



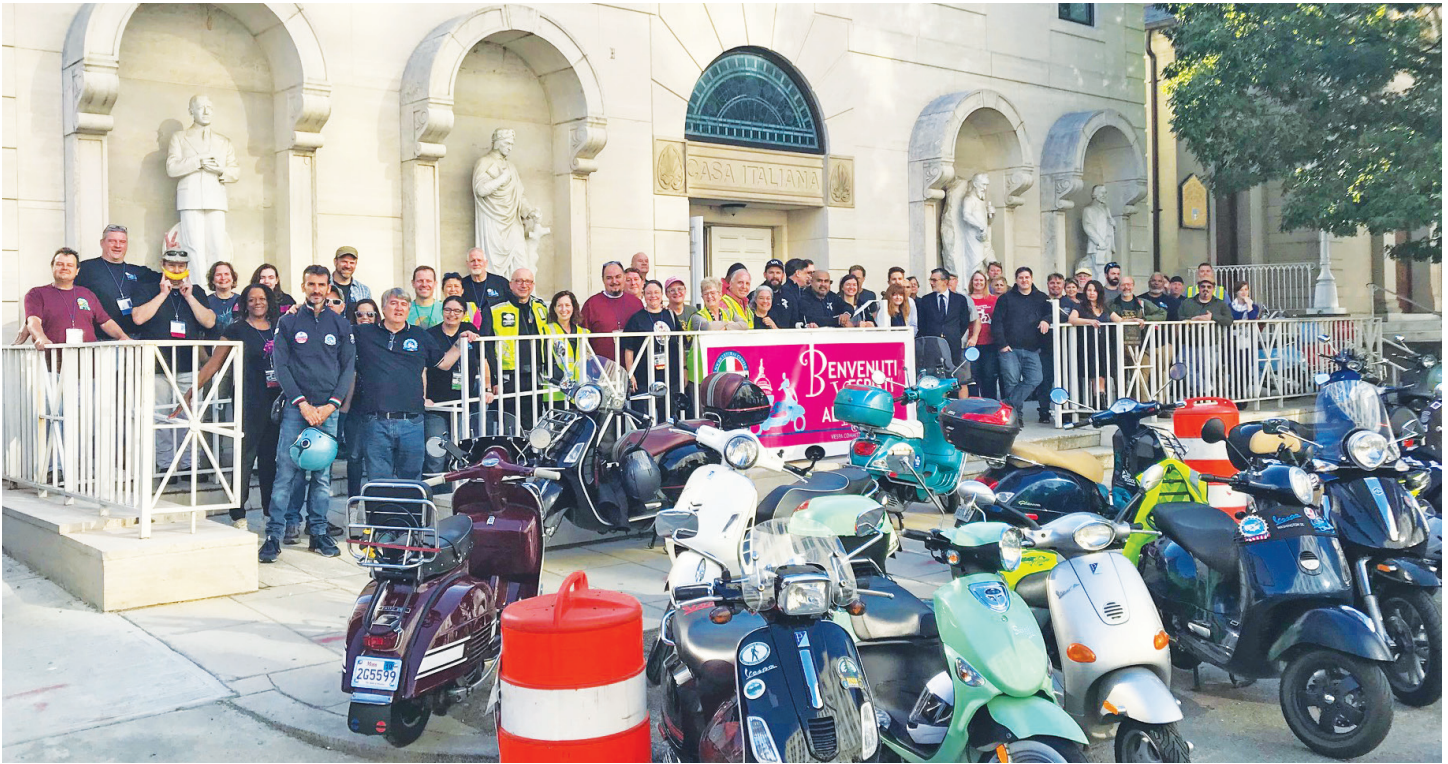
AMHS

NOTIZIARIO

CELEBRATING ITALIAN CULTURE & COMMUNITY SINCE 2000

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

November/December 2019



Participating Raduno Vespisti and their rides outside Casa Italiana.

AMHS CELEBRATES THE VESPA & ITS INVENTOR

The society's fourth program of the year was dedicated to the Vespa, that iconic symbol of Italy, which is only fitting as the inventor of the Vespa was Abruzzese. Our program took place on September 22, 2019, at Casa Italiana as part of a three-day Vespa Raduno organized by our speaker, Willy Meaux.

Willy's hard work paid off in a very successful Raduno which drew Vespisti from up and down the East Coast, as well as the Washington, D.C., area. We were pleased to have had as our special guest, Panfilo D'Angelo, president of the Vespa Club of Sulmona. Panfilo's visit came about after AMHS President Ray LaVerghetta sent him an invitation through Willy, who visited Panfilo in Sulmona during a trip to Italy over the summer. Panfilo said he accepted the invitation with pleasure, and he was accompanied to the lunch by his sister and brother-in-law who live in the D.C. area.

The Raduno was a wonderful event for everyone who loves the Vespa. This year AMHS was a sponsor of the Raduno, "The Vespa Rally of the Nation's Capital." It started with a delicious barbecue on Friday evening, September 20, at La Moto dealership in Arlington, Va. AMHS Past President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers and board member Albert Paolantonio were among those who helped out.

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AMHS NOTIZIARIO

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members and friends:

Fall is definitely in the air now, as we make our way through November. As I write this message, memories of our September 22nd general meeting are still fresh. This is understandable, inasmuch as the meeting, held at Casa Italiana, was a great success, as measured both by the number of participants (over 80) and by their expressed enjoyment of the program and food. The program reflected our meeting's association with the Vespa Rally of 2019, which occurred on the third weekend of September. Be sure to see Nancy DeSanti's article on our

meeting and on the rally on page 1 of this newsletter.

In the course of the rally weekend, our society sponsored the "arrosticini abruzzesi" barbeque that was held at La Moto in Arlington, Virginia on the evening of Friday, September 20. In addition, we also had a role to play in the "crespelle" breakfast on the morning of Saturday, September 21, the purpose of which was to pay tribute to the designer of the Vespa — Corradino D'Ascanio, a native son of Abruzzo. During the breakfast, both Domenico Bellantone, the Counselor for Consular Coordination and Social Affairs at the Italian Embassy in Washington, and your President had the opportunity to give some remarks. Counselor Bellantone addressed the importance of the Vespa in post-War Italy and showed how it became so much more than a simple means of transportation. I focused on the life and work of Corradino D'Ascanio, who designed the Vespa in 1946 and whose creativity and innovative thinking puts him in the company of other illustrious Italian designers. The written version of my remarks is in an article on the next page.

This year, as in the past, the AMHS was a supporter of the annual Columbus Day festivities in Washington, D.C. In addition, some of our members took part in the various events that were part of the festivities, which were held at Columbus Circle in front of Union Station.

On November 2, just a couple of weeks after the Columbus Day celebration, some of our members ventured to the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington to enjoy the sights and sounds of the NIAF Expo Italiana 2019. This year's exhibitors included some vendors from Molise, NIAF's 2019 Region of Honor, as well other Italian and Italian-American firms offering numerous kinds of food, drink, coffee, sweets and other goods and services.

