



THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

of the Washington, DC Area

Celebrating Italian Culture & Community since 2000

www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org

AMHS NOTIZIARIO

January 2018



Top: Sampling the homemade wine at the November 12, 2017 general Society meeting.

Bottom (from left): Gianni Meffe, Associazione Culturale Monongah; Father Ezio Marchetto; Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, AMHS President; and Catherine Flumiani, Counselor, Embassy of Italy, at commemoration ceremony for the Monongah, WVA mine disaster, at Casa Italiana, Sunday, December 3, 2017. *(photos courtesy of Sam Yothers and Tricia Matagliati).*

NEXT SOCIETY EVENT: Sunday, January 28, 2018 at 1:00pm at Casa Italiana. Author Sara Gay Forden will talk about the house of Gucci. *See inside for details.*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members and friends:



I am gratified to have this first opportunity to address you as your new AMHS President.

As we all know, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers did an outstanding job before me, leaving us an organization that has a robust membership, a healthy financial status, and a consistent record of delivering interesting

and stimulating programs. Following in her footsteps will be a challenge. Fortunately, Maria will still be around and very much involved in our Society, so I will be able to avail myself of her guidance and advice. Rest assured then that her experience and leadership will remain an invaluable asset of the Society.

I write this note in the waning days of 2017, so the time is appropriate for both a look back and a look forward. Looking back, we have enjoyed a series of superb speakers for our General Society meetings: First Counselor at the Italian Embassy Catherine Flumiani, author Ceil Lucas, author and chef Domenica Marchetti, author and actress Katherine Wilson, and medical researcher (and AMHS's own) Lynn Sorbara. The presentations were all of high quality, a testament to the dedication and high standards of the AMHS Program Committee. At the first general Society meeting of 2017, the two winners of the NIAF/AMHS scholarship for the 2016-2017 academic year, Salvatore Pitino and Nicholas Rao, addressed the membership and talked about the importance of their Italian heritage and the role of the scholarship in furthering their studies. In May, the Scholarship Committee selected two new winners for the 2017-2018 academic year: Benjamin Abeles (Cornell University) and Gianluca Nigro (George Washington University). We can expect to meet them in person (perhaps individually) at one of our General Society meetings in 2018. In December, members of the AMHS, along with the Italian Embassy and other community organizations, attended a Mass and reception commemorating the 110th anniversary of the Monongah mining disaster, in which hundreds of immigrant workers, including many Italians from Molise, lost their lives. Lastly, as the year ends, we pause to recall the passing of Pino Cicala (in April), and Mike Savino (in December), as well as all other AMHS members or friends we may have lost in 2017.

Looking forward, the Program Committee has prepared another excellent lineup of speakers and presentations for 2018. Stay tuned for the announcements. As I noted above, the Society's membership going forward remains strong, as do its finances. The officers serving the Society in the new year are, in addition to me, Nancy DeSanti (First Vice President); Lynn Sorbara (Second Vice President); Carmine Spellane (Secretary); and Peter Bell (Treasurer). New members of the Board are Rico Allegrino and Joann and Joe Novello

(welcome back!). The AMHS truly appreciates their willingness to volunteer their time and energies, and we should all realize that the Society cannot function without contributions such as theirs. Outgoing Board members Ennio DiTullio and Jim Mustachio (in addition to me) deserve our thanks for their work.

Still looking forward, it is important to remind our membership that the period for submitting an application for one of the two joint NIAF/AMHS scholarships opened on December 1st 2017 and will close on March 1st of 2018. If you have a child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or family friend who might benefit from the scholarship, be sure to have them check out the AMHS website for additional information (<http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/scholarships/how-to-apply/>), including the Society's criteria for eligibility. The website now reflects the current criteria (Thank you, Jonathan Stern!).

By the time that you read these words, the New Year will have already started. It will not be too late, however, to wish everyone a healthy and happy new year, enlivened by an active participation in the cultural events of your Society, starting with our first General Society Meeting of the year on January 28th. The speaker will be Sara Gay Forden, author and financial reporter, who will talk on the "House of Gucci". It should be interesting.

Best regards,
Ray LaVerghetta

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2018!

Congratulations to the officers and three members of the Board, who were voted in by acclamation at the November 12 meeting:

Officers

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

Members of the Board

Americo (Rico) Allegrino
Joann Novello
Joe Novello

These three board members join Jeff Clark, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers (Immediate Past President), Lucio D'Andrea (President Emeritus), Helen Free, Albert Paolantonio, Sarah Scott, Jonathan Stern, and Lourdes Tinajero.

These individuals will be installed at the January 28, 2018 general Society meeting. Officers serve a 2-year term, and the newly elected board members serve a three-year term.

We can rest assured that the Society will be in good hands! Please be sure to congratulate these individuals and thank them for their service to the mission of the Society.

Submitted by the AMHS Nominating Committee, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, Lucio D'Andrea, and Ennio DiTullio.

UPCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

AMERICAN AUTHOR TO TALK ABOUT AMAZING STORY OF "HOUSE OF GUCCI" *by Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs*

Finance and fashion are intertwined as the topic of our first program of the year on January 28, 2018, at Casa Italiana. Our speaker, Sara Gay Forden, lived in Milan for 22 years where she covered financial news which frequently intersected with fashion news and personalities.

So Sara knew a lot about one of the legends of Italian fashion—the House of Gucci—and she decided to write a book 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, Sara's book is entitled, "House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour and Greed." (Note: If you would like a signed copy of the book, please order it in advance and bring it to the meeting for signing by the author).

To gather information for her in-depth book, the author interviewed 100 people over a two-year period. While in Milan, as a journalist with Dow Jones 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 overlapped with the fashion world. In fact, even now, there are reports in the news about Gucci's problems with the Italian tax authorities.

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

Explaining some of the highlights of her book, she noted that often some of the fashion brands were 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. While it has had its up and downs, it was fortunate to have talented designers like Tom Ford.

No doubt you will be fascinated to learn the details of the infamous trial involving the murder of one of the Gucci heirs, actually the founder's grandson. This story is stranger than fiction, and Sara covered the trial and wrote about it in detail.

So please invite your family and friends, and make your reservation early to hear this most interesting talk. The deadline for paid reservations is January 24, 2018. We will also have a delicious lunch catered by Fontina Grille. The menu includes baked ziti with cheese, chicken piccata with lemon and capers, rice, house salad and dessert. See you there!!

SAVE THE DATES: 2018 CALENDAR OF AMHS MEETINGS & EVENTS

- Sunday, January 28, 1:00 p.m., Casa Italiana.**
- Sunday, March 25, 1:00 p.m., restaurant TBD**
- Sunday, June 10, 1:00 p.m., Casa Italiana**
- Sunday, July 22, 1:00 p.m., Casa Italiana**
- Sunday, August 12, 3:00 p.m., Ferragosto Picnic**
- Sunday, September 23, 1:00 p.m., restaurant TBD**
- Sunday, November 11, 1:00 p.m., Casa Italiana**

RECENT SOCIETY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

NOVEMBER 12 WINE TASTING DRAWS BIG CROWD *by Nancy DeSanti*

On a beautiful crisp fall day, 94 AMHS members and friends came together at Casa Italiana to enjoy our annual wine tasting and luncheon. Once again, the event proved to be an outstanding success, with 11 winemakers participating. This was one of our best turnouts for this popular annual event.

Much credit must go to Romeo Sabatini who always helps with this event, and especially to Jim Gearing, who organized the wine makers' participation. And a big thank you to Three Brothers Italian Restaurant for catering a delicious lunch.

Before the program got underway, we held a short business meeting to elect new officers and board members. Congratulations to our new incoming president, Ray La Verghetta, the re-elected vice presidents Nancy DeSanti and Lynn Sorbara, secretary Carmine Spellane and treasurer Peter Bell. We welcome new board member Americo (Rico) Allegrino and are very pleased that Joe and Joann Novello will be returning to serve as board members. And we thanked Maria D'Andrea who is stepping down as our president (see related articles in this *Notiziario*).

Once again this year, we had to forgo the usual porchetta made in past years by Joe Novello, our go-to guy for the porchetta, since there are still issues with using the Casa Italiana kitchen. However, from the comments we received afterwards, the Three Brothers lunch was enjoyed by everyone, with a delicious menu consisting of orrechiete with broccoli rabe in garlic and olive oil, sausage and peppers, rice, salad, bread and dessert.

There were many varieties of wines to taste this year, made by Osvaldo Barsi, Jim and Bev Gearing, Romeo Sabatini and his

grandson Emanuele di Prima, Darrin P. Sobin, Jack Grimaldi, Wayne C. Witkowski, Diane Riccobene, John Paul Maye, and Bob and Amie Barbieri.

Before the wine tasting got underway, Tom Savage of International Cellars, a wine importer who is very knowledgeable about the wines of Abruzzo and Molise, gave us a fascinating talk about wines in Italy. Tom was in Abruzzo during the earthquake last August, but that didn't deter him from his travels to the small vineyards all over Italy. In fact, Tom urged the audience to find a local small business which imports wines from small Italian vineyards rather than the big conglomerates. As he pointed out, if sales of these wonderful wines can be increased through publicity and marketing, that would be a much-needed boost to the economies of these regions. He noted that there are a mindboggling 500 genetically distinct grapes in Italy.

So for a couple hours, we enjoyed good food and wine, got some good information, and enjoyed socializing with our families and friends. What better way to spend a beautiful fall afternoon?

We would like to thank the many people who contributed to the success of this event, especially Jim Gearing, Romeo Sabatini, all the wine makers and also all those volunteers who pitched in to do the setting up of the room and the serving of the food. And last but not least, we would like to thank the donors of the raffle prizes and all those who bought tickets for the raffle which brought in \$159 for our scholarship fund.

THANK YOU TO OUR OUTGOING PRESIDENT

by Nancy DeSanti

At our November 12, 2017 program, new AMHS officers and board members were elected, and therefore it was our last program with Maria D'Andrea-Yothers as president. So some of the people who worked closely with Maria over her years as president, wanted to say a few words before the program began.

AMHS 2nd Vice President Lynn Sorbara started by saying although she was an original member of the Society, and a board member years ago, she had to step back for a few years due to family issues involving her mother's health. She told us that after her mother passed away, she felt lost, disconnected from her family, her roots, and her "Italian-ness." She said after she came back to the Society, she once again found her second family—a family where she felt "welcomed, accepted and connected to wonderful people."

Lynn called Maria "a very special person and a very special president! She is dedicated and has worked tirelessly to bring AMHS to the pinnacle and status that it now enjoys. She has done tremendous outreach to other organizations and has made AMHS part of the larger Italian community."

Then 1st Vice President Nancy DeSanti said Maria in her leadership over the past four years has shown us how it's done. She said not only is Maria so efficient and responsive

(like often answering e-mails within minutes), she is interested in and knowledgeable about everything that goes on. She added that Maria's energy and ideas are appreciated by all, and so is her outgoing personality and friendliness.

And Nancy said that Maria goes the extra mile. For example, if she learns one of our members is sick, she promptly sends them a get-well card. If one of our members' parents or loved ones passes away, she arranges to have a Mass said in their memory. Thoughtful gestures that mean so much!!

AMHS Past President Omero Sabatini, one of the founders of the Society, called Maria's Mom, Edvige, "the glue that holds everything together." Omero complimented Maria on the excellent job she has done, adding that she epitomizes the progress our members have made by electing her president, because in the old days a woman in a position of leadership of any organization was almost unheard of. Omero introduced a note of levity by telling the audience that although Maria's e-mail address starts with the letters uva (meaning grape in Italian), she is not a maker of either wine or grape juice, but he said this "shortcoming" is more than offset by the outstanding job she has done as president.

