May, 2010 Vol. XXVII, No. 9

poche parole

The Italian Cultural Society of Washington D.C.

Preserving and Promoting Italian Culture for All

www.italianculturalsociety.org

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 back cover)

Sunday, May 16: ***The National Philharmonic Singers, a group of 26 voices that performs regularly in the DC area will present a concert of music: "An Afternoon at the Opera". See page 3***

ITALIAN LESSONS ON May 16 at 2:00
There will be no movie of the month at the May 16 meeting

Saturday, June 12: ***Annual ICS Scholarship Gala at the Friendship Heights Village Center. See page 11.***

Sunday, June 20: ***FESTA ITALIANA See page 4 to volunteer. Uncle Ron Wants YOU !!!***

SIGN UP FOR ICS TOUR OF PUGLIA SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 17 – 26; SEE ENCLOSED FLYER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our April meeting featured SMATCH's Sylvana Ehrman and Luigi De Luca presenting "Between Art and Science: Chemistry on the Walls", a fascinating disquisition of posters from the 1920's through the 1940's advertising a kind of "better living through chemistry" array of products ranging from soaps (even radioactive ones!) to foodstuffs to mothballs. Images of women graced the earlier posters which exemplified the artistic trends of the time: Art Deco, Realism, Futurism, and then male-dominated "heroic" images from the Fascist period.

By now many of you will have participated in the ICS sponsored tour of the Brumidi murals in our nation's Capitol building that took place on Saturday, April 24. After the 2 h tour, the group enjoyed a lunch at Toscana Cafe near the Capitol.

Our May meeting brings us the National Philharmonic Singers in concert "An afternoon at the Opera" with works from Verdi, Bizet and Gershwin. This concert will feature soloists soprano Jennifer Jellings, baritone Bryan Jackson, and tenor Jason Saffell with the Singers performing chorus numbers. A $10 donation is suggested to defray costs. Please bring your music-loving friends. We will also have a brief business meeting to elect board members.

In June we have our annual gala dinner, featuring our scholarship winners, at the Friendship Heights Village Center. Make your reservations now! **And please remind your students and friends that the deadline for scholarship applications is May 22.**

Also in this issue please see the enclosed flyer about a trip to the southern Puglia region scheduled for the fall that is being organized through your Society.

►►►►

Finally, coming up in June is the annual Festa Italiana on June 20 in DC. Mastrogiurato, a group of performers in medieval costume from Lanciano in Abruzzo will be parading and on display. (picture on p. 10) This year the Molise region is featured through cooperation with our friends in the Abruzzo/Molise Heritage Society. As this is our last issue until the fall, let me say that I hope you have enjoyed the events the Society has planned for you. It has been an exciting and eventful year, and it has been my pleasure to serve as president of this wonderful organization.

Ron Cappelletti

Correction: The, location, date, and time of the Gala , have changed. It will take place Saturday, June 12, 4:30 to 7:00PM, at the Friendship Heights Village Center. See page 11.

CONTENTS

2. ICS Scholarship Awards Application
3. May 16 Program "An Afternoon at the Opera"
4. Festa Italiana Volunteers
4. Pictures from the Brumidi tour
5. A Woman Pope: Pope Joan?
7. An Abbey in Ruins, a Parable of War
10. New Members
10. Local Events of Interest
10. More pictures
11. ICS GALA Menu and Reservation Form

BE SURE TO READ THE FLYER INSERT FOR THE ICS TOUR OF PUGLIA

ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM

4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301
Bethesda, MD 20814
Day, Evening and Weekend Classes
for Adults and Children
Serving Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC
SPRING SESSION STARTED APRIL 12
website: www.italianculturalsociety.org

phone: 301-215-7885

CONSULAR SECTION
ITALIAN EMBASSY

3000 Whitehaven Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
Information: 202-612-4400
Serves residents of Washington, DC, Montgomery & Prince George's Counties, MD; Arlington & Fairfax Counties, VA

bethesda travel center
You're about to take the best vacation of your life.

Bethesda Travel, LLC
We Know Italy

Engage your family. What better time to take the whole crowd to the land of your ancestors! We can make it happen. Call us for suggestions. Customized ancestral research throughout Italy.

www.bethesdatravel.com
301-656-1670

ICS ANNUAL AWARDS APPLICATIONS

Applications are being sought for the following Awards:

1. The Elena and Antonio De Luca $1,000 Award to a scholar who has excelled in 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 Moriggi 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.

7. The Pietro Antonio Donna Italian Scholarship of $600 for a high school student who has excelled in the study of Italian.

