



AMHS

NOTIZIARIO

CELEBRATING ITALIAN CULTURE & COMMUNITY SINCE 2000

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

March/April 2021



AMHS Bids Farewell to FATHER EZIO MARCETTO *With Our Thanks*

By Nancy DeSanti

Father Ezio Marchetto left Holy Rosary Church in February for his new assignment in New York City, taking with him the thanks and affection of the AMHS for his support throughout his seven and a half years here.

The Society presented Father Ezio with a letter of thanks and appreciation from President Ray LaVerghetta and gave him a warm Pittsburgh Steelers sweatshirt. We learned that this is his favorite team because as he was first learning about the game, the Steelers won four Super Bowls. And not only that, he found out that one of their star players, Franco Harris, had a Sicilian mother.

As Ray said so well in his letter to Father Ezio, "Though not a parish organization of [Holy Rosary Church], we in the AMHS have nevertheless felt welcomed, even at home, in what is now the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center — our home away from home. We enjoyed this sense of belonging not just because you checked a box or signed off on an authorization form that allowed us to use the facility. You no doubt did this. However, you did a great deal more."

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AMHS NOTIZIARIO

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members and friends:

As we slough out of winter and step into spring, it is natural to feel a little excitement. Even those who love the cold weather appreciate a return to greener grass, leaves on the trees, blooms on the flowers, and days that stretch longer. Many of us may also be excited about something else: the prospect of a vaccination to counter the Coronavirus that has ravaged much of the world, and which may well mark the beginning of a return to normalcy.

It has been over a year since our Society has been able to hold an in-person event. During that time, our program committee and executive committee have done a great job of trying to maintain some semblance of community by organizing "get-togethers" in a safe and socially distant way, that is, virtually. The virtual format falls short of the real thing, but it has actually made possible the active participation of speakers and guests who otherwise would not have been able to join us due to physical distance, including some speakers and participants in Italy.

I know that many of you took part in our fifth film discussion of 2020. On December 19th of last year, AMHS members and friends joined actor Ray Abruzzo, Director Robert Tinnell and producer Jim Toscano for an enlightening discussion of the 2019 film "Feast of the Seven Fishes." The film, set in a small Pennsylvania town with a large population of Italian-Americans, takes a look at an Italian-American family as it prepares its dinner for Christmas Eve. The film reminded us of what Italian-American Christmas celebrations looked like before the pandemic and the discussion shed some light on several themes that would be familiar to many of our families.

Our program of events for 2021 began with another film discussion. Many of you, as well as quite a few AMHS friends, discussed "From the Vine" on January 30. The film recounts the story of a stressed-out business executive (played by Joe Pantoliano) who abandons his corporate, valueless world in order to re-locate to Italy, where he re-establishes his grandfather's vineyard. Film producer and director Jim Toscano led our discussion, which featured the participation of the film's principal actor and protagonist — Emmy Award winning Joe Pantoliano. Mr. Pantoliano talked about various aspects of the film, including the development of the script, the casting, and the shooting, as well as his personal experience in playing the lead role. He also shared interesting details about his life growing up and his professional work in film. Ray Abruzzo made a special guest appearance and added his perspective on the career and life of a successful Italian-American actor and on the impact of the pandemic on the film industry.

By the time you read this message, our organization will have held its first general meeting of 2021: a virtual presentation on February 21 by Abruzzese author Michele Antonelli. The topic was to be some samples of wisdom from his latest book — "My Land Was Wise: Over 2000 Proverbs from the Abruzzese-Sabine Apennines". We hope you had a chance to take part.

Those of you who are members of Holy Rosary Church in Washington, D.C., know that the pastor, Father Ezio Marchetto, has taken a new assignment. He was appointed Provincial Bursar for his religious order. Such a position is clearly a recognition of his many accomplishments as well as of his personal and spiritual attributes. His departure for New York leaves us with mixed emotions because he was a very good friend of our organization and made us feel at home at the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center. We wish him good health, much success, and personal and professional satisfaction in his new position. At the same time, we welcome his successors — Father Peter Paul Polo and Father Andrei Zanon — and look forward to sharing community events with them.

Please stay tuned for upcoming programs which, at least for the near to medium-term, will have to be in the virtual format. While there will not be hugs or food to go with the programs, their core will remain the same — good speakers, interesting presentations, and much to be learned about our shared culture. We will keep you posted about the calendar of events going forward.

Please stay safe and enjoy the spring.

Regards,
Ray LaVergnetta

Local Artist Amy Guadagnoli Honored as an NOIAW “Wise Woman” of 2021

By Nancy DeSanti

The National Organization of Italian American Women recently honored a local artist with Abruzzese roots, Amy Guadagnoli, as one of its “Wise Women” for 2021.

NOIAW’s annual event was held virtually on January 23, 2021 and for the first time combined to honor four “Wise Women” from New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Washington, D.C. The event was organized with the help of NOIAW Washington, D.C. Chair Diana Femia and was emceed by Gemma Puglisi, sister of AMHS member Angela Puglisi. Welcoming remarks were also given by Domenico Bellantone, First Counselor of the Embassy of Italy.

Amy Guadagnoli is an artist, designer and teacher whose works appear in various museums, including our Italian American Museum of Washington, D.C. (IAMDC). Her family traces its roots to Cansano in Abruzzo (see related article on page 7).



More of Amy's art at the Italian American Museum of Washington, D.C.



Amy Guadagnoli with some of her art.

