonica durante i 64 anni di regno di Vittoria, ad iniziare con le innovazioni stilistiche intese a differenziare gli edifici americani da quelli della Gran Bretagna. Comunque, verso il 1850 gli inglesi introdussero nei loro edifici degli stili rivitalizzati. Gli Americani incorporarono alcuni spunti dall'Inghilterra ma, nel caso dello stile Italianate, erano in Italia i prototipi ai quali gli inglesi si riferivano.



In campo internazionale il più importante promotore

The most important proponent of Italian style architecture, internationally, was John Ruskin, an art critic who lived almost exactly in the same years as Queen Victoria. Ruskin spent long periods of time in Venice and glorified Venetian ruins in his books. Ruskin's influence, and specifically his way of interpreting of Venice, can be clearly seen in most American business districts.

The Italianate style was popularized through pattern books, similar to books of house plans one might find on a magazine rack today. The pattern books showcased designs by architects around the country — a design that had been developed for a site in one state was readily adapted to numerous other locations around the country. Some magazines, such as *Godey's Lady Book*, featured a different pattern in each issue. As railroads were built, it became possible to manufacture building parts (and to publish books) in one part of the country and ship them rapidly to distant locations, making ready-made buildings available even to completely new communities. Prior to the development of extensive rail lines, published patterns based on far away examples with exotic details had a limited impact because builders followed local, handed-down traditions.

Ironically, the Italianate style passed out of fashion just as new immigrants from Italy and Eastern Europe were arriving on American shores. Among the immigrants were carpenters, masons, and others with skills in the building trades. They knew little about these "interpretations" of Italy based on sketches by English and American tourists, but they knew the real thing. American flourishes, like an over-sized wooden ornament shaped like a keystone nailed onto the outside of a building, would have made little sense to a person coming from Italy. As fashions changed, the immigration from Italy made craft work, like stone cutting and building masonry walls, more viable in American construction, and the Italian craftsman had an impact on the new fashions as American taste evolved. But urban America also became a more stratified society in the same period, and cultural differences took decades to resolve before the full benefit of the skills Italian immigrants brought with them was realized. Arriving in a country that had been trying its best just a couple of years earlier to look like Italy, even if it was hard for them to recognize that, the real Italians helped to usher out the false impressions of their homeland's architecture and usher in a whole new generation of substantial buildings.

dello stile architettonico italiano era John Ruskin, un critico d'arte che visse quasi esattamente durante lo stesso periodo della regina Vittoria. Ruskin passò lunghi periodi a Venezia e glorificò nei suoi libri le rovine veneziane. L'influenza di Ruskin, e specialmente il suo modo di interpretare Venezia, può essere chiaramente visto in gran parte dei distretti commerciali americani.

Lo stile Italianate è divenuto noto grazie a libri sullo stile, simili alle pubblicazioni di piani di interni di case che si possono trovare in edicola. I libri con piani di case mostravano progetti di architetti di tutto il paese — un progetto che era stato sviluppato per una località in uno stato, veniva prontamente adattato per numerose altre località nel paese. Alcune riviste, quale *Godey's Lady Book*, dedicavano ciascun fascicolo ad uno stile diverso. Man mano che si estendeva la rete ferroviaria, diventava possibile costruire sezioni di edifici (e pubblicare libri) in una parte del paese e spedirle rapidamente in località distanti, facendo sì che edifici prefabbricati fossero disponibili persino in comunità completamente nuove. Prima dello sviluppo di un'estesa rete ferroviaria, stili basati su modelli distanti aventi dettagli esotici avevano avuto un impatto limitato perchè i costruttori seguivano tradizioni tramandate localmente.

