



AMHS

NOTIZIARIO

CELEBRATING ITALIAN CULTURE & COMMUNITY SINCE 2000

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

March/April 2020



AMHS Immediate Past President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers supported by family and friends including Fr. Ezio Marchetto at NOIAW's celebration of Three Wise Women.

Maria D'Andrea-Yothers Honored AS 'WISE WOMAN' BY NOIAW

By Nancy DeSanti

A sizeable group of AMHS members was on hand to cheer for Maria D'Andrea-Yothers as she was honored as one of the Three Wise Women by the National Organization of Italian American Women. Maria and the other two honorees were celebrated for their professional achievements at a dinner on January 9, 2020 at Maggiano's in Washington, D.C.

The annual event, which coincides with the Feast of the Epiphany, honors Three Wise Women from the Washington, D.C. area. Maria, our AMHS Immediate Past President, was recognized for her distinguished career in the field of international trade.

Speakers at the event included Diane Femia, president of NOIAW for the Greater Washington Region; Maria Tamburri, the NOIAW Chair visiting from New York; and Domenico Bellantone, the First Counselor for Consular and Social Affairs of the Embassy of Italy. The emcee for the evening was Gemma Puglisi, a 2016 recipient of the Wise Woman award. Gemma, an assistant professor of communications at American

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AMHS NOTIZIARIO

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members and friends:

I hope that I can be forgiven for defining the Big Bang Theory as an explanation for the stellar beginning of our 2020 series of programs. The New Year's first general meeting, held on January 26th at Casa Italiana, drew about 100 members and guests who enjoyed delicious food prepared by Osteria da Nino as well as a very interesting presentation by guest speaker Paul Paolicelli. Mr. Paolicelli talked about the many ways in which Italian immigrants have changed America for the better. The changes have become so ingrained in the American fabric

that we are often unaware of how they came about and to whom we owe their existence. We thank Mr. Paolicelli for reminding us, and informing us, of so many fascinating facts.

The meeting attracted more than the usual number of guests, which of course was quite gratifying. Included among them was one of our scholarship winners for the 2019-2020 academic year, Thomas Ronan, and his parents John and Cristina Ronan. Thomas, a freshman at Georgetown University, addressed those in attendance (please see the related article on page). It was clear that he is an outstanding young Italian-American student whose background and studies ensure a continuing connection to the Italian language and culture. Members of the Scholarship Committee, Officers and Board members of our Society, and members and guests in general were delighted to meet him as well as his parents.

We also took care of several organizational matters. Immediate Past President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers administered the oath of office to me to inaugurate my second term as AMHS President. I did the same for our Officers, Nancy DeSanti (1st Vice President-Programs), Lynn Sorbara (2nd Vice President-Membership), Carmine James Spellane (Secretary) and Peter Bell (Treasurer), who began successive terms in their respective positions. I then swore in our incoming Board members John Dunkle, Chris Renneker and Joseph "Sonny" Scafetta, Jr. and recognized outgoing members Jeff Clark, Helen Free and Albert Paolantonio for their service and significant contributions.

I am pleased to report that our Scholarship Committee has decided to continue awarding two scholarships each academic year to deserving Italian American students, notwithstanding the loss of matching funds from the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). The Committee's decision underscores the importance with which the Society views our commitment to foster and strengthen the ties of young Italian American students to Italy, its culture and language. Of course, the Committee's decision also entails the need for increased fund raising to support the effort. If you share this goal, please consider making a donation to the scholarship fundraising campaign — it is never too late to contribute. Please also see to it that your families and friends are aware of our scholarship opportunities, so that those close to home may also take advantage of them.

Our next general meeting will take place on March 22 at Casa Italiana, featuring guest speaker Carla Gambescia. As noted in the article on page 3, Carla is an accomplished and energetic woman and a dynamic speaker. So please note the date and give yourself an early spring treat.

Kudos are in order for our Immediate Past President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, who was honored for her professional achievements in January by the Washington D.C. Chapter of the National Organization of Italian American Women (NOIAW). Maria was selected as one of this year's Three Wise Women for the greater D.C. area. Congratulations, Maria.

Finally, stay tuned for plans regarding our 20th anniversary celebration in June.

Thank you for reading. I look forward to seeing you in the spring — on March 22.

*Best regards,
Ray LaVerghetta*



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

Maria D'Andrea-Yothers Honored as 'Wise Woman' by NOIAW

▼ *Continued from page 1*

University, is the sister of AMHS member Angela Puglisi who has also been an award recipient.

Maria was introduced as an international trade specialist who is currently with the U.S. Commerce Department, where she is Director of the Office of Textiles and Apparel in the International Trade Administration. In that capacity, she manages a staff of 11 international trade specialists, international economists and administrative specialists. She has been involved in negotiations of top trade priorities such as special safeguards against China and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. Maria is such an expert in the field of textiles and apparel that her advice is sought by U.S. industry and foreign government representatives.

Before going to work at the Commerce Department in 1992, Maria worked on textile and clothing trade issues at the World Trade Organization in Geneva, Switzerland.