Applicants should be no more than 25 years of age (except for Award No. 4, for which older applicants are accepted) by **Saturday, May 22nd, 2010**, 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 May 22, 2008 and mailed to:

The Italian Cultural Society, Awards Section,
4827 Rugby Ave. Suite # 301,
Bethesda, MD 20814

Awards will be presented at the gala dinner, which will take place on Saturday, June 12 at 6:00 PM at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Ave. Chevy Chase, MD, 20815. (see p.11) 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.

The Italian Cultural Society Presents
Sunday 3pm, May 16, 2010
National Philharmonic Singers
"An Afternoon at the Opera"

The National Philharmonic Singers, a chamber choir and one of several performing ensembles of the National Philharmonic under the direction of conductor **Stan Engebretson**, will present a concert of operatic arias and choruses by Verdi, Bizet and Gershwin on Sunday, May 16, 2010, 3 pm at the Friendship Heights Community Center, Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Soloists

Soprano Jennifer Jellings is a frequent soloist in opera, recital and oratorio. Ms. Jellings recently made her debut at Carnegie Hall as a first place winner in the Barry Alexander International Vocal Competition. Ms. Jellings has appeared at the White House and with the Washington National Opera, the Summer Opera Theatre Company, the Alexandria Symphony, the New Dominion Chorale, the In-Series and Choralis.

Baritone Bryan Jackson Scarpia, Aleko, Figaro, are just a few of the roles in which baritone, Bryan Jackson, is making his mark. He has appeared most recently as Il Duca D'Albuquerque in Donizetti's Maria Padilla with the Washington Concert Opera and Jupiter in Offenbach's Orpheus in the Underworld.

Tenor Jason Saffell is a member of both the National Philharmonic Chorale and the NP Singers. He has performed as a soloist with area choruses and ensembles and is a student of Molly Donnelly, Professor of Music at Montgomery College.

Program

La Traviata: Libiamo, ne'lieti caldici (J. Jellings, J. Saffell)
G. Verdi Noi siamo zingarelle
Di Madride noi siam mattadori
Sempre Libera (J. Jellings)

Carmen: Toreador song (B. Jackson)
G Bizet

Porgy and Bess: (J. Jellings & B. Jackson)
G. Gershwin Summertime
It Ain't Necessarily So
Oh, I Can't Sit Down!
Bess, You is My Woman Now
Oh Lord, I'm On My Way

A donation of $10 per person is requested to offset expenses

FESTA ITALIANA, SUNDAY, JUNE 20
11:30 AM – 5:30 PM

This year the Festa celebrates the region of Molise and, besides the singers and dancers on stage, the cultural displays, the food, and the children's activities, we feature the Mastro Giurato from the town of Lanciano in nearby Abruzzo, a marching band of 23 musicians, drummers, and flag wavers in medieval costume, See page 10 and www.mastrogiurato.it

Our Society is one of the three organizations running the Festa. We are represented by four members of ICS: Ron Cappelletti, Joe Onofrietti, Cecilia Fiermonte, and Arrigo Mongini. Romeo Segnan, Aldo Grossi, Nick Monaco and Paolo Vidoli are also making important contributions.

WE NEED MORE ICS VOLUNTEERS !!!

ICS members interested in volunteering are requested to complete the following information and either bring this form to an ICS Social meeting, or mail it to Arrigo Mongini, 5541 Mohican Rd., Bethesda, MD 20816 or just call him at 301-229-1653 or send an email to arrigo.mongini@verizon.net .

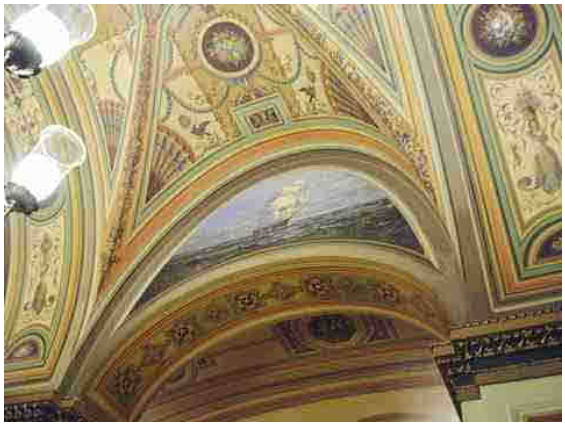
FESTA ITALIANA 2010 VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET

Name _____ E-mail_____
Phone_____ Cell_____
_____ This year we celebrate the Molise region. I would like to help with the regional cultural displays
_____ I would like to help with publicity and getting organizations to participate
_____ I know some vendors who might be willing to donate raffle or silent auction prizes and I will contact them.
_____ I would like to help with the layout of the various components in and outside Casa Italiana
_____ I would like to help put together the souvenir program, deal with advertisers, printer, etc.
_____ I would like to help with any number of jobs on the day of the Festa

You will find volunteering to stage this colorful and lively Festa to be very rewarding and a means by which to show your pride in our shared heritage and/or your love of Italian Culture

1

3



2

Brumidi tour pictures 1 & 2 by Charles De Marco

4

Tour & Toscana Café pictures sent by Don McPherson

A WOMAN POPE: POPE JOAN ?

by Luciano Mangiafico

Was there a woman who became pope in the Roman Catholic Church? While the Church denies it, there are numerous sources in Medieval and Renaissance history pointing to the remote possibility that in the 9th century a woman, who had disguised herself as a man, was elected to the papacy and held the office for about two years.