Credit: Natalie Wulderk

She specializes in woodblock printing and says she is greatly interested in the power of the arts to engage minds and improve lives. Now residing in Maryland, Amy was born in Denver, Colorado which influenced her to draw from the organic earth forms she found, as a child, in the mountains. She joked that there were not many Italian Americans in her area growing up, so her schoolmates had trouble pronouncing her last name which they mangled as “Guacamole.” While studying art at the University of Denver, she became interested in relief printmaking and she learned how to hand carve and print multi-layered images without machinery.

After moving to Austin, Texas, she taught a monumental-scale printmaking class for at-risk teens, where students collaboratively carved and printed large woodblocks. Amy’s passion in working with young people, along with her interest in using design to promote education, led her to a job with an educational consultancy where she led statewide projects in Texas and the Southwest.

Her design work has won numerous national awards and she has exhibited her work in Colorado, Texas, Arizona, California, Maine, Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Lima, Peru. Her work has been reviewed in the National Italian American Foundation’s (NIAF) publication and she has spoken on such topics as “Gutenberg Revisited: How Art Teaches the Next Form of Literacy.”

The Other Honorees Were:

Angela Mingari Mills, M.D. (New York), whose parents immigrated from Sicily and who is Professor and Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Columbia University’s Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons as well as Chief of Emergency Services for NewYork-Presbyterian.

Marisa Giarnella-Porco (Connecticut), who is a long-time social worker dealing with women’s and children’s issues and who is also the Co-Founder and President of the Jordan Porco Foundation dealing with youth suicide and mental health issues.

Bruna Petrarca Boyle (Rhode Island) who was born in Fornelli, Italy, in the region of Molise where she completed her elementary school education and who is an adjunct lecturer in the Language Department at the University of Rhode Island

In previous years, NOIAW’s Washington, D.C. event was held at Maggiano’s restaurant in Friendship Heights, on a date close to the Feast of the Epiphany. Past NOIAW honorees have included AMHS Past President Maria D’Andrea-Yothers, AMHS 2nd Vice President Lynn Sorbara and AMHS member Angela Puglisi. ■

The Politically Talented D'Alesandro Family

Part I - Thomas D'Alesandro Jr.

By Joseph "Sonny" Scafetta, Jr.

Thomas D'Alesandro Jr. was born in Baltimore, Maryland on August 1, 1903. His father was Tommaso Giovanni D'Alesandro and his mother was Maria Foppiani Petronilla, a young widow whom his father had married in their home community of Montenerodomo (population 673 in the 2017 Census) in the province of Chieti, in the region of Abruzzo, Italy. After they married, the young couple immigrated to Baltimore where both had relatives living.

Thomas graduated from a local Catholic high school and then from the Calvert Business College in Baltimore. After graduating with a two-year business degree at age 20 in 1923, he went to work as an insurance and real estate broker.

After three years, he ran for public office as a Democrat and was elected to the Maryland State House of Delegates. He started to serve in Annapolis in January 1926. In 1928, the 25-year old Thomas married Annunciata Lombardi, six years his junior, who had emigrated from the city of Campobasso (population



Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr. as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Credit: Wikipedia

49,230 in the 2017 Census) in the province of Campobasso in the region of Molise, Italy. They had six children, five sons and one daughter.

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 21st anniversary, let's all help ensure a bright future for our mission to celebrate "all things Italian." ■

Give the Gift of MEMBERSHIP!

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

His oldest son, Thomas John D'Alesandro III, also became a Mayor of Baltimore while his only daughter, Nancy Patricia D'Alesandro Pelosi, became the first woman Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Thomas served in the Maryland House until 1933 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him to be the General Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue in Washington, D.C. After a year of service, he quit to run for the Baltimore City Council and was elected in November, 1934. He was sworn into office in January 1935 and served one three-year term.

In November 1938, he was elected as the Congressman for the Third District of Maryland in the 76th U.S. Congress. He was sworn into office on January 3, 1939. On December 8, 1941, he voted with the majority of the House of Representatives to declare war on Japan. However, he challenged Roosevelt's lack of interest in aiding Jewish refugees during World War II. After the war ended, he lobbied President Harry S. Truman to oppose British control of Palestine.

Thomas served in the House of Representatives until May 16, 1947, when he resigned after winning an election to become the Mayor of Baltimore. He served three four-year terms for a total of 12 years until May 16, 1959.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy appointed him to the Federal Renegotiation Board in Washington, D.C. He served in this position for almost eight years until January 20, 1969. After leaving this post at the age of 65, he retired from active politics and returned to his family home in Baltimore where he lived the last 18 years of his life. He died in his home in Baltimore on August 23, 1987, about three weeks after his 84th birthday. His wife survived him and lived another eight years. ■

Sources, all accessed August 1, 2020:

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Thomas_D%27Alesandro_Jr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_D%27Alesandro_Jr).

[www.geni.com/people/Tommaso-G-D-Ale-
sandro/6000000](https://www.geni.com/people/Tommaso-G-D-Alesandro/6000000) (link expired)

it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montenerodomo

AMHS Bids Farewell to Father Ezio Marchetto *With Our Thanks*

▼ **Continued from page 1**

Many of us have fond memories of Father Ezio attending many of our events. Not only did he allow us to use the Casa Italiana facilities, he also took part in many of our activities. He engaged our guests and our speakers, said grace before meals, participated in our raffles, and even lent a hand in setting up the media systems. And Father Ezio let us know that he appreciated what the Society was doing to promote cultural and educational programs in a social setting that bonded our community together.

