ICS EVENTS

Social meetings start at 3:00 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month, September through May, at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD (see map on back cover).

Sunday, December 14: 4:00 p.m. (note the time) Christmas Party, Festa di Natale. There will also be food, games, and gifts along with Babbo Natale, I Folletti & La Befana.

Sunday, January 18: 3:00 TBD

www.italianculturalsociety.org

At our November social: a raffle winner, Charo Saenz, shown with Nick Monaco, raffle MC.

Roman architectural innovation used cement to lighten the load of the Pantheon’s roof. (see p.8)

One of many children who received presents at last year’s Festa di Natale.
The President’s Message

Parmigiano is one of my favorite cheeses, and, judging from the attendance at the November social, it is also very popular among many ICS members and friends. We enjoyed hearing Elisabetta Bonini Bell’s talk on the subject and tasting different version’s of it. Every time we grate some Parmigiano on a pasta dish we will think of the Vacca Rossa of Reggio Emilia.

I want to thank our board members for the great job they did in putting on the November social aided by our newest and youngest board member, Allegra Tartaglia, our youngest board member, who will be helping with social media and marketing of our language and cultural programs. You can read more about Allegra on page nine.

Readers of Poche Parole and all ICS members should feel free to submit articles to our editor, Dennis Siracusa, at ics.pocheparole@gmail.com in English or Italian or in both versions and on any subject related to Italy, Italians, or the Italian language, however tangential it may be. One source for ideas is the Italian press. Most Italian newspapers have an online edition, including Corriere della Sera, which translates some of its articles into English that many Americans find quite humorous.

Finally, do come to the Festa di Natale on December 14, and be entertained by an operatic soprano, and the children’s chorus. See Babbo Natale give out presents to the kids, bring a potluck dish, and connect with fellow ICS members (see page three).

Buon Natale, and we will see you on December 14!

Welcome to Our New Members

Frances Bernstein
Andrea Clemente & Stephen Siegforth
Dina Fleming
Carmen Hanna
Fazurin Jamaludin
Michae Kacmar
Morvarid Kazemian
Joseph Mallet
Marina Meehan
Fernanda Nicola
Clare O’Callaghan
Roberto Pennazzato
Edgardo, Elena & Maria Ruggiero
Rafael Ugarte
Jeanne Wolfe

ICS Board of Directors and their Duties
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Ron Cappelletti, Vice President
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Francesca Casazza, Director of the ILP
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Marie Frances, Fund raising producer
Olga Mancuso, Historian and Event Organizer
Allegra Tartaglia, Social Media and Marketing
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 the newsletter is the 22nd of
the month preceding publication of the issue.
Please send submissions on the internet to e-mail
address: ics.pocheparole@gmail.com or on a
computer CD/DVD to: Editor, Poche Parole,
4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301, Bethesda, MD 20814
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Sunday, December 14th
4:00 PM-6:30 PM

Friendship Heights Village Center
4433 South Park Ave, Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Tel (301) 437-3362

4:00 PM
Kids will create Christmas decorations & will be entertained by the Mad Scientist. Activities sponsored by Le D.I.V.E & MaPaCi.

4:15 PM
WNO Soprano Angela Knight will be performing an operatic Christmas song selection.

5:00 PM
Children’s choir followed by Babbo Natale, Befana and the Elves for gifts distribution.

(Parents must bring labeled gifts and drop them off at the door by 4:30 PM)

5:30 PM POTLUCK
Last names from A to M, please bring meats or casseroles. Last names from N to Z, please bring appetizers or salads. No desserts!
ICS will provide lasagna, desserts and drinks.

RSVP
To help us plan refreshments and children's crafts, please specify number and names of adults and children in your party. Email us at rsvp@italianculturalsociety.org
Elisabetta Bonini Bell spoke to a rapt audience of over 65 people, many of whom have their own opinions about which type of Parmigiano was the best. The Benedictine monks created the cheese in the Twelfth Century in Bibbiano. By the Renaissance it was widely used by the nobility. Farmers began producing it in the Sixteenth Century and by the Nineteenth its popularity spread throughout Europe, in particular France. By the Twentieth, production started in the provinces of Modena and Mantua.

Today, it is made as it was eight centuries ago with the same ingredients (milk, rennet, salt), same techniques, same care.

The milk comes from three kinds of cows: Holstein, Red, and White. The Holstein produces cheese with a pastel yellow color, the Red Cow, the “mother” of Parmigiano Reggiano, produces less milk than the Holstein, and requires a minimum of 24 months of aging, the White Cow (only 250 left) produces superior milk with high quality of casein and protein and its cheese has a pale yellow color with a slightly salty taste. The cheese from the White Cow ages for 40 months.

