

# IL POSTINO

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## *Auguri Mamme*



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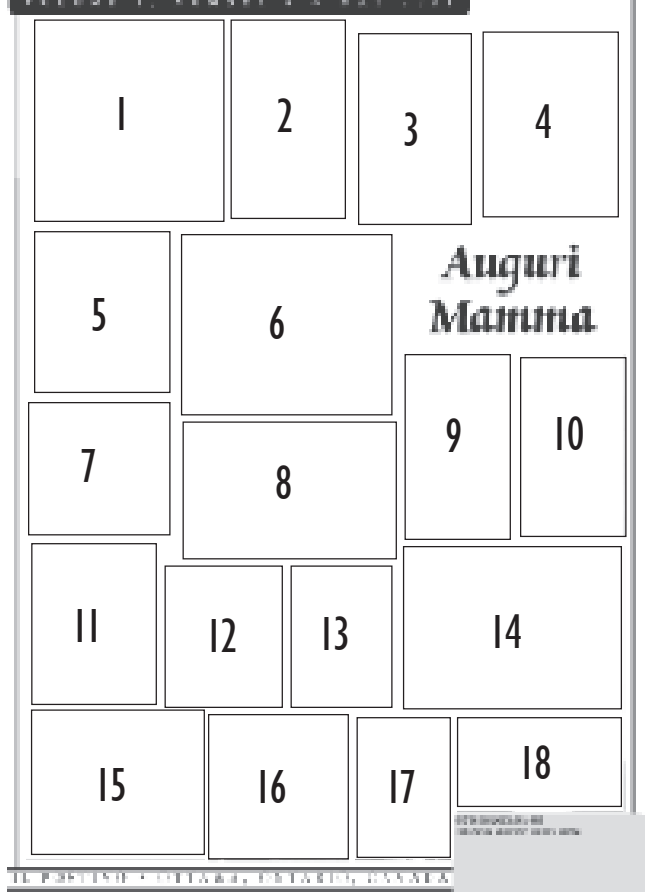
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## MOTHERS *from the cover*

- 1 - Rose D'Amelio and daughter Laura
- 2 - Rose D'Amelio and daughters Silvia and Laura
- 3 - Filoso family
- 4 - Ada Dinardo (second from right) with her parents  
(seated) and siblings.
- 5 - Gina Ierullo-Borrelli and sons Brandon and  
Alexander
- 6 - Mothers (and sisters) Adelina (Palermo) Bruni,  
Rosina (Palermo), Ottorina (Palermo) Cavallere
- 7 - Giuseppina D'Amelio and granddaughter Silvia
- 8 - Mary Ierullo, with husband Jimmy and children  
Angela, Anthony and Peter
- 9 - Adelina Bruni and daughter Rose
- 10 - Rosa Tiezzi and son Silvio, 1930
- 11 - Cesare and Francesca (Imbesi) Ierullo, 1953
- 12 - Rina Filoso's mother
- 13 - Gail Ierullo and grandson Alexander Borrelli
- 14 - Three generations: Vittoria Ierullo and daughter  
Rosa Rossanese and granddaughter Roberta Rossanese
- 15 - Teresa and Antonio Ierullo with family in 1937
- 16 - 100-year-old woman
- 17 - Tammy Lethintin with husband and new daughter
- 18 - Angelo Filoso's mother, Rina Filoso and Daughter

## IL POSTINO



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# Looking from Signal Hill into the next millennium

## Marconi's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary is honoured

by Laura D'Amelio

On Dec. 12, 1901, Guglielmo Marconi, a man born in Bologna, Italy, stood atop Signal Hill in Newfoundland, Canada and received the first signal to be transmitted across the Atlantic Ocean. The beacon was originating from Cornwall, England and the event was to become a starting point for the advancement of telecommunication for the next 50 years.

Marconi's progression with his experiments would lead to breakthroughs in communications both in radio and broadcasting and in navigation systems. It would affect everyday lives of citizens and connect the world in ways never thought possible.

The Embassy of Italy recognized the historic importance of Marconi on April 25 as Mario Boffo, acting Italian ambassador to Canada, told the invitees to a dinner at the Ambassador's residence of the events planned in Marconi's honour.

