



AMHS

# NOTIZIARIO

CELEBRATING ITALIAN CULTURE &amp; COMMUNITY SINCE 2000

A Publication of the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society of the Washington DC Area

May/June 2019



*The Ordine della Stella D'Italia awarded to Lucio D'Andrea*

## AMHS PRESIDENT EMERITUS D'ANDREA AWARDED *Order of The Star of Italy*

By Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

On Monday, February 25, AMHS President Emeritus Lucio D'Andrea was awarded the Ordine della Stella D'Italia (the Order of the Star of Italy) at a ceremony held at the Embassy of Italy in Washington, D.C. The Order of the Star of Italy honors Italians abroad who have acquired special merit in the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation between Italy and other countries and the promotion of ties with Italy. Activities that warrant recognition include the promotion of the Italian language, volunteering, charitable & philanthropic activities, and participation in community life of our communities abroad. The order is conferred by the President of the Republic of Italy on the advice of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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## AMHS NOTIZIARIO

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members and friends:

With the return of baseball, the completion of March Madness, and the full blooming of the Cherry Blossoms, we can be sure that we have crossed the threshold of spring. The month of May brings us warmer weather, pretty flowers, and the prospect of additional events sponsored or supported by our Society. Our expectation is that these events will be as pleasant and enjoyable as our March 24th general meeting, in which AMHS member Kirsten Keppel presented her wonderful film on the Tradition of St. Joseph's Table. That

meeting also marked our return to Alfio's La Trattoria in Chevy Chase, Maryland, after an absence of a number of years. Alfio's did a superb job of welcoming us back, with excellent food and service. Together with Kirsten's presentation, it made for another very successful and informative program.

A date to set aside in the month of May is Sunday the 19th, when the AMHS will again co-sponsor the annual Mass at Holy Rosary Church commemorating the assassination of Judge Giovanni Falcone. This year marks the 27th anniversary of the assassination by the Mafia. Our society, as well as a number of other local Italian-American organizations, will honor the memory of Judge Falcone at the 10:30 Mass. The guest speaker will be Vincenzo Romeo, the law enforcement attaché at the Italian Embassy, who will make brief remarks at the conclusion of the Mass. There will be a reception following the Mass at Casa Italiana. Judge Falcone is a real Italian hero, and there is no disagreement that he represents the very best of Italy and deserves the admiration and respect of not only all Italians and Italian-Americans but of everyone who values courage, the pursuit of justice, and the rule of law.

Our next general meeting will take place on June 9th at the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center. The meeting will feature a presentation by Professor Carmine Vittoria, who will talk about the events of World War II in the Naples area as witnessed by himself as a child and his family. The subject matter informs his recently published book "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso," which is full of remarkable insights and observations. His talk will undoubtedly be interesting, so please plan to attend. If you do, you will also get to savor the excellent cuisine of Fontina Grill.

Speaking of June 9th, take a look at Maria D'Andrea-Yothers' article in this newsletter on the Society's newly amended bylaws. We will hold a vote for their approval at the June general meeting, so Maria's article will provide useful background. We are in debt to Maria, Lucio D'Andrea and Jeff Clark for their work in updating and consolidating our bylaws.

Over the past month of April, the AMHS Scholarship Committee (Peter Bell, Lucio D'Andrea, Romeo Sabatini, Lourdes Tinajero and myself) was busy evaluating the applications for the two 2019-2020 joint National Italian American Foundation (NIAF)-AMHS scholarships. As usual, the quality of the applicants was extremely high and the task of selecting two winners extremely challenging. The number of applicants continues to increase each year, which is a sign of the value and attractiveness of our program. You will find out who this year's winners are in the next issue of the Notiziario.

Further to the work of the Scholarship Committee, two of its members, Peter Bell and I, visited NIAF in April to deliver the Society's \$4000 contribution to the scholarship program. NIAF matches that amount and together the two organizations jointly fund the program. The collaboration offers a good example of how the Italian-American community can work together to promote and sustain Italian language and culture in the years ahead.

Thank you for reading and for your support of our society's activities.

Best regards,  
Ray LaVerghetta

# CELEBRATES ST. JOSEPH'S TABLE TRADITION

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President, Programs

Our second program of the year on March 24, 2019, celebrated the St. Joseph's Table tradition and featured the film made by AMHS member Kirsten Keppel. Her half-hour film, which was screened by the National Italian American Foundation last March, tells the story of the Tavola di San Giuseppe tradition as passed down through generations of Italian Americans.

About 45 people attended the luncheon program, held at Alfio's La Trattoria in Bethesda, Maryland.

Kirsten told the story of how she came to make the film after she visited the Cleveland Park Library in Washington to start her research focusing on the Baltimore area. There, she found a book that had the e-mail address for someone at St. Leo's Church in Baltimore's Little Italy. So she went to Baltimore and found that the original Italian immigrants were passing down this beautiful tradition to the future generations. Kirsten was able to interview some of the key people behind this annual celebration.

Kirsten invited some of the film's participants and people who helped her make the film. They included Karen Kiesner, whose family has celebrated the tradition for the past 100 years; Paul Paolicelli, the well-known author of "Under the Southern Sun" who was interviewed in the film; Damon Lombard, who grew up in New Orleans with the St. Joseph's Table tradition; and Antonio Villaronga, the film's editor who is also responsible for the music (he found the wonderful accordion music and taught himself to play the mandolin).



Kirsten Keppel (center) at the March meeting with contributors to her film. Pictured are (l to r) Karen Kiesner, Damon Lombard, Paul Paolicelli, and Antonio Villaronga.

*Kirsten's film, entitled "Ringraziamenti: The St. Joseph's Table Tradition," was a semi-finalist of the 2017 Russo Brothers Italian American Film Forum and was first shown at the NIAF Gala.*

Kirsten is the great-granddaughter of Molisani immigrants to New York. Her great-grandmother came from Jelsi, and her great-grandfather came from Riccia in the province of Campobasso. Her great-grandfather's youngest sister married in Philadelphia, and later returned with her husband to L'Aquila, where Kirsten's many cousins live today, thus giving her ties to both Abruzzo and Molise.

Although Kirsten's grandfather and his siblings were bilingual in English and Italian, Kirsten grew up learning French. She currently

works as a French language instructor for a contractor, Yorktown Systems Group, Inc., on location at the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. State Department. Kirsten also studied Italian in college and at the Casa Italiana Language School.

Kirsten's film, entitled "Ringraziamenti: The St. Joseph's Table Tra-

dition," was a semi-finalist of the 2017 Russo Brothers Italian American Film Forum and was first shown at the NIAF Gala.

In her talk, she explained how St. Joseph's Table represents an ancient tradition that goes back to the Middle Ages, as legend has it, to a time when there was an especially severe drought in Sicily. No rain fell for a long time, so no crops would grow and famine was widespread. The people prayed to God for rain, and they also prayed to St. Joseph to intercede with God on their behalf, promising that if God caused it to rain, they would have a special feast in honor of St. Joseph. Miraculously, the rains came and the crops were planted. With the harvest, the people prepared a feast of foods from those crops, and this became known as La Tavola di San Giuseppe. Families prepared huge buffets and invited the less fortunate people of the village, especially the homeless and sick.

Kirsten explained how nowadays the tradition is still practiced in Sicily and worldwide, especially in Italian-American communities of Sicilian descent. The St. Joseph's Table tradition was brought to America in the late 19th and early 20th century by Sicilian immigrants into Louisiana, Texas, California, Colorado and New York. ■



Nancy DeSanti with AMHS members Bill Sansalone and Lena Lupica



# Update on Italian Embassy's Strategic Plan to Promote the Italian Language

By Maria LaVerghetta

On February 19th, the Italian Embassy hosted a meeting of the Greater Washington, D.C. Observatory of the Italian Language. The purpose of this meeting was to provide updates about the steps taken to promote the Italian language in the D.C. area since the last meeting in January of 2018. As the work of the AMHS plays an important role in achieving this goal, the embassy's organizers of this event, Minister Counselor Domenico Bellantoni, and Director of Education Maria Fusco, invited the AMHS to take part. I had the privilege of attending on behalf of AMHS.

By way of background, in May 2017, the embassy introduced the 2017 Strategic Plan for the Promotion of the Italian Language. The top priority was to increase the Italian Advanced Placement (AP) exam volumes. If a high school world language program offers an AP course and exam, completion of which typically results in college credits, students have an incentive to study that language over one that lacks the AP course and exam. For Italian programs to thrive in the greater D.C. area, high schools absolutely need robust Italian AP exam volumes. A second priority was to develop beginning Italian language courses at the elementary and secondary levels. Students who learn languages at an earlier age generally develop more native-like pronunciation. Moreover, students who enter high school already with a basic understanding of Italian can more easily reach the AP level, thus supporting the Observatory's main goal. The third priority was fundraising, particularly to increase the availability of scholarships, which will promote the study of the Italian language at the university level and encourage more young people to become Italian teachers.

At the start of our meeting, Professor Fusco shared news about the successes and challenges regarding the implementation of the strategic plan. She first addressed the AP exam volumes from 2018, noting that there were 34 AP exams taken in the D.C., Maryland and Virginia (DMV) area. That figure represented a decrease from the preceding year. On the positive side, however, the number of students who chose to study Italian at all levels from 2017-2018 increased by 7.8%. Indeed, Italian stands as the fourth most studied language by university stu-



*Italian Embassy, Washington, D.C.*

Photo Credit: Flickr user Adam Fagen

dents in the United States. Looking ahead to the 2019 AP exams, the Italian Embassy was to host (and did in fact host) a training on March 16th to update Italian teachers in the surrounding area about the best practices and strategies for building proficiency at an advanced level and increasing student's scores on this assessment. (I also attended this training, which I found extremely helpful.) Additionally, in November of this year, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages will host its fall conference in Washington, D.C., providing another great opportunity for Italian teachers to learn strategies to better prepare their students.

Regarding the second priority, increasing the number of students in beginning Italian classes, Professor Fusco alluded to the potential strategy of working toward dual immersion programs as well as the introduction of Italian into kindergarten classes. No substantive updates were provided on priority number three — the increase of funding for scholarships.

Following Professor Fusco's updates, the representative from the National Organization of Italian-American Women briefed the attendees on the scholarship opportunities for young women interested in studying Italian at the university level. The Director of Scholarships, Grants and Youth Engagement at the National Italian American Foundation, Julia Streisfeld, and I spoke about the scholarship opportunities we continue to offer each year to students who are committed to studying Italian as a major or minor at the university level. Scholarships are essential for the promotion of the Italian language because the students who gain the most from their language programs are those who have

the opportunity to study in Italy, which scholarships often help make possible. In my own case, a NIAF/AMHS scholarship allowed me to study at the University of Perugia for Foreigners, an experience that made me a more knowledgeable Italian teacher, a more proficient speaker of Italian, and a more effective promoter of the Italian language.

The participants also discussed some of the other significant resources, projects and events that will generate interest in the Italian language in the general public as well as among prospective Italian students. I proposed an initiative in which the AMHS's first student intern, Julia Paola of The George Washington University, would help coordinate Italian cultural events throughout the school year that would be open to all students and teachers of Italian in the area. These events would provide an opportunity for students to interact with other students in Italian in authentic ways and allow teachers to incentivize their students to practice in fun ways outside of the classroom.

Lastly, we also spoke about the many challenges that we face promoting the Italian language in the DMV area. I shared the challenges that I face as the sole high school Italian teacher in Anne Arundel County. Specifically, I addressed the lack of resources, of an established curriculum, and of the support needed for potential new Italian teachers in the area. Happily, since our last meeting, the Italian Embassy in D.C. has been able to integrate Anne Arundel County, Howard County and Prince William County into their geographic coverage, which in turn will allow them to provide financial and curricular support to Italian teachers and programs in those counties. Dr. Joseph Lupo of Casa Italiana and Maria Grazia Cavallini of Walter Johnson High School expressed their concerns over the continuing cuts to Italian programs in Montgomery County and Prince George's County, as well as over the threat to the reduction of Italian programs in middle schools in Montgomery County. These problems have unfortunately not improved since our last meeting in February of 2018.

*Maria LaVerghetta is an AMHS member and Representative to the Greater Washington D.C. Observatory of the Italian Language*

# Women of the Renaissance Inspire Us Today, Says Author Carla Gambescia

By Nancy DeSanti

To celebrate Women's History Month in March, the National Organization of Italian-American Women (NOIAW) invited author Carla Gambescia to talk about how the women of today have been influenced by the Renaissance women with an "indomitable spirit."

Carla has written a book, "La Dolce Vita University," which is a light-hearted yet educational series of mini-essays on various aspects of Italian culture, history, art and much more. Carla, whose father's family is from Sulmona, in Abruzzo, has traveled to all parts of Italy either hiking or bicycling.

Carla explained how the Renaissance was in many ways a turning point for women, with the rise of humanism and a flourishing of art and culture. She mentioned Botticelli's famous painting, "The Birth of Venus" and she told us that the model for Venus was his muse, the beautiful Simonetta Vespucci, who was the cousin-in-law of the explorer Amerigo Vespucci, after whom America was named. She thus became one of the most famous women in the history of art. Botticelli asked to be buried at the feet of Simonetta, who died at the age of 23.

Another inspiring woman was Margarita Luti, who was Raphael's muse and probably modeled for many of the hundreds of his drawings that survive. She inspired him throughout his amazing artistic career, which ended when he died on Good Friday at the age of 37.

Yet another muse for a famous artist was Vittoria Colonna, who was the muse of Michelangelo. A celebrated poet, she influenced his ideas about religion, patronized his work, and served as one of his closest confidantes. She was the Marchessa of Pescara in Abruzzo, a great poet and a friend to many of the educated and cultured people of her time. And she was one of



Carla Gambescia

only a few people who had access to the Sistine Chapel during the nine years when Michelangelo was working there.

Carla told of a few more of these amazing women, such as Isabella d'Este, an early fashionista who was the Jackie Onassis of her day. This glamorous fashion icon was known for her plunging necklines, furs and jewels.