Even while maintaining a busy work and travel schedule, Maria has been very active in several Italian cultural organizations. Most of all, of course, she has been involved with the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society, where she has served as an officer and past president. The AMHS, which is about to celebrate its 20-year anniversary, was founded by Maria's father Lucio, who is from Molise (her mother Edvige is from Abruzzo).

Maria is also a board member of the National Christopher Columbus Association, and she has collaborated on programs with the Italian Cultural Society, the National Italian American Foundation and the Lucchesi nel Mondo-Tuscany Club.

The two other women honored by NOIAW this year were lawyer Giovanna M. Cinelli and political journalist Tara Palmeri.

Giovanna is a partner in a leading global law firm, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, where she heads the firm's international trade and national security practice. During her career, she has conducted over 250 civil and criminal investigations, both classified and unclassified, and she is an expert in a broad range of issues affecting national security, including sanctions, cross-border compliance, international technology transfer, and export controls including arms exports. Over the last 30 years, she has negotiated and favorably settled more consent agreements with the State Department than any other outside counsel.



Honored as Three Wise Women for 2020 were (l to r) Tara Palmeri, Giovanna Cinelli, and Maria D'Andrea-Yothers

Giovanna has also lectured and written extensively on strategic issues affecting international arms trades, technology transfer and export issues, and she has appeared on CNN and MSNBC programs as an expert in international technology, arms exports and related national security issues.

At the same time as she was establishing herself in her legal career, Giovanna, who is fluent in Italian and French, served as a Naval Reserve Intelligence Officer. In her spare time, she is a competitive amateur concert pianist and a violinist with the Washington Opera Society.

Tara was introduced by Gemma Puglisi, who was her professor at American University and who said she knew all along that Tara's smarts and hard work would lead to success. Tara has been a CNN political analyst, a contributor to the New York Post's Page Six, Politico's White House correspondent, and a former White House correspondent for ABC News. For a time, she reported from Brussels for Politico's European edition, returning to Washington in 2016. Tara is most recently the host and chief investigative reporter on the podcast "Broken: Jeffrey Epstein."

Her work has taken her all over the world, most recently from Singapore to Finland and North Korea. She is one of the few American journalists to travel to North Korea with an official delegation.

Tara said she is proud of her Italian heritage and her family's roots in Sicily and at no time did she consider changing her name to Palmer to advance her career in broadcast journalism.

Maria, in addition to members of her AMHS "family," was joined by her husband Sam, her parents Lucio and Edvige D'Andrea as well as many other proud family members. Among those present and congratulating Maria was one of the 2019 Wise Women, AMHS 2nd Vice President Lynn Sorbara, who was recognized last year for her important cancer research work. ■

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 your story. 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 abruzzomoliseheritagesociety@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, let's all help ensure a bright future for our mission to celebrate "all things Italian." ■

Author Paul Paolicelli Tells *HOW ITALIANS CHANGED AMERICA*

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President – Programs

The new year was off to a great start, with well-known author Paul Paolicelli drawing a crowd of just over 100 people for his talk about “How Italians Changed America.” Our first program of the year was held on January 26, 2020 at Casa Italiana.

Paul, who now lives in North Carolina, returned to Casa Italiana after more than five years. Some attendees recalled that in his previous talk, he told about his life-changing experiences in Southern Italy that deepened the admiration and affection he feels for this part of Italy. AMHS member Dave Ciummo originally suggested Paul as our speaker. Paul was also interviewed by AMHS member Kirsten Keppel in her film about St. Joseph’s Table which was featured at our March 2019 meeting.

*Those who left Italy
for America didn’t
bring valuables;
they brought values.*

Paul told us that his interest in his Italian heritage really grew after he became friends with his news colleague Tom Capra, the son of the famous Frank Capra, who immigrated from a small farming town near Palermo at the age of 6 and directed such movie classics as “*It’s a Wonderful Life*.” Paul said his long talks with Tom Capra led him to eventually meet one of Frank Capra’s relatives who lived near Corleone, Sicily. When asked to comment on Frank Capra, the relative said that those who left Italy for America didn’t bring valuables; they brought values. In other words, they didn’t have much in the way of material things, but they brought with them their strong work ethic and determination, their love of family, and their faith.

After achieving professional success in the television news business (he was news director for NBC-TV in Washington for 10 years), Paul decided to move to Rome for a few years, where he learned Italian, played in a jazz band, and spent considerable time in Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria and Sicily — the journey he wrote about in

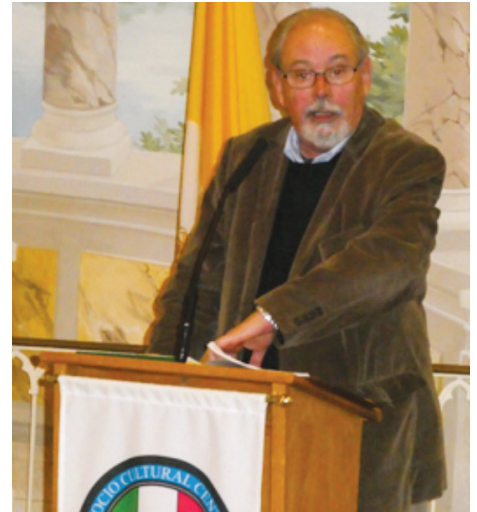
his first book, “*Dances with Luigi*.” Encouraged by the book’s success, he wrote a second book, “*Under the Southern Sun: Stories of the Real Italy and the Americans It Created*” because he wanted to try to find out why so many of the Southern Italians who emigrated to the U.S. became successful in just one generation — bankers, film directors, politicians, scientists, business leaders, artists, musicians and athletes.

