



THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

of the Washington, DC Area

Celebrating Italian Culture & Community since 2000

www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org

AMHS NOTIZIARIO

November 2017



Top: AMHS 2nd Vice President-Membership and cancer specialist Lynn Sorbara presents on the latest cancer treatments at the September 24 meeting at Carmine's Restaurant.

Bottom (from left): AMHS members, by family name, Ricci's, DiPilla, Ciccone, Caniglia, Bianchini, Ciccone, and Helina Zewdu Nega (Nellie). (photos courtesy of Maria D'Andrea-Yothers).

NEXT SOCIETY EVENT The next AMHS general Society lunch meeting catered by 3 Brothers Restaurant and annual wine tasting will be held on **Sunday, November 12, 2017** at 1:00pm at Casa Italiana. *See inside for details.*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Cari amici,



The year 2017 will soon be coming to a close. I imagine most of you are asking, as am I, “where has the year gone!” I want to thank the members of the Executive Committee who worked so hard this

year to bring some extraordinary events to our membership: informative and quality programs presented at our general Society meetings; the Ferragosto picnic; and recognition of this year’s AMHS/NIAF scholarships winners, Salvatore Pitino and Nicholas Rao.

We had a very successful September meeting at Carmine’s Restaurant (be sure to read Nancy’s article on page 3). At this meeting, the 46 members present voted overwhelmingly in support of affiliation with NIAF as a member organization for a 3rd year. As the Society’s representative on NIAF’s Italian American Leadership Council this year, I have remained dedicated to its work to grow the Council to include more member organizations such as ours. The “great name” of AMHS is well-known and well-respected amongst NIAF Board and IALC members. Several officers and members will attend this year’s NIAF Gala weekend (November 3-6), at the Expo Italiana and the Gala itself.

We have another fantastic event this month, the ever-popular wine tasting event on November 12 at Casa Italiana (be sure to read Nancy’s article on page 2). We are very happy to have back, as our guest speaker, Tom Savage, with International Cellars (and an AMHS member), who will give a remarks on wines of Italy. We are also excited to have as our guest Jenifer Landor, Director of Live and Learn Italian in Agnone, Molise. If you will recall, AMHS board member Albert Paolantonio wrote an article, in the September *AMHS Notiziario*, about our experience studying with this program in June. Jenifer will be in Washington to connect with other Italian language programs to further promote the Live and Learn program.

With respect to the November 12 meeting, one important item of business will be the elections for officers and three members of the board (for candidates, see the article from the Nominating Committee on page 3). If the elections go as I hope/expect, the Society will elect a new President, Ray LaVerghetta. Ray and his wife Michele have been AMHS members since May 2013; Ray currently serves on the board and, since 2016, he has chaired the Scholarship Committee. He is very dedicated to the Society’s mission. Therefore, this should be my final message to you as President.

It has been an incredible honor to represent the Society for a fifth year as President. I could not have led the organization without the commitment, dedication, support and friendship of the many officers and board members with whom I have

served over the years; the foundation laid by our past Presidents: my father Lucio; Ennio DiTullio; Omero Sabatini; and Dick DiBuono; and the support and friendship of the members.

Stepping down as President is very bittersweet . . . but it is time to “turn the reins over” to someone else, so to speak – someone who can carry forward with the mission of the Society and strongly represent our voice in the larger Italian American community. But you know, given my strong familial ties to both Abruzzo and Molise, I will not venture far and I will, in fact, be a member of the board serving as Immediate Past President. I love this organization too much to simply walk away! I hope you do as well, and that you will continue to appreciate the hard work of the Executive Committee but, most importantly, I hope you will continue your support and commitment to the Society. We are a wonderful family who takes pride in our Italian heritage and in “all things Italian”.

In closing, I would like to quote Wilferd A. Peterson (the author of “The Art of Living”), who said “*when we become more fully aware that our success is due in large measure to the loyalty, helpfulness, and encouragement we have received from others, our desire grows to pass on similar gifts. Gratitude spurs us on to prove ourselves worthy of what others have done for us. The spirit of gratitude is a powerful energizer.*”

I look forward to seeing you on November 12!

Cordiali saluti,

Maria D’Andrea

UPCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL LUNCH MEETING AND WINE-TASTING ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2017

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs

You should definitely not miss out on our most popular event of the year, which will be held Sunday, November 12, 2017, at 1:00 p.m. in Casa Italiana. We are pleased once again to present our annual lunch meeting and wine-tasting. Our wine-making members and friends will be bringing samples of their production to share with the attending members, friends and guests.

This year, a delicious lunch will be catered by Three Brothers Italian Restaurant. The wine-tasting is being organized by Jim Gearing and Romeo Sabatini, who in past years have done an outstanding job in coordinating the event. Based on previous years, there is sure to be a variety of wonderful wines to be tasted and possibly some limoncello too. We will also have a brief talk by AMHS member Tom Savage, with International Cellars, on the wines of Italy.

The program will begin with a brief AMHS general meeting at which time we will elect officers and members of the Board of

Directors (please read the following article from the Nominating Committee to learn more about the candidates running for office).

Please make your reservations early to be sure you don't miss out on this fun event!!

REPORT OF THE AMHS NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The following officers and members of the Board of Directors will have their terms of office end on December 31 of this year: Maria D'Andrea, President; Nancy DeSanti, 1st VP-Programs; Lynn Sorbara, 2nd VP-Membership; Peter Bell, Treasurer; Ennio DiTullio, Ray LaVerghetta, and Jim Mustachio. We owe a debt of gratitude for their service to the Society.

The Nominating Committee, whose role it is to nominate members to stand for election to fill these vacancies, is very pleased to announce the following slate of candidates:

Officers

Ray LaVerghetta, President
Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs
Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President-Membership
Carmine James Spellane, Secretary
Peter Bell, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Americo (Rico) Allegrino
Joann Novello
Joe Novello

Officers serve for two years, and Board members for three. The election will be held at the November 12 general Society meeting.

Most of you know the candidates for office and the Board, as they have served the Society in various capacities over the years. However, we are pleased to have a new candidate who has volunteered to serve on the Board, Americo (Rico) Allegrino. His bio and picture are included here.

Americo "Rico" Allegrino, Board of Directors



contractor for NOAA's satellite division providing

Americo (Rico) Allegrino grew up in upstate New York. His father came from Chieti in the Abruzzo region of Italy and his maternal great grandparents came from Sicily and Naples. He earned a Master's degree in Meteorology from the University of Maryland. He currently works as a government

programming support to the next generation of weather satellites. Rico has worked for NOAA for 21 years. Previously, he worked at Goddard Space Flight Center studying sea ice and snow cover using various remote sensors.

He has volunteered as a special events coordinator for an organization of single Catholics called the Catholic Alumni Club. There, he organized picnics, happy hours and dinners. He was also membership chair for several years for this group. Currently, he leads a group of volunteers from his local parish to provide a monthly dinner for homeless men in Prince Georges County. He also volunteers his gardening services to his local parish. He is an avid gardener. He has been an AMHS member for 4 years.

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee: Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, Lucio D'Andrea, and Ennio DiTullio.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- AMHS general Society meeting, Sunday, November 12. Annual wine tasting event. Casa Italiana, 595 3rd Street, NW, Washington, DC, 1:00 p.m.
- SAVE THE DATE: December 10, 2017, Memorial Mass at Holy Rosary Church to honor the victims of mining disasters, including Monongah, WVA that occurred on December 6, 1907 (see pages 15-16). Details to follow at a later date.

RECENT SOCIETY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

LYNN SORBARA WOWS AUDIENCE WITH TALK ON CANCER RESEARCH

By Nancy DeSanti

For our 5th program this year, we were very pleased to have one of our own as speaker, Lynn Sorbara. Of course Lynn was familiar to most of the audience as the current AMHS 2nd Vice-President following several years as a board member. This very successful event was held on September 24, 2017, at Carmine's Restaurant a few blocks from Casa Italiana.