Ironicamente lo stile Italianate passò di moda proprio quando arrivarono negli Stati Uniti nuovi immigranti dall'Italia e dall'Europa dell'est. Tra gli immigranti c'erano carpentieri, muratori ed altri esperti nel campo della costruzione edilizia. Questi sapevano ben poco di queste interpretazioni dell'Italia basate sugli schizzi dei turisti inglesi ed americani ma conoscevano bene la situazione reale. Per una persona che proveniva dall'Italia non avevano significato gli abbellimenti americani, quale un ornamento sovradimensionato della forma della chiave di volta inchiodata all'esterno di un edificio. Come cambiava la moda, così l'immigrazione dall'Italia rendeva più accessibile nella costruzione americana il lavoro artigianale, quale il taglia pietre e la costruzione di muri in pietra, e gli artigiani italiani ebbero un impatto sulla nuova moda man mano che si evolveva il gusto degli americani. Ma contemporaneamente l'America urbana diventava anche una società più stratificata e passarono decenni per appianare le differenze culturali prima che si potesse beneficiare pienamente delle specializzazioni che gli artigiani italiani portarono con sé. Arrivando in un paese che fece del suo meglio per assomigliare all'Italia appena qualche anno prima, anche se era difficile per loro riconoscerlo, i veri italiani aiutarono a porre fine alle false idee dell'architettura del loro paese natale ed iniziare una generazione completamente nuova di edifici importanti.

A CONTRADA DINNER

(Another article in a continuing series of correspondence from San Gimignano by ICS member Don McPherson)

The contradas of San Gimignano are not rivals like those of Siena, the capital of Tuscany. This is due mainly to the fact that until the post World War II period, San Gimignano had been in a devastating depression for more than a century and the people did not have the energy to establish a competition among the sectors of the town. Because Siena is larger and had more diverse and powerful interests, it had not suffered to the same extent. One fortunate result is that – in contrast to Siena - the contradas of San Gimignano are friendly towards one another and happily attend each others' events.

One of these events is the annual dinner of the "Castello" Contrada. It is held in an especially suggestive surrounding – a courtyard which was originally a cloister of a Dominican monastery. After residents of Castello have had the opportunity to purchase tickets for this event, the remaining tickets are sold publicly at the Tourist Office, and Silvia and I purchased two. One hundred forty persons were in attendance, and Claudia, capitana of Contrada Castello, knew each one.

At the entrance to this grand dinner, we were immediately offered a delicious aperitivo served from a large bowl. We proceeded to greet acquaintances and periodically returned to the bottomless bowl. Our new-found friend Costanza Redini mezzo-soprano of the AdLib Trio and resident of the Contrada Castello, accompanied by an instrumentalist played a short concert of medieval songs. Then while we were selecting our tables and greeting other guests, this duo set the mood by playing with tambourine, flute, drum and bells, always with one or two voices.



Diners in the Cloisters

We sat at one of the many long tables spread throughout the portico and were pleased to see Mayor Marco Lisi and his wife, Graziella Giapponesi, director of the library, being escorted to the seats next to ours. [Recently we had presented my book 'Ah! Tuscany' to each of them in their official capacities. Also, Silvia and I had joined a research project on visitors to the public library since it opened in 1874.] Signor Rossi, owner of San Gimignano's only bookstore (in which my book is sold) and Fulvia of the Tourist Office joined us to form a convivial and lively group, while Claudia served our table swiftly and efficiently.

UN PRANZO DI CONTRADA

(Traduzione di un' altra di una sere di lettere da San Gimignano di Don McPherson, socio dell' ICS)

Le contrade di San Gimignano non sono rivali come quelle di Siena, la capitale di Toscana. Questo è dovuto principalmente al fatto che fino al dopoguerra, San Gimignano si trovava in una depressione devastante per più di un secolo e la gente non aveva l'energia per stabilire una competizione entro i settori della città. Perché Siena è più grande e perché aveva interessi più diversi e di maggior potere, non aveva sofferto come San Gimignano. Un risultato felice è che – in confronto a Siena – le contrade di San Gimignano sono amichevoli l'una all' altra e sono contente di assistere alle feste delle altre contrade.

Una di queste feste è il pranzo annuale della Contrada Castello. Ha luogo in un ambiente particolarmente suggestivo – un cortile che era originalmente un chiostro di un monastero Domenicano. Dopo aver dato l'opportunità ai residenti di Castello, di comprare i biglietti per il pranzo quelli rimasti vengono venduti al pubblico nell' Ufficio Turistico. Silvia ed io ne comprammo due. Cento quaranta persone erano presenti, e Claudia, la capitana della Contrada Castello, conosceva tutti.