Marconi's achievements as an Italian working in Canada have been a special interest to the Italian Embassy. Boffo emphasized the importance of Italy and Canada working in cooperation in high technology to continue Marconi's vision and outlined the steps that have already been taken to achieve this goal.

Through Marconi celebrations, the embassy would like to convey three specific messages to both Canadian and Italian citizens. The first is that Italy has a tradition of science and technology and is not just a country of artists and writers. Italian scientists such as Galileo, Volta and Fermi dispel the notion that Italy's role in innovation is anything less than significant.

"Marconi was not an isolated case, but the expression of a culture," says Boffo in explaining the second message they wish to communicate: Italy is not the backwards country it is often portrayed to be. Italy has contributed to the advancement and modernization of humankind and will continue to do so.

The third message lies in the events themselves. The commemorative projects are based on the notion that relations between Canada and Italy have always had a technological element from the beginning. The voyage of Caboto is cited as an example.

For the celebrations and commemorative projects, the embassy is working with representatives from Heritage Canada for the philosophy of the celebrations and the Industry Canada for the industrial and technological aspects of the initiatives.

The government of Newfoundland is also getting involved in the event by organizing a conference for Italian

and Canadian telecommunication specialists in September. The Wireless Vision Congress will gather experts in telecommunications in St. John's, from Sept. 26 to 28.

The goal of the conference, according to promotional literature for the event, is to "look beyond the day to day to the vision of what the world will become" with advancements in telecommunications. Congress chair John Kelly has insisted that this is not a trade show but a 'thinkers' congress'.

Interactive sessions between panelists and delegates who develop new technology and those who actually use it will hopefully create an exchange of ideas. Also, some issues to be discussed are the protection of cultural identity and diversity, overcoming distance in rural and remote areas, and sea-to-sky possibilities.

Speakers at the conference will include Jean Monty, chairman and chief executive officer for BCE Inc., Frank Plastina, president of Wireless Internet at Nortel Networks and Brian Tobin, Minister of Industry.

All these events were spurred by the positive results of an Italy-Canada Investment Forum which took place in February as well as a Memorandum of Understanding agreed to and signed by the two countries in Ottawa.

In the memorandum the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Trade for both countries agreed to such things as an exchange and comparison of information on international business practices, information technology, interdepartmental coordinating and exploring forms of cooperation.

Eventually the groups will meet to discuss these subjects and incorporate private sector expertise to establish a



Canada-Italy Business Sector.

While using the celebration of this historic anniversary as an opportunity to foster and extend business relations between the two countries, Boffo made it clear that they must also send a message to the citizens, both Canadian and Italian, and get them involved.

Canadian telecommunication experts can now also take advantage of the year's festivities through the Guglielmo Marconi scholarship established by the Italian government. This scholarship allows Canadian researchers and specialists in telecommunications undertake advanced studies in Italy. The Italian Embassy hopes that this will promote the development of contacts while sending the message that Italy has the ability to train more than artists and musicians.

"We expect that Canada will soon establish a similar scholarship for Italian Citizens, thereby doubling the results of this program," says Boffo.

Through the three-fold message Boffo laid out, the embassy hopes to change the stereotypes often associated with Italy. Boffo said that it is important to banish the traditional cultural view of Italy, which "suffers from an excess of tradition and folklore, it is often too regional and focused on the past."

With this image in the minds of Canadians and young Italian-Canadians, it would be hard to get them interested in what Italy has to offer.

To see Italy as a progressive and advanced country, rather than a backwards, traditional nation, will draw researchers, investors and tourists to a country prepared to take the world stage.

More importantly however, Boffo said this must be done "in the interest of Italians in Canada, who can once again make their heritage interesting to their children."

Perhaps Marconi's work will do more than keep communication alive in the end, but will help to maintain a culture through his innovation and spirit.

For more information on the Wireless Vision Congress, you can visit [www.wirelessvision.nf.ca](http://www.wirelessvision.nf.ca). For information about the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorate events in Newfoundland and Labrador go to [www.gov.nf.ca/marconi](http://www.gov.nf.ca/marconi).

## