



THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

of the Washington, DC Area

Celebrating Italian Culture & Community since 2000

www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org

AMHS NOTIZIARIO

May 2016



Top: Colonel Rodolfo Sganga, Military Attachè, Embassy of Italy, talks about “How Italian Characteristics Shape Italy’s Military”.

Bottom: Members of the AMHS Executive Committee with Command Sergeant Major Massimiliano Tallu, his wife Silvia, and daughters Giada and Alice; and Colonel Sganga, his wife Cinzia, daughter Marta, and son Roberto. *(Photos courtesy of Sam Yothers).*

NEXT SOCIETY EVENT: Sunday, May 15, 2016, 1:00pm at Casa Italiana, in collaboration with the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura*: Carla Kosciuszko presents “The Etruscans – An Amazing People”. See inside for additional details.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Cari amici,

I am going to keep this message short, given that there is a lot of wonderful content in this issue of the *Notiziario*. Thank you to all the members who contributed content. We

welcome your continued support!

Please be sure to read about the May 15 program on the Etruscans, and note that the Italian Festival at Villa Rosa in Mitchellville, MD will be held on Sunday, September 11. As in year's past, AMHS volunteers at the Festival to sell wine and promote our Society and the regions of Abruzzo and Molise.

I look forward to seeing you at future AMHS events!

Cordiali saluti,
Maria

UPCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

MAY 15 PROGRAM WILL FOCUS ON ETRUSCAN LEGACY

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President - Programs



Our program on Sunday, May 15, 2016, at Casa Italiana will examine "The Etruscans – An Amazing People" and you may find out many things that surprise you, such as the fact that there

were Etruscans in Abruzzo. Our speaker will be Carla Kosciuszko, who after graduating with an art history degree from DePaul University in Chicago, studied Italian art history and language at the *Istituto Dante Alighieri* in Florence and did research at the *Museo Archeologico Nazionale*, also in Florence. This program will be held in collaboration with the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC)*, Washington, DC, and we thank Director Angela Tangianu for facilitating IIC's participation.

The program will look at the significance of the Etruscans - a civilization of ancient Italy - and the areas of Italy where Etruscan artifacts have been found, the theories of the origin of the Etruscans and their alphabet, engineering, tombs and afterlife, and of course their art. The Etruscan civilization flourished in Toscana, western Umbria and northern Lazio from

about at least 800 B.C. until the late 4th century A.D. when it was absorbed into the Roman Republic. Many if not most Etruscan cities are older than Rome.

Historians have no literature and no original Etruscan texts of religion or philosophy; so much of what is known about their civilization comes from grave goods and tomb findings. As far as architecture, the Etruscans absorbed the Greek influence and they made lasting contributions to the architecture of Italy which were adopted by the Romans and through them became standard to Western civilization. And as far as art, the Etruscans had a strong tradition of figurative art using terracotta and bronze. Among the most beautiful examples is a picture of the Flute Player, from the Tomb of the Leopards from about the 5th century B.C.

So if you would like to learn more about this amazing civilization that had such an influence on Italian art and culture, you should come to our program and bring your family and friends too. Lunch will be catered by Carmine's Restaurant, Washington, DC. The menu will include penne with vegetarian marinara; sausage and peppers; salad, bread, and dessert. Beverages are also included. Paid reservations can be made online, using Mastercard or Visa, at <https://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/mission/events/#event/2016/5/15/amhs-general-society-meeting>, or by sending in your paid reservation, by check, using the flyer contained elsewhere in the *Notiziario*. Paid reservations are required by May 11, 2016 (no exceptions)!

RECENT SOCIETY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

MILITARY ATTACHE RODOLFO SGANGA EXPLAINS ARMY'S "ITALIAN WAY"

By Nancy DeSanti

For our second program of the year on March 20, 2016 at Casa Italiana, AMHS was very pleased to have as our speaker the Military Attachè of the Embassy of Italy, Colonel Rodolfo Sganga, who looked familiar to those who came to our program in January 2015 when Major Elio Manes gave us a talk on the Bersaglieri. At that time, Colonel Sganga offered to give a talk to us in the future. So we decided to take him up on his kind offer. Lucio D'Andrea, our unofficial liaison with the Embassy, reached out to Colonel Sganga, who kindly invited Lucio and me to meet with him at the Embassy. Lucio and I had a wonderful meeting with Colonel Sganga and his colleague Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Massimiliano Tallu who joined us for our program. And both of them brought their lovely families.

Colonel Sganga is originally from Varese in northern Italy and he was educated at the Accademia Militare in Modena, which you could say is the equivalent of our West Point, and also studied at the University of Trieste, the University of Torino and the United States Marine Corps University School of Advanced Warfare in Quantico, Virginia, where he received a

Master's degree in military studies and operational studies.

The Italian Army's history dates back to the 1850s and 1860s and the unification of Italy but Colonel Sganga's focus was on more recent times, post-Cold War, when the Italian army has seen extensive peacekeeping service and combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. That is something Colonel Sganga surely knows about very well. One of his prestigious assignments was as brigade commander of the Folgore Paratroopers Brigade, the 187-mo Reggimento Paracadutisti Folgore based in Livorno. La Folgore, which means "lightning", is the airborne brigade of the Italian Army and is one of three light infantry brigades.

Colonel Sganga participated in the Saber Junction 13 exercises in Vicenza in 2012 in which Italian paratroopers took part in multinational training exercises as one of 19 national contingents in preparation for the deployment to Iraq as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, the global war on terrorism.

During his career, Colonel Sganga served overseas in Kosovo and later in Afghanistan. Colonel Sganga forgot to mention this, but Google makes life so easy and so we were able to learn from his hometown newspaper in Varese that while in Farah, Afghanistan, one of the hot spots there, he was awarded the bronze cross and the silver cross for valor, for saving the life of a wounded soldier by pulling him to safety while their battalion came under heavy enemy fire. Perhaps this is why Colonel Sganga has said "Yes, war is hell, always. However, there are a few stories in which humanity shows up in its best aspects, stories of incredible camaraderie, friendship and heroism which we have the duty to never forget. If we remember the tragedy of war, maybe we will avoid the next one." Such wise words!!