All' entrata di questo grande pranzo, venne offerto immediatamente un aperitivo delizioso servito in un grande vaso. Incontrammo amici, vari conoscenti e periodicamente si tornava al vaso costantemente riempito. La nostra nuova amica Costanza Redini, mezzosoprano del Trio AdLib e residente di Contrada Castello, accompagnata da una strumentista dette un piccolo concerto di canzoni medioevali. Mentre sceglievamo i nostri tavoli e salutavamo altri ospiti, il duo creava l'ambiente con tamburelli, flauti, tamburi e campane, sempre ad una o due voci.



Squadra di Tiro alla Fune di Contrada Castello

Sedemmo al lungo tavolo sotto il portico e fummo contenti di avere al nostro lato il Sindaco Marco Lisi con la moglie Graziella Giapponesi, direttrice della biblioteca. [Recentemente, avevamo presentato il mio libro "Ah!, Tuscany" ad ognuno di loro nelle loro capacità ufficiali. In più eravamo stati invitati a lavorare alla biblioteca sulla ricerca dei visitatori apparsi dal momento in cui si aprirono le porte nel 1874.] Signor Rossi, proprietario dell'unica libreria di San Gimignano (la quale vende il mio libro) e

The first course was a surprise of crostini covered with various seafoods such as caviar and salmon. This was followed by seafood pasta as the wine began to flow. Although it is a common restaurant dish in Tuscany, we had never ventured to try it until then. But as a sauce with hot pasta, we found it absolutely delicious and can now recommend it highly.

While the lively crowd awaited the steaks now darkening on the huge grill in the centre of the cloister, Signora Graziella invited Silvia to visit a few rooms in the Castello. Many are used to house artifacts of Contrada Castello, offices of many organizations of San Gimignano, and Etruscan artifacts of the town museum. However there are also prison cells to remind us of its most recent history as a men's prison, and earlier a women's prison. All the rooms have been fashioned from the remains of the Dominican Monastery, which in turn had been constructed from the ruins of the castle of the bishop, while its predecessor belonged to the French king Ugo, and before him Desiderio. Long before that the legendary Roman soldier Luca built a castle here.

The ladies returned as the steaks were being served. Soon the children returned to a tug-of-war in the courtyard. Extra helpings were then offered and the noise-level of conversation grew. In a while, the children joined the serving staff to clear the tables for the final surprise: Sergio's 'Greatest in the World' Ice Cream. It's true!, Sergio, a member of Contrada Castello, owns the ice cream shop in the Piazza della Cisterna and his ice cream received the top award in a 2005 international competition. Generously, he offered it as the climax of the evening. As the conversation continued to flow, so did the vinsanto, grappa, water, wine and coffee accompanied by a dolce. Soon the children were again running about cheerfully. Slowly the crowd began to thin. My lasting recollection was how everyone enjoyed sharing an evening of simplicity and happiness. ©2007 Don McPherson

LOCAL EVENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Abruzzo & Molise Heritage Society: at Casa Italiana Our own Romeo Segnan, Professor Emeritus at American University, will talk about the beauty and glory of Venice, and will address the question, "Is Venice Sinking?" May 18 at 1:00 PM

Italian Cultural Institute:

Film Fest DC: The Istituto is pleased to announce the participation of three Italian movies at this year's Washington, DC International Film Festival :

La ragazza del lago, by Andrea Molaioli (The Girl by the Lake, Italy, 2007, 95 minutes, Color, In Italian with English subtitles) Saturday, April 26 7:00 PM AMC Mazza Gallerie
Wednesday, April 30 6:30 PM Avalon Theatre

Fulvia dell'ufficio di Turismo si sedettero con noi. Tutti amici allegri, mentre Claudia – una signora molto efficiente e sollecita serviva al nostro tavolo.

La prima portata era una sorpresa di crostini coperti da vari frutti di mare come caviale e salmone. Questo era seguito da pasta ai frutti di mare mentre il vino cominciava a scorrere. Pur essendo un piatto comune in Toscana, non avevamo mai osato ad assaggiarlo fino a quel tempo, ma come salsa con la pasta calda l'abbiamo trovato assolutamente delizioso e ora possiamo raccomandarlo vivamente.