The Society's activities continue with our upcoming general meeting on November 17th. This is our annual wine tasting event in which several AMHS winemakers, as well as other local winemakers, bring their products to the meeting for our tasting enjoyment. It is always an enjoyable afternoon, so mark your calendar. One order of business that we will take care of at our November meeting will be the election of three new members of the Board of Directors to replace those whose term expires at the end of this year. The candidates are John Dunkle, Chris Reneker, and Joseph (Sonny) Scafetta, and I thank them for their willingness to assist in the running of our Society. Their bios appear in a separate article later in this newsletter. I am also grateful to the members they are stepping up to replace: Jeff Clark, Helen Free and Albert Paolantonio, who have each made significant contributions to the Board and to our Society through their ideas and loyal service.

As we move into the last remaining weeks of 2019, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our members and friends a healthy and enjoyable holiday season. I would also like to thank those members who have supported our meetings and activities throughout the year. Without your interest and participation in our events, our organization would exist in name only and, of course, would be a lot less fun.

Best regards,

Ray LaVerghetta

THE GENIUS OF CORRADINO D'ASCANIO

AMHS HONORS ABRUZZO NATIVE WHO INVENTED THE VESPA

By Ray LaVerghetta

The Vespa Rally that took place in Washington, D.C. in late September of this year presented an opportunity for our Society, and the vespisti attending the Rally, to recognize the life and work of Corradino D'Ascanio, the Italian engineer from Abruzzo who designed the Vespa. D'Ascanio is best known for his two magnificent machines, the helicopter and the Vespa, but it was the Vespa that rally attendees gathered to pay tribute to during an early morning breakfast held on September 21. D'Ascanio designed the Vespa in 1946, and it quickly became immensely successful in Italy and, indeed, all over the world. It also became a symbol of both Italian freedom and Italian style. It was the style of the Vespa that generated its popularity and success.

Born in Popoli, in the province of Pescara, in Abruzzo, D'Ascanio was interested in aeronautics from an early age. He studied mechanical engineering at the University of Turin. During the World War I, he created a number of important designs in his job as a member of the Aviators Battalion of Turin (more on them below).

Following that war, D'Ascanio attempted a short venture in the U.S. with the son of Gabriele D'Annunzio, also an engineer, but returned to Italy after a year. On his return, he set up a company with a wealthy friend from Pescara — Baron Pietro Trojani. His sole purpose was to prove the viability of a concept first put forth by another

Italian designer — Leonardo Da Vinci: that an aircraft could fly by means of a vertical rotating mechanism. D'Ascanio soon demonstrated the proof of that concept with his D'AT 3 prototype, which he designed and patented in 1929. It was the first helicopter to ascend, remain airborne and descend vertically in the same spot. Its first public flight took place at Ciampino airport and was witnessed by Benito Mussolini. It broke the record for duration and distance.

Mussolini was not interested in helicopters. He wanted Italian industry to develop standard aircraft. As a result, the company that D'Ascanio had set up with Pietro Trojani dissolved. D'Ascanio began to collaborate with the company Piaggio, which at that time manufactured only aircraft. In 1943, he designed the PD3, a helicopter that used a single rotor and dual counter-rotating propellers, similar to today's models.

The Piaggio factory, as well as the PD3 prototype, were destroyed by Allied bombing during the War. Worse for D'Ascanio, as part of the peace settlement, Italy was forbidden from engaging in research and production in military and aerospace technology as well as from exporting overseas any products so developed. This meant that D'Ascanio was not only out of a job but was also effectively unemployable.

Following the devastation of the war, transportation was a great challenge and Italians lacked an affordable means to get around. The company for which D'Ascanio had been working, Piaggio, having been shut out of the aeronautics sector and sensing a good business opportunity, moved into the business of designing road vehicles. The company was familiar, of course, with D'Ascanio's design talents and called on him for assistance. D'Ascanio went to work on designing a convenient and economical means of transportation and the rest, as they say, is history.

If we take a step back to put the Vespa in the context of D'Ascanio's career, we see that this inventor from Abruzzo had the three talents that have characterized so many successful Italians and Italian-Americans in many different fields of endeavor: creativity, resourcefulness, and an eye for style. If we wanted to demonstrate his creativity, we need do nothing more



D'Ascanio with millionth Vespa produced

than refer to his two magnificent machines. However, there is so much more.

During the World War I, he installed the first radio transmitter and receiver on an Italian plane. He built and patented the first automatic pilot on a plane. He developed a heating mechanism to keep oil from freezing on aircraft. He designed the variable pitch propeller, which was installed on the most advanced Italian aircraft. Outside of the military realm, his work had many civilian applications. Among his many designs were a soap dispenser, an olive oil press and an electric oven for baking bread and pastries. He also designed a machine for the organization and rapid retrieval of documents — a forerunner of our Information Age. He invented a speed sensor to be used on vehicles, and a telecommunications system that worked off the electric grid. He designed a device for lifting and moving patients who were confined to bed and a machine for exercising and massage, a forerunner of today's fitness industry. These practical and innovative devices, along with his two magnificent machines, put him in very elite company among the world's inventors and designers, and constitute strong evidence of his creative genius.

His ability to land on his feet despite the worst of times — two World Wars — and the worst of luck leaves little doubt as to the resourcefulness that accompanied his creativity.

As far as his eye for style, I refer you to the Vespa, still selling in Italy and throughout the world and still attracting the gaze of admiring onlookers everywhere. ■



Report of the AMHS Nominating Committee

Elections To Be Held at November Meeting

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce three exceptional candidates for the AMHS Board of Directors: John Dunkle, Christopher Renneker, and Joseph “Sonny” Scafetta Jr (please see their bios, below). If elected, these candidates will replace Jeff Clark, Helen Free, and Albert Paolantonio, whose terms on the board expire at the end of this year. The Committee is also pleased to announce that the 5 current officers have agreed to be candidates to serve an additional 2-year term: Ray LaVerghetta, President; Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs; Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President-Membership; Carmine James Spellane, Secretary; and Peter Bell, Treasurer.

The election shall take place during the general Society meeting on November 17. Additional nominations for office may be made in writing to the Nominating Committee, prior to the meeting, or from the floor during the meeting, after which the nominations will be closed, and the election will be held. The elected board members shall assume office on January 1, 2020, and they shall be installed at the January 2020 general membership meeting. Their term of office is for three years. (Submitted by the AMHS Nominating Committee: Maria D’Andrea-Yothers, Lucio D’Andrea, and Lynn Sorbara).

John Dunkle is of German and Irish heritage. However, 56 years ago he married a beautiful Italian lady named Alice Riccadonna. Therefore, he became an “IBM” — Italian By Marriage. Excellent Italian food and wine and a welcoming family made their marriage quite special.

John received a degree in physics from Syracuse University and a Masters’ Degree in engineering physics from the Air Force Institute of Technology. Alice completed a PhD in biology from Cornell. They were in the Air Force for twenty years and then John worked in industry for 18 more years.

When John and Alice moved to Great Falls, Virginia, they helped build the church that is now

St. Catherine of Siena. There he served as a lector and as a Eucharistic minister. Alice wanted to be involved with the Italian community so, after a call to Father Cesare at Holy Rosary, John and Alice joined the parish. Over the years they have participated in parish activities and more recently, John became a member of the Holy Name Society and the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society (AMHS). John looks forward to contributing to the AMHS mission and to support the parishioners of Holy Rosary Church.