And then Maria's Dad, Lucio D'Andrea, also a past president and one of the Society's founders, told the audience how very proud he was of his daughter and how much it has meant to him that she has carried on the work he began when he helped found the Society in 2000. He said it made him very happy to see that the Society not only survived, but thrived.

Nancy told the audience that the previous Sunday, some of the people who worked closely with Maria had a surprise lunch for her at Osteria da Nino in Shirlington. And it really was a surprise, even though quite a few people knew about it. And the reason everyone knew it was a surprise, is that Maria came wearing a sweatshirt and sneakers. And we all know Maria is usually dressed to the nines, right?

And one of the things she said then was that the people she has come to know in our Society are like her second family. And you know, some of us got a little choked up, because she's right. Through the activities of the Society, through seeing each other at Holy Rosary most Sundays (for many of us, anyway), we have truly become close.

Nancy noted that although Maria is stepping down as our president, she will still work with the program committee, she will still work on the *Notiziario*, and she will still attend board meetings as immediate past president. And Maria has been invited to join the board of the National Christopher Columbus Association, filling the spot held by our dearly departed member Pino Cicala.

In closing, Board Members Lourdes Tinajero and Albert Paolantonio presented Maria with beautiful flowers. Then, it was on to the wine tasting and lunch!!

AMHS MEMBERSHIP

by Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President – Membership

I am pleased to report that there are 293 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 2018 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: **Teresa & Gianpiero Forcina, Barbara Friedman, Heidi Gundlach, Trudy McCrea, Giovanni Sciannameo, and Robert & Barbara Verdile**; and to our scholarship winners: **Benjamin Abeles, and Gianluca Nigro**.

Compleanni a Gennaio

Paul Fazioli, Jeffrey Petrino, Carmela Ventresca, January 2; Rose DelBorrello, January 7; Americo S. Allegrino, Emma DiTullio, January 8; Abraham Avidor, January 12; Monica Reed, January 18; Frank DelBorrello, Jacqueline D'Ermes, January 19; John Villilo, January 20; Cecilia Fiermonte, Imara-Rose Glymph, January 21; Nicholas Campanell, January 23; Bess DiTullio, January 24; Lois Sandri, January 25; Margherita Amatucci, Norina Noto, January 26; and Stanley B. Scott, January 31.

Anniversari a Gennaio

Ennio & Emma DiTullio, January 5; and Joseph & Lois Sandri, January 24.

Compleanni a Febbraio

Mauro Chiaverini, Roberto Di Tullio, Dora Marinucci, February 2; Rev. Lydio Tomasi, February 6; Karen DiGiovanni, February 7; Carmen Ciccone, February 8; Louis Sacchetti, February 9; Stephan Carrier, Mark Lino, February 10; Julie Finigan-Dal Forno, February 14; Elisa DiClemente, Andrea Balzano, February 18; Lana Nardella, Graziella Orfila, February 19; Francesco Isgro, February 21; Emanuele DeMarco, Gino Marinucci, February 22; Joe Marchegiani, Diana Del Grosso, February 23; Andrew Marotta, February 24; Luigi DeLuca, Lourdes Tinajero, February 25; Michele LaVerghetta, February 27; and Loretta Mastragelo, Feb 28.

Anniversari a Febbraio

Sam & Maria D' Andrea Yothers, February 11; Michael & Dena DeBonis, February 15; Bruno & Joanne Fusco, Feb 14.

SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

WHAT'S THE POSSIBILITY – LIFE-LONG AMHS MEMBERS & FRIENDS MEET IN PORTUGAL!

What are the odds that two couples – long-time friends and members of AMHS - vacationing in Portugal, would run into each other “out of the blue”. Well, that is indeed what

happened when Lucio and Edvige D'Andrea ran into Francesco and Anna Isgro when they were walking through the city of Coimbra, Portugal.



Both couples knew they would be visiting the country but had no idea they would be in one city at the same time. It is indeed “a small world after all!” (submitted by Maria D'Andrea-Yothers).

CELEBRATING LA CUCINA E VINI DI SARDEGNA

On Sunday, November 19, a group of seven AMHS members participated in one of Osteria da Nino's monthly wine pairing dinners. On this night, the group enjoyed a celebration of the food and wines of Sardegna, from its most famous winery, Sella & Mosca.



From left, Lucio & Edvige D'Andrea, Nancy DeSanti, Sam Yothers, Jeff Clark, Albert Paolantonio, owner Nino Pino, and Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

Nino Pino, owner of Osteria da Nino, was a most gracious host, as was speaker Alfonso Gagliano, U.S. Brand Manager for Sella & Mosca. The group was treated to a dinner of tuna carpaccio, paired with La Cala 2015 (100% Vermentino); house-made squid-ink ravioli stuffed with shrimp, lobster, crab meat and minced clams, paired with Terre Bianche Torbato 2015 (100% Torbato); fregola sarda, paired with Terrerara Carignano Riserva 2010 (100% Carignano); house-

made semolina gnocchi Sardi with a fennel, sausage and tomato ragu, paired with Cannonau di Sardegna 2011 (100% Cannonau); and grilled lamb chop with rosemary fingerling potato, paired with Marchese di Villamarina 2010 (100% Cabernet Sauvignon).

One interesting fact about the Torbato grape – it is a white wine grape variety now grown exclusively in northwest Sardegna, largely thanks to the revival efforts of Sella & Mosca, which produces both still and sparkling versions of the once-rare grape.

For some attending the dinner, this was an extra special treat as they had either visited Sardegna and/or the Sella & Mosca winery (Albert Paolantonio, Lucio & Edvige D’Andrea, and Maria D’Andrea-Yothers & Sam Yothers – wearing lapel labels with the flag of Sardegna). In addition, it was Edvige D’Andrea’s birthday – she was treated to a special cake and a rousing chorus of “*buon compleanno a te*”!

