



AMHS

NOTIZIARIO

CELEBRATING ITALIAN CULTURE & COMMUNITY SINCE 2000

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

July/August 2019



From left, Ray LaVerghetta, Father Ezio Marchetto, Maria Fusco, and guest speaker Carmine Vittoria

Professor Describes

WARTIME SURVIVAL, PERSEVERANCE IN SMALL-TOWN ITALY

By Nancy DeSanti, First Vice President - Programs

For our third program of the year, we were very pleased to have a speaker who came all the way from Florida to give us a talk at Casa Italiana on June 9, 2019. And what a story Professor Carmine Vittoria had to tell!

The author of the book "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso" spoke to an audience of enthusiastic and appreciative AMHS members and guests, telling a story of family, a story of hardship and survival, through the eyes of a boy growing up in the small town of Avella before, during and shortly

continued on 14

What's Inside

- 03 July and September Programs
- 03 Annual Ferragosto Picnic
- 04 Italian Jazz Singer Chiara Izzi
- 04 Scholarship Recipients
- 05 Peruvian Adventure
- 05 Bella Italia Market Volunteers
- 06 Siamo Una Famiglia
- 07 AMHS Membership
- 08 Exploring Our Roots
- 10 Carapelle Calvisio
- 12 Sant'Elena Sannita

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members and friends:

Summer is here! Some of us are thinking “finally,” while others are astonished at how quickly the days pass. Since our last general meeting in early spring, our society has kept quite busy.

At the end of April, the AMHS Scholarship Committee (Lucio D’Andrea, Peter Bell, Romeo Sabatini, Lourdes Tinajero and myself) completed its evaluation of the applicants competing for the two National Italian American Foundation (NIAF)/AMHS scholarships for the 2019-2020 academic year. This year saw the highest number ever of students applying, with absolutely no loss of quality among the outstanding young men and women vying for the awards. For more details, take a look at the article on page 4.

On May 19th, a number of our members, officers and Board of Directors attended a Memorial Mass at Holy Rosary Church to mark the 27th anniversary of the assassination of Magistrate Judge Giovanni Falcone. The magistrate, who specialized in prosecuting the Sicilian Mafia, was assassinated on his way to Palermo, as were his wife and three bodyguards. The Mass was certainly an appropriate way to honor the memory of Judge Falcone, a real Italian hero whose life has become an inspiration to Italian-Americans, Italians, and the entire world. Immediately following the Mass, Vincenzo Romeo, a colonel in the Italian National Police and the Law Enforcement Attaché at the Italian Embassy, delivered some poignant remarks on the life of Judge Falcone and the importance of remembering his work and principles. A reception followed at Casa Italiana.

On May 23rd, Immediate Past President Maria D’Andrea-Yothers and I attended a meet-and-greet social event at the Rayburn House Office Building with members of the Italian-American Congressional Staff Association. The get-together served to foster communication between the Italian-American Congressional delegation and NIAF, in part through its Da Vinci Council, a top-tier membership initiative whose members play an important role in sustaining NIAF and engaging in local community outreach. The AMHS has a place on the Council by virtue of its affiliate status with NIAF.

AMHS President Emeritus Lucio D’Andrea, Immediate Past President Maria D’Andrea-Yothers, AMHS Representative to the Greater Washington D.C. Observatory of the Italian Language Maria LaVerghetta, and myself attended a reception at the Italian Embassy on May 30th to recognize and celebrate Italy’s national day. Italian Embassy officials, including the Ambassador and his wife, were present to welcome the guests. The Ambassador’s remarks summarized Italy’s commitments

around the world to help ensure stability and tied them to the importance of Italian-U.S. bilateral relations.

On June 9th, a most enjoyable AMHS general meeting took place at Casa Italiana. The event, catered by Fontina Grill, featured an interesting presentation by Carmine Vittoria, who talked about his book “Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso,” a first-hand account of his experiences growing up in a small town near Naples during World War II. The author came equipped with copies of his book for sale. The meeting was also an occasion to finalize an important item of business. The members present at the meeting, voting on behalf of the AMHS membership, approved the society’s amended bylaws, a significant step forward in bringing our key documents up to date and ensuring that its practices reflect its rules and bylaws.

Regarding our schedule of events moving forward, there will not be another general meeting until September. Please check out the article on page 3 by our First Vice President-Programs Nancy DeSanti for background and additional details regarding our scheduling plans. We will, however, hold our annual Ferragosto picnic on August 11th at Ft. Ward Park in Alexandria, Virginia. The fun starts at 3:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars, as the picnic has been very successful the last two years and we would like to have the chance to interact with even more of our members in this informal setting. Please see the article and flyer in this issue for full details.

Our September meeting, to take place on the 22nd, will be part of the Vespa Rally of Washington, which will bring Vespa enthusiasts to D.C. for an entire weekend of rides, food, drink, and musical entertainment. The AMHS is an official sponsor of the rally and will have a special role to play in the Saturday (21 September) morning crespelle breakfast at Casa Italiana honoring Corradino D’Ascanio, the Italian engineer from Abruzzo who designed the original Vespa in 1946. Please make a note on your calendar to keep your schedule free for the meeting on Sunday, the breakfast on Saturday morning, and any other events over the weekend that you might enjoy.

Finally, a number of our members have had problems renewing their membership, sometimes because of online instructions that are not as clear as they could be. We are aware of the problem and are working to remedy it.

I hope you all have a safe and relaxing summer, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

*Best regards,
Ray LaVerghetta*

Revised Schedule for July and September Programs

By **Nancy De Santi**, *First Vice President - Programs*

The AMHS has made some changes to the schedule of events for July and September. We ask our members to note the following dates.

We have decided to forego our summer program, for a couple of reasons. First, the date we were able to obtain at Casa Italiana is July 28, which is a little later than usual. This date is close to the date of our Ferragosto picnic on August 11 (see related article on this page). Second, we have found that many of our members are on vacation, or visiting their hometowns in Italy, so that the summer meeting is less well-attended than others.

So, it was decided that those who wish to get together informally, should give us their suggestions. For example, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers has volunteered to organize a lunch on Sunday, July 28, 12:30 p.m., at Osteria da Nino in Shirlington, Va. There would be no set menu; people can order what they wish from the standard lunch/brunch menu. If you are interested in this lunch, please contact Maria at uva051985@comcast.net by July 21 for her to make a reservation with the restaurant (friends are welcome!). Anyone else interested in organizing a lunch, or any other event that can bring members and friends together in July, please feel free to contact any of our officers and board members to discuss your ideas. And be sure to check you email for notices for these and any other events as the time draws nearer.