Ms. Bonini Bell stresses that aging affects texture and sapidity (flavor). Her kitchen hints are: use PR as an ingredient or as a meal, grate it at the last moment, and use it for pasta or fillings. Her nutritional advice is: PR has essential amino acids and is good for children and is easily digestible for toddlers, for allergic people and there is no milk sugar. The high calcium makes PR good for both adolescents and older people. Athletes benefit from its quick digestibility (45 minutes as compared to 3-4 hours for a similar portion of meat).

ICS board members passed around each type of PR based on the number of months it had aged, i.e., Holstein (12 months), Red Cow (25, 30 and 40 months). No White Cow was available.

If we like PR, we are in good literary company. It is said that Moliere’s dying wish was for a piece of Parmigiano. —Dennis A. Siracusa
Prior to the talk, Silvana De Luca conducts an Italian conversation class for those who want to sharpen their speaking skills. From left to right are Andrea Clemente, Stephen Clemente, Frances Li, Silvana De Luca, and Katie Annulli.

Photos by Dennis A. Siracusa

There are always winners at the raffle. Conrad Clark purchases his tickets from Marie Frances and Nick Monaco. Winners are from the top: Ingrid Mongini, Pierre Salmanni, Brenda Monaco, Vito Di Pietro, and Peter Andrioie and Karen Hwei.
At the end of the fall semester, Antonella Salvatore’s Current Events class had lunch at the home of the ILP cooking instructor, Maura Maffia. Signora Maffia, aided by her little dog, Totti, greeted the students with friendly hellos and with the aroma of Italian food emanating from the kitchen. We could not wait to eat.

On the table, Signora Maffia had already placed three plates; polpettine di spinaci e noci, involtini di zucchine e tonno, and pizzette di melanzane. The main course was a Calamarata with calamari and gamberetti. Tutto cibo vegetariano. After we thought that we could not eat any more, La Signora brought out a fantastic torta caprese senza farina.

The class with Maura: back, Antonella Salvatore, Barbara Bickham, Cameron Whitman, Renee Licht, and Katy Mead. Front: Morvarid “Leyla” Kazemian, Karen Davis, and Maura Maffia. Right: Maura with Dennis Siracusa, Totti the dog.
This November, ILP teachers attended the workshop, “Learner Centered Classes,” organized by the University of MD, the Italian Embassy and AATI (American Association of Teachers of Italian) where we learned new strategies and communicative approaches to the teaching of Italian in our classes.

The Fall Term is ending and we are happy to offer again the “December special drop-in classes.” Last year the initiative was appreciated, and we hope that this year new people will also have a chance to sample our courses, while meeting our students who chose to attend extra classes.

Looking ahead, the Winter Schedule is now online and registration is open. I am pleased to announce the addition of two new courses: 1. ART CLASS: DRAWING STILL LIFE, held on Saturdays, 11:00 am, at the Friendship Heights Village Center, by the artist and Italian instructor, Sofia Caligiuri. Students will learn the fundamentals of drawing the complexities of Still Life and Landscapes, while practicing their Italian skills. As with our cooking classes, this art class is a very good opportunity to practice and learn the language, but if you are only interested in drawing (or cooking), you will receive instruction in both English and Italian. 2. LATIN 1, taught by Prof. Luigi De Luca, former President of the ICS. The class is for adults and for middle school/high school students. We thought teens and their parents might enjoy coming to class together to learn the fundamental notions of the Latin language and Roman history. Through the story of a Roman Senator’s family, the students will be introduced to the Latin language and the use of the declensions and conjugations. We will also be honored to listen to Prof. De Luca presenting a lecture (see flyer). Thank you, Luigi for giving us your availability and illuminating us with some basics of classical culture!

“Discover Sicily:...” will be taught again by Riccardo Cannavò, this time on Monday evenings. Thanks to the valuable feedback from the students who enjoyed very much their trip, Davide Pirrera was able to perfect his tour of the island. On Saturdays, “Discover Roma and Lazio” will be offered again. We hope many of you will be able to meet our contacts in Italy and immerse into a real Italian experience!

Finally, the new curriculum of our language classes reflects the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This is an internationally recognized framework that describes six levels of language ability from A1 for beginners up to C2 for those who have mastered a language. The CEFR is used by organizations all over the world as a reliable benchmark of language ability. Students can have an idea of their level reading the definitions of A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 as reported on our website http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/italian-language-program/

We hope to see you all at our Festa di Natale. The children in our courses will be happy to show you their work!-Warm wishes from Francesca Casazza Director, ILP
Il cemento romano

by Barbara Bickham una studentesa di ILP

L'Impero Romano si sviluppò approssimativamente tra il secondo secolo a.C. e oltre il secondo secolo d.C. Fu il periodo degli imperatori, famosi e malfamati, e delle conquiste di Roma dalla Gran Bretagna e Spagna all'Asia e Nord Africa.