This is the second wine pairing dinner sponsored by Osteria da Nino, where several AMHS members participated (the first one was a wine pairing dinner for the region of Puglia in May). These are very successful events, so much so that a couple of officers are going to work with Nino to arrange a wine pairing dinner for the regions of Abruzzo and Molise sometime in 2018. So stay tuned! (*submitted by Maria D’Andrea-Yothers*).

ABRUZZESE NAMED HONORARY CONSUL IN CONNECTICUT

by Nancy DeSanti and Lucio D’Andrea, AMHS President Emeritus

When Quintino Cianfaglione came to Hartford, Connecticut from Abruzzo as a 20-year-old searching for the American dream, he probably never imagined that 50 years later, on a day he called “one of the most important” of his life, the dream had finally come true.



Cianfaglione was officially sworn in on November 21, 2017, as the honorary consul of Italy in Connecticut in a ceremony

led by Armando Varricchio, the Italian ambassador to the United States. Cianfaglione’s appointment comes with a consulate on Trumbull Street, across from the XL Center.

“His presence shows how much Italy cares about its citizens in this state,” Cianfaglione said of Ambassador Varricchio. “Spreading and promoting our culture is the most important issue we have at the moment, not only for Italians living here, but the Italian-Americans who were born here.”

As Ambassador Varricchio noted, “Such a large, active and well integrated community, among whose members towers Ella Grasso, one of the first women to be elected governor of a state in the U.S., warranted the re-opening of an honorary consulate in Hartford...This will ensure that the relationship between Connecticut and Italy continues to develop and grow stronger to the benefit of our citizens. Among all states, Connecticut has the second-largest number of residents claiming to be of Italian origin in percent, trailing only Rhode Island. The University of Connecticut was the first college to offer a doctorate in Italian-American history in the United States,”

The Ambassador added: “Connecticut, with its world class universities such as Yale and Trinity College, is in a unique position to meet the needs of forward-looking and innovative companies willing to compete and succeed not only in the United States but worldwide. This is why many Italian businesses and entrepreneurs decided to invest here, from Hartford to New Haven, and harness Connecticut’s remarkable economic performance, based on a strong focus on research and development. These are elements of the utmost importance in any entrepreneurial endeavor. Thanks to the region’s assets, Italian companies based here are expanding their activities nationwide, from the mechanical sector to cutting-edge technology—not forgetting the food industry.”

In addition to promoting Italian history and culture, the state’s honorary consulate will also provide wide-ranging services for expats living there. Beginning in 2018, the office will be able to issue Italian passports, a service that was previously only available in New York City. It will also help Italian immigrants collect their social security payments from their homeland, a common issue for older Hartford residents, according to Cianfaglione.

“Connecticut has an older population that needs to be assisted,” he said. “They cannot travel to New York anymore, and this will also save everybody money and time.” Those services, he stressed, are not exclusive to people residing in or near Hartford, and promised that some mobile services will circulate throughout the state when the consulate is fully operational.

Catherine Flumiani, the First Counselor for Consular and Social Affairs of the Embassy of Italy, noted that “**we have** worked very hard to reopen our Honorary Consulate in Hartford,”

Following the announcement of the opening, AMHS Past President Emeritus Lucio D'Andrea spoke with Cianfaglione and congratulated him on his appointment.

Cianfaglione is originally from Pratola Peligna in the province of L'Aquila. He arrived in 1967 and settled in Hartford, Connecticut, where he hosted an Italian radio program after having obtained a degree in radio technology while in Italy. For many years, until his retirement, he managed his construction company and radio and television stations. Meanwhile, he served in leadership roles in the Comites in Connecticut and New York for the last 20 years and he is now president of the Comites of the tri-state area of New York, Connecticut and New Jersey.

In addition, Cianfaglione was the founder of the Madonna della Libera Title Holder Pratolana Society, a non-profit organization that promotes social activities for Italian-Americans of Abruzzese heritage, organizes scholarships and carries out charitable activities on behalf of disabled children in Connecticut.

For the past 10 years, Cianfaglione has directed the Connecticut branch of the non-profit Associazione Cristiana Artigiani Italiani of U.S. Since 1973, he has coordinated the annual fundraiser for the orphans of Father Arturo D'Onofrio of Visciano (Napoli).

We are pleased to offer him an honorary membership in AMHS.

2018 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PERIOD NOW OPEN

By Ray LaVerghetta, Chair, AMHS Scholarship Committee

The AMHS awards a \$4,000 scholarship every year to two students who have demonstrated strong academic performance and a keen interest in Italian language and studies. The AMHS and the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) together manage this important program, for which the application period for the 2018-2019 academic year just opened on December 1st, 2017. The deadline for receipt of applications is March 1st, 2018. Those interested in applying should check the eligibility criteria for both NIAF and AMHS by going to their respective websites: <https://www.niaf.org/> and <http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/scholarships/>.

It is worth emphasizing that this program offers a unique opportunity for high school and college or university students who have an Italian background, and so AMHS members and friends should ensure that their children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, etc. are aware of it. Membership in the AMHS is not a requirement for submitting an application, but applicants must either be NIAF members themselves or have a parent or guardian who is. Remember that AMHS members are automatically members of NIAF because of the Society's official association with that organization.

The program operates in the following manner. NIAF manages the initial screening of applicants, ensuring that all are eligible. It then forwards all the eligible candidates to the AMHS, whose Scholarship Committee selects the two winners by majority vote. Current Scholarship Committee members include Peter Bell, Lucio D'Andrea, Ray LaVerghetta (Chair), Romeo Sabatini and Lourdes Tinajero.

For information or questions concerning the program, please visit the Society's website or contact one of the Scholarship Committee members.