For September, we have a wonderful luncheon meeting planned which will take place at Casa Italiana on the 22nd, 1:00 p.m. Our focus will be on the Vespa, the iconic symbol of Italy. We will be honoring the inventor of the Vespa, Corradino D'Ascanio, who is Abruzzese (from Popoli). Our speaker will be Willy Meaux, an expert on all things Vespa. Willy is an AMHS member and a member of the board of the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center. Some of you may recall that for the Bella Italia Market in December, Willy arranged for a Vespa dealership to display several Vespas, including the prized Aprilia. We also expect to have remarks from the head of the Vespa Club in Sulmona (Abruzzo), Panfilo D'Angelo, who will be visiting in September. We will also hear from the 2018 NIAF/AMHS scholarship winners, Kath-

ryn Donati and Francesca Minicozzi.

Our program will coincide with the Raduno, the Vespa rally that Willy is organizing for that weekend. The Vespa rally will include a concert featuring the Italian American guitarist Tony

Richards, whose mother is Abruzzese. We hope to have many of the participating Vespisti come to our program. This will be a fun event! Stay tuned for more details. ■

Join AMHS for the Annual Ferragosto Picnic Sunday, August 11

By **Maria D'Andrea-Yothers**, *Immediate Past President*

Please join AMHS for its annual Ferragosto picnic which will be held at Area 2 of Fort Ward Park in Alexandria, Va., from 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 11. The park is a historical Civil War site (the Fort Ward Museum and Historical site, which, according to the park's website is "the best preserved of the system of Union forts and batteries built to protect Washington, D.C. during the American Civil War"). We have reserved the largest covered pavilion which includes 9 picnic tables and one charcoal grill. Within walking distance are a playground and two enclosed restrooms. There is also ample parking.

The event is free and open to all, rain or shine. As in prior years, AMHS will provide beverages (soft drinks, water, wine, and beer which, according to our ABC license, can only be drunk from kegs in plastic cups). We only ask members, friends, and family to bring a basket of food to share, paper products and utensils, and Italian cards. You may also want to bring lawn chairs and a personal portable grill, so long as it is charcoal only. We will be able to play some music on a "boombox", so bring your favorite Italian songs. Bring your bocce sets too — while there is no "official" bocce court, we can make our own. There will also be AMHS merchandise for sale (t-shirts, baseball caps, aprons, tote bags). We hope you will bring your family and friends to join the afternoon of fun and friendship.

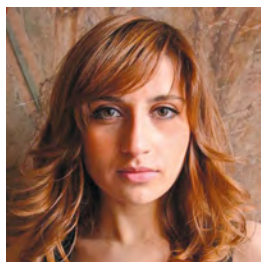
For additional details, please see the flyer on page 15 of this issue. ■



Ferragosto 2018

Italian Jazz Singer Chiara Izzi at Kennedy Center

By Nancy DeSanti



Italian jazz singer Chiara Izzi on May 3 came to the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage by way of New York and was warmly welcomed by an enthusiastic

audience. The talented performer sang in four languages (Italian, English, Spanish and Portuguese) as part of the Kennedy Center's "Unexpected Italy" series, in cooperation with the Embassy of Italy and the National Italian American Foundation.

Originally from Campobasso, Molise, Chiara Izzi's warm, Mediterranean voice has won her fans all over the world, recording contracts, and a first prize awarded by Quincy Jones at an important jazz festival.

At the Kennedy Center event, she was accompanied by internationally known pianist Kevin Hays. She had first met Hays in Italy in 2006, while he was playing in Campobasso. After the concert, Izzi, then a university student majoring in communications and media who was beginning her career as a professional musician, asked him to sign her copy of his CD.

Later the Italian singer became a bandleader based in Rome and made her international debut at the 2011 Montreux International Jazz Festival Vocal Competition, where Quincy Jones awarded her first prize. (The Montreux festival, on the shores of Lake Geneva in Switzerland, is the second largest annual jazz festival in the world after Canada's Montreal International Jazz Festival). With the award came the 2012 recording session that generated her debut album, "Motifs," which included lyrics in English, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

But Izzi's goal was New York City. She made the move in August 2014. Not long afterward, she was playing with Hays at a midtown Manhattan club. It was the beginning of a fruitful collaboration, which was apparent to her audience at the Kennedy Center.

Enzo Capua, the producer of her second album "Across the Sea," first met Chiara at a musical festival in Rome about seven years ago and

ended up collaborating with her in New York after she relocated there in 2014.

Capua has said he believes that it was crucial for Izzi to sing and include Italian songs in her album, like "Viaggio Elegiaco" where Izzi contributed to Hays' music with Italian songwriting.

But even when writing in English, Capua said With her vocal talent, warm personality and confident stage presence, this Molisana singer, known as the "jazz singer with the Mediterranean voice," seems well on her way to a big international career. ■

Scholarship Committee Announces 2019 - 2020 RECIPIENTS

By Ray LaVerghetta

As many of you know, the AMHS awards a scholarship every year to two outstanding students who are either already attending, or have been accepted for admission to, an accredited college or university. The program, which we fund in conjunction with the National Italian American Foundation, selects students who have demonstrated academic excellence as well as a keen interest in the Italian language and culture.



Julia Paola

This year, the AMHS Scholarship Committee, consisting of Lucio D'Andrea, Peter Bell, Romeo Sabatini, Lourdes Tinajero and myself, worked hard over the month of April, scrutinizing the applicant materials and evaluating the students' many accomplishments and strengths. This year's group of applicants was arguably the strongest group that the committee has ever reviewed. It is hardly an exaggeration to claim that all of the applicants deserved to win — an impossibility, of course, since we have only two scholarships to award. This year's applicants were also the largest group to ever compete.



Thomas Ronan

Following a careful evaluation of the candidates, the Scholarship Committee selected Julia Paola and Thomas Ronan as the scholarship winners for the 2019-2020 academic year. Ms. Paola is a rising sophomore at George Washington University, where she is majoring in International Affairs and Political Science and minoring in Italian Language and Literature. She traces her Italian roots through her paternal side to Calabria and Piedmont. Her ultimate career goal is work for the U.S. government as a Foreign Service officer in the State Department. Ms. Paola's permanent residence is in Annapolis, Maryland.

Mr. Ronan, from Macungie, Pennsylvania, is a rising freshman at Georgetown University. He plans to major in the Italian language, with a minor concentration in classical and medieval studies. His Italian lineage runs through his mother to Bergamo, Lombardy. His plans currently include postgraduate specialization in Italian studies, leading to a career as a university professor or museum curator.

This year's winners will be honorary members of the society for the calendar year 2020. The AMHS President will invite them to attend a meeting as the society's guest, at which time they will address the membership and tell us about themselves, their studies and interests, their plans, and their relationship to Italy. The committee, and the AMHS in general, are delighted to be able to assist such extraordinary students, and we are confident that they will do their part to promote the Italian language and Italian culture in the years ahead. ■

A Fantastic Peruvian Adventure

By Sam Yothers, AMHS member

This April, Maria (D'Andrea-Yothers) and I hiked the historical Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, one of the 7 Wonders of the World. The hike was a 4-day, 3-night adventure that challenged us physically and mentally but offered stunning views of the snow-capped Peruvian Andes and entry to incredible ancient Inca sites accessible only by foot. Many consider this trip to be one of the best backpacking trips in the world.