Colonel Sganga used a power point presentation and videos to illustrate his very informative talk on "the Italian way" as he explained what distinguishes the Italian military from the military of other countries. For one thing, there is an emphasis on using restraint instead of force, whenever possible. Also, there is the use of negotiating skills, and developing good relations with local forces and populations. From personal experience, he told us how this was implemented in Farah, Afghanistan, and we saw the video that showed us Italian soldiers interacting with the Afghans, meeting with tribal elders, and airlifting supplies of food, water and medicine as well as ammunition.

We also watched the Italian soldiers engaging in combat with the Taliban, and Colonel Sganga pointed out that one of the benefits of having good relations with the local population was that they are more willing to provide good intelligence.

Colonel Sganga described the various stages in the recent development of the Italian Army which, like the U.S. Army, no longer consists of draftees; it is a volunteer army. He explained that during the shaping period, the Italian Army was in Somalia and Lebanon and later on during the transition stage, the Italian Army was in Bosnia and Kosovo. In reaching the maturity stage, the Italian Army now is in Mali, Iraq and Afghanistan, leading the NATO effort in the Balkans, and preparing for the

next effort to fight ISIS in Libya, if and when there is a united government in that country. And Italian troops will soon be stationed in Mosul, Iraq, to protect the Italian company which is tasked with the important project of working on the Mosul Dam. He noted there are no Italian troops in Syria and said that is a political decision.

Colonel Sganga said the Italian Army has played a key role in the last 30 years and has been praised for its professionalism, personal contact and continuity. He mentioned that soldiers also patrol in some cities in Italy such as Naples to help maintain order, and he added that some soldiers at first were not happy to be deployed in their homeland but then they came to understand the value of their assignment.

Speaking again about Afghanistan, Colonel Sganga said a decision was initially made to avoid the use of force because civilian casualties alienate the local population. He said his soldiers set up "Checkpoint Pasta" and joked that "we name everything pasta."

The audience was fascinated by the video showing the Folgore contingent leaving the airport in Italy, checking their equipment before arriving in Kabul, walking around a market in Kabul, and visiting the pediatric hospital built by the Italians. In Farah, the video showed bleak mountains and desert, and it showed the soldiers' night vision capabilities and how the soldiers used cards to overcome language barriers. The video also showed an intense firefight with the Taliban from the ground perspective. After his very informative talk, Colonel Sganga took questions and comments from the audience, and stayed to chat with many of our members.

We were truly honored to have with us Colonel Sganga and his wife Cinzia, son Roberto and daughter Marta, and CSM Tallu and his wife Silvia and their daughters Giada and Alice. And everyone enjoyed the delicious lunch catered by Three Brothers Italian Restaurant, which was arranged thanks to Sergio and Maria Fresco. We are also grateful to those who donated some wonderful raffle prizes and bought raffle tickets, raising \$165 for our scholarship fund.

DELIGHTFUL SPRING TOUR OF HILLWOOD ESTATE & GARDENS

By Nancy DeSanti

A group of 10 AMHS members had made plans to spend a nice spring day at Hillwood Estate & Gardens overlooking Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. Well, April 3 turned out to be a cold, windy day but nevertheless we had a wonderful time visiting the beautiful Hillwood mansion and gardens.

The mansion itself features grand staircases, rock crystal chandeliers, and built-in lighted cases filled with treasures. Hillwood is especially known for its collection of Russian and French art objects. Our Russian tour guide, Marina, was very knowledgeable about the Russian art objects, starting with the oval portrait of Empress Catherine the Great, which looked like a painting but was actually a tapestry. We saw the beautiful

Russian icons, the stunning large chalice made with gold and precious stones, the priceless Faberge eggs, and so much more.

Around every corner there were beautiful pieces of jewelry, porcelain china pieces in a beautiful shade of blue known as "heavenly blue" (bleu celeste) and antique furniture such as the carved roll-up desk which served as a dressing table and a safe with hidden compartments.



We also learned quite a bit about Hillwood's owner, Marjorie Merriweather Post, an heiress in her own right who married four rich men. She had a special affinity for French and Russian art, and during her time in the Soviet Union when her husband was the U.S. ambassador, she rescued many precious art objects that the Soviets had removed from churches and palaces. She managed to acquire many pieces which the Soviets had planned to melt down if they could not sell them quickly. We learned that Marjorie Merriweather Post intended all along to make Hillwood a museum and she hired a well-known curator to help her. And in addition to being beautiful, elegant and rich, we learned she was also a kind person who for example, after one of her famous dinner parties, would go back in the kitchen to personally thank the cooks and servers.

We did not have a chance to spend much time in the greenhouse or gardens, but we did learn that the gardens were designed with the help of an Italian landscape architect, Umberto Innocenti. We think a return trip is in our future because we truly enjoyed the beauty and serenity of Hillwood.

AMHS MEMBERSHIP

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President - Membership

I am pleased to announce that the 2016 membership renewal campaign has been going smoothly. We are currently at 188 members, with 43 members from last year who have not yet renewed (for those who have not renewed, you will receive an email reminding you to renew your membership for 2016; anyone who does not renew by May 31 will be dropped from the membership).

Thank you for your support of the Society's programs and activities. We have many wonderful events coming up in the next few months and your membership makes them possible!

Social Networking

AMHS is involved in social networking and post pictures of our events and interesting articles about Italy online. Please take

some time to visit our AMHS Facebook page and hit the "Like" button to follow our updates,

<https://www.facebook.com/abruzzomoliseheritagesociety>.