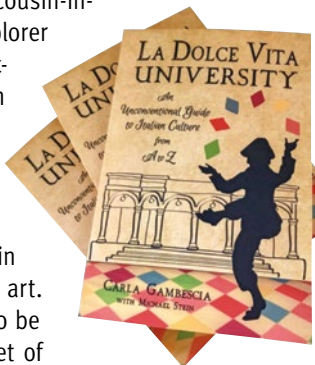
Not to be outdone, Caterina de Medici, who married the King of France, moved to Paris where she brought her own perfumes and was

the first to wear high heels. Not only that, but she introduced the knife and fork, as well as the use of herbs and spices in cooking to make food more flavorful. Her fame as a culinary innovator is such that the Culinary Art Institute in New York named its restaurant after her.

And last but certainly not least, Carla mentioned Artemisia Gentileschi, the best-known woman artist of her time who overcame many trials and tribulations before gaining respect for her artistic work. She is quoted as saying, "I have the spirit of Caesar and the soul of a woman."

Many thanks to Diana Femia for organizing this wonderful event for Women's History Month.

Carla makes her home in New York State and travels extensively. She plans to come here early next year to give a talk to AMHS members and guests. Carla said her program will be "Italian Cultural Trivial Challenges," and she promises it will be fun and interactive. So stay tuned!!



Carla's book on all things Italian.

## AMHS Social Meet-Ups:

# Building Friendships and Growing Our Membership

By Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

The AMHS will soon introduce some new social events and activities that members and friends can join outside of the bi-monthly general membership meetings. A small group of members came together recently and strategized on activities that would help build friendship and interest in AMHS, e.g., happy hours, walks/hikes, book clubs, museum visits, cooking classes, volunteer events, and possible day or weekend trips.

We would be looking for a volunteer to propose an event or activity and take "ownership" in organizing that event. We would look to promote these events/activities in the Washington, D.C. area so that we can appeal to a larger audience. We would publicize the events/activities on the society's Facebook page, on our calendar of events, and via email message. We hope to create meet-up events in the many neighborhoods our members live in.

While the small group came up with some initial ideas, we want to hear from you — soon you will receive, via email, a survey that is intended to gauge your interest — so please participate. We look to your support to strengthen our community while offering new ways to get together to celebrate all things Italian. Remember to like AMHS on Facebook!



# STAMPING AROUND ITALY CITY OF VASTO MUNICIPALS

By Louis Alfano, AMHS member

**D**o you collect stamps? If so you may be able to form a collection of stamps from your ancestral home town. Of the roughly 8100 Italian *comuni*, about 4000 are known to have issued municipal stamps bearing the town's name. Other *comuni* may have used "generic" municipals, which can only be associated with a particular *comune* by their cancellations.

The stamps were used to collect municipal fees on various documents — birth, marriage, and death certificates, family status certificates, mandatory municipal identity cards, health certificates, various contracts (e.g.: sale of cemetery plots, sales of fishing boats), and others. In addition to the municipal stamps, some documents also required national revenue stamps.

Vasto is the home town of my maternal ancestors. Located on the Adriatic Sea in the Province of Chieti, in the Abruzzo region, it has a population of about 41,000 people.

*Vastese* municipals are difficult to acquire. In the listing which follows, stamps in my collection are listed in normal type. Others known to me are listed in *italics*. "In use" dates are from cancellations or copies on documents. This is the most complete listing of *Vastese* municipals to date.

**Kingdom (circa 1910).** No town name. These can only be identified as from Vasto by cancellations. Perf.11.

## DIRITTI DI SEGRETERIA



1. 50 cent red
2. 1 lira rose
3. 2 lire brown
4. 5 lire orange
5. 10 lire purple

**Fascist Era (used in 1930).** Town name & value in black.

## DIRITTI DI SEGRETERIA



6. 0.40 L red-orange

**Fascist Era (used in 1930).** Town name in black.

## DIRITTI DI SEGRETERIA



7. 0.25 L red-orange
8. 1 L blue

**Fascist era (circa 1935).** 21 x 30mm. Perf.11 Paper white.

## SEGRETERIA



Use and Value in blue.

9. 0.50 lire claret
10. 0.80 lire green
11. 3 lire purple

## STATO CIVILE

Use & Value in red.

12. 1.50L green

## DIRITTI SANITARI

Use and Value in violet.

13. 10L, orange-red

During the twenty-year Fascist era, as part of Mussolini's rampant "Romanizing" of Italy, about a thousand municipalities "Romanized" their names. Under the provisions of Royal Decree No. 517 of 31 March 1938, the name "Vasto" was changed to "Istonio," reflecting the Histonium of Roman times. The authorization was published in the Official Gazette of May 18, 1938, and the next day the city took the name of Istonio. After the liberation of the city, by a resolution of October 10, 1944, Mayor Giuseppe Nasci forwarded a special request to restore the old name of the City. The Lieutenantcy Decree of repeal (Decree No. 389), was approved on November 15, 1944 and published in the Official Gazette of December 28, 1944. Thus, after 6 years, 7 months and 9 days, the city resumed the name "Vasto".

## DIRITTI DI SEGRETERIA

Town name in black, value in red. Perf.11 (Used in 1940.)



14. 5 L blue

**Fascist era (circa 1940).** "Citta di Istonio," 21 x 30mm. Perf.11 Paper white.

## STATO CIVILE



Use & Value in red.

15. 1.50L green



## Republic circa 1946.

### STATO CIVILE



- 16. 2L, red (Town name, Use and Value in blue. Perf.11½)
- 17. 10L grey (Town name in black, Use and Value in red, Printer's name at bottom. Rouletted) used in 1952

### SEGRETERIA

- 18. 5 L purple (Town name in black, Use and Value in red, Perf.11½) used in 1946.
- 19. 10L brown (Town name in black, Use and Value in red, Perf.11½) used in 1948

### URGENZA

- 20. 10L green (Town name in blue, Use and Value in red, Perf.11½) used in 1948

**Republic, circa 1946.** Rouletted. Town name and Value in black. 21 x 30 mm.

### DIRITTI DI STATO CIVILE



21. 15L, green

**Republic, circa 1946.** 22 x 28mm. Perf.11½. Name, Use and Value in black. Paper white.

### Inscribed "VASTO"

### DIRITTI SEGRETERIA



- 22. 10 L lemon (used in 1949)
- 23. 100 L blue

### DIRITTI URGENZA

- 24. 20 L grey (used in 1950)

### Inscribed "Citta del VASTO"

### DIRITTI SEGRETERIA



- 25. 10 L green (used in 1949)
- 26. 10 L red

### URGENZA

- 27. 20 L lemon (used in 1950)

**Republic.** (in use 1951) 21.5 x 28mm.

Perf.11½. Paper white thin. Booklet panes (of 10?).

### DIRITTI DI SEGRETERIA



- 28. 10 L, green

### DIRITTI D'URGENZA

- 29. 20L, red

**Republic.** (in use 1960) 35 x 20mm.

Perf.11½. Paper white.