Una delle cose più interessanti successe in questo periodo è, secondo me, nel campo dell'architettura: lo sviluppo ed uso del cemento.

Questo cemento fu usato molto estesamente nell'architettura romana per creare forme architettoniche di archi, volte, e cupole. Queste forme non furono usate spesso prima dello sviluppo del cemento.

Il cemento cominciò ad essere usato durante la Repubblica di Roma. Tuttavia, durante l'Impero Romano le cose avanzarono velocemente dal 64 d.C.

Nel 64 d.C., durante il regno di Nerone, ci fu un grande incendio a Roma. Roma bruciò per sei giorni. Zone enormi della città furono distrutte. Dopo questo evento grandi zone furono nuovamente disponibili per la costruzione. Inoltre, le macerie che erano state lasciate dall'incendio, fornirono materiale con cui fare cemento. Dopo l'incendio Nerone propose un codice nuovo per costruire, consistente prevalentemente in cemento con una facciata di mattoni. Questo metodo incoraggiò lo sviluppo di industrie di cemento e mattoni.

Come era fatto


Caratteristiche

Nel passato, prima del cemento, erano usati marmo e mattoni. Questi limitavano la costruzione in forme solamente angolate.

Il cemento, invece, permise qualsiasi forma. I vantaggi del cemento furono che la costruzione poteva essere più grande, più solida (della somma delle parti), velocemente costruibile, poco costosa, e fu anche possibile versarlo sotto acqua.

Il miracolo del cemento è che ha un grande robustezza in relazione al peso e perciò, era possibile costruire edifici più grandi con cupole più grandi. La forza del cemento permise la costruzione di soffitti voltati senza travi. (continua nel prossimo numero)

Roman Cement

The Roman Empire developed approximately between the second century B.C. and the second century A.D. It was the period of the emperors, famous and infamous, and of the Roman conquests from Great Britain and Spain, to Asia and North Africa.

One of the most interesting events during this time-period was in the field of architecture: the development and use of concrete.

Cement was used extensively in Roman architecture to create architectural forms such as arches, vaults, and domes. These forms were not used often before the development of cement.

Cement was used during the Roman Republic but really advanced during the Roman Empire beginning in 64 A.D.

The Great Fire of Rome occurred in 64 A.D., during the reign of the Emperor Nero. Rome burned for six days. Enormous parts of the city were destroyed. After the fire, new areas became available for construction.

After the Great Fire, Nero instituted new building codes consisting primarily of cement faced with brick. This method encouraged the development of both the cement and brick industries.

How It Was Made

This Roman cement was called “opus caementicum” It was made of tile, rubble, lime, sand, and above all, “pozzolana.” Pozzuoli is a city in the commune of Naples. Pozzolana was the volcanic ash found in this area and was the magic ingredient of cement; the most important addition to the mix.

Characteristics

Before cement, marble and brick were used. This limited construction to only angular forms.

Cement, however, permitted any form. Cement allowed the construction of larger edifices (stronger than the sum of their parts), more quickly, less costly, and it was able to be poured under water.

The miracle of cement is that it has great strength in relation to its weight. Therefore, it was possible to construct larger buildings with larger domes. The strength of cement permitted construction of vaulted ceilings without beams. (continues in the next issue)
Allegra Tartaglia: New Board Member

Allegra Agata Tartaglia was born in New Orleans, LA. Her mother is a native New Orleanian and her father is native Italian from Campobasso, Italy. Since she was nine months old, Allegra resided in Italy; she then returned to the U.S. in 2009 to start College at Loyola University New Orleans. Overseas, Allegra had the opportunity to develop a love for languages, international living, arts, people, and culture. She has lived in Napoli, Roma, and currently, Vicenza, Italy.

Her education began in the American Department of Defense Education Activity School System; then she attended the Italian middle school, and two years of Italian high school, “Liceo Linguistico.” Allegra is a 2013 Loyola University New Orleans Graduate. She has a B.A. in History and Minors in French and Medieval Studies. She loves community involvement and making a positive difference in society. She joined the International Society at Loyola, wanting to share and bridge her Italian culture with the Loyola Students and faculty.

She has taught beginner and upper level Italian Language courses to professionals at the Italian American Cultural Center in New Orleans. She tutored Loyola Opera students in Italian diction, together with providing private Italian lessons to young and old. Her expertise in speaking four languages had led Allegra to specialize in providing interpretation services while pursuing a career in international diplomacy. Allegra teaches in the Italian Language Program and has been instrumental in helping Francesca Casazza, the ILP director, create exciting flyers.