New Members

A warm welcome to our newest members, Linda Ciocci, Katherine Condon, Stephen diGirolamo and Christine Smith, Ann La Lena, Mario Marinucci, Jane Bondanza Morrissey, Shari Sanford, and Rose Silvestri Canahl.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

The following members celebrate birthdays and anniversaries in May and June. *Buon compleanno, buon anniversario e Auguri!*

Compleanni a Maggio

Lucy Manzano, May 1; Darlene Palumbo Barnsby, May 3; Joanne Fusco, May 5; Samira May Badawi, Nancy Coviello, May 7; Samuel Amatucci, Joseph Scafetta, Jr., Peter A. Eastor, 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; Attilio Manzano, May 24; Cristina Scalzitti, May 25; Agnes Sabatini DeMauro; Vince Ciccone, May 27; Joan Marie Amatuzio, Jim De Santis, May 28; Ennio Di Tullio, Gaspare Tirabassi, May 29, and Renato Orcino, May 30.

Compleanni a Giugno

Beniamino Caniglia, June 4; Lucille Fuscillo, Janet Marmura, Anita Morton, June 6; Joseph Lupo, June 9; Alberto L. Paolantonio, June 10; Giuseppe "Pino" Cicala, June 12; Liliana Ceresini, June 14; Raymond Sciannella, June 19; Daniel Fusco, June 20, Rita Coyne, Judge Richard Marano, June 22; Margaret Uglow, June 25; Omero Sabatini, June 26; Rita Orcino, June 28; and Helen Antonelli Free, Laura Gentile, June 30.

Anniversari a Maggio

Joseph & Amy Profit D'Amico, May 1; Lenny & Laura Crump, May 5; Frank & Joyce Del Borrello, May 10; Guido Cassetta & Patricia Violante, May 26; Mario & Carmen Ciccone, May 27. Ordination: Rev. John V. DiBacco Jr., May 13

Anniversari a Giugno

Beniamino & Delores Caniglia, June 2; Luigi & Silvana DeLuca, Omero & Belinda Sabatini, June 3; Michael & Theda Corrado, Massimo & Rosa Mazziotti, Joseph and Betsy Ruzzi, June 4; Joe & Tina Marchegiani, June 5; Lucio & Maria Marchegiani, June 9; Mauro & Elizabeth Chiaverini, June 11; Edward & Rita Coyne, Anthony & Elodia D'Onofrio, June 25; and Lucio & Edvige D'Andrea, June 27.

AMHS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

By Ray LaVerghetta, Chairman, Scholarship Committee

As many of our AMHS members likely know, our organization awards two \$4,000 scholarships each year, one to each of two highly qualified students. The AMHS provides \$4,000, an amount which is matched by the National Italian American Foundation. The winning applicants must meet the collective criteria of both the NIAF and the AMHS. NIAF staff carry out the initial screening of the applicants, ensuring that only those

applicants who meet the two organizations' criteria and whose documentation supports their application make it through the first pass. The qualified applications are then forwarded to the AMHS Scholarship Committee, which further evaluates them and selects the winners of the two scholarships on the basis of majority vote.



The entire process begins in January with the opening of the application period for academic year 2016-2017, which this year closed on March 1st. NIAF then does its review and forwards the results to the AMHS Scholarship Committee sometime in April. The Committee then gets down to the business of selecting winners and notifying the NIAF of its decision as early as possible in May.

Recently, on March 23rd, AMHS President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers and AMHS Scholarship Chairman Ray LaVerghetta headed over to NIAF headquarters to deliver the organization's \$4,000 check to NIAF Director of Programs, Gabriella Mileti, carrying out what has become a symbolic step in the scholarship process. Readers of the *Notiziario* should be able to read about the winning applicants in the next edition.

SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

A REMEMBRANCE FROM A VISIT TO ITALY



Dear Maria:
The scan is an enlarged photo of the original that I took in 1988 at the Vatican in Rome. This was my first trip to Italy to visit my Dad's home town in Pacentro. The visit was wonderful staying with my relatives in Pacentro; eating real Italian food, breathing the crisp mountain air, and enjoying the wonderful people living in Pacentro.

This photo is most unusual and I took it with a Polaroid Camera. The image startled many of the people that were with my tour group. Some thought I was sick and there was a message in this photo. I don't know but I like to think it is

something special so I am submitting this photo in case you may want to share with other members.

Thank you, William F. LePore

LUCIO IS AT IT AGAIN!

Inspired by the success Lucio achieved about four years ago in establishing the Italian Heritage Society of St. Mary of Sorrows Church in Fairfax, VA, Lucio has done it again!

When Lucio and Edvige moved, about two years ago to Westminster at Lake Ridge, an independent living community, they joined the parish of the Church of the Nativity in Burke, VA. Some of the Church's parishioners knew that Lucio had launched an Italian heritage society at St. Mary's, and asked Lucio and Edvige to do the same at Nativity. They were both enthusiastic with the idea. They approached the Pastor at Nativity, Father Robert Cilinski, whose parents are Polish and Italian, who gave his whole-hearted support. Joining in their support were Sisters Donatella and Mary, members of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and natives of Sicily.

An open house was held on Wednesday, March 2 to launch the Nativity Italian Heritage and Cultural Society (NIHCS): 65 parishioners attended the open house. Lucio and a small group of friends who helped to launch the Society were pleasantly surprised and encouraged. Lucio invited each person at the open house to introduce himself/herself and to indicate their Italian roots. Besides some native Italians, the majority of guests were 1st or 2nd generation Italian Americans; some recalled where their ancestors came from, including Sicily, Campagna, Veneto, Friuli/Venezia, Puglia, Calabria, Abruzzo, and Molise; some have no Italian roots but love Italy. What was especially gratifying to Lucio and Edvige was the enthusiastic support and the obvious need for a society that was long overdue. Nativity is one of the largest parishes in the Archdiocese of Arlington, with some 6,000 parishioners. The potential for growth is there.