Now he said he is working on a third book, tentatively titled “*The Good Father*.” Paul noted that “*The Godfather*” movies were among the most successful movies of all time and were great cinematic achievements, but the bottom line is that they were based on a lie — that Italians are largely Mafia gangsters and criminals — while the truth is that Italians or Italian-Americans comprise only a tiny percentage of the prison population.

He noted that ever since Italians started immigrating to America, there have been slurs that they were criminals and undesirables. He said that even Frank Capra was referred to as “Dago” by one of his peers in Hollywood. Paul pointed to historical events such as the mass lynching of Sicilians in New Orleans in 1891 and the 1924 law limiting immigration from Southern Europe and said this sad state of affairs only began to change during and after World War II. One reason, he noted, was that Italian-Americans enlisted in the war effort in numbers almost double their percentage of the American population, even though it meant they would be fighting against the country of their ancestors.

Paul explained that another reason for the acceptance of Italian-Americans in American culture and society was the growing popularity of entertainers such as Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, and athletes such as Yogi Berra and Rocky Marciano. Then in the 1950s and 1960s, many of the popular teenage idols were Italian-American — Frankie Valli, Bobby Rydell, Dion and Annette Funicello — and they became mainstream.

Paul told us that since his last visit in 2014, he had taught a course at the University of Calabria, and, together with his colleague Sam Patti, has been involved with the Foundation for Italian Diaspora Studies which helps fund the program at the University of Calabria. This year the foundation raised enough to fund a Fulbright Fellow (Stan Pugliese from Hofstra University) who will



Paul Paolicelli

be lecturing this year in Calabria. Paul noted that it’s only been in the last 10 years or so that Italians have become interested in investigating the history of Italian migrations in the world.

Before the talk, we heard from AMHS scholarship winner Thomas Ronan (see related article on page 5). We also enjoyed a delicious lunch catered by one of everyone’s favorites, Osteria da Nino. We closed by raffling off some wonderful prizes which brought in \$295 for our AMHS programs. Many thanks to those who helped serve the lunch and to those who donated raffle prizes and bought tickets.

We also heard an update on two of our previous speakers. Sara Forden, the Bloomberg editor, spoke to us about her book, “*The House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour and Greed*.” Sara says her book is now being made into a movie directed by Ridley Scott with Lady Gaga in the title role of Maurizio Gucci’s wife Patrizia who was convicted of his murder.

Also, you may remember Katherine Wilson, who talked to us about her adventures going to Naples, marrying a Neapolitan guy and also feeling intimidated by and then falling in love with his stylish, supremely self-confident mother. Katherine had mentioned to us that she was moving with her family from Naples to Rome to try to take advantage of her training at the Princeton Drama School. Now she has small roles in two big films, “*The Two Popes*” and “*TotoToto*,” a satirical comedy that is breaking box office records in Italy. ■

DC Youth Orchestra Program Advances Music Education

By Lourdes Tinajero

Sixty years of music education is a milestone worthy of celebration, and so it is with the DC Youth Orchestra Program (DCYOP). This year, 2020, marks the sixtieth anniversary of the local non-profit organization which serves more than 500 students from D.C., Maryland and Virginia and has given them the opportunity to perform in several countries, including Italy.

As one of the organization's board members, I am excited by the program's unique role in introducing and advancing music skills and education for young people ranging from 4 years of age to seniors in high school. DCYOP fills a unique



Maestro Gianandrea Noseda conducts a rehearsal of the DC Youth Orchestra. Standing, center, is DCYOP Executive Director Liz Schurgin.

role indeed, providing an introduction to play an orchestra instrument or further developing the musical skill level of children and teenagers from

diverse cultural and education backgrounds.

Students meet almost every Saturday from September thru May for lessons in one of DCYOP's several classes at the Takoma Education Center (TEC) in Northwest D.C. It's endearing to see very young children begin to learn an instrument. These young individuals, older children and adolescents have the fantastic benefit of learning from experienced music teachers including some who were once DCYOP students. Each time I visit the Saturday programs or attend an event in the area, I'm inspired about music education and seeing students learning how to interact with each other, to learn how to listen to each other, and play instruments together. These are important life skills and essential when a DCYOP orchestral group has the opportunity to tour to other countries. The DC Youth Orchestra toured to Riva del Garda, Italy, in 2018 where they served as Orchestra in Residence at the Musica Riva festival.