Events of Holiday Interest

Secret Societies of the Ancient World
Smithsonian Inst. Bldg. Thursday, December 11

Italian Holiday Festival Smithsonian American Art Museum: Enjoy seasonal music and costumed performers that embody Italian culture December 13, 11:30-3:00

The National Philharmonic Orchestra: Handel’s Messiah at Strathmore, Saturday, December 20

The Washington Chorus: A Candlelight Christmas at Strathmore
Tuesday, December 23, 7:30

Della Cucina di Mia Cugina
Maria Borsa

Giugiu_lena
Sesame seed cookies

2 cups flour
1/2 cup sugar
11/2 tsp. baking powder
2/3 cup Crisco
2 egg yolks
1/4 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla and sesame seeds

Sift first three ingredients, put in Crisco with pastry cutter. Make a well and add remaining ingredients. Form 2 1/2 to 3 into a log; dip in milk and roll in seeds. Bake at 375 degrees for 10-12 minutes.
Whether these testimonies, in an era when witnesses could be bought, intimidated, or tortured, were truthful cannot be ascertained. Although, given the count’s character, they sound plausible. However, a possible alternative version to the virtual seclusion of the two women within the castle was the fact that Beatrice, then over 21 years old and not the young innocent teenager of romantic legend, may have been pregnant by a married man, the castle manager, Olimpio Calvetti. It may be that, apart from jealousy, the count was keeping the young woman sequestered to avoid a scandal.

In any case, on the morning of September 9, 1598, Francesco Cenci, allegedly fell some forty feet to his death from a balcony, landing on a virtually inaccessible rock outcrop used for dumping the garbage from a castle window.

Once his body was discovered, it was retrieved and pulled up to the castle tied to a short ladder and taken to the castle pool for washing. There, a number of curious villagers, servants, and even three priests noticed that the dead count had three puncture wounds on his right temple, one so large that a finger could be inserted in it. Such wounds could not have resulted from a fall, but appeared to have been made by a cutting instrument or, more likely, by a pointed stiletto or spike.

The police were called to the scene and in searching the count’s bedroom discovered that the improvident killers had even failed to remove the blood-soaked sheet from the bed where the count apparently had been murdered.

During the interrogations, (first by the Neapolitan authorities which controlled the area where the castle was located) and the trial by the papal authorities in Rome to whom the suspects in custody had been turned, the apparent truth came to light. Francesco’s wife, Lucrezia, and his children, Beatrice and Giacomo, had conspired to murder him. They had the active assistance of a Church prelate, a certain Monsignor Guerra, the castle manager, Olimpio Calvetti, and a hired ruffian, Marzio Catalano (a.k.a. Marzio de Fiorani). Another of Lucrezia’s son, Bernardo Cenci, a young teenager, was aware of the conspiracy but not actively involved.

Apparently, Beatrice had given her father a drugged draught to induce a deep sleep, during which Calvetti and Catalano were to kill him. However, the count had awakened during the murderous assault and had to be held down while several attempts were made to drive a spike through his head with a hammer. On the third strike, they succeeded; the two then dressed the body, threw it over the balcony’s edge, and to muddle the evidence of their dastardly deed, hacked the balcony’s wood flooring, leaving a ragged hole, which was too small for the count’s hefty body to have fallen through.

Both Calvetti and Catalano had then fled and were long gone when the body was retrieved. Both were suspects from the start, primarily because of their disappearance. A bounty was offered for their capture and killing. Calvetti was caught in the Abruzzi hills and killed by a bounty hunter who cut his head with a hatchet to prove that he was entitled to the bounty. Some sources say the bounty hunter had been hired by Giacomo Cenci to eliminate one who could implicate him in the murder.

The other suspect, Marzio Catalano, however, was caught alive by the Neapolitan police, confessed, was turned over to the Roman authorities, and died in the Rome prison of Tor di Nona. The only outside conspirator who had fled and was successful in avoiding capture was Monsignor Guerra.

In early November 1598, Roman authorities arrested Giacomo, Beatrice, Bernardo, and Lucrezia Cenci for murder. Under interrogation and torture, Lucrezia and Giacomo confessed to the active conspiracy, implicating Beatrice as the prime mover. Beatrice herself refused to confess, insisting on her innocence until the very end, stating that she had no reason to see her father dead.(continues in the next issue.)

H. G. Hosmer: *Beatrice Cenci*
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 expiration date of your membership is shown on the address label. Please renew using the form at the bottom of this page.

ICS membership application

Mail application to:
ICS Membership
4827 Rugby Ave., Suite 301
Bethesda, MD 20814

Please make check payable to:
The Italian Cultural Society

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Volunteer Skills __________________________________________
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meeting location

friendship heights village center
4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815