### DIRITTI DI SEGRETERIA



- 30. 10L red
- 31. 25L orange-brown
- 32. 50L green

**Republic.** (in use 1960) 28 x 21.5mm.

Perf.11½. Paper white thin. Image of Dante Gabriele Rossetti

### DIRITTI DI STATO CIVILE



- 33. 15 L brown

**Republic.** (purchased at the Comune in 2017) Imperf. Self-adhesive. 57 x 34 mm.

### IMPOSTA DI BOLLO



- 34. No value (costs 16 euro)  
Multicolored

Bureaucracy being what it is, it took a while to purchase this stamp. I wound up with three receipts for my 16 euro, 2 official ones, plus a credit card receipt. ■

## AMHS Bylaws Revised Pending Membership Vote

By Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

For over five years, the Executive Committee (EC) and Board of Directors have been discussing the restatement of the society's bylaws, to make them more consistent with current practices and procedures that have, over time, changed. Furthermore, the Society has two sets of bylaws: one set for the Grant and Scholarship Fund, Inc.; and one set for the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society. The provisions contained in both are almost identical, so it made sense to review the two sets and merge them into one. The EC discussed the bylaws at the January 20, 2019 EC meeting, at which time Lucio D'Andrea, Jeff Clark, and Maria D'Andrea-Yothers agreed to serve on an ad-hoc committee to review the by-laws and make suggested changes.

The restated by-laws were presented to the EC at the March 3 meeting, along with a "change record" that reflected the most significant amendments to the existing bylaws and/or removal of certain provisions. The EC, after careful review of the proposed amendments, unanimously approved the restated bylaws, and recommended the same for adoption by the general membership at the June 9 meeting.

The membership will receive the change record via email 30 days prior to the June 9 meeting. The bylaw committee will ask for a vote to approve the changes. Subsequently, a notice of final adopted amendments shall be sent to the members for their records. ■



# SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

## VP Sorbara's NIH Research Project Highlighted at Conference

**T**he work of AMHS Second Vice President, Lynn Sorbara and her team at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on groundbreaking cancer research continues to earn notice. She along with her colleague, Dr. Sudhir Srivastava, conducted a lecture and discussion session at the American Association for Cancer Research Conference on April 2, and the information was picked up by CNN. One of the Grantees in her Consortium, Dr. Nick Papadopoulos of Johns Hopkins University, was interviewed. She said CNN even used her pet phrase to describe the goals they have as “The Holy Grail.”

According to the CNN article, “Testing for cancer in blood, urine or even saliva: That approach has been called the ‘holy grail’ for diagnosing the second leading cause of death in the world.

“For the future, many cancer researchers are



*Pictured at the AACR conference are AMHS VP Lynn Sorbara (2nd from left) and colleagues on the Liquid Biopsy Consortium.*

exploring whether a cancer test could involve only collecting and analyzing a sample of your blood, saliva or urine so that it's noninvasive, cheaper and more appealing to patients — especially when trying to diagnose cancer early.

“The science behind detecting signs of cancer in liquid biopsies — and how that could change the patient experience and public health as a whole — remains in the early, experimental stages but has spurred some excitement.”

Lynn is currently the program director for the Cancer Biomarker Research Group in the Division of Cancer Prevention of the National

Cancer Institute (NCI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Brava, Lynn. We are all very proud of you! ■

## Bruno Fusco to Judge Dance Competition in Italy

**A**MHS member Bruno Fusco is traveling to Monte di Procida near his hometown of Napoli this summer to judge a dance competition.

As he has done all over Italy, Maestro Cav. Fusco will participate as a judge in the “Premio Napoli per La Danza” on July 17-19, 2019. The event is being held under the direction of Antonio Salernitano, who invited Bruno to be the President of the jury. Bruno will award the winning student a scholarship on behalf of the Maryland Youth Ballet, a dance academy in Silver Spring, Maryland. Hopefully Bruno will have time to reconnect with his friends and his former colleagues from the Teatro San Carlo where he got his professional start.

On behalf of the Maryland Youth Ballet, Bruno is asking if any AMHS members or friends would be willing to host the scholarship winner and the person accompanying him or her, during the 7 to 10 days they will be attending classes in Silver Spring in September or October.

If you are interested in being a host or to find out more details, please contact Bruno at your earliest convenience at the following phone numbers: (301) 654-5218 or (240) 472-2707. ■

## THIS IS YOUR NOTIZIARIO

**By Carmine James Spellane, Editor**

*The Notiziario belongs to all of us, and we want to hear from you.*

The AMHS is much more than just its meetings. We are a vibrant society of people who care about their heritage and want to learn more. And all of us have stories to tell. We encourage you to submit articles for the newsletter to tell your story. It could be about a recent trip to Italy, honors received by you or your family, milestones such as significant birthdays or anniversaries, reviews of books on Italian topics, or recipes, to name but a few ideas.

All articles can be emailed to [abruzzomoliseheritagesociety@gmail.com](mailto:abruzzomoliseheritagesociety@gmail.com) to my attention. As editor, I will carefully review each submission and edit as needed. Please understand that publication of any article is subject to space available and the appropriate nature of the content, but we will make every effort to use your work and photos.

As noted in Maria's article on page 5, the AMHS is making new efforts to engage our current members and add more to our ranks. A vibrant Notiziario is part of that. As our society approaches its 20th anniversary next year, let's all help ensure a bright future for our mission to celebrate “all things Italian.” ■



## AMHS Membership

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President, Membership

I am pleased to report that there are 237 members of AMHS, including six new members. Thank you for your support of the Society's programs and activities.

I would like to mention that if anyone has a question, concern, or issue regarding their membership status or renewal process, kindly contact me DIRECTLY either by email at: [drlynnrose@yahoo.com](mailto:drlynnrose@yahoo.com) or via phone at (301) 926-7792. This is the most expedient method of resolving your concerns.

### There are two ways to renew your membership.

(1). You may visit the AMHS website: [www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org](http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org). Select the "Membership" tab, then click on "Become a Member," and then look under the "+MORE MEMBERSHIP" on the right there is a link to "Update Membership." The first time you use this system, you will request a password to be sent to your email address on file. Then, you can use the password to renew your membership, update your profile, and connect with our website's other new features!

(2). You may contact me for a renewal form. The form should be filled out and sent back to me with your check. The information regarding membership levels/dues and my address are on the form.

Finally, I remind everyone that, currently, there are several outstanding and/or expired memberships. Our automated system is designed to send email reminders to you directly when your membership is about to expire and when it has expired. Only those who do not have an email address will receive the reminder in a letter. Please look for these email messages and check your "spam" folder to make sure that you are receiving these notifications. Please renew your membership as soon as possible. We count on your presence at our events and your membership dues so that we can continue to offer high-quality activities. Thank you for your cooperation.

### Give the Gift of MEMBERSHIP!

For details visit **Become a Member** on [www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org](http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org).

## NEW MEMBERS

*A warm welcome* is extended to: Mary Ellen Allegrino, Crystal Hovermale, Joe Marino, Mary Filippetti Markey, Harry & Joan Piccariello, and Thomas Stallone.

## BIRTHDAYS

### Compleanni a Maggio

Joanne Fusco, May 5; Nancy Coviello, May 7; Joseph Scafetta, Jr., May 10; Kathryn C. DiGiacomo, May 13; Amy Antonelli, May 15; Victor Ferrante, Kathryn Nudi, May 16; Robert Woolley, May 19; Peter Bell, May 20; Rocco Del Monaco, Giulia Michonski, May 21; Cristina Scalzitti, May 25; Benjamin Abeles, May 26; Jacob Yaniero, May 28; Ennio DiTullio, and Renato Orcino, May 30.