THE 110TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONONGAH, WEST VIRGINIA MINING DISASTER

by Maria D'Andrea-Yothers and Lucio D'Andrea

On Sunday, December 3, 2017 at 10:30 a.m., a Holy Mass was celebrated at Holy Rosary Church to commemorate the victims of the Monongah, West Virginia mining disaster (the Mass also honored *Santa Barbara, the Patron Saint of the Marina Militare*).

The Monongah mining disaster occurred on December 6, 1907 in two mines owned, at the time, by the Fairmont Coal Company. This tragedy claimed the lives of (officially) 362 men and boys (unofficial reports put the number of casualties at more than 500, which included children who, at the time, were not recorded when entering the mines). This tragedy has significant meaning for AMHS, given that the majority of Italian immigrants who were killed came from the region of Molise (87 of the 171 immigrants from Italy). This disaster left behind 250 widows, and more than 1,000 children.

The Society, through one of its founder and President Emeritus Lucio D'Andrea, arranged to display, in front of the Church altar, a statue of a miner (made from coal), a miner's head lamp, and a piece of coal from Monongah (see photo, below).



Following the Mass, a reception was held in Casa Italiana, and remarks were offered by Father Ezio; Catherine Flumiani, Minister Counselor of the Embassy of Italy; Gianni Meffe, President of the *Associazione Culturale "Monongah"*; AMHS

President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers; and Lucio D'Andrea, President Emeritus.



From left, Gianni Meffe, Catherine Flumiani, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, and Lucio D'Andrea

Messages were also conveyed from Michele Petraroia, Regional Counselor of Molise, and from Joseph D'Andrea, Former Honorary Consul of Italy in Pittsburgh. A special note should be made of Joseph D'Andrea, brother of Lucio, who conducted extensive research on the Molisani victims of the tragedy, culminating in the publication of the book "Monongah – Cent'Anni di Oblio" ("Monongah – 100 Years of Oblivion").

Poster boards were displayed in Casa Italiana, with photos of the mining disaster; events held on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of this tragedy; and the names of Italian miners who lost their lives. Also played was the video "Monongah Remembered", which connects the impact of the Monongah disaster, still the worst mining disaster in American history, with its eventual ramifications for governmental safety regulations. (A copy of this video is available on request to Lucio, at ldandrea1933@comcast.net).

A primary objective of the Society, in promoting this event, was to educate and inform the larger Italian and Italian American community about this disaster, which has been relegated to the archives of history. Many who attended the event were surprised to learn about this tragedy and the many lives it claimed. The Society expresses its appreciation to the Embassy of Italian and to Father Ezio Marchetto for their support in commemorating this tragedy.

FROM THE REGIONAL CORNER

FOSSACESIA, PROVINCE OF CHIETI, REGION OF ABRUZZO

by Nancy DeSanti

The beautiful town of Fossacesia is located on a small hill on the left of the Sangro River's mouth, about 2 kilometers from the Adriatic Sea. The town has approximately 6,184 residents, known as Fossacesiani.

Located in southeastern Abruzzo, Fossacesia consists of two separate settlements, one high on a hilltop left of the Sangro river, the other (Fossacesia Marina) along the Adriatic, near the picturesque Punta del Cavalluccio bay.



The town's ancient history traces back to a human settlement in the Neolithic period and later the Roman period. Roman columns and stones were dismantled and reused in the Abbey of St. Giovanni in Venere, considered one of the most important abbeys in Abruzzo. There was a strong Benedictine influence in the development of the area, and in the 12th century, there was a borough called Fossa Coeca ("blind ditch"), which is thought to be the basis of the town's name. Eventually, many different families possessed the town and its surrounding area in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance.

Its natural beauty can be seen in the soft pink almond blossoms, green fields of early wheat and the chirping of swallows which provide a feast for the senses. And what else can you say of the beauty of Fossacesia? Well, it overlooks the patchworked Sangro river valley, which is visible from several vantage points, with its fertile flatlands stretching from the Adriatic to the foothills of the Majella mountains only 45 minutes away.

Just a few minutes south along the Adriatica national road lies Torino di Sangro, the resting place of the mortal remains of thousands of young men who sacrificed their lives along the easternmost point of the Gustav line in World War II and who are honored at the Sangro River War Cemetery. (The Gustav Line was one of a series of German military fortifications which ran across Italy from just north of where the Garigliano River flows into the Tyrrhenian Sea in the west, through the Apennine Mountains to the mouth of the Sangro River on the Adriatic coast in the east.)

The bloody battle of the Sangro left deep scars on the land, some of which are still visible in the old part of Fossacesia near the church of St. Donato, the town's patron saint.

Looking west from this vantage point, one is awestruck by the contrast between the majestic Mount Majella and the lush green vegetation in the deep ravine that borders the northern part of town. To add to the enjoyment of nature lovers, colorful wild flowers grow abundantly along the roads,

including the violetta mammola, the sunny yellow primula selvatica, and in April, scarlet poppies.

And Fossacesia does a lot to promote the traditions as well as the arts and crafts of the region, such as a showing of the famous Castelli ceramics. There is one week in May sponsored by the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, which features museum exhibits, library exhibits, shows and conferences.

Visitors can go to the nearby seashore to see the Costa dei Trabocchi, including the famous trabocco "Pesce Palombo" which even has its own website and an amazing YouTube video. And of course there is the delicious seafood, including the tasty dogfish (palombo).



In other words, in this small town, there is something for everybody!!