According to Polish priest Martin of Troppau (? -1278), who was a papal chaplain for Clement IV (1265-68) and the author of the Chronicle of Popes and Emperors, Joan, a woman born of English parents in Mainz, Germany, became a brilliant scholar. After her studies, accompanied by her lover, she travelled from Germany to Greece dressed as a man and studied in Athens, learning Greek. She then moved on to Rome where, passing as a man, she lectured to great acclaim and, because of her apparent piety, upon the death of Leo IV (847-855), was elected pope.

Her name at the time was given as "John VIII Anglicus" (John VIII, the English, pope from 855-857). She was in office a little over two years, until the fact that she was a woman was discovered when she gave birth to a male child in the portico of the Church of Saint Clemente, near the Coliseum. This happened while she was riding a horse in a procession moving from the old Saint Peter's Church to Saint John in Lateran, the official seat of the Bishop of Rome. According to one tale, the enraged Romans, who felt defrauded, killed her and the child near-by.

Joan in Childbirth

Martin of Troppau, who was writing his chronicle almost four hundred years after the alleged events he described, may not have been a discriminating historian and, in this instance, may have been reporting a legendary story. A few years before he wrote his chronicle other priests, such as the Dominicans Jean de Mailly of Metz (France), and the Bishop of Genoa, Giacomo da Varazze (1230-98) had written about a mythical female pope, but their details did not concord with the more colorful story of Martin of Troppau, and they also placed the woman pope in the 11th century, not the 9th century.

Martin of Troppau may have also picked up the story from the original of the Liber Pontificalis, (The Book of the Popes), a papal chronicle allegedly written by

UNA DONNA PAPA: PAPA GIOVANNA ?

dI Luciano Mangiafico

E' esistita una donna che divento' Papa nella Chiesa Cattolica? La Chiesa lo nega, ma ci sono numerose fonti nella storia medioevale e rinascimantale che accennano alla remota possibilita' che nel nono secolo una donna travestita da uomo fosse stata eletta Papa e rimanesse in carica per circa due anni.

Secondo il prete polacco, Martin di Troppau (? –1278) che era il cappellano di Clemente IV (1265–1268) e l' autore della Cronaca di Papi e Imperatori, Giovanna, nata a Mainz, in Germania, da genitori inglesi divento' una studiosa brillante. Dopo gli studi viaggio' vestita da uomo, dalla Germania alla Grecia, accompagnata dall' amante e studio' ad Atene, imparando il greco. Poi si trasferi' a Roma dove, sempre come uomo, tenne delle conferenze che ebbero un grande successo e, grazie alla sua apparente religiosita', fu eletta Papa dopo la morte di Leone IV (847–855).

Il suo nome in quel tempo era "Giovanni VIII Anglicus" (Giovanni VIII l'inglese Papa dall'855 all'857). Rimase in carica per poco piu' di due anni, finche' si scopri' che era donna quando diede alla luce un bambino nel portico della Chiesa di San Clemente, vicino al Colosseo. Questo successe mentre in corteo si stava recando a cavallo dalla vecchia Chiesa di San Pietro a San Giovanni in Laterano, la sede ufficiale del Vescovo di Roma. Secondo un racconto, i romani infuriati e sentendosi imbrogliati, uccisero lei e suo figlio.

Martin di Trottau, che scrisse questa cronaca quasi 400 anni dopo i presunti avvenimenti, non era forse uno storico con molto discernimento e, in questo caso, forse descrisse una leggenda. Quache anno prima di scrivere la sua Cronaca, altri sacerdoti, come i Domenicani Jean de Mailly da Metz (Francia) e il Vescovo di Genova, Giacomo da Varazze (1230–1298) avevano scritto di un mitico Papa donna, ma i loro dettagli non concordavano con la storia piu' affascinante di Martin di Troppau, e inoltre ponevano il Papa donna nell' undicesimo e non nel nono secolo.