Our former AMHS presidents had the following tributes for Father Ezio:

Omero Sabatini said: "Starting in February he will be replaced by two priests. It can only mean that for the past several years, Father Ezio has been doing by himself the work of two clergymen. We can be sure that he will carry this energy and enthusiasm into his new assignment."

Omero added: "So as we prepare to say goodbye to Father Ezio, let us not just be saddened by his leaving. Instead, let us also cherish our pleasant memories of him that we will always carry with us, and let us congratulate him on his new assignment, with the accompanying increased responsibilities, within his Scalabrinian family. His ministry has been inspiring and uplifting. His initiatives for the development of the programs and the facilities of the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center have been extraordinary."

Ennio DiTullio said: "From the outset of his arrival in Washington, Father Ezio Marchetto made an impression on the Italo-American community by plunging right into its activities, not only in his role as spiritual pastor of Holy Rosary Church but also as an active participant in all aspects of its life. He took on a big job and worked hard to do it well, whether as administrator of the Casa Italiana Language School, as the supervisor of the Capital Development Project for the church and its buildings, as the editor-in-chief of *Voce Italiana*, or to realize his dream of the creation of the Italian American Museum of Washington, D.C."

"Father Ezio was especially supportive of the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society by cooperating with our vision and participating in our events. As well, he afforded the same support to other organizations associated with our shared Italian heritage."



Father Ezio and then-AMHS President Maria D'Andrea-Yothers with the U.S. Marine Band at the AMHS program "The Italian Legacy in the Development of the Marine Band," in September 2014.

Ennio continued: "I was honored to work with Father Ezio in organizing several New Year's Eve celebrations at Casa Italiana, events that gave joy to the participants and strengthened their ties to the community."

"On a personal note, I found Father Ezio to be a wonderful priest who celebrated the Holy Mass with sweetness and with the preaching of great homilies. My family and I will always remember him for the beautiful Mass celebrating the life of my dear wife, Emma."

"I offer Father Ezio the thanks of AMHS, a fond farewell, and wishes for continued success in his new and important assignment. He has truly left a lasting legacy to the Italian Americans of Washington, and for that, I am grateful to him."

Lucio D'Andrea, founder of AMHS and President Emeritus, said: "I join in the tributes of Omero and Ennio and recognize and appreciate the support of Father Ezio toward the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society. Casa Italiana became the "home" of the Society since its founding in June 2000 and was the site where most of its monthly meetings were held. If his pastoral duties did not interfere, Father Ezio enjoyed attending those meetings."

Maria D'Andrea-Yothers said: "AMHS greatly appreciates the tremendous support afforded by

Father Ezio to its general membership meetings and special events. Father, a lover of music, art, and scholarly works, thoroughly enjoyed the many speakers we had at our lunch meetings. I particularly appreciate his support when we brought The President's Own Marine Band to Casa, for a performance on September 21, 2014. He did much to revitalize the Italian-American community in the Washington, D.C. area, and he has left a lasting legacy with the new Rectory, Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center, and the new Robert Facchina Italian-American Museum of Washington, D.C. I extend my heartfelt wishes for Father's continued success in his new assignment."

Father Ezio's new assignment in New York, where he lived previously, will be as Provincial Bursar of his Scalabrinian Order. He will be residing at the Provincial House in the Greenwich Village section of Manhattan, next door to Our Lady of Pompeii Church. He said his new assignment involves a lot of travel — from Canada to Ecuador. But he said his home base in New York is "not that far" from D.C. so he expects he will be able to come here for a visit now and then or for special events.

Although we will miss Father Ezio very much, we wish him all the best in his new assignment and we thank him from the bottom of our hearts. Grazie di cuore! ■

IASA Offers Wealth of Italian-American Information

(Editor's Note — One of our new Board of Directors members, Mark Lino, suggested that members of the AMHS be informed of the work of the IASA. The information below is taken from the association's website.)

Since 1880 more than five million women, men, and children have left their birthplace in Italy to make new lives for themselves in North America. As the generations pass, preservation of Italian-American culture is important. Too little is known about this folk migration and its impact on American society. The study of Italian experience is significant for Americans of Italian descent in understanding their own identity. It is also important for all Americans as an integral part of the history of the United States and Canada.

So, in December 1966, a group of historians, educators, sociologists, and other interested persons met at the LaGuardia Memorial House in New York City and founded the Italian American Studies Association (IASA). The Association is devoted to the interdisciplinary study of the culture, history, literature, sociology, demography, folklore, and politics of Italians in America. Since its founding, IASA has published over thirty volumes of the proceedings of its annual conference meetings. Among its members are the most noted professional authorities as well as enthusiastic lay persons. IASA uses scientific and scholarly methods as it seeks to explore and disseminate authentic information and interpretation of the wide-ranging experiences of Italians in America.

As an independent, non-profit organization open to all, IASA:

- publishes a news blog on its website;
- includes active regional chapters — Long Island Chapter and Western Regional Chapter; presents annual scholarships and conference subsidies to graduate students whose work focuses on the Italian American experience;
- sponsors joint conferences and programs with such groups as Immigration History Research Center, the Center for Migration Studies, the Balch Institute (Philadelphia), the American Jewish Historical Society, the American Historical Association, the Canadian Italian Historical Association, the National Italian American Foundation, the Order of the Sons of Italy, the National Organization of Italian American Women, UNICO, the John D. Calandra Italian-

American Institute, the Hofstra University Cultural Center, and other university and community cultural centers worldwide;

- maintains a directory of memberships, including members' interests and contact information;

- publishes peer-reviewed volumes of selected essays from the proceedings of annual conferences;

- maintains a IASA Memorial Fund.