The mission of the NIHCS is to promote the cultural, social and educational heritage of Italy and its regions, and to increase the awareness and appreciation of the contributions made by Italians, Italian Americans, and those of Italian heritage to the economic, social and cultural development of the United States.

The NIHCS plans to hold monthly meetings; an ambitious program is planned for the future. A contributing factor to the success of the NIHCS and the Italian society at St. Mary of Sorrows, is the sponsorship of adult Italian language classes, which are offered not only in these two parishes but also at the Truro Anglican Church in Fairfax and in private homes. One of the earliest supporters of the Society is Carla Kosciuszko, who will be making a presentation to AMHS on May 15, on "The Etruscans – A Beautiful People".

Someone asked Edvige why Lucio is so committed to promoting his heritage; her response was "It is in his DNA!" (*Submitted by Lucio D'Andrea*).

ITALY IN THE WHITE HOUSE: A CONVERSATION ON HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

By Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

On Wednesday, March 2, 2016, I took a day off from work to attend the symposium "Italy in the White House: A Conversation on Historical Perspectives." The symposium was sponsored by The White House Historical Association (WHHA) in partnership with The Embassy of Italy, the Italian Cultural Institute, and the National Italian American Foundation. The day-long educational symposium was held at the WHHA's historic property adjacent to the White House on Lafayette Square.

The purpose of the symposium was to showcase the close connection between the United States and Italy including influences on political philosophy, architecture, cuisine, and more through the lens of White House history. Professor Campbell Grey, Associate Professor, Department of Classical Studies, University of Pennsylvania, provided the keynote address, examining the many Italian influences present in the White House from early presidents to the objects in the White House Collection. Grey is a social historian of the Roman and post-Roman world, and is a residential Faculty Fellow of the King's Court English College House.



Ambassador Varricchio (right) with, to his left, Stewart McLaurin, President, WHHA; John Viola, President, NIAF; Anita McBride, Lloyd Hand, and Catherine Fenton.

Speakers throughout the day engaged in panel discussions about the cultural connections between the U.S. and Italy as they relate to the White House, including a luncheon that featured culinary offerings inspired by menus from past state dinners for visiting Italian leaders. Luncheon panelists included the Honorable Anita B. McBride, former Chief of Staff to First Lady Laura Bush; the Honorable Lloyd N. Hand, former United States Chief of Protocol for President Lyndon Johnson; and the Honorable Catherine S. Fenton, former Social Secretary for First Lady Laura Bush and Deputy Social Secretary for First Lady Nancy Reagan and First Lady Barbara Bush.

Perhaps the greatest highlight of the day was the appearance by the Honorable Armando Varricchio, the new Ambassador of

Italy to the United States, who came to the symposium after presenting his credentials to President Obama.

The afternoon panel continued the discussion with leading scholars including Professor Barbara Faedda, Associate Director of the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia University; Professor Mortimer Sellers, Regents Professor of the University System of Maryland and President of the International Association for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy; Professor Richard Guy Wilson, Commonwealth Professor's Chair in Architectural History at the University of Virginia; and Meredith Levin, Western European Humanities Librarian, Columbia University Libraries. Topics for discussion included tracing U.S. origins to classical antiquity and Italian philosophical thought; exploring the ancient Roman and Italian roots of White House architecture; illustrating the impact of Italy and Italian culture on life in the Executive Mansion and Washington, DC; and an Italian perspective on the U.S.-Italy relationship.

The symposium concluded with a live performance by Ricardo Herrera and Tatiana Loisha, representing the Daniel Ferro Vocal Program based in Greve in Chianti, Italy, of historic Italian music previously performed at the White House.

Other AMHS members in attendance were Lucio and Edvige D'Andrea; Monica Palenski-Reed; Lourdes Tinajero; and Francesco Isgro. At lunch, I had the great privilege to sit with several new members of NIAF's Italian American Leadership Council, including Valentina Vezza, NIAF Regional Vice President of New England; Jeanne Allen, senior fellow emeritus of the Center for Education Reform; and Dr. Anthony Tamburri, dean of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute at Queens College, CUNY. This provided me with a very good opportunity to have a frank and honest discussion about how we can work to help grow the IALC, for the benefit of our collective Italian American community.

This day-long symposium is the first of a series of internationally-themed symposia planned through 2018. Visit the [WHHA](http://www.whha.org) to learn more about its events, activities, etc.

Of note, the WHHA unveiled decoupage glass plates of two of Constantino Brumidi's paintings which hang in the Palm Room of the White House, "Liberty" and "Union", available for sale at the WHHA (to learn more about these plates, visit <http://shop.whitehousehistory.org/catalogsearch/result/?q=brumidi>) (As you may know, due to extensive research and activism by AMHS member Joe Grano, who passed away in November 2013, a larger population know and appreciate who Brumidi was and his important contributions to historical paintings and his fresco work in the U.S. Capitol).





Maria D'Andrea (right) with, to her left, IALC members Jeanne Allen, Valentina Vezza, and Dr. Anthony Tamburri.

PASQUALE ESPOSITO CELEBRATES ENRICO CARUSO

By Sarah Scott, AMHS Board member

AMHS and the Passatempo Meetup make a great team! A large group that included members and guests of both groups - including several parishioners of Holy Rosary Church - shared dinner and then attended "The Voice of A Legend - Celebrating Enrico Caruso," featuring Italian tenor, Pasquale Esposito at the GWU Marvin Center on March 19, 2016.



The event celebrated the legacy of Enrico Caruso, the world's first international recording star, who took opera to the masses and shared the vitality of the streets of Naples through *Canzone Napoletane* (Neapolitan Songs) with the world. The show was part live concert and commentary by Pasquale Esposito and his co-host Dino Natali - best known as Officer Zatelli on the sitcom *Barney Miller* - and part screening of excerpts from Pasquale's first PBS documentary, "Pasquale Esposito Celebrates Enrico Caruso." The documentary combined a stunning concert recorded live at the 13th century Castello Giusso on Italy's Amalfi Coast with travel footage from Caruso's Naples and Sorrento as well as the U.S. Throughout the program, Pasquale, accompanied by his band and special

guests (including an appearance by Placido Domingo), paid homage to Enrico Caruso as he took us on a musical journey of the music and places that shaped Caruso's life and made him an international star.