Martin di Troppau potrebbe aver ricavato questa storia dall' originale del Liber Pontificalis (Libro dei Papi), una cronaca papale attribuita ad Anastasius Bibliotecarius (810 – 878), un funzionario di rango incaricato degli archivi della Chiesa. Il suddetto libro ancora oggi disponibile nella Biblioteca del Vaticano, contiene una nota a pie' pagina che fa riferimento ad un Papa donna. La nota pero' sembra scritta da una mano diversa e puo' essere stata aggiunta molto dopo l'epoca di Anastasius.

La storia di Papa Giovanna e simili storie meno conosciute di altri Papi donne non sembrano vere malgrado persistenti credenze popolari. E' anche probabile che certi Protestanti, intenti ad imbarrazzare la Chiesa Cattolica, abbiano mantenuto in vita queste credenze.

I proponenti della tesi che ci fosse stato un Papa donna hanno fornito quelli che essi credono essere elementi solidi per sostenere la storia di Papa Giovanna. La

Anastasius Bibliothecarius (810-878), a ranking church official who was in charge of the church archives. The above book, still available in the Vatican Library, contains a footnote making reference to a female pope. The footnote, however, appears to have been written by a different hand and may have been added much later than the time of Anastasius life.

The story of Pope Joan, and similar less well-known stories of other female popes, appear not be true, despite long-standing popular beliefs. It is also likely that Protestant writers intent on embarrassing the Catholic Church kept the beliefs alive.

Proponents of the thesis that there was a female pope have provided what they believe to be factual elements to buttress the "Pope Joan" story. The Cathedral of Siena, Tuscany, (construction began in 1260), contains on its interior upper gallery the marble busts of some 170 popes, starting with Saint Peter, in a fairly accurate chronological succession. Apparently, in the 15th century, the bust of "Pope Joan" stood there with the others, and this is mentioned in a letter by humanist Enea Silvio Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II (1458-64). This bust, however, was removed, replaced with another, or retouched giving it male features and the name of "Pope Zachary" during the time of Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605). The Piccolomini Library, which is accessed from the left nave of the same cathedral, has a fresco by Pinturicchio, which shows a portrait of a pope whose facial features and hands appear to be those of a woman (Joan's?).

In Rome itself, there was in the past a Vicus Papissa ("Street of the Female Pope?"), identified by historians with the area near the corner of Via dei Querceti and Via SS. Quattro Coronati. Near the corner, there is a small shrine to the Virgin Mary near the spot where Joan allegedly gave birth and was killed. Until the 1560s this shrine is said to have also contained a statue of Joan and her child; but it was removed by the then Pope's orders. The true fact, however, appears to be that the area was near the 10th century residence of a wealthy Roman, Giovanni Papa (John Pope) and that the street had been named after his wife- thus <u>not</u> the Street of the She-Pope but the Street of Mrs. Papa.

Old legends, however, apparently never die and Pope Joan has still legions of believers in her saga. The Church discounts all the "evidence" and points out that: 1. There are no reliable contemporary sources for the alleged events concerning a Pope Joan; 2. Pope Leo V died in 865 and was succeeded by Pope Benedict III the same year; and, 3. A Pope John VIII held the papacy from 872 to 882.

<u>Notes</u>

Other pertinent documents or books are: Irish monk Marianus Scotus (1028-83) *Chronicle of the Popes*, Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75) *De Mulieribus Claris* (Famous Women), and Bartolomeo Platina (1421-81), the Vatican librarian, *Lives of the Popes.*

More recent books on "Pope Joan" are Lawrence Durell, *The Curious History of Pope Joan*, Derek Verschoyle (London 1954), Peter Stanford, *The Legend*

Cattedrale di Siena, in Toscana, la cui costruzione inizio' nel 1260, contiene nella galleria interna superiore i busti di marmo di ben 170 Papi, cominciando con San Pietro, in una successione cronologica abbastanza accurata. Apparentemente, nel quattrocento, il busto di Papa Giovanna stava li con gli altri, e questo fatto viene menzionato in una lettera dell' umanista Enea Silvio Piccolomini, piu' tardi divenuto papa col nome di Pio II (1458–1464). Questo busto pero' nel periodo di Papa Clemente VIII (1592-1605) venne eliminato, sostituito con un altro, o ritoccato dandogli un aspetto maschile e il nome di "Papa Zaccaria". La Biblioteca Piccolomini, alla quale si accede dalla navata sinistra della stessa Cattedrale, contiene un affresco del Pinturicchio che mostra il ritratto di un Papa con i dettagli del viso e delle mani che sembrano quelli di una donna (Giovanna?)