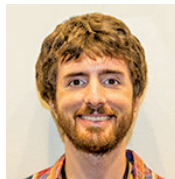
Christopher John Renneker

is a recent graduate (2017) from the George Washington University Law School. He also holds an MBA from the Sungkyunkwan University Global School of Business (2017) and a B.S. from the Florida State University (2011) with majors in political science and history, focused on European Union integration and Renaissance Italy respectively, and minors in Classical Civilization, focused on Etruscan studies, and philosophy.

He is admitted to practice law in the District of Columbia (2017). He currently works at the United States Patent and Trademark Office as an Examining Attorney. He previously worked as an Attorney Advisor in the Small Business Administration Office of Disaster Assistance. Between undergrad and law school Chris taught overseas, including one year of English in Shanghai, China and one year of English, Social Studies, and Math in Mexico City, Mexico. Chris studied abroad for a semester in Italy while at Florida State. He has since visited Italy twice, including six weeks earlier this year. He has family from Abruzzo and Foggia. He has been a member of the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society of Washington, D.C. since 2017 and a member of the National Italian American Foundation since 2016.

Joseph “Sonny” Scafetta Jr.

is the son of Giuseppe Scafetta (1896-1975) who emigrated from the city of Vasto in Abruzzo to



Washington in April 1915. Sonny earned a B.S. from Penn State U. in aerospace engineering in 1969, a law degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 1972, a masters in patent law from Georgetown U. in 1973, and an M.B.A. in the administration of science and technology from George Washington University in 1983. Before entering the private practice of law in 1975, he served as a law clerk for two years for a federal trial judge in Columbia, South Carolina. He is admitted to practice before the state courts in Pennsylvania (1972), the District of Columbia (1978), and Virginia (1979). He is also admitted to practice before the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office (1973), the U.S. District Courts in D.C. (1998) and the Eastern District of Virginia (1982), the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (1982), and the U.S. Supreme Court (1980). He has worked for several law firms in the District and Northern Virginia. Over the years, he has published ten articles in various legal journals and won the prestigious Robert C Watson Award from the American Intellectual Property Law Association in 1976. He is now semi-retired, but still works part time four days a week as Senior Counsel for Ditthavong & Steiner in Old Town Alexandria. He has been employed there since 2011.

He has been a member of the Abruzzo-Molise Heritage Society since 2008. He is also a member of the National Christopher Columbus Association and the Italian Heritage Lodge which is a branch of the Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America which he joined in 1979. He served as the president of the Avanti Italiani Lodge (1981-83) and was the state president of the Grand Lodge of Virginia (1993-95). He served on the Grand Lodge Council for 24 continuous years from 1984 to 2007.

He wrote an article about the Jacuzzi brothers for the Italian-American Review in 1994 and articles about engraving artists Anthony DeFrancisci (1999) and Frank Gasparro (2002) in The Numismatist. He also had biographies about five Italian Americans published in the American National Biography series in 1999. In the Fall 2005 issue of the Italian America Magazine, he had published a lead article entitled “Columbus & the Indians: Friend of Foe?” His last publication was a book entitled “The True & Com-

plete Story of Christopher Columbus” which was released by the Columbia Press Co. in 2007 and sold out.

Sonny has visited Italy four times and spent 11 weeks there. He is fluent in Italian. He studied

French for two years in high school and is now studying Spanish. He has also visited his Italian cousins living in Canada, Australia and Argentina. Currently, he resides in Falls Church with his wife of 33 years, Teresa Talierco, whose paternal

grandparents emigrated from the island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples. They have one son, Joseph Scafetta III, who is a junior majoring in math and computer science at Marymount University in Arlington. ■

Folger's New Season Begins “Music for Machiavelli”

By Nancy DeSanti

When you think of Niccolò Machiavelli, most likely the first thing that comes to mind is “The Prince,” his famous book of political philosophy. The name Machiavelli is synonymous with political deceit, cynicism and the ruthless use of power. Less well known is the side of Machiavelli which loved music, and wrote carnival songs for the Medici family. And so, the Folger Shakespeare Library decided to start off its fall 2019/2020 with “Music for Machiavelli: Florence Circa 2500” to highlight this less well-known part of his life. It’s the first in the “Bella Italia” series of five programs devoted entirely to early Italian music.

The concert was performed by the Folger Consort, the early music ensemble-in-residence at the Folger Shakespeare Library specializing in music from the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods. The performance took place September 29, 2019, at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill. The wonderful singers and musicians brought the music to life using their beautiful voices and instruments including the viola, lute and trombone. Among the audience favorites were *Canzona de’ naviganti* (Song of the sailors), *Fortunata desperate* (Hopeless fortune), *Canto de’ diavoli* (Song of the devils) and *In te, Domine, speravi* (In you, Lord, I have put my hope).

Machiavelli, a true Renaissance man of Florence of the 1500s, was also a playwright who composed the music for his two comedic stage plays. He was, however, most enthusiastic about the role of music in theater. In Machiavelli’s time, being well-educated meant being able to read music and play several instruments. For example, the famous Lorenzo de Medici owned four organs, an organetto, other keyboard instruments, fiddles, lutes and a harp. Although we do not know what instruments Machiavelli played, if any, it is known that music provided him with a welcome distraction and he turned his poetic talents to composing songs.

Machiavelli apparently enjoyed writing *canti carnavaleschi*. Something of a Florentine speciality, *canti carnavaleschi* were sung during the city’s annual carnival celebrations and were always full of jokes and double entendres. How many Machiavelli wrote is unclear, but six have survived, and two were performed during the Folger program. For the revival of his comedy *La Mandragola* in 1526, Machiavelli added a can-

zona after each act, and two of these were included on the Folger program.

After the Medicis’ return to power in Florence in 1512 and Machiavelli’s resulting banishment from political life, he had more time on his hands and he began to think about music more seriously — and to explore its application beyond mere amusement. He was particularly interested in looking at the role of music in war, given how difficult it was to communicate orders, especially in the midst of battle. In *L’Arte della Guerra* (completed in 1519), Machiavelli pointed out that music (especially with trumpets) might be an effective means of directing an army (as he acknowledged, this was not an entirely novel idea, but rather something that the Romans and Greeks had known a thousand years before). So one of the songs performed by the Folger was *Alla battaaglia, presto* (To the battle, quickly!).

If you missed this first “Bella Italia” program, the next one will be a special one in December. Then there will be 8 concerts for the Christmas program, “Gloria! A Baroque Italian Christmas,” on December 13-18. The Folger Consort will perform Vivaldi’s much-beloved Gloria (RV589), written around 1715 and first performed by the all-female choir and orchestra of the *Ospedale della Pietà*, directed by Vivaldi himself. Other seasonal music from the Italian High Baroque will include Alessandro Scarlatti’s Christmas Cantata (“*O di Betlemme altera, povertà venturosa*”) and Corelli’s magnificent Christmas Concerto.



For AMHS members, the Folger Shakespeare Library is offering a special discount for these concerts. Instead of the \$42 regular ticket price, we can buy tickets for \$30 by going to the website www.folger.edu/events/gloria and using the promo code ITALIANA30. ■



SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

Marinucci Family Honored at Holy Rosary Gala

By Nancy DeSanti

Long-time AMHS member Mario Marinucci, his mother Pina, and sisters Sandra and Donna were the proud honorees at the annual Gala at Casa Italiana, presented by Holy Rosary Church. Each year a man and a woman have been honored for their service to Holy Rosary Church and the community. This year it was decided to honor a special family.

Mario and his family have been ever-present at all the important social, cultural and religious events over the years. And in addition, they take an active role in planning and organizing many of those events. For example, Donna is famous for organizing the wonderful bake sales held in Casa Italiana several times a year, when delicious homemade sweets are sold to raise funds for various activities.



Mario Marinucci with (left to right) his sister Sandra, his mother Pina and his sister Donna

The awards were presented at a Gala held on September 7, 2019, at Casa Italiana. Cocktails and appetizers were served in the Lower Hall; the event moved upstairs where a jazz track provided the musical background as 160 attendees enjoyed a delicious dinner catered by Giuseppe Merone, consisting of salad and pasta (gnocchi and tortellini) followed by filet mignon and grilled lobster and then cannoli cake. And of course, wine. The Casa looked beautiful and so did the people.

AMHS member Maria Marigliano was the evening's mistress of ceremonies, and she called on Father Ezio Marchetto to say a few words about the Pro Ecclesia Sacratissimi Rosarii Award, as it is formally known. Father Ezio spoke about how much the Marinuccis have contributed in so many ways and have set a great example of a family whose generations have been active in the parish community. Sandra's daughter Noel talked about the example set by her grandmother, mother, aunt and uncle and how they were always there to support each other.

Mario then came up to the podium to say a few heartfelt words about how honored he was to get the award, and how much it meant to his family. He talked about the how their mother Pina emigrated from Roseto, Puglia, as a young girl, worked hard to raise the family and still found time to be involved in the parish's first lasagna dinners and the Italian festivals at Villa Rosa. Mario also talked about how the family pulled together to support each other after the tragic death of his niece Christina.

He talked movingly about his late father Cristino and how proud he would have been. His father, who emigrated from Sulmona, in Abruzzo, was devoted to his church, his family and community. His father started a construction company, and Mario, after graduating from college, joined the company and eventually became its head. Along the way, he said his father taught him more than just the construction business, but also many important life lessons, such as "tough times don't last, tough people do." He said his father liked to think big, like when others were selling raffle tickets for a few dollars, he managed to sell them for \$20.



Father Ezio with blessing from Pope Francis on occasion of the 100th anniversary of Holy Rosary

Mario and his family have been ever-present at all the important social, cultural and religious events over the years.

The festivities continued the next day, September 8, as Holy Rosary celebrated the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the church, with many AMHS members in attendance. Father Ezio announced that Pope Francis had sent a special congratulatory message. Following the special bilingual Mass, Father Ezio asked everyone to go outside and stand in rows on the front steps of the church so a picture in color could be taken, to compare it with the 100-year-old black and white photo of the church members back then, and to show future generations 100 years from now. Following the picture-taking, everyone went inside for the reception to enjoy some light refreshments, café and camaraderie. ■

AMHS Member Rocco Caniglia Recalls Purple Heart Award

By Nancy DeSanti

Rocco Caniglia was a recent immigrant from Italy, only 23 years old, when found himself in the jungles of Vietnam fighting for his life. Rocco was in the 1st Cavalry Division of the U.S. Army and on June 21, 1967, he and his unit were on a Vietnamese island south of DaNang, near the Cambodian border, when they became engaged in a vicious firefight with soldiers of the North Vietnamese Army.

Rocco remembers American helicopters flying overhead while the American troops on the

ground were fighting to push back the North Vietnamese. The fighting was fierce and he said that other Americans were wounded too. He

Rocco recalls laying on the ground next to another soldier who had been shot ... he recalls trying to calm this despondent young guy.

recalls laying on the ground next to one young soldier who had also been shot but who wanted to end his life, and Rocco tried to calm this despondent young guy.

Rocco lost a lot of blood and has only dim memories of being airlifted to a medical facility in the Philippines and then to a hospital in Japan. It turned out Rocco had been shot and the bullet went through his left hip, which led to the blood loss and to difficulty walking for many months.

Not long after he was shot, Rocco remembers a high-level Army official awarding him the Purple Heart while he was still hospitalized. A photo of Rocco with his Purple Heart will be on display in Casa Italiana's Immigration Museum.

Rocco is one of the original AMHS members. He emi-

grated to the U.S. from Orsogna in Abruzzo in 1956 and moving to the Washington, D.C. area. He later became a successful businessman and restaurateur. He owned Mamma Mia and as a chef he catered a number of events at Casa Italiana over the years. One of our members who grew up in Italy recalled Rocco's pasta as the best he had ever tasted outside of Italy.

Rocco, we thank you for your service. ■

Bruno Fusco Judges Dance Competition in Italy

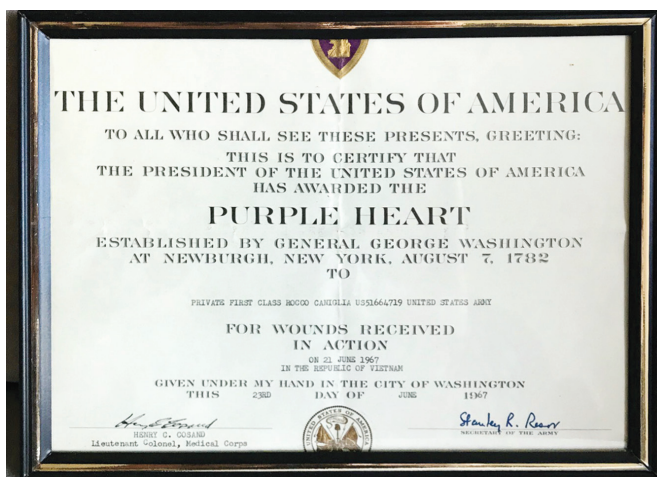
By Nancy DeSanti

This summer, AMHS member Bruno Fusco traveled to Monte di Procida near his hometown of Napoli to judge a dance competition. He has traveled to Italy in the spring or summer in recent years to judge talent competitions all over the country.

Maestro Cav. Fusco participated as a judge in the 17th edition of the "Premio Napoli per La Danza" in Monte di Procida, a town facing the island of Procida and located about 15 kilometers west of Napoli, where Bruno got his professional start at the Teatro San Carlo. The event took place July 17-19, 2019, and on the third day, Bruno awarded a scholarship on behalf of the Maryland Youth Ballet, a dance academy in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The lucky winner was Raffaella Ciaremella, a 14-year-old from Napoli, who was judged to be the best dancer. She will be coming to the U.S. on October 20 as a guest of the Maryland Ballet. Bruno said the judges were impressed with her variation on the classical ballet La Esmeralda, a famous ballet inspired by the novel Notre Dame de Paris by Victor Hugo. The panel of nine international judges represented many aspects of dance, such as classic, contemporary, jazz, modern, folkloric and Latin.