Mentre una folla animata aspettava che le bistecche abbrustolissero sull'enorme graticola nel centro del chiostro, la Signora Graziella invito' Silvia a visitare alcune camere del castello. Molte di queste camere possiedono oggetti storici della Contrada Castello e oggetti etruschi del museo municipale, e altri servono da uffici di varie organizzazioni di San Gimignano. Sono ancora in esistenza le celle di prigione per uomini e donne, ora non piu' usate. Camere e celle sembrano esser state costruite con i resti del monastero Domenicano che, a sua volta era stato costruito con le rovine del castello del vescovo, mentre il castello precedente apparteneva al re francese Ugo. Prima ancora, a Desiderio; e a grande distanza nel passato al mitico soldato romano Luca.

Al loro ritorno le bistecche vennero servite, e presto i bambini tornarono al tiro alla fune nel cortile. Seconde porzioni venivano offerte, e il tumulto di conversazione cresceva. Durante una breve pausa i bambini aiutarono i camerieri a preparare i tavoli per l'ultima sorpresa - "Il Miglior Gelato del Mondo" di Sergio. É vero! Sergio, anche lui della Contrada Castello, è proprietario di una gelateria in Piazza della Cisterna e il suo gelato vinse il primo premio in un concorso internazionale nel 2005; generosamente lo offri' come climax della serata. Mentre la conversazione continuava, scorreva il vin santo, la grappa, l'acqua, il vino e il caffè, accompagnato dal dolce. Presto i bambini correvano dappertutto con vivacità. E a poco a poco la folla diminuì. Avro' sempre un bel ricordo di questo evento condiviso con semplicità e allegria.

WELCOME TO NEW ICS MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that I introduce those Members who have joined us in the last month. As I welcome them I hope that they will take advantage of all that the Society has to offer and that they will contribute with their knowledge and expertise to the success of the Society's mission.

Judith Blumberg, Claudia Boucas,
John and Mary Kavaliunas
Leanne Danielson, Ralph and Deborah Yatso, Dorota Godoy
Varda Nowitz, Milo Medrano

Benvenuti !

Cesarina Horing, ICS MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Centochiodi, by Ermanno Olmi (One Hundred Nails, Italy, 2007, 93 minutes, Color, In Italian, Po Valley dialect, and English with English subtitles) Friday, May 2 8:30 PM Avalon Theatre Saturday, May 3 9:00 PM AMC Mazza Gallerie

L'orchestra di Piazza Vittorio, by Agostino Ferrente (The Orchestra of Piazza Vittorio, Italy, 2006, 90 minutes, Color, in Italian with English subtitles) In Person: Director Agostino Ferrente co-presented with the Italian Cultural Institute Thursday, May 1 6:30 PM and Friday, May 2 6:30 PM at Landmark's E Street Cinema

Metropolis: On the occasion of the European Cultural Week, the Italian Cultural Institute in Washington, DC presents "Metropolis", a photographic exhibition by Renato D'Agostin. The exhibition will be open May 1 through June 15, 2008 Mon-Fri 10 am - 12 pm and 2 - 4 pm at 3000 Whitehaven St. NW, Washington, DC. Cocktail Reception with the photographer May 5, 6:30 - 8:30 pm RSVP required: iicwashington@esteri.it or (202) 518-0998 ext. 1 – photo ID required

Marco di Marco : The Istituto invites you to a piano concert with jazz pianist Marco di Marco. The program includes music by Guy Wood and Robert Mellin, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Miles Davis, Harold Arlen, Joseph Kosma, Antonio Carlos Jobim and Di Marco's own compositions. Wednesday, May 7, 6:30 PM at 3000 Whitehaven St. NW, Washington, DC. RSVP required by 05/05/08: iicwashington@esteri.it or (202) 518-0998 photo ID required

Italy vs. US in the America's Polo Cup competition at Morven Park, Leesburg, VA on Saturday, May 10, benefiting Journey for the Cure. Festivities start at 2:00 PM, game starts at 4:00 PM. Advance purchase tickets \$25 and up . Details see <http://www.americaspolocup.com/theevent.php>



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Dear readers:

In the warm weather, Poche Parole goes fishing, so the next issue will not be until September. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to be your editor for these last nine issues, and I plan to return in September. Please let me know of any ideas you may have for improving our newsletter, and have a pleasant summer.