Pure a Roma c' era nel passato un Vicus Papissa ("Strada del Papa donna?") che degli storici indicano si trovasse vicino all' angolo di Via dei Querceti e Via SS. Quattro Coronati. Nei pressi dell'angolo c' e' un piccolo sacrario dedicato a Santa Maria Vergine accanto al posto dove si crede che Giovanna avesse partorito e fosse stata uccisa. Si dice che questo sacrario fino agli anni 1560 contenesse anche una statua di Giovanna e di suo figlio, ma che fosse stata tolta dietro ordine del Papa di allora. Tuttavia in realta' sembra che nel decimo secolo questa zona fosse vicino alla residenza di un ricco romano, Giovanni Papa, e che la strada portasse il nome di sua moglie, quindi <u>non</u> Strada del Papa donna, ma Strada della Signora Papa.

Le vecchie leggende pero' sembrano non morire mai e Papa Giovanna ha ancora legioni che credono alla sua saga. La Chiesa non da' peso a tutte le "prove" e indica che: 1) Non esistono fonti contemporanee valide circa i presunti eventi riguardanti un Papa Giovanna; 2) Papa Leone V mori' nell'885 e Papa Benedetto III gli successe nello stesso anno, e 3) Un Papa Giovanni VIII era Papa dall'872 – all'882.

<u>Appunti</u>

Altri documenti o libri pertinenti sono: del monaco irlandese Marianus Scotus (1028–1083) *Cronaca dei Papi*, di Giovanni Bocaccio (1313–1375) *De Mulieribus Claris*, e di Bartolomeo Platina (1421–1481), il bibliotecario del Vaticano, *Vite dei Papi*.

Libri piu' recenti su "Papa Giovanna" sono: Lawrence Durell, *La Storia Curiosa di Papa Giovanna* (Derek Verschoyle, Londra, 1954); Peter Stanford, *La Leggenda di Papa Giovanna: in Cerca della Verita'*, (Henry Holt & Co. 1999); Alain Boureau, *Il Mito di Papa Giovanna* (University of Chicago Press, 2000); e Donna Wooffolk Cross, *Papa Giovanna* (Ballantine Books, 2005), quest' ultimo, un racconto di fantasia.

Ci sono pure due film su Papa Giovanna: uno del 1972 con Liv Ullman, e uno dell' ottobre del 2009 (Die Papstin, (La Papessa) basato sul racconto immaginario della Cross.

Author Luciano Mangiafico is a US diplomat who served as consul in Milan and later Consul General in Palermo.

Of Pope Joan: In Search Of Truth (Henry Holt & Co, 1999), Alain Boureau, *The Myth of Pope Joan* (University of Chicago Press, 2000), and Donna Woodfolk Cross, *Pope Joan* (Ballantine Books, 2005), this last a fictionalised account.

There are even two movies about "Pope Joan": a 1972 one starring Liv Ullman, and an October 2009 one (Die Papstin) based on Cross' fictionalised account.

SAGGIO DALL' ICS LANGUAGE PROGRAM

UN' ABBAZZIA ROVINATA,

UNA PARABOLA DELLA GUERRA

di Adele Baker

Nella seconda guerra mondiale, nel febbraio del 1944, 66 anni fa, l'Abbazia di Montecassino è stata distrutta dalle forze alleate. Gli alleati sono sbarcati nel gennaio del 1944 ad Anzio e si aprirono una via di combattimento sulla penisola italiana. L'Abbazia era un ostacolo sulla strada per Roma.

L'Abbazia, uno dei siti più sacri della Cristianità, è stata fondata da San Benedetto nel VI secolo. È un sacrario della civiltà occidentale, un centro dell'arte e cultura che data quasi dall'Impero Romano. La prima battaglia è avvenuta a San Pietro, un villaggio montano vicino e in basso all' Abbazia. Oggi questo villaggio rimane come era dopo la battaglia. Un antiaereo arrugginito è nella piazza. La chiesa rimane piena di buchi di pallottole. Niente è stato restaurato. È un villaggio spettrale come Pompei. I tedeschi hanno spinto la popolazione di San Pietro fuori dal paese e ad abitare in cave. La maggior parte di loro è morta di freddo e di fame.

Nel gennaio del 1944, il Generale Mark Clark ordina l'assalto di San Pietro. Da questo paese i tedeschi avevano una linea diretta di fuoco sui soldati alleati. Ci sono state 2.000 perdite in quarantotto ore.

I tedeschi ripetutamente avevano detto che non avevano nessun soldato o nessun' arma nell' Abbazia di Montecassino. Il 4 maggio, Julius Schlegel, un tenente colonnello, aveva evacuato manoscritti e tesori d'arte dall'Abbazia. Il comandante tedesco, Fridolin von Senger und Etterlin, che era un ex "Rhodes Scholar" a Oxford e un italofilo, aveva ordinato ai suoi soldati di stare lontano dagli edifici. In fatti, i tedeschi si erano ritirati in cave sotto all'Abbazia. Non era necessario occupare l'Abbazia dove sarebbero stati esposti di più.