We started in the capital of Lima before flying to Cusco, which is nestled in a beautiful mountain "bowl," just over 11,000 feet in the Andes. We spent two days there acclimating to altitude, and touring Inca capital buildings and the extraordinary Sacsayhuaman (pronounced "sexy woman") site, the scene of a bloody battle between the Incan people and invading Spanish conquistadors. The site showcases terraced fortress walls made of huge stones, up to 100 tons each, fitted precisely together with no mortar of any kind. How the ancient Incas managed this still baffles modern archeologists and engineers.

Leaving Cusco, we met our guide Miguel of Wayki Trek and the other adventure seeker in our group, Romy Ochmann from Ottawa, Canada. In Ollantaytambo we met up with our native Peruvian porters. The first day of hiking was relatively easy, bringing us to camp 1 near a small village offering stunning views of Mount Veronica (18,642 feet) and the glaciated peaks surrounding her.

Day 2 tested our fitness and determination. The Inca Trail climbs relentlessly from 9,000 feet at camp 1 to just under 14,000 feet at Dead Woman's Pass. The reward for attaining this highest point on the trail is a 4,000-foot descent to camp 2. Arrival here is a great relief and a great thrill as the porters cheer your arrival and usher you into a lovely campsite with afternoon tea and a fantastic dinner of fresh, local ingredients. Our group had a chef, an assistant chef, and 5 porters. You come to admire and love your porters - their athletic ability to haul 50-pound packs up and down the Andes and always greet you with a supporting smile as you struggle with the altitude and steep trails quickly makes them heroes to your group.

Machu Picchu is in the Amazon rainforest, so we were not surprised to be greeted with rain on day 3. The steep rock steps became slip-



Maria & Sam, Inca Trail.

pery, the danger increased significantly, and the stress to avoid falling began to compete with the physical effort. But our amazing por-

ters greeted us in camp 3 with a dry dining tent decorated with balloons and streamers for my birthday. They even baked and frosted a cake and offered a bottle of wine to celebrate. We're struggling to survive the lofty mountain passes and they are hauling decorations, fresh eggs, and a wine bottle!

Finally, on day 4, we reached Machu Picchu through the Sun Gate. The site is genuinely breath-taking, situated high on a hidden plateau, surrounded by misty and snowcapped mountains. Don't even consider calling it a "ruin"; the site is still usable to this

day, with a working water supply and irrigation to the extensive terraces. Machu Picchu was a worthy crown to cap off our bucket-list adventure hiking the Inca Trail. ■

Bella Italia Market Volunteers Thanked at Casa Italiana Reception

By Nancy DeSanti

The success of the Bella Italia Market was officially recognized during a reception at Casa Italiana on May 26, 2019. The Market, which took place in December 2018, raised \$15,000 for the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center (CISC). As the volunteers and members of the community looked on, the symbolic check was held up by CISC President Francesco Isgrò and by Franca Bartoli, the fashion designer who was the creator and driving force behind the market.

As Francesco commented, "it took a village" to make the event such a success, and many in that village were AMHS members (including Francesco himself). Two of the three board members present were AMHS members — Anna Isgrò and Nancy DeSanti.

Welcoming remarks were made by Father Ezio Marchetto, who complimented the volunteers for organizing an event that presented the best of Italian culture, in food, art, ceramics, fashion and design. After remarks by Francesco and Franca, the volunteers and

community were invited to enjoy the elegantly presented refreshments catered by Simonetta Baldassari, who did a wonderful job of decorating the Casa for the Bella Italia Market event.

At the opening ceremony December 1 with Minister Domenico Bellantone from the Embassy of Italy, President Ray LaVerghetta and Immediate Past President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers represented AMHS (a sponsor of the event).

AMHS members who contributed greatly to the success of the Bella Italia Market include (in alphabetical order):

- Peter Bell
- Jim Cocco
- Julie & Corrado Dal Forno
- Liz DiGregorio
- Nancy Hurst
- Lena Lupica
- Joe Lupo
- Maria Marigliano
- Willy Meaux
- Lynn Sorbara
- Lourdes Tinajero



SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

Founders Fund Brunch June 1, 2019

By Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

On Saturday, June 1, Peter Bell and Maria D'Andrea-Yothers attended a brunch at the Casa Italiana Socio-cultural Center (CISC), to represent the Society as one of the 100 members of the CISC Capital Founders Fund. Hopefully our members recall that, the AMHS membership, as represented by those attending our January 27 general meeting, unanimously approved a decision by the AMHS Executive Committee to join the Founders, a group of committed individuals or organizations who have donated or pledged at least \$5,000 to CISC, as the latter begins a new phase of its history and broadens its influence in the Italian and Italian-American communities.

The brunch was an opportunity to give thanks to the Founders as well as a status on the construction of the new CISC. Francesco Isgro, President and CEO of the CISC (and AMHS member) provided opening remarks, and Father Ezio Marchetto, Pastor of Holy Rosary Church, gave a powerpoint presentation which focused on the new construction, which will house the Robert Facchina Italian American Museum of D.C. (IAMDC); the Marconi project, an effort by the CISC to capture the memories and experiences of Italian immigrants in the greater Washington D.C. area; and a library, with more than 2500 books in Italian and a rich collection of Italian movie DVDs (there will also be a children's library).

We were pleasantly surprised to learn that the opening of the new CISC is ahead of schedule, and we are looking at an opening date of September 2019. The AMHS sees its Capital Founders status as a way to give back to the Casa for its hospitality over the years, as a way to support and sustain CISC's new programs and projects, and as a way to cement our relationship with CISC as the two organizations move forward in the coming years. ■



From left, AMHS members Peter Bell, Lucio & Edvige D'Andrea, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, Father Ezio Marchetto, and Francesco Isgro (President & CEO of the CISC)

Congratulations to Lucio & Edvige, 60 Years of Wedded Bliss!

By Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

On June 27, Lucio and Edvige D'Andrea (my mother and father) will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. When their children asked what they would like to do for a celebration, Lucio and Edvige responded "we just want to have a dinner together with all our children, their spouses, and our grandchildren". Well, given the size of my family, where they are located, and summer job schedules ... this was no easy task! However, we pulled it together and on Saturday, May 18, the entire D'Andrea family — all 27 of us, including one cousin and her family from Pittsburgh, Pa., — came together at Osteria da Nino in Shirlington, Va. I worked with the owner, Nino (a good friend to AMHS) to create a menu, and to hold our dinner in the private dining room. Needless to say we enjoyed a wonderful dinner, and we were well taken care of by the owner and our private server, Sarah.



Edvige and Lucio D'Andrea toast their 60th wedding anniversary.