What to See

- Punta del Cavalluccio bay
- Abbey of San Giovanni in Venere
- Trabocco "Pesce Palombo"

Important Dates

- June 23-24: Feast of San Giovanni, with the vigil held at the Abbey
- 2nd half of July: Sagra del Pesce Fritto.
- 1st weekend in August: Palio de "lu Sticchie"
- August 6-7: Feast of St. Donato the Martyr, the patron saint
- September: Grape festival

Sources:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fossacesia>

<https://www.lifeinabruzzo.com/fossacesia/>

<http://www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/chieti/fossacesia.htm>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IZIWJARuK0>

FOSSACESIA, PROVINCIA DI CHIETI, REGIONE ABRUZZO

Translated by Maddalena Borea, AMHS member

Questa cittadina sorge su una piccola collina nei pressi del fiume Sangro, a circa due chilometri dal Mare Adriatico. Conta pressappoco seimila abitanti, conosciuti come Fossacesiani.

È divisa in due parti: Fossacesia superiore alla sinistra del fiume Sangro, e Fossacesia Marina lungo la costiera adriatica, vicino alla bella baia, conosciuta come Punta del Cavalluccio.

La sua storia risale al periodo neolitico e a quello romano. Colonne e pietre dell'era romana furono smantellate e riusate per la costruzione dell'abbazia di San Giovanni in Venere, considerata una delle più belle abbazie d'Abruzzo. Molto importante fu l'influenza benedettina nell'area.

Nelle vicinanze di Fossacesia si trovava un comune di nome Fossa cieca, da cui deriverebbe il suo nome. Differenti famiglie furono al governo della cittadina lungo il Medioevo e il Rinascimento.

I suoi fiori di mandorlo, il profumo che emanano, il verde dei suoi prati, e il verde del suo grano primaverile, il cinguettio delle rondini riempiono l'aria del luogo e rallegrano i sensi. Quali altre bellezze si possono trovare in questa cittadina? Si affaccia sulla vallata del fiume Sangro con le sue vegetazioni, con la sua fertile pianura, e si estende dall'Adriatico alle pendici della maestosa Maiella.

Non molto distante, nei pressi della strada nazionale Adriatica sorge Torino di Sangro, dove migliaia di giovani trovarono la morte durante la seconda guerra mondiale. Riposano nel cimitero dei caduti di guerra del Fiume Sangro. La ferocissima battaglia del Sangro lasciò molte cicatrici e molte rovine in questa terra. Alcune rovine sono ancora visibili nei pressi della chiesa di San Donato, il Santo Patrono.

I contrasti naturali del luogo costituiscono la sua maggiore attrazione: il verde dei prati, i colori dei fiori che adornano i cigli delle strade, le viole, le mammole, le primule e il rosso scarlatto dei papaveri sono la sua bellezza.

Fossacesia promuove le sue arti, le sue attività artigianali e le sue ceramiche, e il Ministero dei Beni artistici e culturali dedica una settimana ogni anno nel mese di maggio a esibizioni che mettono in risalto le creatività e i tesori culturali della cittadina.

I turisti hanno la possibilità di gustare il magnifico pesce del luogo, e di visitare la costa dei trabocchi, regno del Pesce Palombo, che può essere visitato in rete o su YouTube.

Attrazioni del luogo

- La Baia della Punta del Cavalluccio
- L'Abbazia di San Giovanni in Venere
- Trabocco "Pesce Palombo"

Date da ricordare

- 23-24 Giugno: Festa di San Giovanni con veglia nell'Abbazia
- Seconda metà di Luglio: Sagra del Pesce Fritto
- Primo Fine Settimana di Agosto: Palio de "Lu Sticchie"
- 6 - 7 Agosto: Festa di San Donato Martire, Santo Patrono
- Il mese di Settembre: Sagra della Vendemmia

MONTERODUNI, PROVINCE OF ISERNIA, REGION OF MOLISE

by Nancy DeSanti

The beautiful small town of Monteroduni, located about 40 kilometers west of Campobasso and 11 kilometers southeast of Isernia, was recently in the news, in a good way!

Monteroduni made the news in October 2017 with the return to Monteroduni of a 16th-century statue of the Archangel Michael stolen by thieves some 20 months earlier. The return was a heartfelt affair celebrated by many.

A marching band led a procession through the narrow streets of the town, followed by a religious confraternity in full regalia, as members of the military police's art theft unit carried the statue of the town's patron saint to Monteroduni's main church.



With a sizable portion of the town's residents marching happily as children popped balloons and scattered confetti, bells rang joyfully and some older residents wiped away tears of joy and cried out "Evviva San Michele."

The investigation that led to its recovery, and that of objects stolen from dozens of churches throughout Italy and abroad, turned out to be "one of the most important operations in recent years," said Paolo Albano, the chief prosecutor of the nearby town of Isernia, who coordinated the case.

The town has approximately 2,195 inhabitants, known as Monterodunesi.

Monteroduni is an ancient and certainly pre-Roman town, as evidenced by the discovery in 1881 of Neolithic tombs in the

area now called "Soccie". Some experts think the present name Monteroduni derives from Rota, while others suggest that it derives from Olotronus, the ancient name of the Volturno River which crosses this land.

It's possible that the land of Monteroduni, which was very strategic for its closeness to the Matese and for the passage of armies, was the place where battles between the Romans and the Samnites were fought. At any rate, the area certainly has an interesting history. After the defeat of the Samnites, these lands were also crossed by the armies of Hannibal on their way to Puglia, Sannio and Lazio.

During the Roman Empire, under Augustus, the southern land of the Volturno became part of the Teretina tribe; while the northern area, Rota, belonged to the Tromentina tribe. The finding of many fragments of tombstones suggests that in that area there was also a temple dedicated to the goddess of the storm and it was connected to the cult of the god of the Volturno which was celebrated to avoid the floods which devastated the fields.

In 456, the "Campo Sacco" area was looted by vandals who were marching towards Isernia. During the Longobard period, from 589 to 1058, the depopulation of "Campo Sacco" led to the creation of a new settlement on the mountain, where the present town of Monteroduni now stands. The depopulation was caused by the need of the people to live in a place far from the roads where the Longobards fought their battles, but it was also caused by the phenomenon of the Saracen invasions of the Samnite land in the second half of the 9th century.