Ma gli alleati erano convinti che la sorgente degli spari di cannone venisse dall' Abbazia. Il comandante francese, il Generale Alphonse Pierre Juin, aveva pregato gli Americani di risparmiare l'Abbazia, dicendo che sarebbe stata una follia. Ma quelli in carica non volevano sentire questo e hanno dichiarato che il monastero doveva essere distrutto e anche tutti dentro perché non c'era nessuno , soltanto i tedeschi.

Come sempre, l'informazione cattiva fa prendere le decisioni cattive. Ma il Generale Clark ha ordinato l'assalto. Non aveva scelta. Il Primo Ministro Winston Churchill e il generale inglese Harold Alexander urgevano l'azione. Il Generale Dwight Eisenhower era

ESSAY FROM THE ICS LANGUAGE PROGRAM

AN ABBEY IN RUINS, A PARABLE OF WAR

by Adele Baker (translation)

In World War II, in February of 1944, 66 years ago, the Abbey of Montecassino was destroyed by the allied forces. The allies had disembarked in January of 1944 at Anzio and had opened up a combat route on the Italian peninsula. The Abbey was an obstacle in the way toward Rome.

Montecassino after the bombing

The Abbey, one of the most sacred sites of Christianity was founded by St. Benedict in the sixth century. It is a shrine of western civilization, a center of art and culture that dates back almost to the Roman empire.. The first battle occurred at San Pietro, a mountain village just below the Abbey. Today this village remains as it was after the battle. An rusted anti aircraft gun is in the piazza. The church is still full of shell holes. Nothing has been restored. It is a ghostly village like Pompeii. The Germans pushed the population of San Pietro out of the town to live in caves. Most of the people died of cold and hunger.

In January of 1944, General Mark Clark orders the assault on San Pietro. From this town the Germans had a direct line of fire on the allied soldiers. There were 2,000 casualties within 48 hours.

The Germans had said repeatedly that they had no solders and no arms in the Abbey of Montecassino. On May 4, Julius Schlegel, a lieutenant colonel had evacuated manuscripts and art treasures from the Abbey. The German commander, Fridolin von Senger und Etterlin, an ex Rhodes Scholar at Oxford and an italophile had ordered his soldiers to stay far from the buildings. In fact the Germans had retreated to caves below the Abbey. It was not necessary to occupy the Abbey , where they would have been more exposed.

But the allies were convinced that the source of the cannon blasts was coming from the Abbey. The French commander, General Alphonse Pierre Juin, had entreated the Americans to spare the Abbey, saying that it would be madness. But those in charge did not want to hear this and declared that the monastery had to be destroyed, even along with everyone inside, because nobody was there except the Germans.

As always, bad information leads to bad decisions. But General Clark ordered the assault. He didn't have a

d'accordo. Il Generale Clark avrebbe speso il resto della sua vita spiegando la sua decisione. Il Generale Clark non era certo che i tedeschi fossero nell'Abbazia, e se la avessero distrutta avrebbero dato ai tedeschi un altro luogo per nascondersi. Ma i generali superiori prevalsero.

Il 15 febbraio gli aeroplani alleati arrivarono. Duecentocinquanta di loro deposero 1.300 bombe incendiarie. Molti rifugiati dai paesi sotto al monastero che si erano riparati nell'abbazia sono stati uccisi. C'erano circa 400 cittadini nel monastero a quel tempo ma chiaramente nessun tedesco.

Montecassino oggi

L'Abbazia è stata polverizzata. I tedeschi si sono nascosti nelle rovine. Questo gli ha permesso di guadagnare un po' di tempo. Da febbraio alla primavera migliaia di americani, inglesi, francesi, polacchi e italiani sono morti come risultato di questo piano disastroso. Il piano degli alleati era di circondare i Tedeschi. Gli alleati avevano un milione di soldati in Italia. In totale, la campagna italiana di 608 giorni è costata agli alleati 312.000 perdite.

Nel suo libro "Day of Battle" lo storico Rick Atkinson descrive la guerra in Italia. Dice che la presenza degli alleati in Italia era stata una "improvvisazione." Nel maggio del 1943, un milione di truppe alleate erano in Tunisia. Quella guerra era finita. Che cosa fare di tutte queste truppe? La Normandia era ancora lontana 13 mesi. Il luogo dove combattere i Tedeschi era in Italia. Se non in Italia, dove?