### Compleanni a Giugno

Judy D'Ambrosi, June 2; Giovanni Sciannameo, June 4; Lucille Fuscillo, Janet Marmura, June 6; Joseph Lupo, June 9; Alberto L. Paolantonio, Robert Tobias, June 10; Sharon Moran, June 17; Harry Piccariello, June 24; Margaret Uglow, and Cristina Scalzitti, June 25; Omero Sabatini, and Alessia Thiebaud, June 26; Barbara Bernero, Rita Orcino, June 28; and Helen Antonelli Free and Laura Gentile, June 30.

## ANNIVERSARIES

### Anniversari a Maggio

Joseph & Amy Profit D'Amico, May 1; Francesco & Anna Isgro, May 19; and Mario & Carmen Ciccone, May 27.

Ordination: Rev. John V. DiBacco Jr., May 13

### Anniversari a Giugno

Joseph & Betsy Ruzzi, June 4; Omero & Belinda Sabatini, June 6; Lucio & Maria Marchegiani, June 9; Tom & Cindy Savage, June 13; Tony & Judy D'Ambrosi, June 22; Anthony & Elodia D'Onofrio, June 25; and Lucio & Edvige D'Andrea, June 27.

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

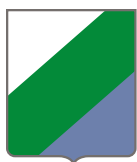
Category	# of Persons
Associate (Couple)	2 x 2 = 4
Associate (Individual)	29
General (Couple)	55 x 2 = 110
General (Individual)	85
Honorary	5
Scholarship	2
Student	2
<b>Total Membership:</b>	<b>237</b>

## Live and Learn Italian Joins with Road Scholar for "Hidden Villages of Italy: Agnone and Molise"

We are pleased to announce that *Live and Learn Italian*, directed by AMHS friend Jenifer Landor, is teaming up with Road Scholar to offer "Hidden Villages of Italy: Agnone and Molise" as a new addition to their international programs.

Road Scholar is a non-profit organization, established in the United States in 1975, that offers educational travel for adults, with a huge variety of programs, taking participants on learning adventures to over 150 countries. Jenifer's program will be sharing the *Live and Learn Italian* magic but in English, without the Italian lessons. Participants will enjoy tours, visits and field trips to cultural and historical sites as well as encounters with artisans and food producers and sharing meals with local cooks.

If you have family and friends not studying Italian, but interested in exploring Molise, an undiscovered and unspoiled part of Italy, please share this. To learn more about this specific program, visit [www.roadscholar.org](http://www.roadscholar.org) and search for program #23490RJ. ■



# ABBATEGGIO

PROVINCE OF PESCARA, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Nancy DeSanti

One of Abruzzo's beautiful small towns, Abbateggio, is located about 40 kilometers from Pescara. The town has approximately 400 inhabitants.

Situated along the northern slopes of the Maiella, Abbateggio has a broad panorama with an all-around view from the Gran Sasso mountains to the Adriatic. It is also included in the Majella National Park.

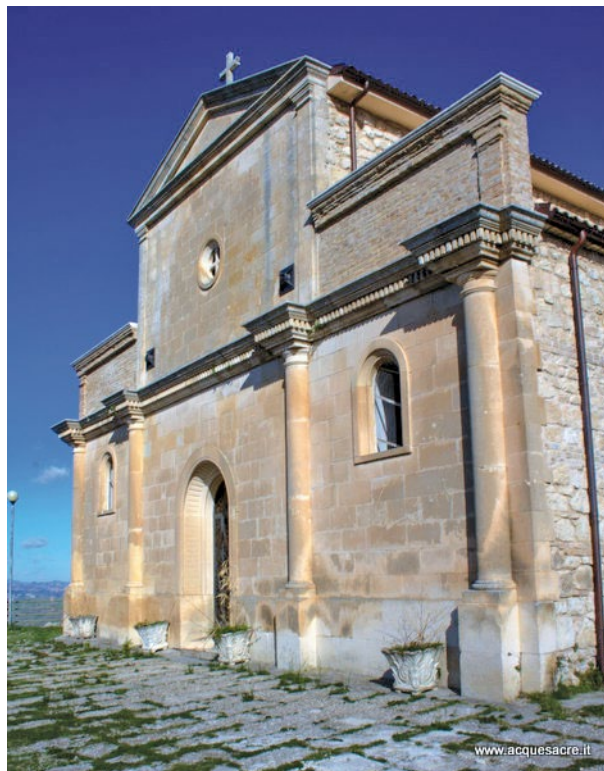
*The economy is based on mixed agriculture including livestock, grains, fruit, olives, cheese, and honey.*

The first documents about the village's existence date back to the 10th century. Over the centuries, it belonged, among others, to the celebrated Orsini and Farnese families

The economy of Abbateggio is based on mixed agriculture. Livestock are kept and crops including grain, olives, vines and fruit trees are grown, with cheese and honey also produced.



*Celebrating the feast of the Madonna dell'Elcina*



*Sanctuary of the Madonna dell'Elcina*

During the apparitions of the Virgin, according to tradition between the 15th and 16th centuries, the monks of Santo Spirito a Majella, from their heights, saw an intense light coming from the Elcina hill. The sanctuary, rebuilt in 1927, preserves the statue of the Madonna dell'Elcina dating back to the first decades of the 16th century. Under the altar there is a trunk of elce, considered a remnant of the ancient tree on which the Virgin appeared; while to the left of the altar is a canvas with the Madonna who, in a red tunic and blue mantle, sitting on a tree, holds the Christ Child in her arms. The

The Cusano district of the comune is home to the ruins of an ancient castle and other early medieval buildings.

Tradition has it that at Abbateggio, on the Elcina hill, two mute shepherd boys saw the Virgin Mary standing on a tree of *elce* (holm oak) and, at the foot of the tree, a painting of the Madonna seated on a tree holding Jesus. The Virgin Mary expressed the desire to see a church built on that hill. The young shepherds reported the incident to the village, and the inhabitants were amazed to hear the two boys talk. They rushed to the place of the apparitions where they found the painting which they hastened to bring to the parish church of San Lorenzo Martire.

The following morning, the image was miraculously found under the holm oak. Three times the image was brought back to the village and three times the image returned to the hill, near the tree. After the third recovery, it was decided to fulfill the request of the Virgin, building on the hill the church dedicated to the Madonna dell'Elcina.

painting, perhaps from the 17th century, was found behind the statue of the Madonna during the restoration of the Church in 1927. Despite the chronological inconsistency, the people believe that it is the painting found by the little shepherds at the time of the apparition of the Virgin.

*“Tradition has it that at Abbateggio, on the Elcina hill, two mute shepherd boys saw the Virgin Mary.”*

The Madonna dell'Elcina is celebrated on September 8. In memory of the apparition, on the vigil the painting of the Madonna is carried in procession from the Sanctuary of the Madonna dell'Elcina to the Parish Church of San Lorenzo. The next day, there is a solemn procession in which the women, in the characteristic folkloris-

# ABBATEGGIO

PROVINCIA DI PESCARA, REGIONE ABRUZZO

Translated by Maddalena Borea

**A**bbateggio, una piccola cittadina di Abruzzo, si trova a circa quaranta chilometri da Pescara, e conta pressappoco quattrocento abitanti.