We congratulate Raffaella and we hope she enjoys her stay here. ■



Caniglia Purple Heart

continued on 8



SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

▼ Continued from page 7

AMHS Membership

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President - Membership

As of October, the Society has 228 members.

We would like to remind you that the option to renew your membership online has been simplified. We now have a new drop-down box under Membership, on the AMHS website "Manage Your Account" (see www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/manage-account/#account/manage). From here, you enter your email address and password (if you've forgotten your password, you can request that it be emailed to you). Your membership profile will populate, and you are given the option to renew, upgrade, or update your billing. We would also like to remind you that membership renewals are automatically sent via email for our members who choose to renew online. We appreciate your support of AMHS events and activities.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to our newest members: Patricia Badia-Johnson, Domenico Cipicchio, John Iademarco, and Aldo D'Ottavio.

BIRTHDAYS

Compleanni a Novembre

Eileen Verna, November 1; Rev. John V. Di Bacco, Jr., November 2; Anthony Narcisso, November 3; Rita Carrier and Michael DeBonis, November 4; Luciana Caleb and Sergio Fresco, November 8; Rocco Caniglia and Joseph Ruzzi, Jr., November 9; Michael McDonald, November 10; Emilia DeMeo, November 12; Gabriel Battista, November 14; Edvige D'Andrea, Joseph D'Andrea and Dena DeBonis, November 19; Betsy Ruzzi and Ross Cameron, November 21; Cindy Savage, November 23; Christina Iovino, November 25; Maria-Stella Gatzoulis, November 26; and Amelia DiFiore, November 30.

Compleanni a Dicembre

Domenica Marchetti, December 3; Alfred DelGrosso, December 4; Marlene Lucian and Louie Anne D'Ottavio, December 6; Yoni Kay Caniglia and Joe Marino, December 7; Frank Bonsiero, December 8; Stephen di Girolamo, December 9; William Lepore and Barbara Gentile, December 12; Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, December 13; Cathy Branciaroli, December 16; Domenico Conti, December 18; Palmer DeMeo, December 19; Elodia D'Onofrio and Carmine James Spellane, December 20; Anna Isgro, December 21; Claire DeMarco, December 22; Brian Pasquino, December 25; Michael Savino, December 26; and Margot DeRuvo Gilberg and Father Charles Zanon, December 29.

ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversari a Novembre

Harry & Joan Piccariello, November 9; Anthony & Jacqueline D'Ermes, November 21; and Joseph & Gloria D'Andrea, November 22.

Anniversari a Dicembre

Ray & Michele LaVerghetta, December 11; and David & Cristina Scalzitti, December 27.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Category	# of Persons
Associate (Couple)	2 x 2 = 4
Associate (Individual)	28
General (Couple)	51 x 2 = 102
General (Individual)	84
Honorary Scholarship	5
Student	4
	1
Total Membership:	228

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

AMHS Baseball Caps **\$15.00**

We offer merchandise for sale at bi-monthly AMHS general society meetings and for order, by check on the AMHS Shop.

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 Michele LaVerghetta, (410) 707-4611.

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

Thank You Letters from Our Newest Scholarship Winners

By Ray LaVerghetta

In the July/August edition of our Notiziario, we introduced you to our two scholarship winners for the 2019-2020 academic year: Julia Paola and Thomas Ronan. We have since received a thank you letter from each of them, in which they express their gratitude for our assistance. We re-print the letters below:

Julia's letter



I am writing to thank you for selecting me as a recipient of the 2019 NIAF Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society Matching Scholarship. I am truly appreciative of your generosity and I am honored to have been chosen from a diverse pool of applicants. Your contribution will help me further my education by lessening my financial burden and allowing me to focus on more important things such as pursuing my degrees and building my personal identity.

I am currently majoring in International Affairs and Political Science with minors in both Italian Literature and Language and History. I aspire to work for the U.S. Department of State and have a career that allows me to expand my interest in travel. No matter what position I achieve, I hope to continue to learn while serving others in the community around me, just as you have helped me.

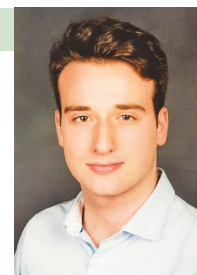
From a young age, I have been enamored with my Italian-American heritage and how it impacts my personal identity. I have a deep appreciation for my family and those who immigrated before them, and now have great hopes for my achievements, just as they did.

Once again, thank you for helping me pursue my educational goals through your generous scholarship. Throughout my years in college, I hope to take steps to maintain my cultural roots and serve as a student liaison of Italian heritage. Your gift has inspired me to serve my community and hopefully give back one day, just as you all have done for me. Thank you for enabling me to follow my 'American Dream.'

Grazie mille,
Julia Paola

The George Washington University
Elliott School of International Affairs

Thomas's letter



I cannot begin to express my gratitude to your foundation for its incredibly generous gift of \$4,000 for my studies. I will use these funds to honor Italy to the best of my ability in the Heritage Society's very own Washington, D.C. beginning this fall as an Italian major at Georgetown University.

Growing up, I spent my summers in Bergamo, Italy, with my mother's family. The city's historic center, Città Alta, a medieval citadel built on Roman ruins and surrounded by sixteenth-century Venetian walls, was the backdrop of much of my childhood fun. Perhaps it was inevitable that as I got older, I would be drawn powerfully to the history and culture of Rome and medieval and Renaissance Italy.

As a freshman in high school, I wrote my National History Day paper on Caesar's Gallic Wars, and I was fortunate enough to qualify for the national competition in D.C. The experience inspired me to study Latin and Roman topography in Rome itself at Saint Stephen's School Summer Program.

During my sophomore year, I read a translation of Dante's Divine Comedy in my free time. The wildly imaginative epic led me to the Calder Classics program the following summer in its author's hometown of Florence, where I studied medieval and Renaissance Italian art and read original Roman texts in Latin. In my junior year, I read Boccaccio and Petrarch independently, and the next summer, I shadowed at the Accademia Carrara art museum in Bergamo, where I was quite literally surrounded by medieval and Renaissance paintings. I also volunteered at Bergamo's Caritas, where I served meals to and made friendships with some of the city's unemployed residents, most of whom were new Italians — migrants from Africa and the Middle East.

I will emphasize late medieval and Renaissance Italian history, art, and literature in my studies at Georgetown and work to improve my Italian writing. I hope to use my knowledge of Italian and Italy in a career of international law or foreign service. The Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society will not only help me in advancing in my studies, but it will also allow me to form a more pan-Italian view of my heritage. Your society's remarkable gift to me, a student whose family hails neither from Abruzzo nor Molise, truly reflects its noble goal — "to foster the cultural heritage of these two regions and Italy." Your example of trans-regional generosity inspires me to learn more about Italian regions unknown to me and to celebrate our common Italian identity rather than regional loyalties.

I cannot thank you enough.

Cordially,
Thomas Ronan



SANT'OMERO

PROVINCE OF TERAMO, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Nancy DeSanti

The beautiful small town of Sant Omero rises on a hill between the Salinello and the Vibrata rivers, 16 kilometers away from the Adriatic coast. The town has approximately 5,317 inhabitants, known as Santomeresi.