A special occasion this past year was having Maestro Gianandrea Noseda conduct a rehearsal of DCYOP's DC Youth Orchestra (DCYO). Practicing Brahms's Symphony No. 2 was quite an experience for orchestra members and all who attended the rehearsal and post-rehearsal Q&A with DCYOP students.

Please visit www.dcyop.org for more information about the organization and its programs. If you would like to visit DCYOP on a Saturday morning, please contact me at (202) 680-9348.

Lourdes Tinajero serves on the AMHS Scholarship Committee and is a past member of the Society's Board of Directors. As stated above, she also is on the board of the DCYOP. ■

Scholarship Winner Addresses General Meeting

By Ray LaVerghetta



Thomas Ronan

Thomas Ronan, one of the two AMHS scholarship winners for the academic year 2019-2020, addressed the AMHS General meeting on January 26 at Casa Italiana. Among the approximately 90 members and guests in attendance were Mr. Ronan's parents, John and Cristina, who traveled from Macungie, Pennsylvania to be present.

Mr. Ronan thanked the Society for his scholarship award and noted the importance it has had in furthering his studies. A freshman at Georgetown University, he is majoring in Italian and minoring in Medieval Studies. He talked about the formative experiences that led him to the Hilltop and laid the foundation for his current interests.

In that regard, he recounted the summers he spent in Bergamo, Italy with his mother's family and, in particular, the one he spent as a high school junior at the Accademia Carrara Art Museum there. The museum houses Italian medieval and Renaissance works of art. Mr. Ronan worked at the museum's reception desk, collaborated on several of its projects, and helped to update its website. He had spent an earlier summer studying Italian medieval and Renaissance art and literature in Florence at the Calder Summer Classics Program. These exciting and stimulating experiences in Italy, in tandem with his high school classroom studies, led naturally to the next step in his education — enrollment at Georgetown, whose strengths in languages and the classics are a perfect fit for his academic interests.

Mr. Ronan is thinking about a career in either international law, diplomacy or academia. It is evident that, whatever career path he chooses, he has the tools to be successful: talent, passion, and energy. He embodies the best characteristics possible for maintaining the ties between Italy and the U.S., and he personifies the value of the Society's scholarship program, which aims to keep the Italian language and culture alive and vibrant in future generations. ■



SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

Family and Friends Pay Respects to Nancy Hurst

By Nancy DeSanti

On January 20, 2020, many family members and friends attended a Mass at Holy Rosary Church to say goodbye to Nancy (Annunziata) Cotticelli Hurst. Many AMHS members were in attendance to honor Nancy, a former chairman of the AMHS board of directors, who passed away after a long illness.

Nancy was known to all as a woman of style and class. She was born in 1937 in Salerno, a city she loved and returned to often. Her father, Mario, was killed during World War II when she was only 6 years old. Nancy went to school with the nuns growing up in Italy and took piano lessons as a child.



Nancy Hurst

When she was 19, her mother, Tina, allowed her to move to Paris to study, at a time when it was unusual for a girl to leave home, especially a southern Italian girl.

Nancy learned to speak French, thinking that with her gift for languages she might become an interpreter. Instead, she met an American Navy man, Jim Stolt, whom she married and lived with in Paris, London and Naples, and eventually came with to the United States. She lived in Jacksonville, Florida, and managed to overcome the culture shock after years in Paris. She ended up in Washington and after a time parted ways with her husband.

Ever resourceful, Nancy established a business

in the Watergate — the Chocolate Box — which was the first shop in Washington to carry Godiva chocolates. Later, she opened a perfume shop in the Crystal City Underground, then tried her hand at catering, becoming assistant director of catering at the Watergate Hotel and then director of catering at Embassy Row Hotel.

Nancy had a flair for parties, decorating and presentations, and she was an excellent cook who enjoyed inviting friends for dinner. She began taking flamenco lessons and used to give impromptu performances at her home. She also played the guitar, read tarot cards, and loved going to the ballet.

Meanwhile, she met Bill Hurst, whom she married in 1978. Together, they had a daughter, Francesca,

who was the light of her life. Nancy was very proud of her daughter, who became a classical pianist and teaches music students at Catholic University.

After leaving the catering business, Nancy went to work for private Italian companies in Washington such as IRI and Finmeccanica, where she developed special friendships that lasted even after she retired. Nancy chose to spend her retirement half in Italy and half in the U.S., enjoying amazing summers at the beach in Italy, and coming home to D.C. during the rest of the year to be near her daughter. She played an active role in AMHS for many years, and she was also active in the Order of Sons of Italy in America.

Nancy's style, wisdom and goodness will be missed by all who knew her. ■

Bruno Sabatini, Brother of AMHS Past President, Dies in Italy

By Nancy DeSanti

On January 23, 2020, the older (and only) brother of AMHS Past President Omero Sabatini passed away in Italy at the age of 92. Omero's brother, Bruno Sabatini, was a well-known medical doctor and poet.