Situata nei pressi della Maiella, gode una bellissima vista del Gran Sasso e dell'Adriatico, ed è parte del Parco Nazionale.

Vanta i suoi primi documenti storici al decimo secolo, e fu feudo delle famiglie Orsini e Farnese. La sua economia si basa sulla produzione di grano, di olive, di uva, di frutta, di formaggio e di miele.

Fra le attrazioni del luogo è giusto nominare le rovine di un vecchio castello e altre testimonianze medievali. Secondo una storia popolare, due pastori sordomuti di Abbateggio avrebbero avuto un'apparizione della Vergine sulla collina di Elcina. La Vergine, in piedi su una quercia, ed un dipinto di Lei ai piedi dello stesso albero. Maria, che tiene fra le braccia il Suo Gesù, esprime ai due pastori il desiderio di avere una chiesa dedicata a Lei in quel luogo. I due corsero al paese a rivelare la loro visione. La gente meravigliata nel sentire i due pastorelli parlare, si precipitò verso il luogo dell'apparizione e trovò ai piedi della quercia il dipinto descritto dai due pastori.

Portarono il dipinto alla chiesa di San Lorenzo Martire, ma la mattina seguente il suddetto dipinto era di nuovo miracolosamente, ai piedi della quercia. Tre volte il dipinto fu trasportato alla chiesa, e tre volte fu ritrovato ai piedi della quercia. Dopo la terza volta si decise di erigere una chiesa sul luogo dell'apparizione, dedicata alla Madonna dell'Elcina. Si racconta anche che, durante le apparizioni della Vergine, intorno al quindicesimo e sedicesimo secolo, i monaci del Santo Spirito, dalle alture del loro convento sulla Maiella, vedevano, di tanto in tanto, un'intensa luce venire dalla collina dell'Elcina, luogo del Santuario, che fu ricostruito nel 1927.

Durante la ricostruzione il dipinto fu miracolosamente trovato dietro alla Madonna. Nel Santuario ricostruito si trovano il dipinto, forse del diciassettesimo secolo, un tronco della vecchia quercia dell'apparizione, e una tela raffigurante Maria che, in tunica rossa e mantello azzurro, seduta ad una quercia, tiene in braccio il Suo Figliuolo. La credenza popolare vuole che quel dipinto sia lo stesso trovato dai pastori ai piedi dell'elce, al momento dell'apparizione.

La festa della Madonna dell'Elcina si celebra ogni anno l'8 settembre. In commemorazione dell'apparizione di Maria, alla vigilia della festa il dipinto viene trasportato dalla chiesa della Vergine dell'Elcina al santuario di San Lorenzo. Il giorno dopo alcune donne del luogo, in antichi costumi folcloristici, portano doni di grano alla Vergine. Il dipinto viene poi riportato a casa. Ne uscirà per recarsi alla Messa solenne alla chiesa parrocchiale dove resterà fino alla sera del nove settembre. ■

## What to See

- Church of San Lorenzo
- Sanctuary of the Madonna dell'Elcina, where according to tradition, the Virgin Mary appeared in a tree
- Typical tholos, shepherds' huts in dry stone
- The nearby Maiella National Park

## Important Dates

- **January 17** — Feast of St. Anthony
- **August 10** — Feast of San Lorenzo
- **September 8-9** — Feast of the Madonna dell'Elcina

## Sources:

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbateggio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbateggio)

[www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/pescara/abbateggio.htm](http://www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/pescara/abbateggio.htm)

[translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=https://www.acquesacre.it/index.php/it/tradizioni-sentieri/229-il-santuario-della-madonna-dell-elcina-ad-abbateggio&prev=search](https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=https://www.acquesacre.it/index.php/it/tradizioni-sentieri/229-il-santuario-della-madonna-dell-elcina-ad-abbateggio&prev=search)

## Attrazioni del luogo:

- Chiesa di San Lorenzo
- Santuario della Vergine dell'Elcina, dove, secondo la tradizione, Maria sarebbe apparsa a due pastori in un albero.
- Ripari di pastori in pietra grezza
- Parco Nazionale della Maiella

## Date da ricordare:

- **17 gennaio** — Festa di Sant'Antonio
- **10 agosto** — Festa di San Lorenzo
- **8-9 settembre** — Festa della Madonna dell'Elcina





# MIRABELLO SANNITICO

PROVINCE OF CAMPOBASSO, REGION OF MOLISE



*Mirabello Sannitico festival scene*

**By Nancy DeSanti**

The picturesque small town of Mirabello Sannitico is distinguished by the Tappino River flowing on either side of the town on the north and south, with nearby towns including Campobasso to the northwest and Vinchiatturo to the southwest.

The town has approximately 2,132 inhabitants, known as Mirabellesi. It has an agrarian-based culture and history, dating back to at least the 12th century.

The story starts in the 3rd century B.C., when the Romans destroyed the Samnite town of Ruffirum in a bloody battle, and the population moved away and founded another village, called Mirum Bellum, while on the ruins of the old town, the Romans built a tower used as a fortress for political prisoners.

In medieval times a number of lords ruled over Mirabello, among them Stefano di Beclair, the D'Alemagna, the Gambatesa and finally the Frangipane families.

The oldest reference to the town appears in a

church register in 1193 which mentions the church of Saint Salvatore of Mirabello whose location and ruins are now lost, adjacent to the Tappino river. Numerous battles were fought over water rights for the land between Mirabello Sannitico and Ferrazzano.

Unfortunately, many earthquakes have historically plagued the area. This region suffered large earthquakes in 847, 1294, 1309. Other temblors struck in 1456, 1587, 1688 (resulting in no deaths since the earthquake struck when most were in the fields) and 1794. In 1805, an earthquake struck the area that killed nearly 6,000 people in Molise and 300 in Mirabello itself and turned a previously damaged church, San Nicola, into rubble.

The town is laid out in a classic medieval fashion, with a radial array of streets surrounding the principal church, Santa Maria Assunta in Cielo. The principal street, as in nearly all Italian towns, is named via Roma, which in accord with a 1930s decree by Mussolini was changed from via San Nicola. This street goes past the main piazza and leads out of town. At the end of via Roma lies an ancient well, where the cap stones have numerous deeply carved vertical grooves due to centu-

ries of hauling water with buckets and ropes.

The townspeople observe many feast days, celebrating in traditional style with parades, religious processions and fireworks. Many inhabitants still make their own wine, preserve tomatoes, make olive oil and slaughter a pig shortly after Christmas (ritualistically imitating centuries of forebears who did the same to provide meat throughout the coming year).

The most elaborate celebration is for the feast of the patron saint of the town, St. George, on April 23. A beautiful legend tells the story of the miraculous intervention of St. George during the Middle Ages. As the legend has it, invaders were approaching the village when a majestic knight appeared on a hill (now called Colle San Giorgio) and at each touch of his spear from the ground there rose innumerable soldiers, and this frightened their enemies, who retreated. Then the people of the village ran to the top of the hill and saw not even one soldier, just in the middle of the vineyards the statue of St. George, previously kept in a chapel.

One of the important sights in the town is the



View of  
Mirabello  
Sannitico

church of Santa Maria Assunta, which preserves a silver cross decorated with the images of San Giovanni Battista, San Nicola di Bari, Sant'Antonio and San Francesco d'Assisi, and a painting representing the Virgin Mary, San Nicola and San Pietro.

Emigrants from this town are scattered throughout the world. From about 1880 to 1925 many settled in New York City, Philadelphia and Cleveland. However, after World War II, emigration to Canada, Switzerland, and South America was more common. ■

### What to See

- Church of Santa Maria Assunta in Cielo
- Church of San Rocco
- Church of San Giorgio
- Church of Santa Maria di Monteverde in the nearby hills
- Nearby Campitello Matese Ski Resort

### Important Dates

- **March 19** — Feast of St. Joseph
- **April 23** — Feast of St. George, the patron saint
- **June 13** — Feast of St. Anthony

### Sources:

[en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirabello\\_Sannitico](http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirabello_Sannitico)

[www.comune.mirabellosannitico.cb.it/hh/index.php](http://www.comune.mirabellosannitico.cb.it/hh/index.php)

[www.enchantingitaly.com/regions/molise/province-campobasso/mirabellosannitico.htm](http://www.enchantingitaly.com/regions/molise/province-campobasso/mirabellosannitico.htm)

# MIRABELLO

PROVINCIA DI CAMPOBASSO, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Maddalena Borea

La caratteristica cittadina di nome Mirabello Sannitico è caratterizzata dal fiume Tappino che scorre da un lato e dall'altro della città.

Non molto distante da Campobasso e da Vinchiaturo, conta circa 2,132 abitanti, conosciuti come mirabellesi.

La sua storia risale al dodicesimo secolo, ma in realtà risalirebbe al terzo secolo prima di Cristo. I romani avevano distrutto la città di Ruffrium durante una battaglia sanguinosa, e i superstiti andarono a fondare una comunità a cui diedero il nome di Mirum Bellum.

Sulle rovine del vecchio villaggio i Romani stessi eressero una fortezza in cui custodivano prigionieri politici. Durante il periodo medievale molti signori si susseguirono a governare la cittadina, e sono da ricordare Stefano di Beclair, i D'Alemagna, i Gambatesa e i Frangipane.

Alcune notizie di Mirabello ci vengono da documenti ecclesiastici del 1193., in cui si accenna a una chiesa, la chiesa di San Salvatore di Mirabello, completamente distrutta e quindi non più esistente. Sfortunatamente molti terremoti, quelli dell' 847, del 1294, 1309, 1456, 1587, 1688, 1794, 1805 hanno continuato a piagare la città. Quello del 1805, poi, uccise addirittura seimila persone in Molise e 300 in Mirabello. Mirabello ha caratteristiche medievali, con stradette che circondano la chiesa Madre, cioè quella principale, quella di Santa Maria Assunta in cielo. La strada principale si chiama Via Roma, che precedentemente era conosciuta come via San Nicola.

Si chiamò Via Roma in seguito a un ordine di Mussolini, secondo il quale ogni città d'Italia doveva avere una Via Roma, in onore alla Città Eterna. Alla fine di questa via Roma esiste una cisterna dalla quale, attraverso i secoli, si attingeva acqua con corda e con secchio.

Ancora oggi la popolazione celebra feste con processioni e fuochi artificiali, ed ogni anno ogni famiglia uccide un maiale, dopo Natale, per assi-

curare alla famiglia stessa una provvista di carne per l'anno intero. La festa più elaborata è la festa del Santo Patrono, San Giorgio, il 23 aprile.

Secondo una leggenda, San Giorgio intervenne a proteggere i cittadini di Mirabello durante un'invasione nel Medioevo. Si racconta che un poderoso cavaliere apparve su un colle oggi chiamato Colle San Giorgio, per proteggere i mirabellesi. Ad ogni tocco della spada del cavaliere apparivano innumerevoli soldati. Gli avversari atterriti si dissiparono e gli innumerevoli soldati sparirono. I cittadini corsero verso la collina per cercare i soldati e l'unica cosa che trovarono fu la statua di San Giorgio, che era ordinariamente tenuta in una cappella.

Una delle attrazioni del luogo è la chiesa di Santa Maria Assunta, che conserva una Croce, sulla quale sono immagini di San Nicola di Bari, di Sant'Antonio di Padova, di San Francesco d'Assisi. Conserva anche un dipinto della Vergine, di San Nicola, di San Francesco, e di San Pietro.

Dal 1880 al 1925 molti emigrarono in diverse parti del mondo. La maggior parte negli Stati Uniti e in Canada. e, dopo la seconda guerra mondiale molti emigrarono in Svizzera ed in alcuni paesi dell'America latina. ■

### Attrazioni del luogo:

- La Chiesa di Santa Maria Assunta in cielo
- La Chiesa di San Rocco
- La Chiesa di San Giorgio
- La chiesa di Santa Maria di Monteverde, sui vicini colli
- Campitello Matese, famosa stazione di sport invernali

### Date da ricordare:

- **19 marzo** — Festa di San Giuseppe
- **23 aprile** — Festa di San Giorgio, Santo Patrono



## The AMHS Shop

Please make sure to check out the cool merchandise AMHS has to offer:

**"Traditional Cuisine of Abruzzo and Molise" cookbook** (2nd printing) **\$5.00**

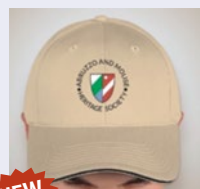
**Buon Appetito Chef's Apron** **\$20.00**

**T-Shirts** **\$20.00**

- Men's sizes:  
S / M / L / XL; Crew neck;  
50% cotton/ 50% polyester
- Women's sizes:  
S / M / L / XL; V-neck;  
90% cotton/10% polyester

**AMHS Tote Bag** **\$30.00**

17" W x 6" D x 13½" H;  
bottom 12" W; handle drop 9";  
100% durable cotton fabric



This year, we are pleased to offer our newest merchandise item, the AMHS baseball cap

**NEW**

**AMHS Baseball Caps** **\$15.00**

We offer merchandise through these outlets:

- At bi-monthly AMHS general society meetings;
- online through the society's website at AMHS Shop.

Online payments can be made using Visa or Mastercard. There is a handling fee to cover postage for merchandise sold online or ordered through the mail.

The proceeds from merchandise sales go toward the AMHS Annual Scholarship Fund. We thank you for your patronage! If you have any questions regarding AMHS merchandise, please contact Lynn Sorbara, (301) 926-7792.

## AMHS PRESIDENT EMERITUS D'ANDREA AWARDED *Order of The Star of Italy*

▼ *Continued from page 1*

Catherine Flumiani, Counselor and friend of the Society, recommended Lucio for the award. It was presented to him by Maurizio Greganti, Deputy Chief of Mission. The D'Andrea children are so very proud of their father, who is very deserving of this award. He has worked tirelessly to promote the Italian culture and language, forming three Italian heritage clubs (The Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society, the Italian Heritage Society at St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church in Fairfax, Virginia, and the Nativity Italian Heritage & Cultural Society at the Nativity Catholic Church in Burke, Virginia), and working with the public school systems in Fairfax County and Prince William County, and the Embassy of Italy, to promote the Italian language. Flavia Colombo, Assistant Director, Casa Italiana Language School/Ente Gestore, was also honored.