Through the course of the evening, the audience learned about Caruso and the music of Naples. Born in 1873, Caruso grew up in poverty and due to his great talent, rose to super-star status. He debuted at 22-years old at *Teatro Nuovo* in Naples. He rose to perform as the star at many European opera houses including *La Scala* in Milan and *Mariinsky Theatre* in Saint Petersburg. He appeared over 860 times at the *Metropolitan Opera House* in New York. Caruso made close to 300 commercially released recordings - many that you can still find in stores or online - and his career paved the way for classical crossover stars like Luciano Pavarotti and Andrea Bocelli.

Pasquale Esposito, who was born and raised in Caruso's neighborhood and even sang in the same church as a boy, performed several of Caruso's most famous songs and arias. Pasquale grew up fascinated by Caruso and how he not only popularized opera but also the beautiful Neapolitan songs. Pasquale still returns often to his hometown of Naples, although he became an American citizen - after winning the Green Card Lottery in 1998 and coming to the United States - and now makes his home in California.

This music is beautiful whenever we hear it, but it is so much better when we can witness it live! Esposito, backed up by wonderful musicians, performed many of the songs that made Caruso famous, including *Nessun Dorma*, *Una Furtiva Lagrima*, and *O Sole Mio*. The evening was a delightful blend of history and opera. After the show, Pasquale graciously chatted with members of the audience, signed autographs, and took pictures.

Pasquale said the documentary has been shown on PBS to over 118 million people worldwide, and he is continuing the celebration of Caruso in Chicago, Denver, Las Vegas, and many other U.S. cities. To learn more about Pasquale Esposito, visit www.pasqualeesposito.com

ANTONIN SCALIA (1936-2016), ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE US SUPREME COURT AND FRIEND OF AMHS

By Ennio Di Tullio, AMHS Board Member

Sadly, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Antonin Scalia passed away suddenly on February 13, 2016. While enjoying a long and distinguished legal career, Justice Scalia never forgot his roots as an Italian-American. In fact, he was the first Italian-American Justice of the Supreme Court, nominated by President Ronald Reagan and confirmed by the Senate in a unanimous vote. While many may have disagreed with his conservative opinions, he was well respected as a legal mind and acknowledged by those who knew him to be a personable and generous man. The huge turn-out for his funeral Mass at the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception attests to this.



Justice Scalia with the AMHS officers

Evidence of his personal kindness and his pride in his heritage was Justice Scalia's attendance at the 2004 AMHS Christmas Gala on Sunday, December 5 held at Martin's Crosswinds in Greenbelt, Maryland. This great honor to the Society came about because my brother-in-law Frank Del Borrello, an AMHS member, was also Justice Scalia's hair stylist. I, then President of the Society, sent the Justice a written invitation, and when I followed up with a telephone call, he gladly accepted the invitation because of his relationship - and mine - with Frank. He regretted that he would be unable to stay for the dinner, because of his duty to review papers for an important Supreme Court decision on the following day, but noted that he would be happy to address the attendees.



Scalia receiving the honorary membership certificate from then Pres. Ennio Di Tullio and VP Gene Swann

Escorted by two US Marshals, Scalia arrived in time to mingle with the crowd and graciously pose for photos during the cocktail hour. The 230 AMHS members and friends present certainly felt the warmth of his personality, a vibe that continued when he addressed the group as a whole. In his remarks, Justice Scalia noted that while he was not Abruzzese or Molisano, he was Sicilian, and very proud of his Italian heritage. The crowd erupted in cheers! Justice Scalia remarked on his regret that he had never learned to speak Italian, but was nevertheless dedicated to the preservation of the Italian-American culture in the United States, and praised the Society for its efforts in that

area, as well as for its dedication to its scholarship program. He also offered his wise advice to students and young lawyers in the audience. 2004 Vice President for Membership Gene Swann and I presented the Justice with a certificate of Honorary Membership in the Society, for which he expressed profound thanks.

Justice Scalia's presence at our Gala was a remarkable honor for AMHS, a singular event with a record attendance that marked a true highlight of the Society's history. Antonin Scalia will never be forgotten by the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society.

TONY CAMPITELLI'S MASTERPIECES STILL MUCH ADMIRERD

By Nancy DeSanti



When we pass the beautiful belltower (campanile) on the way into Holy Rosary Church, or admire the impressive marble façade of Casa Italiana as we enter for an event or a class, many of us may not realize that they have an Abruzzese "Renaissance man" to thank. Anthony Campitelli, known as Tony, was an architect, artist, sculptor and musician. And besides having a deep appreciation for the arts, Campitelli was an architect who designed churches, shopping centers and office buildings.

Campitelli, who died in 2004, grew up in the town of Castel Frentano in the Chieti province (see related article in this *Notiziario*). He came here at the age of 16 - a familiar immigrant story of no money and no English. He painted acrylic landscapes and sculpted the bas-relief plaque of Father Nicholas De Carlo, the founder and first pastor of Holy Rosary Church. The beautiful plaque which is on display in the church was made to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Father De Carlo's ordination and it was unveiled in 1955. The plaque was commissioned by the Lido Civic Club, of which Campitelli was president from 1955 to 1957.

Campitelli also commissioned the portrait of Giulio Andreotti, the long-time Italian prime minister who was a key benefactor of Casa Italiana, as well as the portrait of Father Caesar Donanzan. Campitelli was a close friend of both Father De Carlo and Father Donanzan and a pallbearer at Father Donanzan's funeral.