Sant'Omero is located in the hinterland between Tortoreto and Giulianova and consists of three villages: Sant'Omero, Garrufo and Poggio Morello. Originally an agricultural center, it is nowadays developing as an agritourism and manufacturing center.

One of the interesting sites to visit is the Church of Santa Maria a Vico from the 10th century, on the right of the Vibrata river.

Sant'Omero is one of the 12 municipalities belonging to Val Vibrata. It is among the oldest towns in the area and also considered among the most important. Only 16 kilometers from the coast, it lies on a hill more than 200 meters above sea level, from which it dominates not only the Val Vibrata, but also the Salinello valley.

There were prehistoric settlements in the area, as many findings have confirmed. Legend has it that present-day Sant'Omero was founded on a hill by Charlemagne after the destruction of the fortress of Carrufo (present-day Garrufo). In 1154 it was a Norman territory, then in 1447 became a possession of the Acquavivas and later on of the Mendoza y Alarcón.



Panoramic view of Sant'Omero.



Church of Santa Maria a Vico.

One of the interesting sites to visit is the Church of Santa Maria a Vico from the 10th century, on the right of the Vibrata river, with a three-aisle interior and a stone bearing a Latin inscription for a temple dedicated to Heracles. It is the best-preserved religious monument of the region dating back to the early Christian era.

Instead of the usual wall that blocks everything, there is a railing that makes the street become a kind of balcony. From there it is possible to look out on the valley below, on the hills that surround it and on the road that goes up towards the town. Visitors to the town may well see that a walk like this, although brief, is worthwhile.

One of the traditional events in the town is the Sagra del baccalà, held in mid-July. Initially, the menus focused exclusively on traditional dishes (spaghetti with cod, salt cod with potatoes, and roasted cod), but new dishes have been added in recent years. The dishes are accompanied by wines from the best wineries in the area, along with music and dancing.

In late August in nearby Garrufo, there is beer and pork shank festival, featuring craft beers and pork knuckle with many other dishes, such as asparagus mezzemaniche and sausage. ■

What to See

- 19th century church of Santa Maria a Vico
- Church of S. Antonio Abate
- Le pinciaie, typical houses built with earth and hay
- An ancient "frantoio," an olive-pressing equipment to obtain olive oil

Important Dates

- **June 3** — Feast of Sant'Omero, the patron saint
- **July 21-27** — Sagra del baccalà
- **End of July** — Sagra de "li Maccaru de le Machine" (Poggio Morello)
- **August 20-25** — Sagra della birra (Garrufo)

SANT'OMERO

PROVINCIA DI TERAMO, REGIONE ABRUZZO

Translated by Maddalena Borea

La bellissima cittadina di Sant'Omero sorge sulle colline fra i fiumi Salinello e Vibrata, a soli 15 chilometri dalla costa adriatica. Conta poco più di 5,000 abitanti, i quali sono chiamati Santomeresi.

Sant'Omero si trova nei pressi di Tortoreto e Giulianova ed è formata da tre villaggi: Sant'Omero, Garrufo e Poggio Morello. Originariamente centro agricolo, è oggi centro turistico e artigianale.

Interessante è la chiesa di Santa Maria a Vico del decimo secolo, nei pressi del fiume Vibrata.

Uno dei comuni della val Vibrata, Sant'Omero è fra le più antiche cittadine dell'area e una delle più importanti. A soli 16 chilometri dalla costa, è situata a 200 metri dal livello del mare, dominando così la val Vibrata e la vallata del Salinello.

La sua esistenza risale ai giorni della preistoria, e una leggenda vuole che Sant'Omero sia stata creata da Carlomagno dopo che questi aveva distrutto la fortezza di Carrufo, dove oggi sorge Garrufo. Territorio normanno nel 1154, nel 1447 divenne possedimento degli Acquaviva e in seguito dei Mendoza y Alarcon.

Interessante è la chiesa di Santa Maria a Vico del decimo secolo, nei pressi del fiume Vibrata. Su una pietra di questa chiesa, insigne monumento del primo cristianesimo, si legge una dedica in latino a Eracle.

Invece del solito muro, la cittadina è protetta da un'inferriata, che trasforma la strada in una specie di balcone, dal quale si può vedere la vallata, le colline che la circondano, e la strada che porta in paese.

Una delle tradizioni del luogo è la sagra del baccalà che si tiene alla fine di luglio. In tale occasione si mangia baccalà ed altri piatti locali; il tutto accompagnato dall'ottimo vino domestico, da musica e da balli.

Nel mese di agosto nella vicina Garrufo c'è la sagra della birra e della carne di maiale. In tale occasione si serve birra domestica e si mangia salciccia. ■

Attrazioni del luogo:

- La chiesa di Santa Maria a Vico del diciannovesimo secolo
- La chiesa di Sant'Antonio Abate
- Antiche casupole costruite con terra e con fieno, chiamate Pinciaie
- Antico frantoio dove veniva fatto l'olio

Date da ricordare:

- **3 giugno** — Festa di Sant'Omero, Santo Patrono
- **21 - 27 luglio** — Sagra del baccalà
- **Fine luglio** — Sagra "de li Maccarù de le machine" (Poggio Morello)
- **20 - 25 agosto** — Sagra della birra.

Sources:

en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sant%27Omero

www.comune.santomero.te.it

www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/teramo/santomero.htm

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." ■





SEPINO

PROVINCE OF CAMPOBASSO, REGION OF MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

The picturesque small town of Sepino, called “a treasure in the heart of Molise,” is located about 30 kilometers south of Campobasso. The town has approximately 1,910 inhabitants, known as Sepinesi.

Sepino lies on the plain at the foot of the Matese, facing towards the Tammaro valley. The town features the typical medieval features. There are numerous fountains, such as the one placed in the main square, with its taps indicating the cardinal points for each of the four main points of the compass.

Sepino rises at the foot of the Matese Massif, one of the most ancient European mountains.

Sepino rises at the foot of the Matese Massif, on the Molise Apennines, the Matese being one of the most ancient European mountains, preserved in time from 70 million years ago. There is a spring of water which is collected nowadays and sold as “Sepinia” in the area now called Tre Fontane. Not very far from the spring, the most intact dinosaur in Italy was found.

The archaeological site of Saepinum is located



Sepino panorama

nearby. In the early 7th century A.D., what are today the communes of Sepino, Isernia and Bojano were the places where Grimoald I of Benevento, king of the Lombards, settled a group of Bulgars seeking refuge from the conquering Avars, the Central Asians some historians consider successors to the Huns. The Bulgars, ancestors of the modern Bulgarians, were for many generations a distinctive part of the population, until finally assimilating in their Italian environment.

In the 9th century, a raid by the Saracens led the population to move to a higher position, where the present-day Sepino is situated.

The town has a rich history going back thousands of years. Just before reaching the present-day town, visitors can take a right turn in the northwest direction towards Altilia. The village of Altilia arises amid the ruins of Saepinum, one of the most extraordinary archaeological sites of central Italy, a Roman town where excavations began in the early 1950s.

This prehistoric site called Terravecchia was the refuge of the first shepherds, who during the Bronze Age climbed to drink from the springs in the Matese. There the Samnite citadel of Saepins was built. As the water became the most important element of Saepinum/Altilia, the town was filled with hydraulic plumbings, aqueducts and mills, and magnificent spas. The town developed when rich Roman imperial families came to enjoy the healthy spring water believed to be especially good for the kidneys.