Lucio and Edvige were feted with witticisms of "growing up D'Andrea" by eldest daughter Candida Pisoni; a prayer from their grandson Gabriel D'Andrea; and toasts from their son Paul and eldest granddaughter Angela Pisoni. Their grandson Tyler Alberico-Crump put together a photo presentation, to music, that spanned the entire 60 years of one of the greatest love stories of all, that of my most wonderful, kind, gracious, and loving parents, Lucio and Edvige.

Congratulazioni e buon anniversario mama e papa! ■

AMHS Membership

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President-Membership

I am pleased to report that there are 238 members of AMHS, including seven new members. Thank you for your continued support of the Society's programs and activities. We have wonderful events planned for the rest of the year and your membership makes them all possible!

As a reminder, with our automated system, you will receive email reminders when it is time to renew. The sending name of the email will be "Membership Works." If you do not have email, you will receive a reminder by regular mail. Please pay attention to these various reminders. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me directly at 301-926-7792 or via email at drlynnrose@yahoo.com. Thank you.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to: Anthony Robert Cenfetelli, John Dunkle, Barbara Gentile, Kathryn Gosciewski, Anthony Lombardi, William Anthony Meaux, and Anthony Narcisso.

BIRTHDAYS

Compleanni a Luglio

Amy Profit D'Amico, July 1; Vincenzo Marinucci, July 3; Dianne Francesconi Lyon, July 6; John Verna, July 7; Raymond Bernero, July 12; David Ciummo, and Gianpiero Forcina, July 13; Anthony D'Onofrio, and Helina (Ellie) Zewdu Nega, July 15; Nancy Hurst, July 18; Crystal Hovermale, Matthew DiFiore, and Roberto Severino, July 19; Mario Ciccone, July 21; Mary Smargiassi Muth, July 22; Lina Pronio, July 26; and Lynn Sorbara, July 27.

Compleanni a Agosto

Mario Marinucci, August 2; Ray LaVerghetta, August 5; Pietro Masci, August 8; Richard Stonestreet, August 9; Nancy DeSanti, August 15; Joseph Ruzzi, Sr., and Karen Grasso, August 16; Rose Ruzzi, August 18; Angela Campanella, August 21; Robert Lucian and Joseph Novello, August 23; Katie Musolino, August 28; and Donna Caruso, August 30.

ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversari a Luglio

Joseph & Joann B. Novello, July 4; Peter & Charlie Iovino, July 14; Robert & Barbara Verdile July 17; Renato & Rita Orcino, July 19; Stephen diGirolamo & Christine Smith, July 25; and Stephan & Rita Carrier, July 30.

Anniversari a Agosto

Palmer & Emilia DeMeo, and Paul & Katie Fazioli, August 1; Carmine James Spellane and Susan Noon, August 3; Joseph & Pam Lupo, August 5; Corrado Dal Forno & Julie Finigan-Dal Forno, August 7; Domenico & Julia Conti, August 19; and Guy & Donna Caruso, August 26.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Category	# of Persons
Associate (Couple)	2 x 2 = 4
Associate (Individual)	30
General (Couple)	56 x 2 = 112
General (Individual)	85
Honorary	5
Student	2
Total Membership:	238

THIS IS YOUR NOTIZIARIO

By Carmine James Spellane, Editor

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

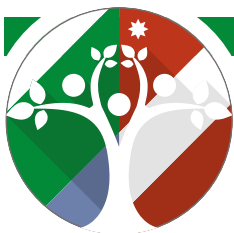
The AMHS is much more than just its meetings. We are a vibrant society of people who care about their heritage and want to learn more. And all of us have stories to tell. We encourage you to submit articles for the newsletter to tell yours. It could be about a recent trip to Italy, honors received by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

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

The AMHS is making new efforts to engage our current members and add more to our ranks. A vibrant Notiziario is part of that. As our society approaches its 20th anniversary next year, let's all help ensure a bright future for our mission to celebrate "all things Italian." ■

Give the Gift of MEMBERSHIP!

For details visit **Become a Member** on www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org.



EXPLORING OUR ROOTS

MEMBERS CONNECT TO FAMILY HISTORY IN ITALY

Stamping Around Abruzzo and Molise

By Joseph Scafetta Jr., AMHS Member

After reading the article “Stamping Around Italy — City of Vasto Municipals” in the May/June 2019 issue of the Notiziario, I was inspired by my fellow stamp-collecting Vastese, Louis Alfano, to write this article.

My father, Giuseppe Scafetta (1896-1975) was a teen-aged stamp collector living in Vasto when the first city municipal stamps were issued about 1910. He did not own any of them and never mentioned them to me before he gave me his collection when I was a young adult. Perhaps he was just not aware of their existence. By the time that the second set of city municipal stamps were issued in 1930, he was already in the United States, having immigrated to Washington, D.C., in early 1915 before Italy entered into World War I in May of that year.

Italy issued a series of 51 colorful stamps depicting castles in four sets between 1980 and 1994. Seven of the 51 stamps illustrated castles in Abruzzo and Molise, making our regions very well represented. The first set was issued on September 22, 1980, and comprised 27 stamps.

Six of the seven stamps accompanying this article are mint, i.e. never used. The last stamp is canceled. The stamp images are enlarged so that you may be able to read the lettering on each stamp. The numbers above the first row and the numbers below the second row of scanned stamps were assigned by the Scott Publishing Company in its Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue and are used by collectors to identify each image. The numbers assigned by Scott start in 1862 when the Kingdom of Italy began issuing postage stamps.

In the first set, the Rocca Calascio in the province of L'Aquila in the region of Abruzzo is shown on a 50-lire stamp (Scott #1412) and the Cerro al Volturno in the province of Isernia in the region of Molise is shown on a 200-lire stamp (Scott #1420). I obtained these two stamps during my second visit to Vasto in 1986 from my first cousin,

Antonio Scafetta, who was the city postmaster at that time. As you see, these two stamps are perforated on all four sides. My cousin carefully tore them from sheets of 40. He put money in the post office till whenever he gave a stamp to me.

Italy issued a series of 51 colorful stamps depicting castles in four sets between 1980 and 1994. Seven of the 51 stamps illustrated castles in Abruzzo and Molise, making our regions very well represented.

Rocca Calascio (Scott #1412) is a mountaintop fortress. At an elevation of 4,790 feet, it is the highest fortress in the Apennines. It was built of stone and masonry exclusively for military purposes, not the nobility. The fortress overlooks the Plain of Navelli at one of the highest points in the medieval Barony of Carapelle. Construction started in the 10th century as a single watch tower. A walled court yard with four cylindrical towers at the corners around a taller inner tower was added in the 13th century. The lower half of the fortress was built with distinctively larger stones than its upper half. This feature was made so that its base would be impenetrable to invaders tunneling underneath. However, the fortress was never tested in battle. Nevertheless, it was badly damaged in November 1461 by a severe earthquake. While the town of Calascio below the fortress was rebuilt, the fortress itself was not. Rocca Calascio lies within the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park alongside the high plain of Campo Imperatore.

Cerro al Volturno is a municipality located about 28 miles west of Campobasso and about 6 miles northwest of the provincial capital city of Isernia. The town was founded by the Samnites during the 3rd century B.C.E. It was built about 1000 A.D. on a spur commanding a magnificent view of the nearby valley. The castle (Scott

#1420) is one of two now called Pandone after Count Enrico Pandone who later owned it.

In the second set of ten stamps, the Spanish fort in the city of L'Aquila is shown on a 30-lire stamp (Scott #1475) issued on August 20, 1981. The castle of Caldoresco in the city of Vasto in the province of Chieti in the region of Abruzzo is shown on a 1400-lire stamp (Scott #1479) issued on February 14, 1984. The 1400-lire stamp was the highest denomination issued in the 51-stamp series. The castle in Venafrò in the province of Isernia in the region of Molise is shown on a smaller 400-lire coil stamp (Scott #1483) issued on June 25, 1983. I obtained these three stamps also during my 1986 visit to Vasto from my postmaster cousin. The L'Aquila stamp was torn from a sheet of 40. Because we are Vastese, my cousin gave me an entire sheet of 40 Vasto stamps! The Venafrò stamp was torn from the end of a horizontal coil of 100. Coil stamps have either horizontal straight edges and vertical perforations or vertical straight edges and horizontal perforations.

The Spanish fort, locally known as Forte Spagnolo or just Il Castello (Scott #1475), is a Renaissance castle. In the 15th century, L'Aquila had become the second most powerful city in the Kingdom of Naples after the capital of Naples itself. Wool and saffron were exported throughout Europe. All of this was lost when the Aquilans, during the war between the French and the Spaniards for the throne of Naples, sided with the French. In 1528, L'Aquila was occupied by the Spaniards. The viceroy ruling for King Carlos V of Spain ordered the city to build a fortress in the highest spot north of the city. In the following 40 years, the heavy taxes necessary to build the fortress impoverished the city. In 1567, the city implored the Spaniards to stop the construction and the succeeding King Felipe II did so. Because the work was interrupted, parts of the castle were never completed. The fortress was not built to defend the city but rather to control it. Its cannons were pointed towards the city, not away from it. Fortunately, it was never used in battle.

Il Castello Caldoresco (Scott #1479) is also a Renaissance castle. It is privately owned and not open to the public. It was built in the early 15th century by the then lord of the city of Vasto,



These seven stamps depicting castles in Abruzzo and Molise were among 51 issued by Italy. The identifying numbers are referenced in the body of the article.

Jacopo Caldora, starting from a pre-existing large tower which dated to the 14th century. It was later modified and restored. The castle is located on a coastal promontory overlooking the Adriatic Sea. It includes four corner buildings connected by walls with a square court yard inside. Three of the four corners feature a cylindrical tower.

Venafrò is a municipality in the province of Isernia in the region of Molise. The historic center was built on existing Roman urban structures and many buildings still have Roman foundations. Built in the highest part of the town, a castle (Scott #1483), the second of two now called Pandone, was constructed by the Lombards on an older fortification in the 10th century. In the 14th century, it was expanded with the addition of three circular towers. A moat was added around the castle in the 15th century. Interior wall frescoes commissioned by Count Enrico Pandone, for whom the castle is now named, were added during the Renaissance. Currently, the castle serves as the National Museum of Molise.

Because the Venafrò coil stamp had become so popular, it was re-issued in a different color and

in a higher denomination of 750 lire on March 1, 1988, in the third set of nine castle stamps. It was assigned #1665 by Scott. I got this sixth castle stamp from my postmaster cousin when I visited Vasto for the third time in 1991.

Likewise, the castle of Cerro al Volturno was so popular that it too was re-issued on February 24, 1994, with the fourth and last set of five castle stamps. It was assigned #1862 by Scott. When you compare it to the earlier issued Scott #1420, it looks identical, but it is not. Although the colors are the same and the denomination of 200 lire is the same, the difference lies in the manner in which the image was made. The earlier Scott #1420 was lithographed, then hand engraved, while the later #1862 was photoengraved to produce a sharper image. This difference is only evident by examining the two stamps side by side with a magnifying glass. The difference is not obvious to the naked eye. Why, you may ask, is this last stamp canceled when the first six are mint and never canceled? The reason is that my postmaster cousin, since he had retired by the time that the last stamp was issued, just placed it on an envelope and mailed it to me. I did not

want to write back to him in Italian and tell him: "Hey! Send me this last stamp mint inside the envelope, not on the outside!" I never have been able in the past 25 years to find this last stamp on sale by any dealer in Italian stamps, but I keep looking for it every time when I go to a stamp show, which are usually held in this area about every three months. If you find it, let me know. I will pay you 30 cents which is its Scott catalogue value in mint condition! ■

Sources:

Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue, volume 3, Italy, at pages 1355, 1356, 1360 & 1365, Scott Publishing Co., 2014.

[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocca_Colascio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocca_Colascio).

[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cerro_al_Volturno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cerro_al_Volturno).

[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forte_Spagnolo,_L'Aquila](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forte_Spagnolo,_L'Aquila).

[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castello_Caldorese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castello_Caldorese).

[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venafrò_Castle_Pandone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venafr%C3%B2_Castle_Pandone).



CARAPELLE CALVISIO

PROVINCE OF L'AQUILA, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Nancy DeSanti

One of Abruzzo's beautiful (very) small towns, Carapelle Calvisio, is located 35 kilometers from L'Aquila in the natural park known as the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park at 3,000 feet above sea level. It is only a few kilometers from the historical castle Rocca Calascio.

The town, with only approximately 86 inhabitants, known as Carapellesi, is known as one of the smallest non-Alpine communes in Italy. Carapelle Calvisio's location (separated by a mountain from the L'Aquila area) preserved it from serious damage during the April 2009 L'Aquila earthquake.

Situated in the Southern Gran Sasso chain just below Monte Prena, the village is surrounded by mountains and woods and is renowned for its truffles. Its territory was featured, along with Rocca Calascio, in a medieval fantasy movie, "Ladyhawke," starring a young Michelle Pfeiffer and Matthew Broderick. (The 1985 film is a "fairy tale thriller" about a young thief who unwillingly gets involved with a warrior and his lady who are being hunted by the Bishop of L'Aquila. As he comes to know about the couple's past and their secret, he finds himself determined to help them overcome the bishop's oppression, both with arms and in the form of a demonic curse).



Carapelle Calvisio panorama

Carapelle Calvisio has an interesting history. It was a Roman hamlet, and then in the Middle Ages, a document recorded in 779 outlines a dispute between the homines de Carapellas and monastery of S. Vincenzo al Volturno. In the 13th century, historians found a mention

of a demanium Carapelle and later of a barony which was then dismantled in the 18th century and gave origin to different municipalities. So Carapelle became a hamlet of Castelvecchio Calvisio. Finally, Carapelle Calvisio became an independent municipality in 1911.