For more information on IASA, please see:
www.italianamericanstudies.net/cpages/home

AMHS Membership

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President, Membership

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our New Members: Ray Abruzzo, Sandra Burnis-Holly, Phillip Contrino, Anthony & Judith D'Ambrosi, Dr. Gary & Jennifer Della Zanna, John Iazzetti, Jenny Irwin, Robert O'Malley, Robert Tinnell and Cora Williams.

BIRTHDAYS

Compleanni a Marzo

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

ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversari a Marzo

Robert & Marlene Lucian, March 3; Albert & Karen Grasso, March 4; Maria Antoinette & Donald Kellaher, March 22; and Raymond & Barbara Bernero, March 26.

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)	5 x 2 = 10
Associate (Individual)	37
General (Couple)	50 x 2 = 100
General (Individual)	85
Honorary	10
Scholarship	2
Student	6
Total Membership:	250



CANSANO

PROVINCE OF L'AQUILA, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Elizabeth DiGregorio

The curvy Peligna valley mountain road between Sulmona and Campo di Giove opens to the commune or municipality of Cansano, a mountain resort hidden in a rugged landscape, over which the Majella looms majestically.

Built as a fiefdom and watchtower in the Early Middle Ages, the picturesque village of 250-plus inhabitants was once home to more than 2,000. Today, Cansanesi are scattered throughout America as well as other countries.

Cansano maintains its medieval heritage while offering a gateway to many natural landmarks and small towns near Sulmona. Its mountain climate, with hot and dry summers and snowy winters, attracts tourists seeking outdoor adventures — hiking, skiing and exploring the national parks.

Abruzzo is earthquake country and Cansano is not immune to the devastating effects. The town and countryside have been shaped by earthquake activity since the 2nd century, most recently, the 2009 L'Aquila Earthquake tremors and aftershocks.

Like many small rural communities in Abruzzo, Cansano has multiple landmark Catholic churches. The 12th century **Church of San Salvatore**, or the Chiesa Madre, on Via del Castello, was destroyed by an earthquake in 1706, then rebuilt and filled with precious religious art and artifacts that disappeared after World War II.

St. Nicholas of Bari on Via Stazione dates back to the 13th century and was renovated in the early 1900s with donations from Cansanesi, living and working as miners in America and devoted to the saint. A stucco relief depicting St. Nicholas protecting the miners is featured in the church which was damaged in the 2009 L'Aquila earthquake and recently reopened.

Chiesa di San Donato near the village cemetery was built in the 18th century. It is open only on the saint's feast day in mid-August. The new **San Rocco Church** built in the 1950s is located in Piazza XX Settembre.



A winter scene in Cansano.

From San Rocco, at the heart of Piazza XX Settembre, is Giovanni Granata's **Monumento ai Caduti** (Monument to the Fallen). The monument was dedicated in 1925 to the "Fallen for the Fatherland" and the funds (56,000 lire) were raised by Cansanesi who had immigrated to America. Granata added "bees" to the plinth as a symbol of the hard work it took to raise the funds. In the background is the Palazzo Comunale di Cansano (municipal building) built in the early 1900s.

The picturesque community has remnants of churches, castles that served as Middle Ages lookout towers and defense walls, like the Colle Mitra which was a perfect lookout point to protect the busy trade routes linking Sulmona to the area.

Parco Nazionale La Majella (Maiella) National Park

Cansano's proximity to Abruzzo's three national parks and one regional park is a big attraction to the area. Cansano is home to the Information Center of the Majella National Park. Qualified and licensed hiking guides organize trips and provide

guided tours in all seasons. The Park is a protected area and home to a diverse habitat and a treasure trove of rare and valuable Italian biodiversity.

A popular trail is the 3-day, 60-kilometer Path of Freedom trek on paths that cross the Majella. The "path of freedom" was the escape route of thousands of Allied prisoners and young Italians fighting for the liberation of Italy, divided by the Gustav Line after the armistice of September 8, 1943, when Abruzzo became a border land and corner of hope for fugitives who sided with the Allied Army.

Also in full view from Cansano is the majestic Gran Sasso, the highest mountain in the Apennines. In addition to La Majella, the Gran Sasso and Abruzzo national parks and the Sirente-Velino regional park make Cansano a magnet for those who love to explore the great outdoors.

Ocriticum Archaeological Park

Cansano's jewel in the crown is the archaeological site of Ocriticum, located a few kilometers from Cansano, at the foot of the Colle Mitra hill which about 2,000 years ago was home to one of the villages within the administrative territory of Sulmona.

On this site there was a settlement, a necropolis and a sanctuary, which had their greatest period of growth between the end of the 4th century BC and mid-way through the 2nd century AD. It was probably an earthquake in the 2nd century AD which damaged many of the buildings, thus starting a process of gradual abandonment of the entire area right up until the 6th century.



Temple ruins in the Ocriticum Archaeological Park.

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In 1992 the Ocriticum Archaeological Park was created to protect and manage the official excavation, thus stemming the unauthorized ones that depleted the archaeological evidence. Inside were found three sacred buildings on two levels: on the upper level are two major temples, one of the Italic era (4th century BC) dedicated to Hercules and one from the Roman period (1st century AD) dedicated to Jupiter. Both are sited within an enclosed area (temenos). On the lower level is the smaller temple which is dedicated to the goddesses Ceres and Venus (from the 2nd century BC) within a small rectangular enclosure.