Casa Italiana was dedicated on March 22, 1981, and the marble façade which Campitelli designed was added in 1989 to beautify

the Casa. Together with a partner who was also an immigrant, Campitelli had formed a company that built thousands of houses, apartment buildings, shopping centers and office buildings over a 50-year period. But his favorite project was his Renaissance-style renovation of Casa Italiana. Campitelli maintained a strong interest in Italian culture and was awarded the Star of Solidarity by the Italian government.

But the story began years before when Father De Carlo turned to Campitelli to assist him in designing the church's belltower. Campitelli had immigrated with his family during World War I. His father was a builder by trade and Tony entered his father's profession and then became a licensed architect. He stopped by Holy Rosary Church one day when he was out driving around, and the intriguing architecture caught his eye. Realizing he was at an Italian Catholic church, he began coming to Sunday Mass, eventually meeting Father De Carlo who asked him to design the belltower. So he drew up the plans for the belltower in 1941 and Father De Carlo raised the funds.

Campitelli used to drive Father De Carlo on his rounds to visit the sick members of the parish, and the priest became concerned about his parishioners' later years. In 1952, he began working out plans for a rest home and figuring out a way to finance the home, which he named Villa Rosa after his mother. The architect for Villa Rosa was Tony Campitelli, and ground was broken in September 1963. A few days after the ground-breaking ceremony, which was attended by the Italian ambassador and the Apostolic Delegate, the first Villa Rosa Festival was held, and it was called "as authentic an Italian festival as can be expected outside Italy." ***That festival continues to this day, and will be held again on September 11, 2016. SO MARK YOUR CALENDARS!***

FIGHTING TO RIGHT A WRONG

The following article, about the mistreatment and internment of Italian Americans during World War II (WWII), might be of great interest to our members. The article has been excerpted from "Ambassador Magazine, Vol. 27, No. 3, Spring 2016," ©National Italian American Foundation, with NIAF's permission.

Last December, NIAF received a holiday surprise from Capitol Hill. Two bills had been introduced in the U.S House of Representatives regarding the mistreatment and internment of Italian Americans during World War II.

Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren of California introduced [H.R. 4146](#), to authorize the Secretary of Education to provide grants for education programs on the history of the treatment of Italian Americans during World War II; and [H.R. 4147](#), a bill to apologize for the treatment of Italian Americans during World War II, on December 1, 2015. This issue landed with the Congresswoman after a constituent approached her. Seeing his determination to pass a law on Italian American mistreatment during World War II, she told the constituent that, if he wrote two bills, she would introduce them in the House. Chet Campanella readily agreed.

Campanella is a retired pharmacist and the son of Italian immigrants, Nicholas and Maria, from the region of Bari. When the U.S. entered WWII, his parents and 600,000 other Italians living here were classified as "Enemy Aliens." They faced movement restrictions, curfews, property confiscation, and potential relocation and internment. Although Campanella was only about 12 at the time, his memory of these injustices hasn't faded. For the last 14 years, he has dedicated himself to educating Americans about the mistreatment of Italian Americans during WWII. "People just have no idea this happened," he said.

In 2010, Campanella campaigned for an official apology from the state of California for the treatment of Italian Americans during WWII. The measure passed unanimously and was signed into law later that year. With dogged determination, he plans to keep working on the national stage until the bills introduced by Congresswoman Lofgren are passed.

On April 7, 2016, NIAF sent an email to its members and affiliate members, requesting that we join NIAF and support H.R. 4146 and H.R. 4147. **Sign the Change.org Petition**[HERE](#). (The Change.org petition was started on April 5; it is at 1,253 signatures with the milestone goal to reach 1,500!). NIAF also urges us to contact our representative and ask them to support or co-sponsor H.R. 4146 and 4147. You can find the name and address of your Representative [HERE](#).

FROM THE REGIONAL CORNER

CASTEL FRENTANO, PROVINCE OF CHIETI, ABRUZZO REGION

By Nancy DeSanti

Translated by Maddalena Borea, AMHS member



The picturesque hilltop town of Castel Frentano is located about 40 kilometers from Chieti. The town has approximately 4,214 inhabitants, known as Castellini.

Castel Frentano is situated on a hill, in a beautifully panoramic position, surrounded by olive trees and vineyards. It is also famous for the typical local cake called "bocconotto", and the recipe for the "bocconotto castellino" has been passed down through the generations since the 8th century and is really the symbol of the town.

Throughout the month of August, there are art exhibits, sports events, wine and local food festivals. At Easter the town has

become known for its *Rappresentazione "Passione di Cristo"* which of course can be viewed on YouTube.

The history of this ancient town goes back thousands of years, to the time of the Frentanes - the Italic population already flourishing in the area 1,000 years B.C. The name of the town is derived from the Frentanes, who populated the area. This connection is documented by the presence of pre-Roman tomb sites at nearby Madonna del Casale, which was a resting station on the "*tratturo*," the long path that Abruzzese shepherds followed from their sites in the mountains to their winter sites along the coast, in Puglia. The town was mentioned in documents dating from the 12th century A.D. Unfortunately a terrible landslide in 1881 destroyed a large part of the village which had to be re-built.

Note: Castel Frentano is the hometown of Tony Campitelli, who after coming to Washington, D.C., as a young man, became the architect of Holy Rosary's belltower, the architecture of Villa Rosa and of the façade of Casa Italiana (see related article in this *Notiziario*).

What to See

- Church of St. Stephen, built in the late 13th and early 14th century and re-built in the 18th century in the neo-Classical style
- Churches of Santa Maria della Selva & San Rocco
- Palazzo Vergilj & Palazzo Crognale
- 14th century defensive walls

Important Dates

- August 3: St. Stephen, the patron saint
- August 5: Feast of "donativi"
- August 15: Feast of the Assunta

Sources:

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRz37vTxA3s>

CASTEL FRENTANO, PROVINCIA DI CHIETI, REGIONE ABRUZZO

Castel Frentano è una pittoresca città di collina a circa 40 km da Chieti.