In the 1910 census, the town counted 1,200 inhabitants, then a first wave of emigration started towards the United States, at the time of World War I. A second large emigration followed in the 1950s with the main destinations being Canada, France and Australia. Nowadays in Toronto, there is a Carapellese community five times the present population of the village.

The town was in the news recently when a British man came up with the idea of having a raffle to sell his home in Carapelle Calvisio — a detached home with a garden in the historical center.

In the last few years, Italy has been one of the few countries in Europe where property prices are going down. According to Istat, Italy's national statistics institute, last year Italy's property



*Overview of
Carapelle Calvisio*

CARAPELLE CALVISIO

PROVINCIA DI L'AQUILA, REGIONE ABRUZZO

prices dropped 0.8 percent, the most in Europe next to Sweden's 2.1. So, one man thinks he has found a way to beat the market: a raffle.

Situated in the Southern Gran Sasso chain just below Monte Prena, the village is surrounded by mountains and woods and is renowned for its truffles. Its territory was featured, along with Rocca Calascio, in a medieval fantasy movie, "Ladyhawke," starring a young Michelle Pfeiffer and Matthew Broderick.

Jamie Abbott, originally from Colchester, is raffling off his three-story house, selling raffle tickets for about €59. He will draw the winning ticket in October. To those who consider this a long shot, he says how often can you buy a €250,000 house (his asking price before the raffle) for €59? ■

What to See

- The historical center
- Church of St. Francis of Assisi, decorated in the baroque style, with beautiful frescoes
- Shrine of San Pancrazio Martire, the patron saint
- Nearby Rocca Calascio

Important Dates

- **May 12** — Feast of San Pancrazio
- **August 15** — Ferragosto

Translated by Maddalena Borea

Uno dei più caratteristici paesini d'Abruzzo, Carapelle Calvisio, si trova a circa 35 chilometri da L'Aquila, nel parco naturale Gran Sasso e in quello dei Monti della Laga, a tremila piedi dal livello del mare, e nelle vicinanze di uno storico castello, chiamato Rocca Calascio.

Conta appena 86 abitanti, conosciuti come Carapellesi, ed è noto anche come uno dei più piccoli comuni montani d'Italia, separato da L'Aquila da una montagna.

Sopravvissuto al tragico terremoto del 2009, è circondato da montagne e da boschi, ed è noto per i suoi preziosi tartufi. Il suo territorio e la Rocca Calascio vissero un momento di fama grazie a un film, ambientato nella Rocca stessa, su una fantastica storia medievale. Il film, "Ladyhawke," offerto nel 1985, aveva come protagonisti Michelle Pfeiffer e Matthew Broderick. Era la storia di un giovane ladro, coinvolto in una vicenda riguardante un guerriero e la sua sposa, oppressi dal vescovo di L'Aquila. Il giovane decide di aiutare la coppia a superare le oppressioni del vescovo con le armi e con espedienti diabolici.

La storia di Carapelle è interessante. Fu possedimento romano, e, più tardi, nel Medioevo, alcuni annali registrano un evento litigioso riguardante abitanti del luogo e il monastero di San Vincenzo Al Volturno. Altri documenti, più tardi, accennano alla sua esistenza, come possedimento baronale, che fu più tardi smantellato per dar luogo a diverse municipalità. Fu frazione di Castelvecchio Calvisio, e più tardi, nel 1911, divenne comune indipendente.

Secondo un censimento del 1910, Carapelle contava 1.200 abitanti, ma le emigrazioni

verso le Americhe, prima della prima guerra mondiale, ne decimarono la popolazione. Un altro gruppo abbandonò il villaggio per andare verso il Canada, verso la Francia e l'Australia intorno agli anni cinquanta. Oggi a Toronto esiste una comunità di Carapellesi che conta cinque volte la popolazione di Carapelle.

Recentemente si è verificato un calo di valore delle proprietà in Italia, specialmente in certe zone dell'Abruzzo. Un certo Jamie Abbott, di origine inglese, crede di aver trovato il modo di aggirare il calo dei prezzi: cercherà di vendere la sua proprietà, una villa di tre piani nel centro storico di Carapelle, tramite una lotteria vendendo i biglietti a circa 59 euro ciascuno. Il biglietto vincente sarà estratto a Ottobre. Agli increduli lui si contrappone dichiarando che sarebbe molto raro poter comprare una casa di 250.000 euro (quanto chiedeva prima della lotteria) per soli 59 euro. ■

Attrazioni del luogo:

- La parte storica
- La chiesa di San Francesco d'Assisi, con affreschi e decorata in stile barocco
- La Basilica di San Pancrazio Martire, Santo Patrono
- La vicina Rocca Calascio

Date da ricordare:

- **12 maggio** — Festa di San Pancrazio
- **15 agosto** — Ferragosto

Sources:

en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carapelle_Calvisio
www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/laquila/carapelle.htm
www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/laquila/carapelle.htm
mail.google.com/mail/#label/AMHS+A%26M+articles/FMfcgxwBWKQwTXDRKtNsDFLrMprSzMW



SANT'ELENA SANNITA

PROVINCE OF ISERNIA, REGION OF MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

The picturesque small town of Sant'Elena Sannita is located about 15 kilometers west of Campobasso and about 20 kilometers east of Isernia. The town has approximately 290 inhabitants, known as Santelenesi.

The ancient name of the village was Cameni or Cameli, then in 1896 the modern name was chosen in honor of Princess Elena of Montenegro, wife of the heir to the Italian throne, Vittorio Emanuele III. The first lords mentioned were the Sant'Angelo in the 13th and 14th centuries, followed by the Orsini, the counts of Montagno and finally the Tamburri, who kept the title until 1806, when feudalism was abolished.

The economy was based on steel works (farming tools, knives, scissors) and over the centuries, the skilled craftsmen of Sant'Elena went to the market fairs as far as Brindisi and Tuscany. The trade gradually passed from that of blade sharpeners to that of suppliers of perfumes and also to barbers. Some of their descendants are among great perfume entrepreneurs in the world today. In Rome, in fact, the Santelenesi are known as creators of an empire of perfumes, with over 200 Roman perfumeries belong to the innovators of Sant'Elena Sannita. Two of their popular perfumes are the Voira and Ventunora fragrances.

Visitors to Sant'Elena Sannita will want to be sure to visit the Museo del Profumo, which opened its doors in August 2014. Visitors can walk along the garden path around the aromatic



The Museo del Profumo is a major attraction in Sant'Elena Sannita.

plants whose scents are the basis for the main essences, while a guide explains the history and evolution of perfumes up until modern times. No wonder the project is known as Il Cammino del Profumo. (Note: The museum's exceptionally good website is the next best thing to being there).

Inside the museum, there are a mind-blowing 1,065 objects including rare books, objects, perfume bottles and flacons — even an unusual design by the artist Salvador Dali. It's said to be the largest such collection in Europe.