Ocriticum Documentation Center

Opened on January 10, 2004 within the 17th century church of San Rocco (now deconsecrated), the Documentation Center houses many of the findings from the excavation site. It also has a multipurpose conference center and a museum/exhibition on immigration.

The Ocriticum exhibitions include votive offerings, terracotta figurines, like the Goddess of Cansano, bronze statues of Hercules, coins, and numerous vases and utilitarian items.

The Immigration Museum (Museo dell'Emigrante) is housed in the lower level of the Documentation Center and consists of a permanent exhibition entitled "L'Emigrante." It is a tribute to all those who left their village in search of fortune. The collection is a rich and evocative series of documents, photographs, model ships and objects relating to the voyage of the "great migration."

Moving Forward

Cansano continues to thrive and reinvent itself. In January 2021, a group of citizens formed "ApesCoop", the Community Cooperative of

Cansano, to promote community-wide economic development. The name was inspired by the bee (ape) that the sculptor Granata placed on the plinth friezes of the Monument to the Fallen.

The Majella (Maiella) National Park of Abruzzo that serves as the heart and soul of Cansano has been nominated for inclusion into UNESCO's 2021 World Heritage Status global network of Geoparks.

Cansanesi are found throughout America and other countries. There are numerous websites and Facebook pages that keep the ties to the small, picturesque village alive. A great site to join on Facebook is www.facebook.com/cansanoaq. Look for this logo. ■

Important Dates

- **June 24-26** — Feasts of St. John the Baptist, St. Nicholas and St. Anthony
- **August 9-10** — Festival of the lamb and cheese
- **August 13 -17** — Feasts of San Rocco, San Donato, and Our Lady of the Snow
- **December 6** — Feast of San Nicola di Bari, (blessing and giving of bread)
- **December 8** — The fire of "Sant'Marì Cuncett" (a bonfire in the piazza to honor the Immaculate Conception)
- **December 31** — Caroling to honor Saint Silvester (Sante Salevjestre) with pizze fritte and a song to usher out the old year and welcome the new.

Sources:

[La Pittoresca Terra Di Cansano, by Nicolina D'Orazio Di Tunno, Gianni Ruscito Editore](#)

www.facebook.com/cansanoaq

[Cansano, province of L'Aquila, Abruzzo, Italy \(italyheritage.com\)](#)

[Cansano: cose vederee cose fare | ViaggiArt](#)

[Parco Nazionale della Majella: cose vedere e cose fare | ViaggiArt](#)

[Guida turistica a Cansano con tutte le informazioni \(inabruzzo.it\)](#)

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Italiano

CANSANO

PROVINCIA DI L'AQUILA, REGIONE ABRUZZO

Translated by Ennio DiTullio

L a sinuosa strada di montagna della Val Peligna tra Sulmona e Campo di Giove si apre al comune o comunità di Cansano, località montana nascosta in un paesaggio aspro, su cui si profila maestosa la Majella.

Costruito come feudo e torre di guardia nell'alto medioevo, il pittoresco villaggio di oltre 250 abitanti ospitava più di 2.000 abitanti. Oggi, i Cansanesi sono sparsi in tutta l'America e in altri paesi.

Cansano conserva il suo patrimonio medievale offrendo allo stesso tempo una porta a molti monumenti naturali e piccoli paesi vicino a Sulmona. Il suo clima di montagna, con estati calde e secche e inverni nevosi, attrae i turisti in cerca di avventure all'aria aperta: escursioni, sci ed esplorazione dei parchi nazionali.

L'Abruzzo è regione terremotata e Cansano non è immune dagli effetti devastanti. La città e la campagna sono state plasmate dall'attività sismica sin dal II secolo e, più recentemente, dal terremoto del L'Aquila del 2009 e dalle scosse di assestamento.

Come molte piccole comunità rurali in Abruzzo, Cansano ha più chiese cattoliche di riferimento. La Chiesa di **San Salvatore** del XII secolo, o Chiesa Madre, in Via del Castello, fu distrutta da un terremoto nel 1706, poi ricostruita e piena di preziose opere d'arte e manufatti religiosi scomparsi durante la seconda guerra mondiale.

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Italy Magazine

A Special thank you to Maria Ciampaglione, in Cansano, for review and fact checks. Photo credits to Facebook sites: cansanoaq, parco archeologico di Ocriticum, wikipedia, and to Giovanni Guadagnoli, Cansano/Milan.

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San Nicola di Bari in Via Stazione risale al XIII secolo ed è stata ristrutturata agli inizi del 1900 con donazioni dai Cansanesi, che vivono e lavorano come minatori in America e devoti al santo. Nella chiesa, danneggiata dal terremoto del L'Aquila del 2009 e recentemente riaperta, è raffigurato un rilievo in stucco raffigurante San Nicola che protegge i minatori.

La Chiesa di San Donato, vicino al cimitero del paese, fu costruita nel XVIII secolo. È aperta solo nel giorno della festa del santo a metà agosto. La nuova **Chiesa di San Rocco**, costruita negli anni '50, si trova in Piazza XX Settembre.

Da San Rocco, nel cuore di Piazza XX Settembre, si trova il Monumento ai Caduti di Giovanni Granata. Il monumento fu dedicato nel 1925 ai "Caduti per la Patria", i fondi (56.000 lire) furono raccolti dai Cansanesi immigrati in America. Granata ha aggiunto le "api" al piedistallo come simbolo del duro lavoro necessario per raccogliere i fondi. Sullo sfondo il Palazzo Comunale di Cansano, costruito nei primi del '900.