Sepino ancient theater

The site features a theatre, dating to the first half of the 1st century A.D. It is characterized by its horseshoe-shaped orchestra seating. The auditorium is divided horizontally into three parts, and vertically into several sectors by ramps of stairs, which provided for the orderly entrance and exit of the spectators. The theater entrance had gate that opened in the town walls, allowing visitors to enter directly into the theatre from outside the town, thus guaranteeing that the crowd could move in safety.

The “arena-pool-portico” complex was planned at the same time as the theatre and comprised a central space which was used for exercises and gladiatorial games, at the center of which was a swimming pool. A U-shaped portico provided shelter for the theater audience during intermissions or in the event of bad weather.

One of the most interesting sights is the Fountain of the Griffin, dated to between the 2nd century B.C. and the 4th century A.D. It is decorated with a relief of a griffin shown in profile, squatting on its hind legs. The griffin is a legendary creature with the body, tail, and back legs of a lion, the head and wings of an eagle, and sometimes an eagle’s talons as its front feet. Because the lion was traditionally considered the king of the beasts, and the eagle the king of the birds, by the Middle Ages the griffin was thought to be an especially powerful and majestic creature. Since ancient times, griffins were used for guarding treasures and priceless

Siede, come accennato, ai piedi del Matese, uno dei monti più antichi d'Europa.

possessions. (Later on in medieval heraldry, the griffin became a Christian symbol of divine power and a guardian of the divine).

Nearby is the Campitello di Sepino plateau, one of the many flat expanses surrounded by woods. Campitello di Sepino is a very interesting place, where you can appreciate large green areas in a large wooded area, with predominantly beech. From this plateau you can reach the tops of the surrounding mountains, inhabited in the past by bandits.

The feast of the town's patron saint, Santa Cristina, is celebrated on July 24, and the following day is an all-day affair dedicated to the emigrants visiting the town. After the Mass, there is a special meal followed by an evening concert of traditional songs. ■

What to See

- Ancient theater
- Fountain of the Griffin
- Chiesa S. Maria dell'Assunta

Important Dates

- **June 13-14** — Feast of St. Anthony
- **July 24** — Feast of Santa Cristina, the patron saint

Sources:

en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sepino
mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#label/AMHS+A%26M+articles/FMfcgwxwDqnnRFjsgNNtRKGJFVQszWjvd
www.comune.sepino.cb.it

SEPINO

PROVINCIA DI CAMPOBASSO, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Maddalena Borea

La pittoresca cittadina di Sepino, chiamata il tesoro del cuore del Molise, si trova a circa trenta chilometri a sud di Campobasso. Conta circa duemila abitanti, chiamati Sepinesi, e si estende ai piedi del massiccio del Matese e guarda la vallata del Tammaro.

Conserva un aspetto medievale e conserva molte antiche fontane, una delle quali nel centro della piazza, il cui rubinetto raffigura i quattro punti cardinali. Situata nell'Appennino molisano, siede, come accennato, ai piedi del Matese, uno dei monti più antichi d'Europa.

Una delle caratteristiche della cittadina è una sorgente dal nome Tre Fontane, che offre un'acqua di rinomata qualità, chiamata Serpinia. Recentemente è stato rinvenuto nei pressi di tale fontana il dinosauro più completo d'Italia.

Date le antichissime origini di Sepino, si è creato nei pressi della città un centro di ricerche archeologico. Quelli che oggi sono i comuni di Isernia, Boiano e Sepino furono i luoghi dove Grimoaldo I di Benevento, re dei Lombardi, nel settimo secolo dopo Cristo, trasferì gruppi di rifugiati Bulgari in cerca di rifugio e di protezione dagli Avari, conquistatori dell'Asia centrale, considerati da alcuni storici discendenti degli Unni.

Quei Bulgari, antenati della moderna Bulgaria, furono per generazioni un gruppo a sé. Più tardi furono assimilati e divennero parte integrante della popolazione italiana. Nel nono secolo gruppi di conquistatori saraceni forzarono la popolazione a cercare rifugio in luoghi più elevati, dove oggi sorge Sepino. La cittadina è ricca di storia che risale a migliaia di anni, ed offre incredibili testimonianze archeologiche, specialmente nella vicina Altilia, che sorge accanto alle rovine dell'antica Sepino, dove i primi pastori, durante l'età del bronzo, cercarono rifugio ed acqua dalle sorgenti del Matese.

I dintorni di Sepino, ricchi di sorgenti di acqua, ritenuta particolarmente salutare, ospitarono

più tardi Sanniti e Romani che ritennero l'acqua della zona particolarmente salutare per i reni. Una delle attrazioni del luogo, un antico teatro, risalente al primo secolo dopo Cristo, ha un golfo mistico a forma di ferro di cavallo, ed una platea divisa in tre parti, che offriva libero e facile accesso ed uscita anche a coloro che venivano da fuori delle mura dell'abitato.

L'Arena, poi, dal portico a forma di U, che riparava gli ospiti dalle intemperie del tempo, era luogo di sport e di giochi agonistici. Importante anche nei pressi è la fontana del Grifone, risalente tra il secondo secolo prima di Cristo e il IV secolo dopo Cristo. Questo grifone ha il corpo di leone e la testa di aquila. Il leone, re della foresta, e il grifone, re degli uccelli, conferivano potere magico e maestoso al centro abitato. Infatti è da ricordare che in tempi antichissimi il grifone fu ritenuto guardiano di tesori, e nel medioevo il Cristianesimo lo elesse a guardiano delle cose divine.

Nelle vicinanze sorge Campitello, ricca di foreste e di alture che offrì nel passato rifugio a banditi, e fu a volte covo di criminali. Oggi è meta di turisti, specialmente nella stagione invernale. La festa di Santa Cristina, Patrono della città è celebrata il 24 luglio, e il giorno dopo si festeggiano gli emigranti in visita. Dopo la Messa segue un grande pranzo al suon di musica e di canti tradizionali. ■

Attrazioni del luogo:

- L'Antico Teatro
- La Fontana del Grifone
- La Chiesa di Santa Maria dell'Assunta

Date da ricordare:

- **13-14 giugno** — Festa di Sant'Antonio
- **24 luglio** — Festa di Santa Cristina, Santo Patrono

AMHS CELEBRATES THE VESPA & ITS INVENTOR

▼ *Continued from page 1*

The weekend also included a crespelle breakfast at Casa Italiana on Saturday, September 21. Then, a trip to the Kennedy Center, where 27 Vespas rallied in front of the Hall of Nations. That evening there was a concert featuring Tony Richards, a virtuoso guitarist and recording artist from Chicago whose mother is Abruzzese. After the concert, Vespisti enjoyed a ride around the city to view the monuments lit up at night-time. When they got to the Capitol, some helpful Capitol Police officers shone spotlights on the building so the riders could get a good look.

The Saturday morning breakfast was attended by many Vespisti who got up early after enjoying the barbecue the night before. The breakfast was sponsored by the American Petroleum Institute and it was catered by Simonetta Baldassari who was tasked with re-creating an Italian pasticceria. The tables looked very elegant and the pastries tasted as good as they looked.