Conta 4,214 abitanti, conosciuti come Castellini. Circondata da uliveti e vigneti, offre una bellissima vista panoramica. Essa, però, è soprattutto, famosa per una torta locale, chiamata "Bocconotto", e per la ricetta de "Il Bocconotto Castellino", che i suoi abitanti tramandano di generazione in generazione sin dall'ottavo secolo. Il Bocconotto è il simbolo di questa città, che lungo tutto il mese di agosto offre esibizioni artistiche,

eventi sportivi e sagre di vini e di leccornie locali. La sua rappresentazione de "la Passione di Cristo" a Pasqua può anche essere vista su YouTube.

La sua storia risale a vari millenni fa, ai tempi dei Frentani, una popolazione italica, esistente qui già mille anni prima di Cristo. Il nome viene, appunto, dai Frentani, che popolarono la zona. Questo si deduce dalla presenza di tombe preromane nella vicina Madonna del Casale. Madonna del Casale costituiva una stazione di sosta, lungo il "tratturo," per i pastori che, d'inverno, trasferivano gli animali dalle zone montagnose alle zone costiere, più calde, della Puglia. Esistono documenti che parlano di Castel Frentano già nel dodicesimo secolo dopo Cristo. Una terribile frana nel 1881 distrusse buona parte della cittadina, che dovè essere ricostruita.

Castel Frentano è la città natale di Tony Campitelli, architetto del Campanile della Chiesa del Santo Rosario, della casa di riposo "Villa Rosa", e della facciata di Casa Italiana (vedere l'articolo a riguardo sul *Notiziario*).

Attrazioni del luogo

- Chiesa di Santo Stefano, costruita tra la fine del tredicesimo secolo e l'inizio del quattordicesimo (ricostruita nel diciottesimo secolo in stile neoclassico)
- Chiese di Santa Maria della Selva & di San Rocco
- Palazzo Vergili & Palazzo Crognale
- Mura di difesa del quattordicesimo secolo

Date da ricordare

- 3 Agosto: festa di Santo Stefano, il Patrono
- 5 Agosto: festa di "Donativi"
- 15 Agosto: festa dell'Assunta

MONTAGANO, PROVINCE OF CAMPOBASSO, MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

Translated by Maddalena Borea



Montagano, in the province of Campobasso, is a beautiful and picturesque town in the province of Campobasso, and is actually about 9 kilometers north of Campobasso.

The town has about 1,207 inhabitants, known as Montananesi, and it rises on one side of the Biferno River, where the ancient Samnite town of Fagifulae once stood. In the 4th century B.C., the inhabitants of that Samnite town sided with Hannibal against Rome.

The name of the town was originally Monte Ogeanum back in the 11th century and then Montis Agani by the 15th century. Eventually the town came under the dominion of the Count of Montagano who died without heirs.

Montagano is a white stone village surrounded by farmland whose fields are neat and intensively farmed. A local legend says that a parish priest in the 17th century, after hearing the confessions of the townspeople, would give them penance to plant trees and vines, and he offered them money to buy tools.

Montagano is a lively place especially in summer when the town has events such as its own “giornata del pomodoro,” concerts with the local band and wine tastings.

In fact, the town is famous for “Il Pomodoro di Montagano” which is a very sweet, delicious variety of tomato. These tomatoes are especially rich in vitamins A and C and also in potassium. Also, scientific studies have shown that the tomatoes have a high concentration of an antioxidant known as lycopene, and the tomatoes can be used in salads or for making the “salsa tradizionale di Molise goloso.”

A local group, Il Viandante del Molise (Wayfarer of Molise) has a poetic saying, “dove il respiro del vento scuote segreti dell’anima,” meaning “where the breath of the wind shakes the secrets of the soul.”

Note: Our thanks to new member Tony Phillips for suggesting this topic. Tony, who lives in Pompano Beach Florida and is president of a local Sons of Italy lodge there, said his grandfather is from Montagano (last names Petrone and Rossi).

What to See

- Church of Sant’Antonio, with a 19th century facade
- Parish church of Santa Maria Assunta, with a beautiful belltower
- Hilltop medieval castle
- Abbey of Santa Maria di Farfula, which was destroyed by an earthquake in 1805 and later restored, and where Pope Celestino V spent his early years as an abbot

Important Dates

- July 11: Feast of Sant’Alessandro, the patron saint
- August 15: Giochi

Sources:

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MONTAGANO, PROVINCIA DI CAMPOBASSO, REGIONE MOLISE

Montagano è una pittoresca cittadina a circa 9 chilometri da Campobasso, suo capoluogo.

Conta 1,207 abitanti, i quali sono chiamati Montananesi. È situata ad un lato del fiume Biferno, dove una volta sorgeva l'antica città sannita Fagifulae. Nel quarto secolo prima di Cristo, la città Sannita si alleò al fianco di Annibale contro i Romani.

Inizialmente chiamata Monte Ogeano, divenne Monte Agani nel quindicesimo secolo. Più tardi fu possedimento del Conte di Montagano, il quale morì senza eredi.

È circondata da terre, da alberi, e da bei campi coltivati. Secondo una leggenda, un sacerdote, addetto alla cura spirituale dei cittadini di Montagano, dopo che confessava i suoi parrocchiani, comandava loro di piantare alberi e vigneti, come penitenza dei loro peccati, e offriva loro i mezzi e gli arnesi per farlo.

È una cittadina molto viva ed allegra, e d'estate offre la sagra del pomodoro, concerti ed assaggi di vini locali. I pomodori di Montagano hanno un sapore unico, e qualità uniche. Sono ricchi di vitamina A, C e di potassio. Un'analisi chimica, infatti, avrebbe accertato in questi pomodori una preziosa sostanza deossidante, chiamata Lycopene.