La pittoresca comunità ha resti di chiese, castelli che fungevano da torri di avvistamento medievali e mura di difesa, come il Colle Mitra che era un punto di osservazione perfetto per proteggere le trafficate rotte commerciali che collegavano Sulmona alla zona.

Parco Nazionale La Majella

La vicinanza di Cansano ai tre parchi nazionali d'Abruzzo e a un parco regionale è una grande attrazione per la zona. Cansano è sede del Centro Informazioni del Parco Nazionale della Majella. Guide escursionistiche qualificate e autorizzate organizzano gite e forniscono visite guidate in tutte le stagioni. Il Parco è un'area protetta e ospita un habitat diversificato e uno scrigno di rara e preziosa biodiversità italiana.

Un sentiero molto apprezzato è il Trekking di 3 giorni del Sentiero della Libertà di 60 chilometri su sentieri che attraversano la Majella. La "via della libertà" era la via di fuga di migliaia di prigionieri alleati e giovani italiani in lotta per la liberazione dell'Italia, divisa dalla Linea Gustav dopo l'armistizio dell'8 settembre 1943, quando l'Abruzzo divenne terra di confine e angolo di speranza per fuggitivi che si schierarono con l'esercito alleato.

In piena vista da Cansano anche il maestoso Gran Sasso, la montagna più alta dell'Appennino. Oltre a La Majella, i parchi nazionali del Gran Sasso e d'Abruzzo e il parco regionale Sirente-Velino fanno di Cansano una calamita per chi ama esplorare i grandi spazi aperti.

Parco Archeologico di Ocriculum

Il fiore all'occhiello di Cansano è il sito archeologico di Ocriculum, situato a pochi chilometri da Cansano, ai piedi del colle di Colle Mitra che circa 2.000 anni fa ospitava uno dei paesi del territorio amministrativo di Sulmona.

In questo sito erano presenti un insediamento, una necropoli e un santuario, che conobbero il loro periodo di massima crescita tra la fine del IV secolo a.C. e la metà del II secolo d.C. Probabilmente fu un terremoto del II secolo d.C. che danneggiò molti degli edifici, avviando così un processo di progressivo abbandono dell'intera area fino al VI secolo.

Nel 1992 è stato creato il Parco Archeologico Ocriculum per tutelare e gestire gli scavi ufficiali arginando così quelli abusivi che hanno impoverito le testimonianze archeologiche. All'interno sono stati rinvenuti tre edifici sacri su due livelli: al livello superiore si trovano due grandi templi, uno di epoca italica (IV secolo a.C.) dedicato ad Ercole e uno di epoca romana (I secolo d.C.) dedicato a Giove. Entrambi sono situati all'interno di un'area chiusa (temenos). Al livello inferiore si trova il tempio più piccolo, dedicato alle dee Cerere e Venere (dal II secolo a.C.) all'interno di un piccolo recinto rettangolare.

Centro di documentazione Ocriculum

Inaugurato il 10 gennaio 2004 all'interno della seicentesca chiesa di San Rocco (oggi sconsacrata), il Centro di Documentazione ospita molti dei ritrovamenti del sito di scavo. Ha anche un centro congressi polivalente e un museo / mostra sull'immigrazione.

Le mostre di Ocriculum comprendono offerte votive, statuette in terracotta, come la dea di Cansano, statue in bronzo di Ercole, monete e numerosi vasi e oggetti utilitari.

Il Museo dell'Immigrazione è ospitato al piano inferiore del Centro di Documentazione ed è costituito da una mostra permanente dal titolo

"L'Emigrante", un omaggio a tutti coloro che hanno lasciato il paese in cerca di fortuna. Il Museo consiste di una ricca e suggestiva serie di documenti, fotografie, modellini di navi e oggetti relativi al viaggio della "grande migrazione".

Andando avanti

Cansano continua a prosperare e reinventarsi. Nel gennaio 2021 un gruppo di cittadini ha costituito "ApesCoop", la Cooperativa Comunitaria di Cansano, per promuovere lo sviluppo economico a livello comunitario. Il nome si ispira all'ape che lo scultore Granata ha posto sui fregi dello zoccolo del Monumento ai Caduti.

Il Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo della Maiella, che funge da cuore e anima di Cansano, è stato nominato per l'inclusione nella rete mondiale di Geoparchi UNESCO del 2021 Patrimonio dell'Umanità.

Il cansanese si trova in tutta l'America e in altri paesi. Ci sono numerosi siti web e pagine Facebook che mantengono vivo il legame con il piccolo e pittoresco villaggio. Un ottimo sito a cui iscriversi su Facebook è www.facebook.com/cansanoaq. Cerca questo logo. ■

Appuntamenti Importanti:

- **24-26 giugno** — Feste di S. Giovanni Battista, S. Nicola e Sant'Antonio
- **9-10 agosto** — Sagra dell'agnello e del formaggio
- **13-17 agosto** — Feste di San Rocco, San Donato e Nostra Signora della Neve
- **6 dicembre** — Festa di San Nicola di Bari, (benedizione e donazione del pane)
- **8 dicembre** — Il falò di "Sant'Mari Cuncett" (in piazza in onore dell'Immacolata Concezione)
- **31 dicembre** — Canti in onore di San Silvestro (Sante Salevjestre) con pizze fritte e una canzone per concludere l'anno vecchio e dare il benvenuto al nuovo.