Speaking to the riders and guests at the breakfast, Domenico Bellantone, First Counselor of the Embassy of Italy, concluded his remarks by saying, “a car moves the body, but a Vespa moves the soul.”

The final event of the Raduno weekend was our Sunday luncheon program which highlighted the fact, not as well known as it should be, that Corradino D’Ascanio, who invented the Vespa in 1946, was from the small town of Popoli in the province of Pescara in Abruzzo.

Willy, our speaker, is a true Vespa aficionado who has many friends and contacts among the Vespisti in the Washington, D.C. area and elsewhere. He is well known to many of us in our society, as he was an original founding member and assisted Lucio D’Andrea, our founder, with the drafting of the original bylaws. Willy’s family heritage is Abruzzese, with origins in Bugnara, which is very close to Sulmona. He said he got involved with Vespas and Apes (a three-wheeled light commercial vehicle) thanks to his Uncle Biaggio who was the second person in Bugnara to own one of the very first Vespas ever produced. And Willy said he has fond memories of his Uncle Biaggio in an Ape with a load of garlic in the bed.

Willy has been a member of the Holy Rosary community for 39 years. Currently he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center. He has been working on



Panfilo D’Angelo (center in black shirt), President of the Sulmona Vespa Club, attended the AMHS-sponsored arrostitini abruzzesi barbecue with (from left) AMHS Immediate Past President Maria D’Andrea-Yothers, Luca Di Girolamo, Angela D’Angelo (Panfilo’s brother-in-law and sister respectively), AMHS Board Member Albert Paolantonio and AMHS Member and Raduno organizer Willy Meaux.

the interviews for the Marconi Project along with AMHS member Tom Sweeney to record for posterity the memories of some of the members of our community who emigrated to the Washington area years ago. Among the interviewees so far are several members of our society.

Willy is a Director of the Arts at Mason Board of the College of Visual and Performing Arts and an affiliate faculty member at George Mason University. He is also the founder and President of the newly established Vespa Committee of Washington DC Inc., a 501(c)(3) foundation charity dedicated to the nexus of Italian and Vespa culture. He said he sees the Vespa as building a bridge across the generations, and as a way of involving people in other aspects of Italian culture.

Willy showed us a short documentary on the amazing life of Corradino D’Ascanio and the invention of the Vespa. He made the film in coordination with Piaggio, the maker of the Vespa, while he was in Italy over the summer. In remarks the previous day at the breakfast at Casa Italiana, Ray gave a very interesting presentation on the life and times of Corradino D’Ascanio (see related article on page 3).

The iconic Vespa (“wasp” in Italian) was so named for its shape and its aerodynamic and nimble structure, and it was D’Ascanio’s most popular creation. Like all Italian inventions, it was conceived with aesthetics in mind. The

beautiful 70th anniversary model was on display during the weekend, and it had all the bells and whistles. Plus it could go up to 80 miles per hour.

Whipping through the streets on this simple, elegant yet robust piece of automotive engineering gave riders a sense of freedom and appealed to the style-conscious Italian public.

Attendees at our meeting also enjoyed looking at photos taken at “Bici e Baci,” the Vespa museum in Rome. The photos were taken in Rome this spring by Casa Italiana community member Teresa Forcina and they included some memorable photos of Charlton Heston in his Ben Hur costume riding a Vespa and of Audrey Hepburn riding sideways on Gregory Peck’s Vespa in the film “Roman Holiday.” Willy added that plans are in the works for a trip to Italy to go to the Raduno in Sulmona.

The 82 attendees at the program also enjoyed a delicious lunch catered by Fontina Grille, with special desserts prepared by AMHS 2nd Vice President Lynn Sorbara. We thank all those who helped with the set-up and serving of the lunch. We also thank those who donated items for the raffle and those who brought tickets. We made \$255 from the raffle, which this time included a gift certificate worth \$300 from Apex for Vespa riding lessons. This lucky prize winner was Edvige D’Andrea, who looked right at home posing on the special display Vespa. ■

November Meeting Features Winemakers

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President - Programs

For a fun Fall afternoon, you should not miss out on our most popular event of the year, which will be held on Sunday, November 17, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. in Casa Italiana. We are pleased to again present our annual lunch and wine-tasting, when our wine-making members and friends will be bringing samples of their production to share with all in attendance. We have invited the winemakers to say a few words about how they make their wine, and what the wine-making process means to them.

The program will begin with a brief general meeting at which time we will elect officers and members of the board of directors (please read the related article by the Nominating Committee on page 4). We will also hear from one of this year's scholarship winners, Julia Paola. Lunch will be catered by Three Brothers Italian Restaurant.

We owe a big thank-you to Jim Gearing and Romeo Sabatini who always helps with this event and organize the winemakers' participation. This year the many varieties of wines to taste will be provided by Jim Gearing; Osvaldo Barsi, Stefano di Girolamo, and Carlo Clinton; John and Maria Villarubbia; Joe & Betsy Ruzzi and Ross Scorci; Romeo Sabatini and Emanuele Di Prima; Darren Sobin, Jack Grimaldi, and Wayne Witowski; Randy Holtz, and Skip and Roberta Margot.

Please make your reservations early to make sure you don't miss out on this fun event. Bring your family members and friends — they will thank you! The deadline for paid reservations is **November 13, 2019.**



2018 Wine Tasting Event

LUNCHEON MEETING

Winemakers' Tasting

Please join us for our most popular event of the year, the annual wine tasting. Our wine-making members and friends will have samples of their product to share. The program will begin with a brief AMHS business meeting, to include election of officers and members to the Board of Directors as well as remarks from one of this year's scholarship winners, Julia Paola. A delicious lunch will be catered by Three Brothers Italian Restaurant. We will also have a raffle with some wonderful prizes, including a \$75 gift card to A. Litteri.

**SUNDAY,
Nov. 17
1:00 PM**

at Casa Italiana
595 Third Street, NW
Washington, DC

MENU

Lunch catered by Three Brothers Italian Restaurant. Menu includes salad, lasagna (meat and vegetable), a beef dish, bread, and assorted Italian cookies for 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 "Upcoming Events" on the home page)

Paid reservations must be received by November 13.

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

✂ **Return with Payment**

PAID RESERVATIONS for AMHS General Society Meeting on Sunday, November 17, 2019

Please make check payable to AMHS.

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

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Guest(s): _____

Number Attending: _____ Check Amount: _____

Email: _____

LUNCHEON MEETING

Winemakers' Tasting

DETAILS
ON
Page 15

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NOVEMBER 17**

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RESERVATION DEADLINE: November 13

2019 CALENDAR of EVENTS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Annual Wine Tasting

1:00pm | Casa Italiana

COMING IN 2020:

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

General Society Meeting

1:00 p.m. Casa Italiana

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

General Society Meeting

1:00 p.m. Casa Italiana

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

**AMHS 20TH Anniversary
Celebration**

1:00 p.m. Casa Italiana

More events will be announced in the next issue.



www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org



THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

of the Washington, DC Area

Celebrating Italian Culture & Community since 2000

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