*Lucio and his family (l to r) son Paul, wife Edvige, and daughters, Laura Alberici Crump, Candida Pisoni, and Sandra Coleman.*

Attending the ceremony were Lucio's wife Edvige, his daughters Candida, Sandra, Laura, and son Paul; Nancy DeSanti, AMHS 1st Vice President; Maria Fusco, Director of Education, Embassy of Italy; Joe Lupo, President, Casa Italiana Language School (and AMHS member); and Father Ezio Marchetto, Pastor, Holy Rosary Church (also an AMHS member). ■

## Treasurer's Report for 2018

By **Peter Bell**, *Treasurer*

In 2018 the Society recorded revenue from our various operating activities of \$16,455, including member dues, lunches, raffles and merchandise sales. The expenses associated with those activities totaled \$15,530, resulting in net income of \$925. The budget for 2018 was higher for both expected revenue and expenses, as was the expected net income. The shortfall was due to decreases in the number of memberships and lunch attendance, which resulted in a lower actual net income for 2018.

The 2018 Scholarship Appeal resulted in total donations of \$5,150. Of that total, \$4,090 was designated for the Annual Scholarship Fund and the balance of \$1,060 was designated for the Scholarship Endowment Fund. At the close of 2018, the Endowment Fund balance was \$41,869. As a reminder, the Endowment Fund can not be used to provide the annual AMHS commitment of \$4000 to NIAF; only the interest on the Endowment principal can be used, which due to current interest rates is quite low.

The closing balance for the society's checking account was \$9,868. The closing balance for the society's savings account was \$61,050, which includes both restricted funds, such as the Endowment Fund, and unrestricted funds.

In 2019, we will continue our association with the National Italian American Foundation and their scholarship program. We look forward to using our resources to participate with other Italian heritage groups and Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center in activities that celebrate and support our history and culture. Should any member have a question related to the information above, please email me at [peter@ezhudhelp.com](mailto:peter@ezhudhelp.com) or see me at a membership meeting. ■



# Professor Describes War-Time Survival, Deliverance in Small-Town Italy

By **Nancy DeSanti**, 1st Vice President, Programs

Our third program of the year is one you won't want to miss. Our speaker, Carmine Vittoria, will tell us a story of family, a story of hardship and survival, through the eyes of a boy growing up in a small town near Naples before, during and shortly after World War II.

The author spent two years writing the book, "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso." The title is a metaphor for the hard times and better times of WW II in the Naples area (1940-1949). He pulled together his own recollections and those of his family members and boyhood friends during trips to Italy with his wife. This human and military story is being told from what a child saw and heard then in the town of Avella.

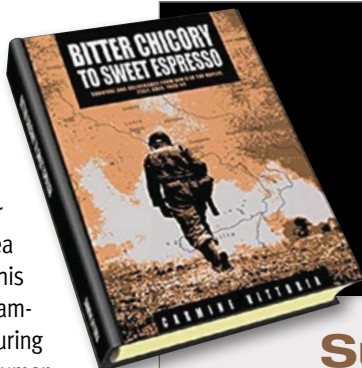
He describes his town as a beautiful place with fields of flowers, resembling a Monet painting. But it's a place whose people have suffered greatly. For over 3,000 years, the author points out, invading armies have come and gone, and the town has adapted and survived all these invasions. His own family endured many hardships, but he quotes the Neapolitan credo "ci arrangiamo" ("we adapt to survive"). He believes that the full story of WW II in the Naples area is yet to be told and the book is his effort to shed light on some of the events of that time and to correct the record in what he describes as wrong thinking about what happened during that war.

After WW II, the war, he left his boyhood home to come to America, and he describes the emotional scene at the ship's dock where the Mother Superior of his school came to see him off. Eventually the boy became Professor Carmine Vittoria, who worked at the Naval research Laboratory as a physicist before teaching at Northeastern University as a full professor of electrical and computer engineering. He retired in 2016.

Professor Emeritus Vittoria received his Ph.D. in applied quantum physics from Yale University in 1970. He is the author of three scientific books, one soccer book and over 400 scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals. He is

Life Fellow of the IEEE (Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineering), Fellow of the APS (American Physical Society) and he has received many scientific awards. He is also a champion bocce player. "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso" is his first non-scientific book.

At the end of the program, to be held at Casa Italiana, we will have a raffle with some wonderful prizes and there will be an opportunity to buy the book "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso" and have the author sign it. The deadline for paid registrations is **June 6.**



LUNCHEON MEETING

## BITTER CHICORY TO SWEET ESPRESSO

Presented by Carmine Vittoria

**Sunday, June 9 | 1:00 PM**

at Casa Italiana | 595 Third Street, NW, Washington, DC

### MENU

Lunch catered by Fontina Grille, Bethesda, MD. Menu includes Greek salad, homemade focaccia, pasta with broccoli, chicken cacciatore, rice, and a variety of homemade desserts. Beverages (water, wine, coffee) are included.

### COST

**\$20.00** members | **\$25.00** non-members.

**PAYING ONLINE IS ENCOURAGED AT**

[www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org](http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org)

**Visa or Mastercard accepted**

(See "Upcoming Events" on the home page)

***Paid reservations must be received by 5:00PM on June 6.***

For questions regarding reservations, please contact Peter Bell (202) 276-2483.

✂ **Return with Payment**

### PAID RESERVATIONS for

**AMHS General Society Meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2019**

Please make check payable to AMHS.

Send to AMHS, c/o Peter Bell, 328 8th Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20002

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guest(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number Attending:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Check Amount:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

LUNCHEON MEETING

## BITTER CHICORY TO SWEET ESPRESSO

Presented by Carmine Vittoria

DETAILS  
ON  
Page 15

### Sunday, June 9

*Please join us* for a wonderful program of interest to both history buffs and those who just love a good story. "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso" is the title of the book by our speaker, Professor Carmine Vittoria. It tells first-hand the author's experiences growing up in a small town near Naples during World War II. There will be a business portion of the meeting prior to lunch and the program, to include presentation of the Society's restated by-laws. We will have a raffle with some wonderful prizes; proceeds to benefit AMHS.

RESERVATION DEADLINE: June 6

## 2019 CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

### SUNDAY, JUNE 9

#### *General Society Meeting*

1:00pm | Casa Italiana

### SUNDAY, JULY 28

#### *General Society Meeting*

1:00pm | Casa Italiana

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

#### *Ferragosto Picnic*

3:00pm | Fort Ward Park,  
Alexandria, VA

### SEPTEMBER 20-22

#### *2019 Vespa Rally*

details to come

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

#### *General Society Meeting*

1:00pm | Restaurant TBA

### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

#### *General Society Meeting —*

#### *Annual Wine Tasting*

1:00pm | Casa Italiana



[www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org](http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org)



## THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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