Una volta l'Abbazia era il sito di un tempio di Apollo. Il monastero è stato visitato da Carlomagno, saccheggiato dai Saraceni e, nel 1349, è stato distrutto da un terremoto. Dopo la guerra, l'Abbazia è stata ricostruita e c'è voluto un periodo corto di 10 anni, ed è stata finanziata esclusivamente dallo stato italiano. Porte antiche da Constantinopoli, tra altre antichità, sono state installate. Mosaici sono stati creati usando pietre dalle rovine.

Il Monastero di Montecassino è stato fondato da San Benedetto con sua sorella Santa Scolastica nel 529 d.C. San Benedetto è il santo patrono degli ingegneri, degli speleogi e di chi si occupa di bonifiche. Lui è stato proclamato il patrono principale di Europa dal Papa Paolo VI. Oggi, senza dubbio, sarebbe il santo patrono dell'ecologia..

C'è un santo patrono per tutti e per tutto!

choice. Prime Minister Winston Churchill and the English General Harold Alexander were urging action. General Dwight Eisenhower was in agreement. General Clark was to spend the rest of his life explaining his decision. General Clark was not sure that the Germans were in the Abbey, and if they had destroyed it they would have given the Germans another place to hide. But the superior generals prevailed.

On February 15 the allied planes arrived. Two hundred fifty of them dropped 1,300 incendiary bombs. Many refugees from the towns below the monastery that had taken refuge in the Abbey were killed. There were 400 civilians in the monastery at that time, but clearly no Germans,

Cortile in Montecassino

The Abbey was pulverized. The Germans hid in the ruins. This permitted them to gain a little time. From February till springtime, thousands of Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Poles and Italians died as a result of this disastrous plan. The allied plan was to surround the Germans. The allies had a million soldiers in Italy. In total, the Italian campaign of 608 days cost the allies 312,000 casualties.

In his book "Day of Battle" the historian Rick Atkinson describes the war in Italy. He says that the allied presence in Italy had been an "improvisation". In May of 1943 a million allied troops were in Tunisia. That war was over. What to do with all these troops? Normandy was still 13 months away. The place to fight the Germans was Italy. If not in Italy, where?

At one time the Abbey was the site of a temple of Apollo. The monastery was visited by Charlemagne, sacked by the Saracens, and in 1343 it was destroyed by an earthquake. After the war the Abbey was reconstructed. It needed a period of ten years and was financed entirely by the Italian government. Antique doors from Constantinople, among other antiquities were installed. Mosaics were created using stones from the ruins.

The Monastery of Montecassino was founded by St. benedict with his sister Saint Scolastica in 527 AD. St. benedict is the patron of engineers, speleologists, and of reclamation workers. He was proclaimed the principal patron saint of Europe by Pope Paul VI. Today, without a doubt, he would be the patron saint of ecology. There is a patron saint for everyone and everything.

ITALIAN GOURMET MARKET

12169 Darnestown Road (Rt.28)
Gaithersburg, MD
Darnestown Rd & Quince Orchard Rd
Tel: 301-926-9236

Gourmet deli and catering

Featuring an extensive line of Italian food favorites, wines and beers!
Italian deli products, panini, subs and sandwiches, fresh mozzarella, & home made delicious Italian meals to go!

Seasonal Specialties Available

Panettone * Pandoro*Panforte *Torrone * Perugina Chocolates*

****

Bring this Poche Parole ad for a 10% discount from Mark! (except for beer wine, and other beverages)

ICS Poche Parole Publication
Arrigo Mongini, Editor
Nick Monaco, Assistant Editor
Romeo Segnan, Paolo Vidoli, Italian Editors

Poche Parole is published each month from January through May and September through December.

The deadline for the submission of all articles and ads for a newsletter issue is the 25th of the month preceding publication of the issue. Please send submissions via the Internet to e-mail address: **icspoparole@verizon.net** or on a computer diskette/CD to:

Editor, Poche Parole
4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301
Bethesda, MD 20814

Publication notice: The ICS Board reserves sole discretion for accepting any material, including advertisements, for inclusion in Poche Parole, pursuant to its established Publication Policy. A copy of this policy is available upon request by contacting the Editor. Advertisers appearing in Poche Parole have paid a fee or provided services in kind to ICS for publishing their respective advertisements. Publication of any advertisement in Poche Parole does not reflect ICS endorsement or guarantee of the advertisers' services, products or statements. Material contained in articles published is the sole responsibility of the author and does not indicate ICS endorsement