Un gruppo locale, Il Viandante del Molise, ha un detto poetico, che va così: “Dove il respiro del vento scuote i segreti dell’anima”.

Cogliamo questa occasione per ringraziare un nuovo membro, Tony Phillips, per averci suggerito questa cittadina. Tony, che vive in Pompano Beach, in Florida, è attualmente presidente della loggia Figli d'Italia del luogo. Le sue origini sono in Montagano, e i nomi di famiglia sono Petrone e Rossi.

Attrazioni del luogo

- Chiesa di Sant’Antonio; la sua facciata è del diciannovesimo secolo
- La chiesa parrocchiale di Santa Maria Assunta col suo bellissimo campanile
- Il Castello Medievale in cima al paese
- Abbazia di Santa Maria Farfula, distrutta da un terremoto nel 1805, e ricostruita più tardi
- Celestino V passò qui i suoi primi anni di vita religiosa

Date da ricordare

- 11 Luglio: Festa di Sant’Alessandro, il Patrono della città
- 15 Agosto: I Giochi

MARCH 20, 2016 GENERAL SOCIETY MEETING



Top (left): AMHS President Maria D'Andrea with Maria Fresco, sworn in for another year as AMHS Secretary.

Top (right): AMHS members Albert Paolantonio, Eileen Parise DelMonaco, and David Ciummo enjoy some sweets.

Center (left): AMHS member Mario Marinucci with his sister Sandra Cordaro and nieces Nina, Isabella, and Marcella. **Center (right):** Maria D'Andrea, Ray LaVerghetta (Chair, AMHS Scholarship Committee), and Michele LaVerghetta with NIAF representatives Gabriella Mileti and Alex Benedetto.

Bottom (left): Sarah Scott with members and guests, of AMHS and the P assatempo Meetup group, from left Jacob Myers and wife, Stephen Ulissi, Jim Mustachio, Nancy Coviello, Andrea Balzano, and Sondra Petty.

Bottom (right): AMHS member Luigi DeLuca shows Isabel Sofia and Nicole Caterina Krieg, daughters of Francesca Casazza, ICS Director of the Italian Language Program, how to make crosses with palm fronds. *(Photos courtesy of Sam Yothers).*

MARCH 20, 2016 GENERAL SOCIETY MEETING



Top (left): AMHS Board member Sarah Scott talks about AMHS merchandise for sale. **Top (right):** AMHS members listen intently to Colonel Sganga's presentation.

Center(left): Nancy DeSanti, AMHS 1st VP-Programs, Maria D'Andrea, and Lucio D'Andrea present Colonel Sganga with gifts to thank him for his presentation. **Center(right):** CSM Tallu's daughters, Giada and Alice, help Nancy DeSanti and AMHS member Cecilia Fiermonte with the raffle.

Bottom (left): Maria and Sergio Fresco – always cheerful – on kitchen clean-up duty. **Bottom (right):** From left, Nancy DeSanti, Lynn Sorbara, Edvige D'Andrea, Lucio D'Andrea, David Ciummo, Sam Yothers, and Albert Paolantonio relax and enjoy a last glass of wine after a very successful lunch and program. *(Photos courtesy of Sam Yothers).*



*The Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society of the Washington, DC Area,
In Collaboration with
Istituto Italiano di Cultura Washington, DC*

cordially invite you to a program on the Etruscan civilization by Ms. Carla Kosciuszko. Ms. Kosciuszko will discuss the significance of the Etruscans to the foundation and history of Italy; theories of the origins of Etruscans; their alphabet (language); areas of Italy in which Etruscan artifacts have been found, including tombs and the afterlife; their engineering; and their art. Ms. Kosciuszko received a B.A. in Art History from DePaul University in Chicago, IL. Her studies include Italian Art History and Language at *Istituto Dante Alighieri di Firenze* and research at the *Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze*.



“The Etruscans – An Amazing People”

WHEN: Sunday, May 15, 2016
TIME: 1:00pm
LOCATION: Casa Italiana
595 3rd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
ADMISSION: \$20.00 for AMHS members; \$25.00 for non-members
RSVP BY: May 11, 2016 (no exceptions)
LUNCH: Catered by Carmine's Restaurant, Washington, DC. Menu: penne with vegetarian marinara; sausage and peppers; salad, bread, and dessert (beverages are also included)
CONTACT: Nancy DeSanti, (703) 967-2169

Flute Player, from Tomb of the Leopards c. 5th cent BC

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PAID RESERVATIONS for AMHS General Society Meeting on Sunday, May 15, 2016

Pay online (using VISA or Mastercard) at

<https://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/mission/events/#!event/2016/5/15/amhs-general-society-meeting>

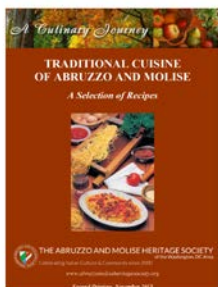
OR Please make check payable to AMHS.

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

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GUEST(S): _____

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“Traditional Cuisine of Abruzzo and Molise: A Selection of Recipes”,
2nd Printing November 2015

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AMHS NOTIZIARIO

Maria Fresco, Editor
Maria D'Andrea, Co-editor
Nancy DeSanti, Contributing Writer

AMHS NOTIZIARIO is published bi-monthly from January through November. The deadline for the submission of articles is the 15th of the month preceding publication of the issue. Please send submissions via e-mail to Maria D'Andrea, uva051985@comcast.net. All submissions may be edited for clarity and become the property of AMHS. Publication of submissions is at the discretion of the Editors however content of articles that are published is the sole responsibility of the author.

You may choose to receive the *Notiziario* by electronic mail (email) only. This will save on paper and postage and will allow you to get your copy more quickly. If you wish to select this preference for online delivery of the latest AMHS news and information, please contact Maria D'Andrea by email at uva051985@comcast.net or by phone, (703) 998-6097. Thank you for considering this option.

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