One of the other interesting sights to see is the Monumento all'Arrotino. It was established in 1997 through the efforts of eight grinders wanting to commemorate their ancestors. It's a small museum that tells the story of the knife grinders and displays the various objects they used. Visitors can have a guided tour of the tools including a practical demonstration.

Another interesting fact about Sant'Elena Sannita is that it is the home of Stappi beverages, which

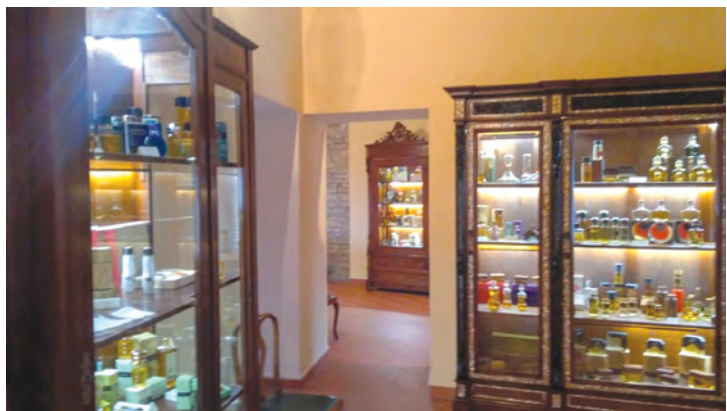


The distinctive bottles of Stappi.

unfortunately are not yet well known overseas. Stappi has a bitter edge to the sweet soda which gives it a different taste.

The Stappi Red Bitter is one flavor in a line that also includes rabarbaro (rhubarb), chinotto (another bitter flavor), gassosa (lemon), coffee, cedrata (citron), lemon, cola, tonic and orange. Consumers notice the bottle's sloping neck, its diminutive size and bright color. With the bitter flavor and slight fizziness, it's seen as a refreshing non-alcoholic version of the aperitivo liqueurs. The fact that it's alcohol-free gives it versatility, and it can be served on the rocks, or cut with some sparkling water, or as a base for a low-proof spritz, standing in for Aperol, or even with prosecco.

Stappi is made specifically in Sant'Elena Sannita. The brand dates to the 1980s, but the company, Di Lorio, goes back to 1896 and claims it



Some of the displays at the Museo del Profumo.

uses pure mineral water. The name Stappi comes from stappare, meaning to uncork, and the story goes that the then hand-blown bottles were topped with marbles, and removing one created the characteristic sound captured in the name.

Massive migratory waves, starting from the late 19th century, reduced the population to one-tenth now of what it was in the early 20th century, but in the summer months, thousands of emigrants and their descendants come to visit. No wonder, since there is so much to see and do! ■

What to See

- Museo del Profumo, collection of rare and unique pieces of modern and contemporary perfumery
- Monumento all'Arrotino
- Parish church of St. Michele Arcangelo, built at the beginning of 1600
- The church of St. Maria delle Grazie, built in 1500, with paintings inside by local artist Mario De Tollis
- Church of Saints Cosimo and Damiano

Important Dates

- **August 18** — Feast of St. Elena
- **September 13** — Feast of St. Filomena
- **September 27** — Feast of Saints Cosimo and Damiano
- **September 29** — Feast of Patron Saint: St. Michele Arcangelo, the patron saint

Sources:

en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sant'Elena_Sannita

www.enchantingitaly.com/regions/molise/province-isernia/santelenasannita.htm

www.ilmuseodelprofumo.it

www.chicagotribune.com/dining/drink/sc-food-stappi-italian-bitter-soda-drink-0517-story.html

SANT'ELENA SANNITA

PROVINCIA DI ISERNIA, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Maddalena Borea

Questa cittadina, Sant'Elena Sannita, si trova a circa 15 chilometri da Campobasso e a 20 chilometri da Isernia. I suoi abitanti sono chiamati Santelenesi, conta 290 abitanti e si chiamò anticamente Cameli o Cameli.

Fu chiamata più tardi, nel 1896, Sant'Elena, in onore della Principessa Elena di Montenegro, sposa dell'erede al trono d'Italia, Vittorio Emanuele III di Savoia. I suoi primi Signori, furono i Sant'Angelo e poi gli Orsini. In seguito i Montagna e i Tamburri, che governarono fino al diciannovesimo secolo, quando fu abolito il feudalesimo.

L'economia, basata su ferramenta, vide i suoi artigiani spingersi a commerciare verso la Puglia e la Toscana. Più tardi commerciarono profumi e oggetti per barbieri, e ancora oggi alcuni discendenti di Sant'Elena sono fra i più grandi industriali di profumi del mondo.

I turisti di Sant'Elena amano recarsi per visitare il museo del profumo, recentemente inaugurato. Oltre al museo, il turista può visitare i giardini dei fiori che offrono le essenze per la creazione dei suddetti profumi. Durante la passeggiata tra i fiori dei giardini una guida spiegherà l'evoluzione del profumo, dalla sua nascita al giorno d'oggi.

Il museo contiene libri, bottiglie di profumi o per profumi, ed un raro dipinto di Salvador Dali: la più grande collezione d'Europa, riguardante il profumo e la sua evoluzione.

Interessantissimo è il monumento all'Arrotino che commemora gli Antenati Arrotini. Il museo, già menzionato, offre anche dimostrazioni dell'evoluzione dell'arte di affilare lame e coltelli.

Interessantissimo, poi, è l'amaro Stappi, ancora non ben noto fuori d'Italia. Lo Stappi è in linea con il rabarbaro, il chinotto, la cedrata etc. A differenza di molte di queste bevande, essa è analcolica. Interessanti le piccole bottiglie dai colori chiari per questa bevanda, molto rinfrescante, che è la versione analcolica

dell'aperitivo. Il fatto che sia analcolica la rende molto versatile, e perciò può essere servita con ghiaccio o aggiunta a del prosecco.

Creata specificamente a Sant'Elena negli anni ottanta, risale, in realtà al diciannovesimo secolo, e la sua casa di produzione, della famiglia Di Lorio, risale al 1896. Questa casa vanta di usare purissima acqua minerale nella preparazione di questo Stappi, il cui nome viene dal verbo stappare, l'atto, cioè di stappare una bottiglia e causare il famoso rumore, prodotto da una bevanda frizzante.