ICS Board of Directors and their Responsibilities
Ron Cappelletti, *President & Webmaster*
Olga Mancuso, *Vice President*
Cesarina Horing, *Membership, Treasurer & Italian Language Program*
Paolo Vidoli, *Secretary*
Arrigo Mongini, *Editor of Poche Parole*
Joe Onofrietti, *Film & Hospitality*
Nick Monaco, *Outside Events*
Aldo Grossi, *Music & Hospitality*
Luigi De Luca, *At large (Past President)*
Romeo Segnan, *At large,*
Maria Wilmeth, *Historian*
Elio Grandi, *Emeritus*
Aldo Bove, *Liaison in Italy*

Antenna Italia

is now on the AMICO website. Get news from Italy and information on Italian and Italian-American events as well as music & commentary in streaming audio. Log on any time at Pino Cicala's web site
www.italianamericancommunications.org

The Italy Experts
Great Travels

FOOD AND WINE LOVERS TOUR OF PIEMONTE

Plus, experience the splendor of Italy's art cities Genoa and Turin

Small, select group, Sept. 11-23

www.great-travels.com
Specializing in Italy for 16 years

SPRING Est. 1967
Bilingual Montessori Academy
3514 Plyers Mill Rd. Kensington, MD 20895
"We plant seeds that spring to life!"

Bilingual Montessori Environments
for 3-6 yrs
with Immersion Classes

FRENCH * ITALIAN * SPANISH

Half-Day • Full Day • Before and After-School Care
www.spring-bilingual.org
(301) 962-7262

WELCOME TO NEW ICS MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that I introduce those Members who have joined us recently. 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:

Cecilia Fiermonte
Donna R. Scriven
Joan Danziger
Michael and Diane Bertocchi
Denise Doban

Benvenuti !

Cesarina Horing, ***Membership Chair***

LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Italian Cultural Institute:
"Shortcuts to Europe" The Italian Embassy and all EU Embassies have open house Saturday, May 8, 10 AM to 4 PM. Visit the embassies for a day of family fun, food and culture. Free shuttle buses with two routes will drop visitors off at various Embassies. Visit www.europe-in-dc.com.

The following three events take place at the Embassy of Italy, 3000 Whitehaven St. NW, Washington DC and with RSVP to be announced

"In the Middle of Our Life's Journey" the first of three lectures on the Divine Comedy by Prof. Frank Ambrosio, of Georgetown U. Thursday, May 13 at 6:30 PM

"Four Lute Piece of the Italian Renaissance" Carlo Pezzimenti in a guitar concert, Friday May 14 at 6:30 PM.

"Battista Sforza: Piero della Francesca and the Court of Urbino" lecture by Deborah Ross Warin, about this fascinating intellectual wife of Federico da Montefeltro. Tuesday, May 18 at 6:30 PM

Three Italian Street Festivals This Summer:
Our own FESTA ITALIANA (see page 4) Sunday, June 20, 11:30 AM to 5:30 PM at 3rd & F Sts. NW in DC

Feast of Saint Anthony Sat. & Sun, June 12 & 13, 12-8PM, Exeter & Stiles Sts., Baltimore

Feast of Saint Gabriel, Sat & Sun. August 21& 22, 12-8 PM, Exeter & Stiles Sts.. Baltimore

Holy Rosary Church and Lido Club: 37nth annual Italian American Open Golf Tournament.. Norbeck Country Club, May 24, 12 to 7 PM
www.holyrosarychurchdc.org/Events/IAGO.html

Washington DC Italian Language & Culture Meetup Group: Social Gatherings every Monday & Friday at Vapiano Restaurant. See www.meetup.com/Dcitalian

Il MastroGiurato

Brumidi

At Toscana Café'

At Toscana Café'

Please mark your calendar
2010 ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER
of the Italian Cultural Society

SATURDAY afternoon, JUNE 12, 2010
4:30 to 7:00 pm
catered by Toscana Café, chef Daniele Catalani

IMPORTANT: NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE FROM PREVIOUS ANNOUNCE-MENT!

Friendship Heights Community Center
4433 S. Park Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

METRO: Friendship Heights Station on the red line
Nearby parking

Please complete the form below to make reservations
And mail in by June 4 at the latest.
$60 person

Menu: Buffet style
Bellini Punch & Antipasti,
Roast beef, grilled salmon with gnocchi and spinach, vegetable lasagna,
Grilled vegetables, roast potatoes,
Fruits, gelati, cannoli
Coffee, tea, wine, beer

Call: 301-215-7885 with any questions.

First Name Last Name Phone # email address

Street City State Zip

List your accompanying guests

Please reserve _____ place(s) for me at the ICS Awards Dinner on June 12, 2010.
Enclosed is a check in the amount of $_____ ($60/person) + scholarship donation _____
Total:$_____. Make check payable to ICS.

Mail completed form and checks to:
Italian Cultural Society, 4827 Rugby Ave. Suite #301, Bethesda MD 20814