Bruno was born in Secinaro in the province of L'Aquila in Abruzzo. He studied medicine at the University of Rome and continued his specialization in obstetrics and gynecology in Perugia.

In addition to his medical skills, this "Renaissance man" also loved poetry, art and music. He especially loved to write poetry including sacred poems, such as "Via Crucis" which has been broadcast on Good Friday on Vatican Radio. And his interest in Greek poetry inspired him to write "Sul Trono di Zeus" (available on Amazon). He also showed his works of figurative art in exhibits all over Italy and especially in Abruzzo.

Our friend in L'Aquila, Goffredo Palmerini, wrote of Omero's brother: "Bruno Sabatini ha sempre rivelato una sensibilità che abbraccia medicina e letteratura, arte e umanesimo, amore per la musi-



Bruno Sabatini

ca e per la montagna. Un incontro con Sabatini è sempre stato un'esperienza che arricchisce e riconnette il nostro vivere alla terra che ci ha generato, e alle radici della nostra antica civiltà,"

Bruno passed away in the San Salvatore hospital in L'Aquila where he was an esteemed doctor for many years until his retirement in 1993. He leaves behind his wife Anna, his daughter Beatrice (Gianriccardo), grandchildren Leonardo, Andrea and Veronica, and his brother Omero (Belinda). Bruno's daughter Beatrice informed Omero that the retired archbishop of L'Aquila presided at the funeral Mass. ■

AMHS Membership

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President, Membership

As of February 2020, the Society has 240 members, up from 234 in December 2019.

We would like to remind you that the option to renew your membership online has been simplified. We now have a **new dropdown box** under Membership, on the AMHS website "Renew Your Membership" (see www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/renew-your-membership/#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. We appreciate your support of AMHS events and activities. Should you have any questions regarding membership, please email me directly at: drlynnrose@yahoo.com.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to: Gino Fosco, Karen Kiesner, Berardino Palazzo & Ilaria Pirocchi, Linda Travis Plato, and Pauline Thompson.

BIRTHDAYS

Compleanni a Marzo

Eileen Parise Del Monaco, March 1; Robert D'Onofrio and Greg Bernabei, March 2; Maria Fresco, March 3; Melis Mull, March 4; Salvatore DiPilla, March 8; Maria Antoinette Kellaheer and Sam Yothers, March 12; Mary Petrino, March 14; David Scalzitti, March 19; Pam Lupo, March 21; Donald Kellaheer, March 22; Thomas Ronan, March 24; Mary Katherine Theis, March 25; Lucio D'Andrea and Thomas Guglielmo, PhD, March 28; and Anna Maria DiPilla, March 31.

Compleanni a Aprile

Eva Del Vecchio, and Albert Grasso, April 1; Joseph Theis, April 4; Susan Ann Bonsiero, April 5; Diana Bernabei, April 6; Steven Wright, April 8; Donald Kellaheer, April 10; James W. Cocco, April 11; Stephen Ulissi and Elena Francini-McGrann, April 21; Julia Conti, April 22; Peter Iovino and Berardino Palazzo, April 24; Belinda Sabatini, April 25; Christopher Renneker, April 26; Joann Novello, April 28; Tommaso Profenno and Rita Costello, April 30.

ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversari a Marzo

Robert & Marlene Lucian, March 3; Albert & Karen Grasso, March 4; Jeff Clark & Anne Eberhardt, March 15; Maria Antoinette & Donald Kellaheer, March 22; and Raymond & Barbara Bernero, March 25.

Anniversari a Aprile

Vincenzo & Dora Marinucci, April 15; Gino & Lina Marinucci, April 24; and Roberto & Bess DiTullio, April 25.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Category	# of Persons
Associate (Couple)	2 x 2 = 4
Associate (Individual)	30
General (Couple)	56 x 2 = 112
General (Individual)	84
Honorary	5
Scholarship	4
Student	1

Total Membership: 240

Give the Gift of MEMBERSHIP!

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

Report of the Treasurer for 2019

By Peter Bell, Treasurer

In 2019 the Society recorded revenue from our various operating activities of \$15,560, including member dues, lunches, raffles and merchandise sales. The expenses associated with those activities totaled \$13,790, resulting in net income of \$1770. The budget for 2019 was higher for both expected revenue and expenses.

In January 2019, AMHS agreed to be a Founder of the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center, making a pledge of \$5000, payable equally over three years. 2020 is year two of our obligation. We are grateful to the AMHS member who donated \$1000 at the January 2019 meeting, when the pledge was approved.

The 2019 Scholarship Appeal resulted in total donations of \$7760. Of that total, \$5890 was designated for the Annual Scholarship Fund and the balance of \$1870 was designated for the Scholarship Endowment Fund. At the close of 2019, the Endowment Fund balance was \$43,750.

The closing balance for the Society's checking account was \$10,674. The closing balance for the Society savings account was \$63,560. Both accounts contain both restricted funds, such as the Endowment Fund, and unrestricted funds.