In 1193 Monteroduni was destroyed and left without water for about 800 years. Several houses had wells and cisterns, fed by rainwater used only for household chores. There were many natural springs, still existing which supplied water to drink. The first real waterworks in Monteroduni were inaugurated in 1938. And Monteroduni is thought to be the first town of the area to have lighting, and in fact the town had its first electric plant in 1883.

One popular event every August is a jazz festival honoring Salvatore Massaro, an Italian-American whose family traces its roots to the town. Born in Philadelphia the son of an instrument maker, he became known as Eddie Lang.

During the 1920s, he gave the guitar a prominence it previously lacked as a solo instrument in jazz bands and the big bands of that era. He learned to play violin, banjo, piano and guitar. While most bands of the time had a banjo player, he was so influential that banjo players had no choice but to switch to guitar. For this reason, musical experts call him the father of jazz guitar.

,
He recorded with blues guitarist Lonnie Johnson under the name Blind Willie Dunn to hide his ethnicity and as a tribute to blues guitarist Blind Lemon Jefferson. He became good

friends with Bing Crosby and played in his orchestra. Quite a versatile musician!!

What to See

- Medieval Pignatelli Castle, beautifully preserved with round towers, once belonging to the Pignatelli della Leonessa family
- Church of Santa Maria in Altissimi, built between the 11th and 12th centuries

Important Dates

- August: "Eddie Lang Jazz Festival," in honor of Italian-American musician Salvatore Massaro
- September 22-24: Grapes Vintage Feast
- September 29: Feast of S. Michele Arcangelo, the patron saint

Sources:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monteroduni>
<http://www.monteroduni.eu/the-history-of-monteroduni.html>
<https://www.enchantingitaly.com/regions/molise/province-isernia/monteroduni.htm>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/22/world/europe/italy-churches-theft.html>

MONTERODUNI, PROVINCIA DI ISERNIA, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Maddalena Borea

Questa pittoresca cittadina, a circa 40 chilometri da Campobasso ed a 11 chilometri da Isernia, ha recentemente fatto notizia col ritorno della statua dell'Arcangelo Michele, che era stata rubata venti mesi prima.

Questo ritorno è stato profondamente sentito e celebrato da molti. In tale occasione la sacra statua è stata riportata alla chiesa madre in grande pompa, in una processione guidata da religiosi, da agenti di pubblica sicurezza addetti alla protezione delle Arti, da musicisti che eseguivano marce di giubilo.

Tutta la popolazione marciava al suono di queste marce, i bambini saltavano gioiosamente e lanciavano coriandoli in aria, le campane suonavano a festa, e i vecchi si asciugavano le lacrime di gioia, e gridavano "Evviva San Michele." La difficile operazione che ha portato al ricovero della statua e di altri oggetti d'arte, rubati nelle chiese italiane ed altrove, è stata una delle più ardue degli anni recenti, ha detto Paolo Albano, il pubblico Ministero della vicina città di Isernia, che ha coordinato e condotto l'operazione.

Monteroduni conta circa duemiladuecento abitanti, i quali sono chiamati Monterodunesi. A giudicare dalle scoperte del 1881 di tombe neolitiche in un'area oggi chiamata "Soccie", la cittadina risalirebbe a periodi preromani. Alcuni pensano che il suo nome venga da Rota, altri da Olotronus, l'antico fiume che attraversava questa terra.

È possibile che il territorio di Monteroduni, molto strategico per la sua vicinanza al Matese e per il trasporto di armi, sia

stato campo di battaglia fra Romani e Sanniti. Comunque sia, questa zona è piena di storia. Dopo la sconfitta dei Sanniti, l'area fu attraversata dalle truppe di Annibale, che si dirigevano verso la Puglia, il Sannio e il Lazio.

Nell'era romana, sotto l'impero di Augusto, la zona meridionale del Volturno faceva parte della tribù Teretina, mentre la parte settentrionale appartenne alla tribù Tromentina. Frammenti di antiche rovine attestano anche l'esistenza di un tempio dedicato alla dea delle tempeste e al Dio del Volturno che proteggeva dalle alluvioni tanto frequenti nell'area. La cittadina fu saccheggiata dai Vandali nel 456, che decimarono la popolazione. Durante il periodo dei longobardi dal 589 al 1058, i superstiti si instaurarono sulle montagne dove oggi sorge Monteroduni, perché fu necessario trasferirsi in zone distanti dai campi delle battaglie che combattevano i Longobardi, e fu anche necessario proteggersi dalle invasioni dei Saraceni.

Nel 1193 La cittadina fu distrutta e lasciata senza acqua per 800 anni. La popolazione si serviva di acqua piovana o di acqua di sorgenti naturali. L'acqua finalmente arrivò nel 1938. Una centrale elettrica era già stata costruita nel 1883.

Oggi giorno, nel mese di agosto, la cittadina ospita un festival di Jazz, e onora un musicista italo americano di nome Salvatore Massaro, ma conosciuto in America come Eddie Lang, il quale, tra l'altro portò la chitarra agli altari del jazz. Questi, oriundo di Monteroduni, è conosciuto come il padre della chitarra jazz. Lavorò negli anni venti col chitarrista di blues Lonnie Johnson col nome di Blind Willie Dunn per nascondere la sua etnicità, e come tributo al chitarrista di blues Blind Lemon Jefferson. Conobbe Bing Crosby e suonò nella sua orchestra.

Le attrazioni del luogo

- Il Castello medioevale Pignatelli, magnificamente conservato, con le sue torri rotonde, una volta proprietà dei Pignatelli della famiglia Leonessa.
- La Chiesa di Santa Maria in Altissimi, costruita tra l'undicesimo e il dodicesimo secolo.

Date da ricordare

- In Agosto: Il festival Jazz Eddie Lang, che onora il musicista italo americano Salvatore Massaro.
- 22- 24 Settembre: Festa della vendemmia
- 29 Settembre: Festa di San Michele Arcangelo, Santo Patrono.