GUGLIONESI

PROVINCE OF CAMPOBASSO, REGION OF MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

The beautiful town of Guglionesi is located about 50 kilometers from Campobasso. It has approximately 2,017 inhabitants known as Guglionesi. The town lies amid fields, olive trees and vineyards, on a hill overlooking the Biferno river.

Founded in the 5th century B.C., at the time it was known as Uscosium or Usconium and together with Pescara, Ortona, Lanciano, Vasto and Larino, it was one of the most important centers of the Frentani, an Italic people who were part of the Samnite confederations.

Thanks to its strategic position along the Via Frenata-Traiana, Usconium became, towards the end of the Roman Republican Era, a municipality eventually reaching a population of about 25,000.

Usconium was located between Monte Antico and Monte Capraro, where Guglionesi is now found. Its inhabitants depended on the Collenisus ("Hill of Bacchus"), a hill fort in which they sheltered after the town's destruction by the Goths.

In 412 A.D., Colleniso (Collenisus) became New Usconium and was encircled by protective walls in the Longobardo period. Afterwards, the most important fortification was raised in the 9th century, when Robert Guiscard took over the



Credit: turismomolise.com / Franco Cappellari

A panoramic view of Guglionesi.

city. During that period, 18 watchtowers and two castles were erected. The ruins of the first castle (named "of head" because it was in a higher position than the others, subsequently called "of foot") can still be seen today. After the destruction of the second castle, the Convent of the Cappuccini was constructed upon what was left of the castle foundations.

In 801 A.D., Colleniso came under the domination of the Duke of Spoleto, and endured various incursions by Saracen raiders. In 1137 A.D., it endured a pillage by Lothar, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. In 1315, King Robert of Anjou gave Colleniso to his brother Peter, Count of Gravina, and at his death, his daughter Agnese inherited the city. During this time the city was repeatedly invaded; its name was also changed from Colleniso to Guillonisi.

In 1496, after the death of René of Anjou, his cousin Charles VIII of France came to Italy with a large army and conquered Naples. During this tragic period, the French entered Guillonisi and plundered the entire village, demolishing the two castles and the towers and killing or raping most of the population. Then in the 16th century, still another invasion occurred by the Turks, who set fire to the church of Saint Maria Maggiore, and consequently the relics of St. Adam, housed in the church, were destroyed and lost.

Nowadays the town offers scenic views and many outdoor possibilities, and the yoga vag-

bonda (Yoga Vagabond) classes have also become popular either while social distancing outdoors or while spending more time indoors. ■

What to See

- Church of San Nicola di Bari a Guglionesi, founded in the 12th century and a fine Romanesque church in the Apulian style.
- Church of Santa Maria Maggiore which rises on an ancient crypt and contains the relics of the Blessed Adam, founder of the church.
- The Palazzo Ducale with a beautiful ancient portal.

Important Dates

- **June 3** — Feast of Sant'Adam Abate, the patron saint

Sources:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guglionesi

www.italyheritage.com/regions/molise/province-campobasso/guglionesi.htm

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Credit: Creative Commons / Filokt user Panoramio

GUGLIONESI

PROVINCIA DI CAMPOBASSO, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Ennio DiTullio

La bellissima cittadina di Guglionesi si trova a circa 50 chilometri da Campobasso. Conta circa 2.017 abitanti conosciuti come Guglionesi. Il paese, adagiato tra campi, ulivi e vigneti, su una collina che domina il fiume Biferno.

Fondata nel V secolo a.C., all'epoca era conosciuta come Uscosium o Usconium e insieme a Pescara, Ortona, Lanciano, Vasto e Larino, fu uno dei centri più importanti dei Frentani, popolo italico che faceva parte del Confederazioni sannitiche.

Grazie alla sua posizione strategica lungo la Via Frentana-Traiana, Usconium divenne, verso la fine dell'era repubblicana, un comune raggiungendo infine una popolazione di circa 25.000 abitanti.

L'Usconium si trovava tra il Monte Antico e il Monte Capraro, dove oggi si trova Guglionesi. I suoi abitanti dipendevano dal Collenisyus ("Colle di Bacco"), una fortezza collinare in cui si ripararono dopo la distruzione della città da parte dei Goti.

Nel 412 d.C. Colleniso (Collenisyus) divenne Nuovo Usconium e nel periodo longobardo fu circondato da mura di protezione. Successivamente, la fortificazione più importante fu innalzata nel IX secolo, quando Robert Guiscard prese il controllo della città. In quel periodo furono erette 18 torri di guardia e due castelli. Ancora oggi sono visibili i ruderi del primo castello (denominato "di testa" perché posto più in alto degli altri, successivamente denominato "di piede"). Dopo la distruzione del secondo castello, su ciò che restava delle fondamenta del castello fu costruito il Convento dei Cappuccini.

Nell'801 d.C. Colleniso passò sotto il dominio del Duca di Spoleto e subì varie incursioni da parte di predoni saraceni. Nel 1137 d.C. subì un saccheggio da parte di Lotario, imperatore dell'Impero Romano Santo. Nel 1315 il re Roberto d'Angiò donò Colleniso al fratello Pietro, conte di Gravina, e alla sua morte la figlia

Agnese ereditò la città. Durante questo periodo la città fu ripetutamente invasa; anche il suo nome fu cambiato da Colleniso a Guillonisi.