We have discontinued our institutional affiliation with NIAF as a result of their decision to stop providing matching scholarship funds. As a result for 2020, we will fund our scholarship program entirely on our own for \$8000, while not contributing the NIAF membership fee of \$2500. We look forward to using our resources to participate with other Italian heritage groups and Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center in activities that celebrate and support our history and culture.

Should any member have a question related to the information above, please email me at peter@ezhudhelp.com or see me at a membership meeting. ■



BARREA

PROVINCE OF L'AQUILA, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Nancy DeSanti

The picturesque town of Barrea overlooks beautiful Lago di Barrea from a hilltop in the upper Valle del Sangro. The town has approximately 731 inhabitants, known as Barreani.

Barrea features old churches, the walls of an ancient castle and the remains of a pre-Roman necropolis. It is a favorite of tourists who like mountain and lake resorts and love the atmosphere of a natural park. Perched on a rocky spur, the town of Barrea is set amid the natural beauty of the National Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise, surrounded by mountains, beech forests and pristine creeks.

It is in fact an ideal starting point for walks and hikes into the park as numerous trails depart from Barrea, leading to the area's main attractions, such as Lake Vivo, Lake Pantaniello, Lake Barrea, and the Resuni mountain hut.

Barrea was founded around the year 1000 by a group of monks to give the inhabitants of the valley a safer place to live. Traces of its past are still preserved in its historic center, which has the structure of a fortified village, and is filled with stone houses, cobblestone streets and ancient churches, such as the parish church of San Tommaso Apostolo with 18th century paintings and the 14th century Church of Madonna delle Grazie.

Through the centuries, Barrea has undergone periods of growth and periods of great poverty. The 17th century was plagued by earthquakes and famine, while the 19th century saw banditry and migration. Today Barrea thrives on tourism thanks to its position in the park.

Just outside the town is the so-called Studio, a unique convent-fortress erected by Benedictine monks; an 11th century castle, with towers connected by fortified walls, now home to cultural events; and an ancient necropolis dating from the 6th-7th century B.C.

But maybe one of the most fascinating sights in Barrea lies just a few kilometers from the town itself: on the shores of the nearby lake, where



A panoramic view of the hilltop town of Barrea.

one can find a small settlement of deer which can be easily spotted grazing on the grass by the lake, led by the "boss deer" that the local residents call Oreste.

Even today the monastery still exists and has withstood the ravages of man and the assault of time and the elements. In the following centuries, the inhabitants of Barrea built a tangle of practically impregnable houses along the southwestern side of the valley. Everything is protected by nature on one side and by observation towers (one round and one square) and defensive walls on the other. Historic records of this town mirror other examples found in Italy: bloody wars, rivalries and even devastating earthquakes.

One side of the original, central castle was protected from invaders by natural means, utilizing the impassably steep slope of the mountain; two stone castle gates afforded other protection to the castle and the homes that were built within its walls, dug into the sides of the mountain.

Historically, residents existed by tending small farms in plots on the mountainside. The town has many monuments to its sufferings in World War II, when it was subjected to Allied bombings.

A major emigration took place after an earthquake in 1984, when many residents declined to return to the homes that had been ruined. Many of the homes have been bought by tourists, who

enjoy Barrea's location on the edge of a mountainside, looking out over the Sangro valley. ■

What to See

- Lake Barrea
- Church of St. Maria della Baia
- Church of St. Tommaso
- Natural Reserve Lago di Pantaniello

Important Dates

- **June 26** — Feast of St. Tommaso Apostolo
- **August** — Feast of St. Maria delle Grazie (when emigrants come back for the occasion)
- **Christmas Night** — Traditional bonfire

Sources:

en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrea

www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/laquila/barrea.htm

www.italymagazine.com/news/borgo-month-wilderness-abruzzos-barrea

BARREA

PROVINCIA DI L'AQUILA,
REGIONE ABRUZZO

Translated by Ennio DiTullio

La pittoresca cittadina di Barrea domina il bellissimo Lago di Barrea da una collina nella parte alta della Valle del Sangro. La città conta circa 731 abitanti, noti come Barreani.

Barrea presenta antiche chiese, le mura di un antico castello e i resti di una necropoli preromana. È un favorito dei turisti che amano le località montane e lacustri e amano l'atmosfera di un parco naturale. Arroccata su uno sperone roccioso, la città di Barrea è immersa nella bellezza naturale del Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise, circondata da montagne, boschi di faggi e insenature incontaminate.

È infatti un punto di partenza ideale per passeggiate ed escursioni nel parco in quanto numerosi sentieri partono da Barrea, conducendo alle principali attrazioni della zona, come il Lago di Vivo, il Lago di Pantaniello, il Lago di Barrea e il rifugio Resuni.

Barrea fu fondata intorno all'anno 1000 da un gruppo di monaci per dare agli abitanti della valle un posto più sicuro dove vivere. Tracce del suo passato sono ancora conservate nel suo centro storico, che ha la struttura di un villaggio fortificato, ed è pieno di case in pietra, strade acciottolate e antiche chiese, come la chiesa parrocchiale di San Tommaso Apostolo con dipinti del 18° secolo e la Chiesa della Madonna delle Grazie del 14° secolo.