Before the program began, a vote was taken by AMHS members on whether to affiliate with NIAF again next year (see results of this vote in the President's message) and then the 65 participants enjoyed a delicious lunch.

The favorable comments after the talk were immediate and numerous, and Lynn really wowed the audience with the depth of her knowledge and ability to communicate it to everyone. She made copies of her PowerPoint presentation for each person in the audience with room to take notes, as well as a list of cancer drugs, and then answered questions from the audience after her talk.

Perhaps not all our members knew that Lynn's day job is as a cancer expert at the National Cancer Institute, which is part of the National Institutes of Health. She is currently Program Director in NCI's Division of Cancer Prevention. So we know Lynn must be smart, but maybe not everyone knows that Lynn is also fun-loving—and funny—and she has a million wonderful stories to tell. Many of them concern her immigrant family and growing up in Queens, New York. Stories like the pigeon club (apparently that was a thing among Italians back in the day) and like how her relatives in Louisiana tangled with the KKK (you can guess who came out on top!!).

So before beginning her talk, she showed family photos and shared with us a little bit about growing up with Italian immigrant parents who assimilated here while still maintaining their Italian traditions. Lynn's father was from Polistena, Calabria and her mother was from Resuttano, Sicily (near Caltanissetta) and together they settled in Queens, with no money and no English. They raised a family which included their daughter Lynn, who earned a Ph.D. from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, N.Y. An amazing success story in one generation!! And Lynn told us it was her father's death at the age of 42, when she was just a child, that really prompted her interest in medicine.

And then of course Lynn talked to us about the topics she is very familiar with—advances in cancer research: What is known? What remains challenging? What are the future possibilities?

Lynn broke it all down for us in layman's terms, beginning with how the ancients dealt with what we now know as cancer, continuing on up to the new treatments of today and the possibilities of tomorrow. She told us that an ancient Egyptian scroll dating back to 2630 B.C. dealt with the most ancient method of treatment—the observation of the patient. Then Hippocrates—of the famous Hippocratic Oath—came along in 460 B.C., followed by Pythagoras.

She explained that cancer is really an umbrella term, it's not just one disease, like tuberculosis or smallpox. She said there is not just one type of cancer, there are a whole lot of them. For example, she said there are 72 types of lymphoma and it is important to know which kind is diagnosed, because the treatments are different. And she said that when a person has one type of cancer, such as breast cancer, which spreads to

other organs of the body, that is still only breast cancer—which has just metastasized to other parts of the body.

She explained to us the risk factors of getting cancer, such as age, family history and obesity, and she said there are some steps we can take to minimize the risk, such as exercising, eating well, and not smoking.

She told us about some of the innovative research going on, for example, studying truffle-sniffing dogs to see if we can develop ways to breathe into devices so signs of certain cancers can be picked up, and using bodily fluids to detect cancer in the early stages.

Lynn noted that when she started in the cancer research field 35 years ago, she would never have imagined the tremendous progress that has taken place. For example, in the field of DNA sequencing, what used to take 13 years at a cost of \$1 billion now takes 1 or 2 days at a cost of \$3,000 to \$5,000. That's pretty amazing progress!!

We thank Lynn and her colleagues for the important work they are doing, and we hope the future brings more important breakthroughs.

AMHS MEMBERSHIP

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President–Membership

I am pleased to report that there are 295 members of AMHS, including many new members. Thank you for your continued support of the Society's programs and activities. We have many wonderful events planned for the rest of the year and your membership makes them all possible!

As a reminder, with our new automated system, you will receive email reminders when it is time to renew. If you do not have email, you will receive a reminder by regular mail.

New Members

A warm welcome to our newest members, ***Stephen & Elaine Balducci, Mary Filipetti Markey, and Christopher Renneker.***

Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

Birthdays

Compleanni a Novembre

Eileen Verna, November 1; Rev. John V. Di Bacco, Jr., November 2; Tony D'Ambrosi, November 3; Rita Carrier, Michael DeBonis, November 4; Joseph D'Amico, Katie Harris, November 5; Luciana Caleb, Sergio Fresco, November 8; Rocco Caniglia, Kate Fazioli, Lidia LaMarca, Joseph Ruzzi, Jr., November 9; Massimo Mazziotti, November 11; Antonio Bianchini, Tina Marchegiani, November 12; Maryann Martella, November 13; Gabriel Battista, November 14; Jonathan Stern, November 17; Edvige D'Andrea, Joseph D'Andrea, Dena DeBonis, November 19; Betsy Ruzzi, November 21; Cindy Savage, November 23; Gerard DiFlavis,

November 24; Christina Iovino, November 25; Amelia DiFiore and James Palumbo; November 30.

Compleanni a Dicembre

Rosalie Ciccotelli, December 2; Domenica Marchetti, December 3; Alfred DelGrosso, December 4; Marlene Lucian, December 6; Yoni Kay Caniglia, Roger Marcella, December 7; Frank Bonsiero, December 8; Stephen diGirolamo, December 9; Angelo DeCecco, Giuseppe Mastrangelo, December 10; Ronald Ciarlo, December 11; William Lepore, December 12; Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, December 13; Cathy Branciaroli, December 16; Domenico Conti, Thomas Ricche, December 18; Sandra Coleman, December 19; Elodia D'Onofrio, Carmine Spellane, December 20; Anna Isgro, December 21; Claire DeMarco, December 22; Danila Tomassetti, December 24; Brian Pasquino, December 25; Michael Savino, December 26; Diane Della-Loggia, December 28; Margot Gilberg and Fr. Charles Zanon, December 29; Kristine Massari, December 30. Anniversaries

Anniversari a Novembre

Enrico Granafei & Kristine Massari, November 4; Anthony & Jacqueline D'Erme, November 21; and Joseph & Gloria D'Andrea, November 22.

Anniversari a Dicembre

Ray & Michele LaVerghetta, December 18; and David and Cristina Scalzitti, December 27.

SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

FATHER EZIO'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION CELEBRATED



Holy Rosary parishioners, including many AMHS members, attended the celebration held September 10, 2017, to honor Father Ezio Marchetto on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of his ordination (the actual date was September 12). The celebration was organized by AMHS member Maria Marigliano, who did a wonderful job arranging for the special music during the Italian Mass including a trumpet player.

Towards the end of the Mass, Maria presented Father Ezio with a Papal Blessing and then she called upon representatives of the various organizations to come up and say a few words. AMHS President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers presented Father Ezio with a framed certificate of appreciation from the Society and thanked him for all the support and encouragement he has given us during the four and a half years he has been pastor of Holy Rosary Church.

Afterwards, a reception was held in Casa Italiana where the large crowd enjoyed light refreshments and three beautiful cakes. A toast with prosecco was made congratulating Father Ezio on this important milestone. AMHS members Maria and Sergio Fresco helped to plan the wonderful reception. The following week, Father Ezio departed for Italy for a visit with his family including officiating at the wedding of his niece (*submitted by Nancy DeSanti*).

FRANCESCO AND ANNA ISGRÒ HONORED BY LIDO CIVIC CLUB

Francesco and Anna Isgro were recently honored at the Lido Civic Club Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill. Since Francesco and Anna are long-time AMHS members, quite a few of the Society's members attended the event on September 14, 2017, at the Rayburn House Office Building.



Francesco and Anna are with Thomas Regnante, President of the Lido Civic Club.

Before the ceremony got underway, the attendees enjoyed a delicious buffet and had a chance to chat with their friends. Then Father Ezio Marchetto delivered the invocation, after which the current president of the Lido Civic Club, Thomas F. Regnante, introduced the two recipients of the club's Community Service Award.

Francesco Isgro was introduced as the Senior Litigation Counsel of the U.S. Department of Justice, who is an expert on immigration law and policy. He was an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center, where years earlier he earned a law degree. Probably most everyone who knows Francesco knows his family is Sicilian, but even some of his friends may not have known previously that he once served in

the Peace Corps in the Central African Republic. Francesco's many accomplishments are too numerous to list all of them, but he is a past president of the Lido Civic Club, past president of the Sons of Italy International Lodge, a council member of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) for many years, a board member of the National Christopher Columbus Association, and a board member of the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center. Somehow Francesco has found the time to also serve as the Executive Editor of the *Voce Italiana*.

Anna Isgro was introduced next, and it was noted that she has a most impressive resume herself. She is a financial journalist and author of several books on personal finance. She was an associate editor and writer at *Fortune* magazine for many years and has also written for *U.S. News*, *Forbes* and *WashingtonPost.com*. She holds a master's degree in international relations from Columbia University, and besides her journalism career, she has worked at the United Nations in New York. For several years, she was the Washington director for an international human rights fellowship program on Capitol Hill. She is on the Editorial Board of *Voce Italiana* and is a volunteer adviser for the planned Italian American Museum of Washington, D.C. at Casa Italiana. And we should note that Anna said she came here from Molise with her family at the age of 5.

No doubt it was a great pleasure for all who attended to see these two wonderful people honored for their impressive roles in our Italian American community. AMHS congratulates Francesco and Anna on their well-deserved award.
(submitted by Nancy DeSanti).

ARRIVEDERCI DICK DiBUONO



Dick DiBuono at the AMHS silent auction on June 1, 2014

We wish to express our best wishes to Immediate Past President Dick DiBuono, who recently returned to his home state of Massachusetts (MA). He will reside in Hudson, MA, where he will be close to family and friends. Dick, we will miss you! (submitted by Maria D'Andrea-Yothers).

OMERO SABATINI SHARES HISTORICAL PHOTO OF GARIBALDI'S DAUGHTER

We thought AMHS members might be interested to know that AMHS Past President Omero Sabatini has an interesting historical photo taken back in 1952. As you can see from the photo, it is a picture of an older woman between two young men.



As Omero explains: "Truth to tell, I do cherish the photo as a souvenir of my distant youth, because the lady is none other than Giuseppe Garibaldi's daughter Clelia, and the two young men are my brother, left, and me, right. In a way, given Giuseppe Garibaldi's preeminent role in the unification of Italy, being in a picture with one of his children is somewhat like having the honor of being in a picture with President Lincoln's son."

Omero wondered if this information would be of interest, but after some urging, agreed to tell us "how I happened to be photographed with Donna Clelia, as she was affectionately known. The picture was taken at Caprera, an island which is off the northeast coast of Sardinia and was owned by Garibaldi. I was there with some other 200 college students to attend a summer camp organized by the Italian government to expose the participants to a bit of Italian history and teach them to do some manual work, as Garibaldi himself used to do. (In those days, in Italy, it was still considered ungentlemanly for a high school graduate to do any kind of manual work. I am digressing, but among my fellow college students there was a widespread belief that working during college was not good for one's resume.)

Omero further explains: "Donna Clelia was born at Caprera in 1867, when her father was 60 years old, and spent virtually her entire life there, devoting herself primarily to the care of her father's house/museum and greeting visitors. Anyway, perhaps the main reason I am showing the photo is that by looking at the image of then 85-year-old Donna Clelia, i.e., the daughter of one the founders of unified Italy, you may be reminded once more of how relatively young the country still is. Enjoy, I hope."

By the way, many people may not be aware of the role Garibaldi played right here in America. In fact, at the outbreak of the American Civil War, Giuseppe Garibaldi was a very popular figure. The 39th New York Infantry Regiment was also named Garibaldi Guard. In 1861, Garibaldi himself volunteered his services to President Abraham Lincoln and he was offered a major general's commission in the U. S. Army. According to Italian historian Arrigo Petacco, "Garibaldi was ready to accept Lincoln's 1862 offer but on one condition: that the war's objective be declared as the abolition of slavery. But at that stage Lincoln was unwilling to make such a statement lest he worsen an agricultural crisis." Although the aging Garibaldi respectfully declined Lincoln's offer, many of Garibaldi's former officers were recruited. On August 6, 1863, after the Emancipation Proclamation had been issued, Garibaldi wrote to Lincoln: "Posterity will call you the great emancipator, a more enviable title than any crown could be, and greater than any merely mundane treasure."
(submitted by Nancy DeSanti).

PRESENTING THE WINNERS OF THE AMHS/NIAF SCHOLARSHIPS

By Ray LaVerghetta, Chair, AMHS Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to present this year's winners of the two joint AMHS/NIAF scholarships, awarded for the 2017-2018 academic year. The recipients are Benjamin Abeles, of Washington, D. C. and Gianluca Nigro, of Chatham, Massachusetts. The two winners are both excellent students who have strong ties to Italy, a keen interest in their Italian background, and a strong commitment to Italian studies.

The Scholarship Committee selected them this past Spring from a pool of other talented and worthy applicants. (The members of the Scholarship Committee at the time the winners were selected: Peter Bell, Lucio D'Andrea, Dick DiBuono, Ray LaVerghetta, Romeo Sabatini, and Lourdes Tinajero).

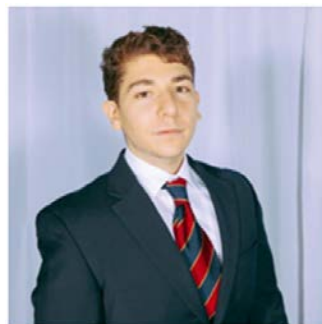
The winners will be honorary members of the Society for calendar year 2018, and they will be invited by the President, as our guest, to attend a meeting in 2018 at which they can address the membership and tell us of their studies, their heritage, and what our scholarship means to them. Congratulations to Benjamin and Gianluca!



Benjamin Abeles

Benjamin Abeles is a junior at Cornell University, where he is double majoring in Italian and Government. His Italian background is on his father's side and traces to the region of Puglia. Mr. Abeles has a strong interest in political science and Italian language, literature, and culture. He has his sights set on a career in the Foreign Service,

Gianluca Nigro is a sophomore at George Washington University. He is a Political Science major, with minors in Italian and History. His Italian roots run through Campania on his father's side, while Molise is the region of his mother's background.



Gianluca Nigro

Mr. Nigro's interests include politics, Government affairs, and Italian culture and language. His future aspirations look toward a career in public service.

Letters from the Winners

The two winners have written to the Society to express their gratitude for their selection, and we re-print them below:

[Benjamin's letter]

May 30, 2017

Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society/NIAF
1860 19th St. NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society,

I am writing to thank you for your generous contribution to my studies at Cornell University. Through my education, I have become a beaming Italian-American, and I would like to express my utmost gratitude not just for your support of my studies, but your commitment to the promotion of Italian culture and values in the United States.

When I first stepped foot in Viterbo as a senior in high school, I strove to rediscover my Italian heritage. Little did I realize the impact that an academic year in a small, Lazio town could have on my future. Ever so slowly, I learned to speak Italian, and many of the beautiful intricacies of the Viterbese dialect. Eventually, I was able to read an entire novel by Italo Calvino. When it was time to return to the United States, I had not only developed a firm grasp of Italian language and culture, but an abiding relationship with my host family and Viterbo.

Four years later, my relationship with Italy, its culture, and language is more profound than I could have imagined when I arrived as an 18 year old. Last summer, as an intern at the American Consulate General in Milan, I witnessed firsthand the special diplomatic relationship between the United States and Italy. Now, as I enter my senior year at Cornell, I prepare to write my honors thesis in Italian Studies.

I am honored to be recognized by the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society and the NIAF, and I look forward to a relationship of promoting Italian culture alongside your organizations.

Cordiali saluti,

Ben Abeles

[Gianluca's letter]

May 30, 2017

Dear Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society,

I want to convey my sincerest gratitude for the extremely generous scholarship which you so kindly awarded me. I was hopeful during the application process that my passion to express my Italian roots would be recognized, and that my endeavor to make my family and other Italian-Americans proud would come to fruition. Having been born in Italy to an Italian-born father, Italian mother, and four Italian-born grandparents has driven me to embrace my heritage in my daily routine, my studies, and my aspirations.

For my grandfather Peppino Sceppa of Campobasso, who is no longer with us and cannot celebrate this achievement with me, this award is extremely special. Just thinking about how proud he would be if he were here today instills in me the drive to continue to make my family and my two countries proud. It is for him, my parents, my sister, and all of my relatives and Italians and Americans that I work so hard for.

To be able to say that I am a NIAF scholarship recipient not only makes me proud to be an Italian American, but it also goes an extremely long way in aiding the struggle of high tuition costs associated with college today. In a couple years' time, I will have graduated with an Italian Language and Literature minor from The George Washington University, an accolade which I would feel unfulfilled without.

For me, the opportunity to say that I graduated with a focus in Italian language and in Italian literature is important for a couple of reasons. Not only will these four years of concentration in Italian language and literature be remembered by me for the way that they expanded my knowledge of Italy, but also for the fact that I will be able to proudly look back on my college years and say that I devoted a large portion of my studies to the language and literature of a nation which is the very fabric of my being.

While not entirely fluent in the Italian language yet, this very generous scholarship will go a long way in helping me continue learning from some of the best Italian professors in the country. For this, I thank you, as my lack of fluency in the Italian language is the only barrier that stands between my culture and me. I cannot express enough how

proud I am to know that I am receiving help from a society with the same roots as mine; for my whole life, I have always known that Italians stick together, and this scholarship is another example of that.

One day, I hope to give back not only to the Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society and to NIAF, but to Italians worldwide. My combined studies in political science, Italian, and history will allow me to excel throughout my career path and one day return the favor to those Italians who have gone to great lengths for me. The political atmosphere today may be tense, but I know that someday, my studies, roots, and cultural tendencies will succeed as the instrumental drivers needed to supply me with the skills to surpass rhetoric and hate and to find a way to do good for the world and for Italians.

With that, I want to extend that if there is absolutely anything I can do to contribute or to help your society, I would be honored to give all that I can. I am honored for this and I am humbled; you have helped me make my loved ones proud. I thank you emphatically.

Sincerely,

Gianluca Nigro

AMERICAN WRITER TELLS AMAZING STORY OF HOUSE OF GUCCI

By Nancy DeSanti

The opening day of Milan Fashion Week on September 20, 2017, was the perfect day to hear about one of the legends of Italian fashion—the House of Gucci. So at an event at Via Umbria in Georgetown, several AMHS members went to hear Sara Forden discuss the book she wrote covering the travails of one of the most storied Italian fashion houses.

The Oscar-winning director Ridley Scott has an option on the book and plans to make it into a movie, and it will no doubt be a hit. After all, the book is entitled, “House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour and Greed.”

The author spoke at an event sponsored by the National Organization of Italian American Women (NOIAW). She interviewed 100 people over a two-year period to gather information for her in-depth book. Sara lived in Milan for 22 years, and as a journalist with Dow Jones, Women's Wear Daily and Bloomberg, she covered business and financial news. She normally covered stories like Chrysler/Fiat and Parmalat, but this being Milan, a city with some big personalities, sometimes the business and financial beats intersected with the fashion world.

Sara now lives in Arlington, Va., and is a board member of the Italian Cultural Society. She told us that she is familiar with Casa Italiana since her daughter once took language classes there.

Explaining some of the highlights of her book, she noted that often some of the leading fashion brands have been cheapened because too many family members who were at odds got involved, but in the case of Gucci, it was able to be brought back to the high-end fashion world envisioned by its founder, Guccio Gucci. The saga of three generations of family members of the famous clothing and leather goods business shows that it had its up and downs, but it was fortunate to have talented designers like Tom Ford. The company is now owned by the Paris-based holding company Kering, the international luxury group which also owns Yves Saint Laurent and Bottega Veneta, among others.



Author Sara Forden

Not that there wasn't a lot of drama along the way. For example, she said the founder's grandson, Maurizio, led a life that was a cross between serious business and the National Enquirer. He was a charismatic man who saw himself as the link between the past and the future. He liked to live large, though, and his ex-wife Patrizia, the mother of his two children, evidently thought he was spending money way too fast, such as by covering the furniture with snakeskin on his big luxury yacht. The author thinks this may have led to his untimely death. He was found shot in the head execution-style and left for dead. Two years later, his wife Patrizia was charged with conspiring to hire a hit man to kill him, and she served 12 years in prison.

The trial was a showy affair, with Gucci stores displaying silver handcuffs emblazoned with the famous double G in their store windows in Florence and Milan on the day of the verdict. Sara covered the trial in Milan and heard all the sordid details such as how Patrizia had conspired with her companion and maga (sorceress) and how Maurizio had his own "white

witch" who he had hired to rid one of his mansions of his wife's "evil spirits." On her way to the police station, Patrizia wore her gold jewelry and a full-length mink coat. She was famously quoted as saying, "I would rather weep in a Rolls Royce than be happy on a bicycle." You can't make this stuff up!!

Sara explains how Gucci originally became famous for its exquisite craftsmanship as well as the latest innovations and creativity at every level, from the fabric to the model on the runway. The vivid details in her book describe the ascent, fall and eventual resurrection of the Gucci family, and it's a book you won't want to put down. ***BREAKING NEWS – we are pleased to let you know that Sara will be the guest speaker at the January 28, 2018 AMHS meeting!***

TWO AMHS MEMBERS AND "BEST OF FRIENDS" IN ITALY – THEIR ADVENTURE CONTINUES!

By Albert Paolantonio, AMHS Board Member, with input from Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

The following is part 2 of the "adventures of Alberto and Maria" who spent part of June and July in Italy. The first part, focusing on Italian language studies in Agnone, Molise and visits to Maria and Alberto's family's villages, appeared in the September issue of the AMHS Notiziario.

Our wonderful adventure in Italia continued when we left Isernia on June 24 in our rented FIAT Bravo. We were excited to get on the road to Puglia - destination, Polignano a Mare, where we planned to stay for four nights in a lovely 3-level apartment. We thought we would have a leisurely drive there, and possibly make some quick stops on the way to absorb as much of Puglia as we could, given that this was our first visit to the region. We navigated the roads out of Isernia in the direction of Termoli, Molise. As we approached this city, Maria and I were so tempted to make a quick stop. We had both visited this beautiful and historic beach-side town separately in the past, and we both loved it. We decided we could not spend too much time there as it was Saturday, and there would be lots of beach traffic. We settled for a quick stop for cappuccino on the outskirts of town before we got back on the road.

I was the designated driver for our trip and, while behind the wheel and not too long after being on the road, I noticed a light on the dashboard, but decided it was just my unfamiliarity with the car, and was not worth worrying about. What could be wrong? About a half hour or so later, we learned otherwise. The Fiat's engine suddenly groaned and stopped. I steered off to the side of the road only to learn we were, in fact, out of gas! It never occurred to me that we had not been given a full tank of gas in Isernia when we picked up the car. Maria immediately jumped out of the car while I was still behind the wheel, cursing my stupidity. I watched her run up the highway a bit; I got out and ran after her, not knowing what else to do. Fortunately, there was a roadside SOS call box, which she used to get us some assistance. We waited by

the car, laughing. What else could we do? Eventually, a tow truck arrived and, after attaching the tow chain to our Fiat and pulling us on to the truck, we rode to the station, in style, comfortably still sitting in our Fiat. There, for a fee, we got our full tank of gas (*meglio tardi che mai*), got the battery jump-started, and we were once again on our way to Polignano a Mare. The rest of the trip went fine with the exception of lots of weekend traffic around Bari which, unfortunately, we never had time to visit. Once we finally arrived in Polignano, we had quite a bit of trouble finding our way to our designated parking lot. We had to call the manager of the residence, who sent help in the form of a *riscio*' (rickshaw), which led us to the lot and, then, we had our luggage and ourselves transferred into the rickshaw. It was a bit of a bumpy start, but soon we arrived at our lovely residence in the *centro storico*.



The *Terrazza Merlata* is a beautiful apartment in the midst of the *centro storico* and perched on the cliffs. It is a three-story property with two very comfortable bedrooms and two complete bathrooms, a nicely furnished living area, and a full kitchen. The top draw for both of us, though, was the amazing rooftop terrace full of spectacular views of the *centro storico*, the cathedral, and the sea surrounding the *Lama Monachile/Cala Porto* which was 30 meters below. This was especially lovely in the evenings when we sat outside, enjoying the amazing views with some of the delicious *vini bianchi Molisani* we brought from Monteroduni, and later some very good *vini Pugliesi*. We also enjoyed our *formaggio caciocavallo* from Agnone, and olives from the local market in Polignano.

Polignano a Mare is a very striking and popular town which is located about 30km south of the Bari airport. It was built over, around and into the rocky cliffs on the coast. The *centro storico* is very walkable, and there are ample means of transportation nearby which make the city a great place to use as a home base. There are also plenty of good restaurants to sample. The town is believed to be one of the most important ancient settlements in Puglia.

Unfortunately, being a weekend in June, the beach and *centro storico* were quite crowded. Maria and I were not used to the crowds after our stay in Molise and, after getting a taste of crowded streets and sidewalks on Saturday night (and Sunday), we decided to do something a little away from the beach area. We scheduled a two-hour boat trip on Sunday afternoon, along the coast that allowed us to see the beautiful

coastline and explore numerous grottoes. The meeting place to catch the boat was at the site of *l'Abbazia di San Vito*. San Vito is the patron saint of Polignano a Mare, and there is a *festa* early in June to celebrate him. We boarded the boat and headed south, back toward where we were staying. It was such a beautiful day. We entered several different grottoes which were stunning. The most interesting, maybe, was the *Grotto Palazzese*. This grotto is spectacular, and is also the site of the famous restaurant of the same name which is housed within. Unfortunately, we did not realize reservations were needed months in advance to visit. In any case, I jumped off our boat with several of our "boat-mates" at the entrance of the grotto (Maria stayed aboard as she did not have her bathing suit) and swam into, through and out again of the grotto back to our waiting boat. It was something I hope to always remember. It was so amazing to absorb all the beautiful colors and markings within the grotto from the perspective of a swimmer, and, then, stopping to also look up and see patrons in the restaurant looking down!

The remainder of the weekend we spent exploring more of the *centro storico*, and different restaurants and shops. We walked around the *borgo* which was much less crowded than the beach area, and very interesting. We found some wonderful local *cozze* (mussels) which we had been craving since our arrival at a ristorante and enjoyed them al fresco with the local beer. One evening we enjoyed a delicious dinner at the *Covo dei Saraceni* ristorante which is called *Il Bastione*. From where we were seated, we enjoyed the view across the *Cala Porto* below. We could see our apartment and its fabulous terrace in the distance. Another evening we found a comfortable wine bar in the *centro storico* called *l'Archibugio*. We liked it so much, we returned there for our last evening.



Along the coastline of Polignano a Mare

On Monday we headed to Alberobello to see the *trulli*. On the way there, we spotted signs for the *Grotte di Castellana*, where we decided to stop and take a quick tour. The ancient grotto was rediscovered in 1938 by Franco Anelli and, subsequently, became more famous. It is full of stalactites, stalagmites, statuary, and caverns, and is dramatically lighted. Following this tour, we arrived in Alberobello and the *trulli*, the unique houses that are found in the southern region of Puglia constructed using a prehistoric building technique which is still used today. The limestone dwellings are

examples of drywall (mortar-less) construction, and employ roughly worked limestone boulders collected from neighboring fields. They feature pyramidal, domed or conical roofs of corbelled limestone slabs. Alberobello, because of the historical value and unique architecture of these structures, is a UNESCO World Heritage site (since 1996). Maria and I visited inside some of the *trulli* during our visit, and we found them quite amazing. Some of the *trulli* were transformed into stores where we bought some local delicious Pugliese specialties of *taralli* and locally-made *digestivi*.



One of the highlights of our visit in Alberobello was the *Trullo Sovrano*. This *trullo* is believed to have been originally built in the early 17th century. In the mid-18th century, it was expanded to include a second level, the only *trullo* of its kind in the village. The top level is connected by an internal stair made from mortar. *Trullo Sovrano* is full of original furnishings and art, and represents a fascinating piece of history in Puglia.



Monopoli

On our last full day in Puglia, we decided to take the train and travel south to Monopoli. It was another beautiful day, and the five-minute ride on the train allowed us a good amount of time to walk around this beautiful and historic sea side town and spend a lovely day on the wonderful sandy beach there

below some of the walls of the town. Happily, it was not packed with tourists! It was difficult to leave, but we made our way back to the station, and safely returned to Polignano in the early evening

Since we were leaving the next morning, we decided we wanted to spend some time at the beach below our apartment after the weekend crowds had left, and enjoyed the clear, turquoise water. The beach is rocky, but it is stunning.

There was a cave on one end of the beach which made it possible to walk through the cliffs and at the other end of the pass-through was a ledge people were jumping off. I did my best to be a local, and enjoyed the plunge. Then, I climbed out of the water back onto the ledge and headed back through the cave to the main beach, where I spent some more time in the refreshing water on the rocky beach before taking a last walk around the surrounding area above the beach.

After four nights in Puglia, it was time for us to leave. We both wanted to see and do more and left knowing that this was only the beginning! We had wanted to see some of the Gargano Peninsula, which we had heard was well worth a visit, but it was a bit out of the way. We decided we could take a detour on our way to Macchiagodena Molise, to experience some of it. I drove the Fiat and Maria navigated, as usual. This part of Puglia, though, is a bit of a challenge with narrow winding roads, sharp turns, and up and down travel. It passed through beautiful parkland filled with cliff-side views of inviting beaches below. But, unfortunately, we were only making time for two stops. The first was Vieste. It is a beautiful town full of alleys, steps, and bright white houses that seem to arise from the water. We walked around for a while and, since it was lunch time, stopped at *Ristorante Enoteca Vesta*.



Ristorante Enoteca Vesta

The restaurant is located in a natural cave in the medieval town. Afterwards, we continued our walk around the *centro storico*, passing through *piazzette*, arches and narrow streets. We climbed higher for a closer view of the *Castello di Federico* and the 11th century Basilica. It was only a taste of a place I would love to return to. But, we had to continue as we

still had quite a bit of distance to cover before arriving at our hotel in Macchiagodena that evening.

We made our way to Peschici, which was the second spot we wanted to visit a little further north on the peninsula. Peschici is another quiet seaside medieval town. As in Vieste, we walked up and down narrow streets. We visited the remains of the castle and fortress which was a vantage point overlooking the bay for pirates in the Middle Ages. Now it is a beautiful spot to look down to the beach. It was so tempting to get a closer look, but we had to get on the road.

We were so happy to have gotten a taste of the Gargano. It is a totally different part of Puglia which many people do not yet know about. As we drove away from Peschici, we could see still more tantalizing views of the coast around every turn. Then, we passed the Lago di Varano in the distance. There was still so much to see. Eventually, we entered our beloved Molise once again. It had been a very full day. It had also been an incredible and happy two and half weeks together in Molise and Puglia. This adventure was almost over for Maria and me, but the sea and mountains and wonderful people of Italia are still beckoning.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HONORED AT COLORFUL UNION STATION CEREMONY

By Nancy DeSanti



Once again this year, AMHS was well represented at the annual ceremony to honor Christopher Columbus held at Union Station in Washington, D.C. on October 9, 2017. The colorful and impressive ceremony took place on a windy and initially rainy fall day in front of the statue of the great explorer erected in 1912. As one of the speakers noted, perhaps this was fitting, since Columbus himself had to weather many storms—natural, political and financial. Because of the weather, the U.S. Marine Band was unable to provide its usual tribute and the Knights of Columbus were unable to wear their colorful regalia. However, the many flags and what seemed to be a record number of floral wreaths added to the pageantry.

The annual event was organized by the National Christopher Columbus Association (NCCA) in collaboration with the National Park Service and with the involvement of many fraternal, civic and cultural associations including the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Proclamations by President Donald Trump and D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser were read.

NCCA President James P. McCusker told the audience that for the first time, the Ambassadors of the two countries so important to Columbus, were present at the ceremony—Armando Varricchio of Italy and Pedro Morenes of Spain—and they both noted that Columbus was the link between the Old World and the New World, between Europe and the Americas.

Another highlight of the event was the award given to the first-prize winner of the essay contest conducted by NIAF and the DAR. This year's winner was a local student, Rachel Grace of Fairfax, Va., who read her interesting and well-researched essay on how modern technology would have changed Columbus' voyages.

Some of the speakers touched on the controversy surrounding the Columbus Day holiday and statues, and decried the revisionist history being pushed nowadays. The facts have been gathered by the NCAA in a website *The Truth About Columbus* and the audience was urged to educate themselves to help counter the false narratives.

And of course, the speakers also noted that Columbus Day is the embodiment of Italian-American pride. Their enormous contributions to the cultural, political, scientific and financial success of America were duly noted by NIAF representative Anita McBride. And Mr. McCusker also noted the contribution of the late Pino Cicala, an AMHS member who was among the founders of the NCCA.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of the many floral wreaths and the singing of "God Bless America." Such a fitting tribute to the Great Discoverer!!

And the day before, Holy Rosary Church had its own Columbus ceremony, following a bilingual Mass in his honor. The speakers and the many parishioners gathered inside Casa Italiana for the ceremony and reception afterwards. Father Ezio Marchetto gave the invocation, and the speakers included Mr. McCusker and also Thomas Regnante, president of the Lido Civic Club, who spoke of his immigrant grandfather's struggles and successes. (Due to the ongoing construction project, the Columbus statue formerly in the Church rectory front yard, donated by the Lido Civic Club in 1992, has been temporarily relocated).



FROM THE REGIONAL CORNER

SAN SABASTIANO DEI MARSI, PROVINCE OF L'AQUILA, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Nancy DeSanti

The town of San Sebastiano dei Marsi is located in the southwest corner of the province of L'Aquila in the region of Abruzzo, about 110 kilometers from Pescara. It is part of the mountain community of Valle del Giovenco in the protected area around the National Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise. The little town has only approximately 159 inhabitants, and it is actually a frazione of the commune of Bisegna.

San Sebastiano dei Marsi recently became famous when a young brown marsican bear named Amarene became a YouTube sensation when it meandered down a hill and down some steps leading into the piazza, alarming and amusing the town's residents and visitors. Last year, the bear began to frequent the town to eat up the black cherries (amarene). Fortunately, this year the bear left town soon after the festivities were over and nobody was harmed.

The Abruzzo National Park posted a video of Amarene running down the steps and through the streets as onlookers leaped out of the way. The uninvited guest just happened to show up as the residents and tourists alike were celebrating the town's namesake, San Sebastiano, known as the patron saint of athletes and archers.

The reason is that San Sebastiano, during the reign of Emperor Diocletian, was charged with being a Christian, was tied to a tree, shot with arrows and left for dead. But he survived and returned to preach to Diocletian, who then had him killed around 288 A.D.

The entire Giovenco valley area belonged to the count of Celano, then to Berardi, the count of Marsi, and later to the Piccolomini. In the forest near the town, you can still see the wall of stones engraved with the "mezzaluna" coat of arms of the Piccolomini, marking the boundaries of their fief.

Well worth seeing in the town is the recently restored Church of the Madonna delle Grazie and Santa Gemma.

On the occasion of San Sebastiano's feast day January 19, people in the town celebrate the *Festa delle Panette*, when during the religious ceremony bread is offered to the pilgrims, especially the homemade *Panicelle*.



So there are good reasons to visit San Sebastiano dei Marsi. You may even see a brown marsican bear, which by the way is one of the symbols of Abruzzo.

What to See

- Church of San Pancrazio
- Chiesa of Santa Maria delle Grazie (also known as the Church of Santa Gemma)
- Church of the Madonna of Loreto
- Church of San Sebastiano al fiume
- Chiesetta del Calvario

Important Dates

- January 19: San Sebastiano Martire, the patron saint
- May 11-13: Festival honoring Santa Gemma

Sources:

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Sebastiano_dei_Marsi
<http://www.blitzquotidiano.it/blitztv/youtube-san-sebastiano-dei-marsi-orso-corre-nel-paese-durante-festa-patronale-panico-tra-i-presenti-2740331/>

SAN SEBASTIANO DEI MARSI, PROVINCIA DI L'AQUILA, REGIONE ABRUZZO

Translated by Maddalena Borea, AMHS Member

San Sebastiano dei Marsi si trova a Sud Ovest della città di L'Aquila, in Abruzzo, a circa 110 chilometri da Pescara. Fa parte della comunità montana della valle del Giovenco, nei pressi del Parco Nazionale di Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise, e conta solo 159 abitanti, essendo, in fatti, una frazione della cittadina di Bisegna.

È diventata famosa recentemente quando un orso di colore scuro, soprannominato Amarene, per il suo amore per le ciliege amarene, è stato colto scendere dalle colline verso il paese e passeggiare giù e sù per la piazza, in cerca di ciliege, spaventando così gli abitanti e meravigliandoli. Quest'anno è sceso in paese per le festività del patrono, ed a festa fatta, se n'è andato senza far male ad anima viva. San Sebastiano, Patrono della cittadina, è anche Protettore degli arcieri e degli atleti.

La storia vuole che durante l'impero di Diocleziano, il Santo, accusato di professare la fede cristiana, fu legato ad un albero

e colpito da frecce. Creduto morto fu abbandonato. Riavutosi, continuò a predicare la fede di Cristo e quindi fu condannato a morte, intorno all'anno 288 dopo Cristo.

L'intera valle del Giovenco appartenne un tempo ai Conti Celano, poi ai Berardi, conti di Marsi, e poi ai Piccolomini.

Nelle foreste circostanti sono ancora visibili sui muri le mezze lune, stemma dei Piccolomini, che marcavano i confini dei loro possedimenti. Bellissima è la Chiesa della Madonna delle Grazie e di Santa Gemma. Durante la festa del patrono il 19 gennaio si celebra anche la sagra del pane, panicelle, che viene distribuito a cittadini e a pellegrini.

Ci sono buone ragioni per visitare questa cittadina. Visitandola ci si può anche imbattere nello scuro orso marsicano, che oggi è anche il simbolo della Regione Abruzzo.

Attrazioni del luogo

- Chiesa di San Pancrazio
- Chiesa della Madonna delle Grazie, conosciuta anche come Chiesa di Santa Gemma
- Chiesa della Madonna di Loreto
- Chiesa di San Sebastiano al fiume
- Chiesetta del Calvario

Date da ricordare

- 19 gennaio: Festa di San Sebastiano, Santo Patrono
- 11 - 13 Maggio: Festa di Santa Gemma

ACQUAVIVA D'ISERNIA, PROVINCE OF ISERNIA, REGION OF MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

The beautiful small town of Acquaviva d'Isernia is located about 45 kilometers west of Campobasso and 10 kilometers northwest of Isernia. It is situated in the basin of the Volturno river with scenery noted for its lush vegetation and big oak trees.

Acquaviva d'Isernia has approximately 501 inhabitants.

The town was apparently given the name Acquaviva d'Isernia to distinguish it from Acquaviva Collecroce among other similar names.



Archaeological findings of the Samnite period show that the settlement existed since very old times. Nowadays, the main occupations are agriculture and farming, especially production of cheeses and a popular type of bean. These

special beans are used in a typical local dish called "sagn' e fasciuol."

During medieval times, the town belonged to the Abbey of San Vincenzo al Volturno and later in the 16th century it belonged to the Abbey of Montecassino.

Acquaviva d'Isernia likes to maintain its traditions and folklore, especially during the vigil of the feast of its patron Saint Anastasio on January 22. Known as "La Focata," the celebration features dishes made with juniper (ginepri) from surrounding areas. A huge bonfire is lit, while stories reliving the past are told as morsels of sausage and potato are enjoyed together with a glass of good wine.

Another popular tradition is the *Sagra della Scorpella*, named after a popular Molise sweet of unknown origins, which in some versions resembles the *cartellate pugliesi* and in other versions resembles the *zeppole di San Giuseppe*. Nowadays it's an occasion where participants dance the *pizzica salentina*, look at displays of photographic reminders of the past, and enjoy exhibits by street artists.

What to See

- Church of Sant'Anastasio, with a beautiful architecture and fine decorations
- Cappellina della Madonna del Rosario
- Sanctuary of Santa Maria Assunta
- Castle of Carmignano, from the Longobard era

Important Dates

- January 21: Focata d'Inverno
- January 22: Sant'Anastasio, the patron saint

Sources:

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<http://molisecitta.it/comuni/acquavivadisernia.html>
<https://www.enchantingitaly.com/regions/molise/province-isernia/acquavivadisernia.htm>
<https://www.molisenetwork.net/2014/08/30/acquaviva-di-isernia-iniziata-la-sagra-della-scorpella/>

ACQUAVIVA D'ISERNIA, PROVINCIA D'ISERNIA, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Maddalena Borea

Questa cittadina si trova a circa 45 chilometri da Campobasso e a 10 chilometri da Isernia. Situata lungo il bacino del fiume Volturno, è circondata da bellissime querce e da magnifica vegetazione.

Conta circa 500 abitanti e si chiama così per distinguerla da Acquaviva Collecroce. Ricerche archeologiche stabiliscono qui la presenza di Sanniti e di altre antiche civiltà.

È una comunità dedita all'agricoltura e alla coltivazione della terra. I suoi formaggi sono famosi, e, più famosi i fagioli coi quali fanno un piatto chiamato "sagn' e fasciuol". Appartenne all'Abbazia di San Vincenzo al Volturno, e più tardi all'Abbazia di Montecassino.

Amante delle sue tradizioni e del suo folklore, li esibisce in occasione della festa del suo Patrono, Sant'Anastasio, il 22 gennaio. La focata, in tale occasione, offre cibi del luogo con

piatti preparati con ginepri, salsicce e formaggi domestici, e offre il vino locale, che viene assaporato accanto a un gigantesco falò che riscalda il cuore e le menti dei presenti.

La sagra della Scorpella offre un'altra dolce specialità di origine ignota, ma simile a dolci pugliesi e alle zeppole di San Giuseppe. Oggigiorno questa sagra dà la possibilità ai cittadini di esibirsi in antiche danze "La pizzica salentina" e di presentare mostre d'arte.

Attrazioni del luogo

- La chiesa di Sant'Anastasio con la bella architettura e le belle decorazioni.
- La cappellina della Madonna del Rosario
- Il Santuario di Santa Maria Assunta
- Il Castello di Carmignano dell'era Longobarda.

Date da ricordare

- 21 gennaio: La Focata d'inverno
- 22 gennaio: festa di Sant'Anastasio, Santo Patrono

COMMUNICATION FROM THE REGION OF MOLISE

Introduction by Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

English Translation by Romeo Sabatini

On September 19, 2017, Michele Petraroia, Regional Counselor for Molise, sent a letter to the Italian Ambassador, Armando Varricchio; the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Cultural President of the Molise Region in New York; the St. Ann Club in Norwalk, CT; and the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society regarding the 110th anniversary of the Monongah, WV mine disaster; the 1908 Statute of mutual aid by the emigrants from Jelsi; and Arturo Giovannitti, an Italian-American union leader, socialist political activist, and poet best remembers as one of the principal organizers of the 1912 Lawrence, MA textile strike (Giovannitti was born in Ripabottoni in what is now the province of Campobasso).

The letter, in Italian, has been translated, below, by Romeo Sabatini; the Italian language version follows the English translation.

The harsh events happening in the world make us concentrate to the present, and may sway our attention from past events. But it should not prevent us from considering the history of a people that left Italy dreaming of a better life in the United States, where through sufferings, sacrifices, and successes, have contributed to the economic, social, and cultural growth of the greatest democracy of the world. Molise, although small, since 1870 has had thousands of emigrants going to all parts of the US: from Boston to San Francisco, and with settlements in the most remote unimaginable places. As examples of the emigration from Molise in the period at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, I shall mention three events:

1) On December 6, 1907 the mine disaster in Monongah, West Virginia is the greatest ever work-related disaster in the US with 361 dead, including 171 Italians, 87 of which immigrants from Molise;

2) On October 12, 1908 a Statute of Mutual Support among immigrants from Jelsi (Campobasso) was signed in New York; and

3) On November 12, 1912, the poet labor leader from Molise, Arturo Giovannitti, makes his famous self-defense speech in the Salem court where he and other labor leaders had been condemned to death.

To the history of the Monongah tragedy, Joseph D'Andrea, the Italian Consul in Pittsburgh and uncle to AMHS President Maria D'Andrea, dedicated 30 years of his life, and has written a memorable book with biographical sketches of each disaster victim, and was able to involve in the 100th anniversary celebration of the mine disaster, the Italian President and the then-president of the American Congress Nancy Pelosi.

The details of the second event, the Statute of Mutual Support by the immigrants from Jelsi, were made available to us by Michele Vena, a Yale professor of Molise origins, who edited and commented the reprint of the Statute in cooperation with the Jelsi Society of Norwalk, CT, who in 2014 celebrated the 100th anniversary of their St. Ann Club.

The third event belongs to the world-wide history of workers' unions, and preceded by 15 years the 1927 Sacco and Vanzetti trial and execution, but with opposite favorable results.

These three events are justly remembered by the Molise associations of New York, Norwalk, and Washington, and could represent an opportunity to further emphasize the role of Italian immigration in North America.

It would be beautiful to remember with a message, an event or a flower, the 110th anniversary of the death of 171 Italian miners at Monongah on December 6, 1907, or to help us find the grave of Arturo Giovannitti in New York, and to express appreciation of the stubborn immigrants from Jelsi, well represented by the recently deceased president of the St. Ann Club of Norwalk, Joe Valente, who kept alive a society founded in 1914.

In this dark period of American history when statues of Christopher Columbus are being defaced, I am aware of the incongruence of my letter already made difficult by the present fragility of the Molise institutions, but especially in difficult times it is appropriate to remind all that today's American progress and well-being is also the fruit of thousands of workers and poor peasants from Italy and from Molise.

Distinti Saluti

Michele Petraroia



Consiglio Regionale del Molise

Il Consigliere
Michele Petrarola

Prot. n. 194/2017
del 19.09.2017

Alla cortese attenzione :

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Officer and Director Woman
St ANN Club, 16 Hendricks Avenue
NORWALK, CT 06851

Oggetto : Comunicazione su 110° anniversario strage mineraria di Monongah (West Virginia), su Statuto di Mutuo Soccorso del 12.10.1908 di emigranti di Jelsi (CB) e sulla figura di Arturo Giovannitti il poeta del lavoro italo-americano nato in Molise.

Il rapido fluire di eventi sempre più aspri che si susseguono in ogni angolo del mondo piegano lo sguardo sul presente e rendono problematica l'attenzione su eventi, personalità e vicende emblematiche del passato. Una simile consapevolezza non deve precluderci l'opportunità di misurarci con la storia di un'umanità partita dall'Italia verso il sogno di una vita migliore e approdata negli Stati Uniti d'America, dove tra sofferenze, sacrifici e successi, ha contribuito alla crescita economica, sociale e culturale della più grande democrazia del pianeta. Il Molise, pur nella modestia delle proprie dimensioni, ha visto partire fin dal 1870 migliaia di emigranti di cui si trovano tracce da Boston a San Francisco con insediamenti che arrivano anche nelle zone più remote e inimmaginabili. Per certificare l'entità del flusso migratorio molisano tra fine ottocento ed inizio novecento mi limito a menzionare tre esempi : 1) Il 6 dicembre del 1907 crolla la miniera di Monongah in West Virginia e determina la più grande strage sul lavoro di ogni epoca degli Stati Uniti con 361 vittime ufficiali, di cui 171 morti italiani e ben 87 migranti provenienti dal Molise. 2) Il 12 ottobre del 1908 viene sottoscritto a New York uno Statuto di Mutuo Soccorso tra cittadini originari del comune di Jelsi (CB) in cui ci si aiutava reciprocamente senza lasciare nessuno indietro. 3) Il 12 novembre del 1912 il poeta-sindacalista molisano Arturo Giovannitti pronuncia la sua celebre autodifesa in inglese innanzi al Tribunale di Salem dove era stato condannato a morte insieme ad altri dirigenti sindacali.

Al primo episodio ha dedicato 30 anni della propria vita il Console d'Italia di Pittsburgh, Joseph D'Andrea, zio della Presidente dell'Associazione Abruzzo e Molise di Washington, che ha scritto una pubblicazione memorabile con schede biografiche per ogni caduto nella miniera, riuscendo a coinvolgere nel centenario della strage mineraria la Presidenza della Repubblica Italiana e l'allora Presidente del Congresso Americano Nancy Pelosi. La seconda vicenda è stata restituita a tutti noi da un docente molisano dell'Università di Yale, Michele Vena, che ne ha curato la ristampa insieme all'associazione degli oriundi jelsesi di Norwalk (CT) che nel 2014 hanno celebrato il centenario del St. Ann club. Il terzo evento è parte della storia mondiale del movimento sindacale avendo preceduto di 15 anni la condanna di Sacco e Vanzetti avvenuta nel 1927 ma con un esito opposto. Questi modestissimi riferimenti, sono oggetto di una giusta attenzione da parte delle associazioni molisane di New York, di Norwalk e di Washington, e potrebbero rappresentare un'opportunità aggiuntiva di valorizzazione del ruolo svolto dall'emigrazione italiana in Nord-America. Sarebbe bello ricordare con un messaggio, un gesto o un fiore, il 110° anniversario della morte di 171 minatori italiani a Monongah il 6 dicembre, aiutare la nostra associazione a ritrovare la tomba di Arturo Giovannitti a New York, ed esprimere apprezzamento per la caparbietà dei migranti di Jelsi (CB) ben rappresentata dall'appena scomparso Presidente del Club Sant'Anna di Norwalk Joe Valiante, per aver tenuta viva un'associazione nata nel 1914. In un periodo buio della storia americana in cui si devastano le statue di Cristoforo Colombo mi rendo conto dell'anomalia di questa mia nota, già resa ardua dalla fragilità dell'istituzione molisana, ma è proprio nei momenti difficili che può essere opportuno ricordare a tutti che il progresso ed il benessere americano di oggi è frutto anche del sacrificio di migliaia di operai e contadini poveri provenienti dall'Italia e dal Molise.

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SHOW YOUR AMHS PRIDE!

by Sarah Scott, AMHS Board Member

We are excited to announce that AMHS has new t-shirts available for our membership. These custom shirts were recently released for sale at the Italian Festival on September 11, 2016 and were a big hit. Additionally, we now have available the AMHS logo Tote Bag.

We will offer these and our other AMHS logo items (see order form at end of this issue) at our upcoming events or, if you would like to order one of these t-shirts (or the AMHS Tote bag) by mail, please send your check payable to AMHS with your name, address, shirt size, and gender to:

AMHS, c/o Sarah Scott, 5108 Donovan Drive, #105,
Alexandria, VA 22304



AMHS Men's T-Shirt

Material: 50% cotton/50% polyester. Sizes: S/M/L/XL
Price: \$25 + \$4.50 postage and handling



AMHS Women's T-Shirt

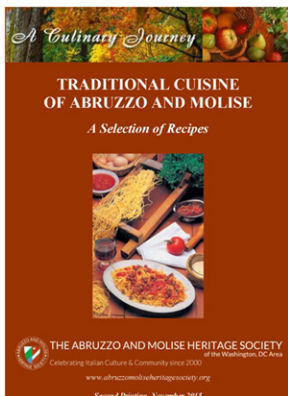
Material: 60% cotton/40% polyester. Sizes: S/M/L/XL
Price: \$25 + \$4.50 postage and handling



NEW! AMHS logo Tote Bag

17"W x 6"D x 13 1/2"H; bottom 12"W; handle drop 9"

Price: \$40 each + \$5.75 for shipping and handling



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

PRICE: \$10.00 + \$5.75 per book for postage and handling = \$15.75

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

OF COPIES: _____ **AMOUNT: (\$15.75 x no. of copies):** _____

✂-----Return with Payment

AMHS POLO SHIRT (ON SALE!)

**AMHS Logo Polo Shirt
Model A**

**AMHS Logo Polo Shirt
Model B**



Model A

MATERIAL: 53% combed cotton
47% polyester EDRY tm fabric
COLOR: light blue
MEN's sizes (only): Small
WOMEN's sizes: M / L

PRICE: \$20 + \$4.50 p&h

MATERIAL: 60% combed cotton
40% polyester regular fabric
COLOR: light blue

WOMEN's sizes only: M / L / XL

PRICE: \$15 + \$4.50 p&h



Model B

Complete one line below for each Polo Shirt being ordered:

MODEL (enter A or B):	<input type="text"/>	(M or W):	<input type="text"/>	(SIZE):	<input type="text"/>	(PRICE):	<input type="text"/>
MODEL (enter A or B):	<input type="text"/>	(M or W):	<input type="text"/>	(SIZE):	<input type="text"/>	(PRICE):	<input type="text"/>
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MODEL (enter A or B):	<input type="text"/>	(M or W):	<input type="text"/>	(SIZE):	<input type="text"/>	(PRICE):	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL POLO SHIRTS:	<input type="text"/>	Total Price:		<input type="text"/>			

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

✂-----Return with Payment



Buon Appetito Chef's Apron with the AMHS Logo

Product details: Extra-long length for more protection. Center divided patch pocket. Ultra-durable 65/35 poly/cotton twill; protected by ProDura with a stain-release finish.

PRICE: \$25.00 + \$5.75 postage & handling = \$30.75

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

OF APRONS: _____ **AMOUNT: (\$30.75 x no. of aprons):** _____

✂-----Return with Payment

FOR MERCHANDISE PAYMENT - CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO AMHS - SEND TO:

Sarah Scott, 5108 Donovan Drive, #105, Alexandria, VA 22304

AMHS SEPTEMBER 24, 2017 GENERAL SOCIETY MEETING



Top (left) and (right): AMHS members and friends enjoy socializing and a sumptuous lunch at Carmine's Restaurant.

Middle (left): AMHS members Mike and Dena DeBonis with a future rising AMHS star, their daughter Rosemary "Rosie" Day.

Middle (right): AMHS members and life-long friends Joann Novello and Pam Lupo.

Bottom (left): AMHS member Mary Petrino and Carmine James Spellane, AMHS Secretary, following the ballot count for NIAF affiliation vote, with AMHS President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers.

Bottom (right): AMHS 1st VP-Programs, Nancy DeSanti, presents guest speaker and AMHS 2nd VP-Membership Lynn Sorbara with a thank-you gift. *(photos courtesy of Maria D'Andrea-Yothers and Joe Novello).*