Nel 1496, dopo la morte di René d'Angiò, suo cugino Carlo VIII di Francia giunse in Italia con un grande esercito e conquistò Napoli. Durante questo tragico periodo i francesi entrarono a Guillonisi e saccheggiarono l'intero villaggio, demolendo i due castelli e le torri e uccidendo o violentando la maggior parte della popolazione. Poi, nel XVI secolo, si verificò ancora un'altra invasione da parte dei Turchi, che appiccarono il fuoco alla chiesa di Santa Maria Maggiore, e di conseguenza le reliquie di S. Adamo, custodite nella chiesa, andarono distrutte e perse.

Oggi la città offre viste panoramiche e molte possibilità all'aperto, e anche le lezioni di yoga vagabonda (Yoga Vagabond) sono diventate popolari sia durante le distanze sociali all'aperto che mentre si trascorre più tempo al chiuso. ■

Attrazioni del luogo:

- Chiesa di San Nicola di Bari a Guglionesi, fondata nel XII secolo e bella chiesa romanica in stile pugliese.
- Chiesa di Santa Maria Maggiore che sorge su un'antica cripta e contiene le reliquie del Beato Adamo, fondatore della chiesa.
- Il Palazzo Ducale con un bellissimo portale antico

Date da ricordare:

- **3 giugno** — Festa di Sant'Adam Abate, patrono

TOMMY LASORDA:

▼ *Continued from page 12*

titles, four National League pennants, and two World Series (1981 and 1988). His teams compiled a record of 1,599 wins against 1,439 losses for a winning percentage of .526. He was voted National League Manager of the Year in 1983 and again in 1988. He also managed four All-Star teams for the National League. On June 24, 1996, he suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized in mid-season. As a result, he decided to quit on July 29, 1996, two months shy of his 70th birthday.

When he recovered after the 1996 season, he was named Vice President of the Dodgers. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame as a manager in 1997, during his first year of eligibility. On August 15, 1997, his uniform number 2 was retired during a ceremony at Dodger Stadium. On June 22, 1998, he became the interim General Manager. He resigned from that position when the 1998 season ended to become Senior Vice President. After a year, he retired.

Tommy came out of retirement to manage the United States baseball team to the gold medal at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia. He then served as the third-base coach for the National League during the 2001 All-Star Game.

During his retirement, he lived with his wife in their home in Fullerton, California. On June 3, 2012, at age 84, he suffered a second heart attack. Since June 7, 2018, he had been the oldest living Hall of Famer. On Thursday evening, January 7, 2021, he suffered a third and fatal heart attack in his home. He was 93 years old. Tommy always said that his motto was: "I would walk a mile to shake the hand of an Italian, but I would crawl two miles to hug an Abruzzese." ■

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The Life of Legendary Baseball Manager Tommy Lasorda

By Joseph "Sonny" Scafetta, Jr.

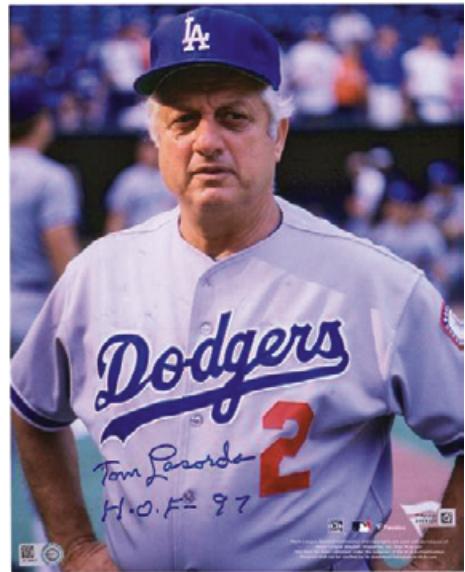
(Editor's Note — In September 2020, AMHS Board Member Sonny Scafetta gave a presentation on noted figures in Major League Baseball with roots in Abruzzo, including Tommy Lasorda, who passed away in January of this year. See page 3 of the November/December issue of the Notiziario for a story on his presentation.)

Thomas (Tommy) Charles Lasorda was born on September 22, 1927, in Norristown, a suburb of Philadelphia, Pa. He was the second of five sons. His father was born in the community of Tollo (population 4,237 in the 2008 census) in the province of Chieti in the Abruzzo region of Italy. His father emigrated to the United States in 1919 after serving in the Italian army during World War I. He made a living by driving a truck in a sand quarry. Tommy's mother was born in the United States. Her parents were Abruzzesi.

He played on the varsity team as a left-handed pitcher in high school and signed with the Phil-

adelphia Phillies after graduation in June 1945. However, in October 1945, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged after two years. After playing the 1948 season in the minors for the Phillies, he was acquired by the Brooklyn Dodgers who kept him in the minors. In 1950, he married Josephine Miller. They had two children. He made his major league debut for the Dodgers on August 5, 1954, and won a World Series ring with the team in 1955. He pitched the 1956 season for the Kansas City Athletics who traded him to the New York Yankees at the end of the year. During the 1957 season, the Yankees sold him back to the Dodgers who sent him again to the minors where he finished playing in 1960 at age 33.

In 1961, he became a scout for the Dodgers who had relocated to Los Angeles. In 1966, the Dodgers made him a minor league manager. During seven seasons in the minors, he won four league championships. In 1973, the Dodgers promoted him to be the third-base coach on their major league team. For four seasons, he served under



Tommy Lasorda

the legendary Hall of Fame manager, Walter Alston. When Alston retired, Tommy was appointed the team manager on September 29, 1976, at the age of 49. He served for almost 20 years. Only three managers, including Alston, had served longer tenures in the history of the game. During Tommy's tenure, his teams won eight division

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