Nel corso dei secoli, Barrea ha attraversato periodi di crescita e periodi di grande povertà. Il 17° secolo fu afflitto da terremoti e carestie, mentre il 19° secolo vide il brigantaggio e la migrazione. Oggi Barrea prospera nel turismo grazie alla sua posizione nel parco.

Appena fuori dalla città si trova il cosiddetto Studio, una fortezza-convento unica eretta da monaci benedettini; un castello dell'XI secolo, con torri collegate da mura fortificate, ora sede di eventi culturali; e un'antica necropoli risalente al VI-VII secolo a.C.



Barrea - Il lago di barrea

Ma forse uno dei luoghi più affascinanti di Barrea si trova a pochi chilometri dalla città stessa: sulle rive del vicino lago, dove si trova un piccolo insediamento di cervi che può essere facilmente individuato al pascolo sull'erba vicino al lago, guidato dal "capo cervo" che i residenti locali chiamano Oreste.

Ancora oggi il monastero esiste e ha resistito alle devastazioni dell'uomo e all'assalto del tempo e degli elementi. Nei secoli seguenti, gli abitanti di Barrea costruirono un groviglio di case praticamente inespugnabili lungo il lato sud-occidentale della valle. Tutto è protetto dalla natura da un lato e da torri di osservazione (una rotonda e una quadrata) e pareti difensive dall'altra. I documenti storici di questa città rispecchiano altri esempi trovati in Italia: guerre sanguinarie, rivalità e persino terremoti devastanti.

Un lato del castello centrale originale era protetto dagli invasori con mezzi naturali, utilizzando il pendio invalicabilmente ripido della montagna; due porte del castello di pietra offrivano un'altra protezione al castello e alle case costruite tra le sue mura, scavate ai lati della montagna.

Storicamente, i residenti vivevano curando piccole fattorie in appezzamenti sul fianco della montagna. La città ha molti monumenti danneggiati durante la seconda guerra mondiale,

quando fu sottoposta a bombardamenti alleati.

Una grande emigrazione avvenne dopo il terremoto del 1984, quando molti residenti rifiutarono di tornare nelle case che erano state rovinare. Molte case sono state acquistate dai turisti, che amano la posizione di Barrea ai margini di una montagna, che si affaccia sulla valle del Sangro. ■

Cosa visitare:

- Lago Barrea
- Chiesa di Santa Maria della Baia
- Chiesa di San Tommaso
- Riserva Naturale Lago di Pantaniello

Appuntamenti importante:

- **26 giugno** — Festa di San Tommaso Apostolo
- **Agosto** — Festa di Santa Maria delle Grazie (quando gli emigranti tornano per l'occasione)
- **Notte di Natale** — Falò tradizionale



TAVENNA

PROVINCE OF CAMPOBASSO,
REGION OF MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

The picturesque small town of Tavenna is located about 40 kilometers north of Campobasso. It has approximately 675 inhabitants known as Tavennesi.

Tavenna offers a remarkable diversity of landscapes, with oaks, olive trees from which an excellent olive oil is produced, almonds, walnuts, figs and thick bushes of brooms.

There are many traditions still maintained among the residents, such as the making of bitter liquors and other healthy beverages according to local recipes, and the tombolo lacework.

The name Tavenna is first mentioned in the 12th century by the Normans in the plural form Tavennas. The town may have originated from the settlement of Slavic populations called in by the Aragonese overlords to occupy the territory.

In Slavic language, the town name was Tavela, but in the documents from 17th century, Tavenna is called casale Taberna or House of Tabenne.

What to See

- Church of Santa Maria di Costantinopoli, from 1770

Important Dates

- **April 23** — Feast of St. George, the patron saint
- **November 3** — Festa dell'Unità Nazionale e delle Forze Armate

Sources:

en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tavenna
www.enchantingitaly.com/regions/molise/province-campobasso/tavenna.htm
www.comune.tavenna.cb.it
tavenna.e-monsite.com/en/pages/the-village-tavenna.html#history

ne. In the Slavic origins of the people, references are made to the parish Church of Santa Maria of Costantinopoli (1770-1773).

In the middle of the 18th century, Tavenna depended on the close-by village of Palata and was integrated into the countryside of Molise, attached to the kingdom of Naples.

Researchers of the 18th and 19th century period state that the Slavic language was still in use at that time by the elders and during the time of the first census of the Italian kingdom in 1861.



Tavenna street scene

During the eras that followed, the area saw some emigration to Argentina, Brazil and the United States. ■

Italiano

TAVENNA

PROVINCIA DI CAMPOBASSO, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Ennio DiTullio

La pittoresca cittadina di Tavenna si trova a circa 40 chilometri a nord di Campobasso. Ha circa 675 abitanti conosciuti come Tavennesi.

Tavenna offre una notevole diversità di paesaggi, con querce, ulivi da cui viene prodotto un eccellente olio d'oliva, mandorle, noci, fichi e folti cespugli di ginestre.