La popolazione di Sant'Elena, decimata dalle emigrazioni, aumenta ogni estate quando i discendenti di coloro che emigrarono, ritornano annualmente alle loro radici, dove c'è sempre tanto da ammirare. ■

Attrazioni del luogo:

- Museo del profumo
- Monumento All'Arrotino
- Parrocchia di San Michele Arcangelo del 1600
- La chiesa di Santa Maria delle Grazie del 1500 con Opere di artisti locali, come Mario de Tollis
- Chiesa di San Cosimo e Damiano

Date da ricordare:

- **18 agosto** — Festa di Sant'Elena
- **13 settembre** — Festa di Santa Filomena
- **27 settembre** — Festa di San Cosimo e Damiano
- **29 settembre** — Festa di San Michele Arcangelo, Santo Patrono

The AMHS Shop

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

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

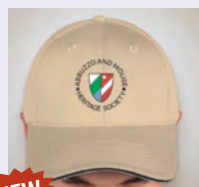
Buon Appetito Chef's Apron **\$20.00**

T-Shirts **\$20.00**

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

AMHS Tote Bag **\$30.00**

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



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

NEW

AMHS Baseball Caps **\$15.00**

We offer merchandise through these outlets:

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

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

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

PROFESSOR DESCRIBES WARTIME SURVIVAL, PERSEVERANCE IN SMALL-TOWN ITALY

▼ *Continued from page 1*

after World War II. He recalls that his family had a peaceful, normal life with his father, the town barber, and his mother, who came from a shepherd family, and how everything changed.

He told us how Avella, with its strategic location not far from both the mountains and the Bay of Naples, was greatly affected by the destruction during the war, and he noted that few families were untouched by tragedy, including his own — he lost his father fighting in Libya and lost his sister due to lack of penicillin. He himself had to hide in a pigsty to avoid marauding soldiers in Avella.

Professor Vittoria said he was inspired to write his story because, although he had read plenty of books about military strategy, he could not find any about how the war affected the lives of the civilian population. So he set out to fix that. Professor Vittoria also believes that the full story of WW II is yet to be told and wanted to counter what he describes as wrong thinking about historical events that happened during that war. He wrote his book to give insights into how the people of his small town pulled together and did their best in desperate circumstances. He cites the Neapolitan credo "*ci arrangiamo*" ("we adapt to survive").

Professor Vittoria told us how he came to America and getting a Ph.D. from Yale in quantum applied physics, and eventually going to work for the Naval Research Lab on the Stealth technology. (While working on this classified technology, he obtained a patent which remains secret to this day and for which he received \$50). He became a professor at Northeastern University in Boston for 32 years, then retired to Florida.

Professor Vittoria noted that he made many trips back to Avella with his wife over a 40-year period. One of the fascinating facts he told us about his town is that it is the site of one of only eight Coliseums in the world (it was covered up for many years but is now a museum).

The title of his book, "Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso," is a metaphor for the hard times and bitter times during the period 1940-1949. He describes his hometown as a beautiful place, with fields of red poppies, chicory flowers, lavender violets, white and pink daisies, and wild dandelions adorning the farms and foothills.



Prof. Vittoria addressing the meeting.

During the war, there were no coffee beans, so a bitter kind of coffee was made from chicory, and it was only after the war that the sweet smell of real coffee could again be enjoyed, and the small pleasures of life could once more be appreciated.

Before Professor Vittoria's talk, Maria Fusco, Director of Education of the Embassy of Italy, made brief remarks stressing the importance of promoting the Italian culture and language and congratulating AMHS for its efforts in this regard.

A delicious lunch was catered by Fontina Grille, which seems to be one of everyone's favorites.

We would like to thank everyone who helped serve the lunch, and those who donated wonderful raffle prizes and bought raffle tickets. We were able to raise \$200 for our AMHS programs. And a special thank you to our 2nd Vice President Lynn Sorbara, for the dessert table full of homemade cakes and sweets. ■

FERRAGOSTO PICNIC

Sunday,
August 11

3-7 PM

FORT WARD
PARK



Please join the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society (AMHS) for its annual Ferragosto Picnic. For the third year, we are hosting the picnic at Area 2 of Fort Ward Park in Alexandria, VA. We have reserved a shelter (covered pavilion) with 9 large picnic tables and one grill.

FOOD & DRINK

- Bring your own picnic basket of food, along with paper products, utensils, and table covers
- Wine, keg beer, soft drinks, bottled water, ice, and cups for beverages provided by AMHS.
- One public grill is reserved (charcoal provided by AMHS). You may bring your own portable charcoal grill; no gas grills allowed.

OTHER INFORMATION

- Bring Italian cards to play
- For your personal convenience, bring lawn chairs, card tables, blankets, etc
- There is a playground within walking distance of the pavilion
- There are two enclosed restrooms within a 4-minute walk from the pavilion area



ADDRESS

**Fort Ward Museum
and Historic Site**
4301 West Braddock Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

PARKING

There is ample parking in front of the picnic area and throughout the park. Note that vehicles must be parked in designated paved and gravel areas and are prohibited on the grass. Look for the balloons outside the designated pavilion.

This event is free. Please bring your family and friends for an afternoon of good food, fun, and friendship!

For information & to RSVP, contact Maria D'Andrea-Yothers (703) 473-4033

Buon Ferragosto a tutti!



AMHS NOTIZIARIO

Carmine James Spellane, EDITOR
Nancy DeSanti, CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, PUBLICATIONS MANAGER
Romeo Sabatini, ITALIAN LANGUAGE EDITOR

*Color copies printed courtesy of
Todd Tomanio & Sydnee Patterson,
TransPerfect Document Management, Inc.*

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

The **AMHS NOTIZIARIO** is an official publication of the Grant and Scholarship Fund Inc. of the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society of the Washington, D.C. area, doing business as The Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society of the Washington, D.C. area, a non-profit, non-partisan, non-sectarian society legally incorporated in the District of Columbia.

OFFICERS

Raymond LaVerghetta, President,
president@abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org,
(410) 992-6885

Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs,
vpprograms@abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org,
(703) 967-2169

Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President-Membership,
membership@abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org,
(301) 926-7792

Carmine James Spellane, Secretary,
cjsn@verizon.net,
(202) 355-3410

Peter Bell, Treasurer,
treasurer@abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org,
(202) 276-2483

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rico Allegrino	Alfred Del Grosso
Andrea Balzano	Helen Free
Jeff Clark	Joann Novello
Lucio D'Andrea,	Joe Novello
President Emeritus	Albert Paolantonio
Maria D'Andrea-Yothers,	Helina Zewdu Nega
Immediate Past Pres.	



Opt to just receive the
AMHS **NOTIZIARIO**
newsletter *via email*.

It's fast, convenient & helps cut down on paper waste and postage.

Contact Maria D'Andrea-Yothers at
uva051985@comcast.net or call (703) 473-4033

Annual FERRAGOSTO PICNIC

Free
Event

Sunday,
August 11

Buon
Ferragosto
a tutti!

See details on page 15

2019 CALENDAR of EVENTS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

Ferragosto Picnic

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

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24

Italian Bred

6:00pm | State Theater,
Falls Church VA

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20-22

Raduno Vespa Rally

Casa Italiana and other locations

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

General Society Meeting

1:00pm | Casa Italiana

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1-2

NIAF 44th Anniversary Gala
Weekend – Region of Honor, Molise

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Annual Wine Tasting

1:00pm | Casa Italiana



www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org



THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

of the Washington, DC Area

Celebrating Italian Culture & Community since 2000

4669 Lawton Way, #104
Alexandria, VA 22311