ITALIAN GOVERNMENT PROMOTING TOURISM IN ABRUZZO TOWNS

By Nancy DeSanti

Recently the Italian Government launched the Cammini d'Italia initiative to encourage tourism in lesser-known areas and reduce the number of tourists in overwhelmed cities such as Venice. In Italy, countless picturesque towns and landmarks go unseen, because tourists rarely know they exist, so the new initiative is designed to fix this.

To restore balance, the Italian Ministry of Culture (Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo) has launched an online portal, called [Cammini d'Italia](http://www.turismo.beniculturali.it/cammini/viaggio-nella-storia-dabruzzo/), that maps historic itineraries beyond traditional tourist routes. For now, the digital atlas counts 41 entries, ranging from the most famous, such as the Appian Way and the Via Francigena, to the more obscure, like Dante's Walk (on the sites where the poet was exiled and where he wrote "The Divine Comedy"), to the Peace Way, retracing battles from WWI. Sites in Abruzzo are also included.

The Cammini d'Italia has a section specifically about Abruzzo, "Un Viaggio nella Storia D'Abruzzo" which mentions its archaeological patrimony, its monuments, and its scenic beauty. Besides the Valle Peligna and the Valle del Saggittario, the web portal mentions *Parco Regionale Naturale Sirente-Velino*, *Parco Nazionale del Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga*, *Parco Nazionale della Majella*, *le Gole di San Venanzio*, *le Grotte di Stiffe*, *l'Altopiano di Navelli*, *la Piana di Campo Imperatore* and *Valle del Tirino*.

In order to be featured in the collection, each itinerary had to meet 11 criteria, such as having very clear signage, services in the near proximity, an up-to-date website, and, very importantly, a safe path.

"Tourism is a great resource for us, and I like to think of tourists as temporary citizens, which I believe we all aspire to when we travel," according to Francesco Palumbo, Director General for Tourism at the culture ministry. "So this is a great way to promote those unique yet deep experiences that one can have when visiting lesser-known sites, he said. "Eventually, by inviting and helping travelers to slow down, this atlas may also increase the average number of days that tourists spend in our country, which is currently between two and three."

For more details on the Abruzzo sites, please see the Cammini d'Italia website below which also has beautiful photos of Rocca Calascio and archaeological site of Amiternum.

<http://www.turismo.beniculturali.it/cammini/viaggio-nella-storia-dabruzzo/>



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"

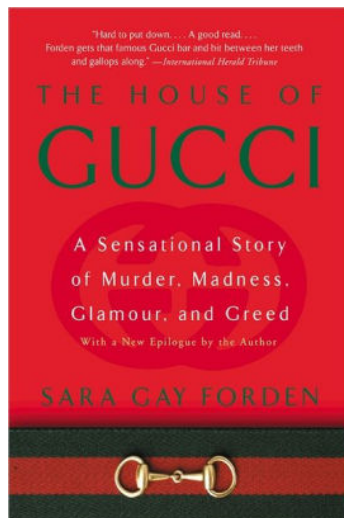
Price: \$40 each + \$5.75 for shipping and handling



THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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Author Sara Gay Forden

❧ LUNCHEON MEETING ❧

Author Sara Forden Talks About Amazing "House of Gucci" Story

When: SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2018

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Location: Casa Italiana
595 Third Street, NW
Washington, DC

MENU: Lunch catered by Fontina Grille. Menu includes baked ziti with cheese, chicken piccata with lemon and capers, rice, house salad, bread and dessert. Beverages are included.

COST: \$20.00 members; \$25.00 non-members.

**WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO PAY ONLINE
(USING VISA OR MASTERCARD) AT
WWW.ABRUZZOMOLISEHERITAGESOCIETY.ORG
(SEE HOME PAGE, "UPCOMING EVENTS"). ONLY
PAID RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED, WHICH
MUST BE RECEIVED BY
JANUARY 24, 2018 (ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM
CLOSES AT 5:00 PM).**

Please come and join us for the first AMHS meeting of 2018. The first order of business will be the installation of officers and three members of the Board. Lunch will be catered by Fontina Grille, after which we will hear the amazing story of one of the most famous Italian luxury houses by our speaker, Sara Gay Forden, an author and a financial reporter who lived in Milan for 22 years. As the title of her book indicates, "*House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour and Greed.*" this is a fascinating true story of larger-than-life characters. Note: If you would like a signed copy of the book, please order it in advance and bring it to the meeting for signing by the author. We will also have a raffle.

For information, please contact Nancy DeSanti (703) 967-2169.

✂----- Return with Payment

PAID RESERVATIONS for AMHS General Society Meeting on Sunday, January 28, 2018

Please make check payable to AMHS.

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

NAME(S): _____ Phone: _____

GUEST(S): _____

Number Attending: _____ Check Amount: _____ Email: _____

NOVEMBER 12, 2017 GENERAL SOCIETY MEETING



Top left: Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, with her parents Lucio and Edvige, thanks the officers, past Presidents, members, and family for the support they have given her throughout her 5 years as President.

Top right: Nancy DeSanti thanks Tom Savage, AMHS member who is with International Cellars, for his presentation on the wines of Abruzzo and Molise.

Middle left: The members and guests thank Romeo Sabatini and Jim Gearing, with the Washington Winemakers, for securing all the winemakers who presented their wines for tasting.

Middle right: AMHS members Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, Albert Paolantonio, and Robert and Barbara Verdile with Jenifer Landor (middle), Executive Director, Live and Learn Italian (all four friends have been students in the program, held in Agnone, Molise).

Bottom (left): Young guests help Nancy DeSanti with the raffle drawing.

Bottom right: AMHS members Barbara Friedman, Helen Free, and Maria D'Andrea-Yothers. *(photos courtesy of Sam Yothers).*