Arrigo Mongini, arriqo.mongini@verizon.net

FAMOSO

fine Italian dining upstairs
and

M Café

bistro atmosphere downstairs

Both Restaurants are located in Friendship Heights, 5471 Wisconsin Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD. Behind the Max Mara Boutique. Famoso received the 2007 Washingtonian Restaurant Award for outstanding food service, comfort, and value, and M Café received the 2007 Washingtonian Best Bargain Restaurant Award

Check out Famoso's Menus created by Executive Chef Romina Lugaresi and M Café's "Bellini Brunch" at <http://www.famosorestaurant.com> and reserve a table by calling:

**Famoso at 301-986-8785 or
M Café at 301-986-4818.**

ICS Poche Parole Publication

Arrigo Mongini, Editor

Nick Monaco, Assistant Editor

Romeo Segnan, Paolo Vidoli, Italian Editors

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FESTA ITALIANA DC 2008 IS COMING!

SUNDAY JUNE 29 11:30 AM – 5:30 PM

And our support is needed!

At one time, Washington, D.C., had its very own Little Italy! The area around Holy Rosary Church, at 3rd and F Streets N.W., was once home to a thriving Italian neighborhood, complete with frequent *feste* – street festivals. In 1999, Washington's active and growing Italian community came together to revive the traditions of their ancestors, and Festa Italiana, DC was born and has continued every year since!

Our Society along with the other sponsoring organizations, Holy Rosary Church Council and FIERI, has established a separate non-profit entity, the Festa Italiana Foundation, to organize and stage the Festa. Currently, the FIF is in its preliminary planning stage and our Society is represented by three members on the FIF Board, Andy Millunzi (President of FIF), Arrigo Mongini, and Joe Onofrietti. Nick Monaco, Romeo Segnan, Paolo Vidoli, and Aldo Grossi are serving as senior advisors and providing significant supporting efforts.

Festa planning is now at the point where volunteers are being sought from all the sponsoring organizations. ICS members interested in volunteering are requested to complete the following information and either bring this form to an ICS Social meeting to give to Andy Millunzi at the front raffle table or mail to him at 19021 Threshing Place Montgomery Village, MD 20886. You can also send it via email to: fifacm1@aol.com or phone: 301-926-4995.

You will find volunteering to stage this colorful and lively Festa to be very rewarding and is a means by which to show your pride in our shared heritage.

For those who are not able to volunteer, your support by being at the Festa on June 29 will help make a success! Ci vediamo!

Festa Italiana 2008 Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet

YES, I would like to help with the 2008 Festa Italiana street festival on Sunday, June 29!

Name: _____ E-mail: _____
Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Special talents/skills: _____

I am interested in helping the following committee(s) – see descriptions at bottom of page:

PR/Publicity Logistics Raffle Culture Entertainment Vendors/Sponsors
 Italian-American Organizations Souvenir Program Volunteer on Festa Day

The best day(s) and time(s) for me to help prior to the Festa are (check all that apply):

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

Time(s): _____

Committee Descriptions:

- o **PR/Publicity:** Develop and execute a vigorous publicity campaign using all available media in the DC metro area, via distribution of press releases, media advisories, community outreach, posters, flyers, etc.
- o **Culture:** Prepare and stage presentations of the featured region of Italy (Rome and Lazio). Coordinate all elements of presentations and keep PR committee informed of nature and scope of presentations.
- o **Vendor/Sponsors:** Secure paying vendors, including food purveyors, crafters, and artisans, as well as sponsors for financial donations. Requires soliciting, providing leads, negotiating, etc.
- o **Logistics:** Support logistic operation efforts on the day of the Festa etc.
- o **Entertainment:** Book all entertainers, arrange for emcees and develop schedule for entertainment events. Set up outdoor stage and prepare scripts. Set up indoor events, locations for children's activities, and other indoor entertainment. Keep PR committee informed of all entertainment arrangements. See to the comfort of performers on the day of Festa.
- o **Souvenir Program:** Design content and layout, including photos. Solicit advertisers and sponsors.
- o **Raffle:** Solicit or acquire raffle items. Manage raffle sales prior to and during Festa. Run raffle drawing on the day of Festa. Keep PR committee informed of prizes to be raffled off.
- o **Italian-American Organizations:** Promote the participation of other metro-area Italian-American organizations in the Festa and serve as liaisons to those organizations' representatives on the day of Festa.
- o **General Volunteer on Festa Day:** Be available for various shifts the day of Festa, i.e., selling raffle tickets, setting up or tearing down, facilitating various activities, etc.