Ci sono molte tradizioni ancora mantenute tra i residenti, come la produzione di liquori amari e altre bevande salutari secondo le ricette locali e il merletto tombolo.

Il nome Tavenna viene menzionato per la prima volta nel XII secolo dai Normanni nella forma plurale Tavennas. La città potrebbe aver avuto origine dall'insediamento di popolazioni slave chiamate dagli Aragonesi per occupare il territorio.

In lingua slava, il nome della città era Tavela, ma nei documenti del 17° secolo, Tavenna è chiamata Casale Taberna o Casa di Tabenne. Nelle origini slave del popolo, si fa riferimento alla chiesa parrocchiale di Santa Maria di

Costantinopoli (1770-1773).

A metà del XVIII secolo, Tavenna dipendeva dal vicino villaggio di Palata e fu integrata nella campagna molisana, collegata al regno di Napoli.

I ricercatori del periodo 18° e 19° secolo affermano che la lingua slava era ancora in uso in quel periodo dagli anziani e durante il primo censimento del regno italiano nel 1861.

Durante le epoche successive, l'area vide un po' di emigrazione in Argentina, Brasile e Stati Uniti. ■

Da visitare:

- Chiesa di Santa Maria di Costantinopoli, del 1770

Appuntamenti importanti:

- **23 aprile** — Festa di San Giorgio, il santo patrono
- **3 novembre** — Festa dell'Unità Nazionale e delle Forze Armate



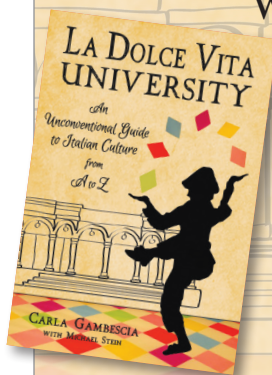
Gambescia to Speak on A to Z of Italian Culture

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President - Programs

Our second program of the year features author Carla Gambescia, the author of “*La Dolce Vita University: An Unconventional Guide to Italian Culture from A to Z*.” The book is a light-hearted series of mini-essays on everything from Arlecchino to Zanni — Arlecchino being the engaging trickster Harlequin (the “true star” of the *Commedia dell’Arte*) and Zanni being the practitioners of a madcap form of comedy just this side of crazy (think Roberto Benigni). Carla is a walking encyclopedia of Italian culture and history, and she said her talk will provide a good opportunity to discover new insights. Carla said she is planning to have a trivia quiz to test our knowledge — like how did the Colosseum get its name? But not to worry, she said if we get 5 right out of 12, we are doing well.

Carla, who lives in upstate New York, opened and ran an Italian restaurant for 12 years and which was known not just for delicious food but also for transforming the interior for fun Italian-themed events. She also had a successful career in marketing and advertising.

Carla’s family roots are in Sulmona in Abruzzo. She traces her love for all things Italian to her mother’s interest in the Renaissance Masters. Her passion grew when, 25 years ago, she went on a bicycle trip in Sicily, when she said “Something magical happened ... I fell deeply in love with the land of my ancestors.” That experience led her to take dozens of trips all over Italy. Being very adventurous, she has hiked or biked in every region of Italy and recently led a bicycle tour in Sicily, from Palermo to Agrigento. ■



LUNCHEON MEETING

“TRIVIA CHALLENGE ITALIAN-STYLE”

With Author Carla Gambescia

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, | 1:00 PM

at Casa Italiana | 595 Third Street, NW, Washington, DC

MENU

Lunch catered by Fontina Grille. Menu includes salad, penne with broccoli and sun-dried tomatoes, rice, chicken cacciatore, focaccia bread, and dessert. Beverages are included.

COST

\$20.00 members | \$25.00 non-members.

PAYING ONLINE IS ENCOURAGED AT
www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org

Visa or Mastercard accepted

(See “Upcoming Events” on the home page)

***Paid reservations must be received by
March 18.***

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

✂ **Return with Payment**

PAID RESERVATIONS for

AMHS General Society Meeting on Sunday, March 22, 2020

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

“TRIVIA CHALLENGE ITALIAN-STYLE”

With Author
Carla Gambescia

Sunday, March 22

Please join us for what is sure to be an entertaining and informative event with Carla Gambescia, author of “La Dolce Vita University: An Unconventional Guide to Italian Culture from A to Z.” Carla is a successful restaurateur, marketing expert and a walking encyclopedia of Italian history and culture who has hiked or biked in every region of Italy.

See details on page 11

RESERVATION DEADLINE: March 18

2020 CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

General Society Meeting

1:00pm | Casa Italiana
Washington, DC

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

AMHS 20th Anniversary Meeting

1:00pm | Casa Italiana,
Washington, DC

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16

Ferragosto Picnic

1:00pm | Fort Ward Park
Alexandria, VA

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

General Society Meeting

1:00pm | Location TBA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Annual Wine Tasting

1:00pm | Casa Italiana,
Washington, DC



www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org



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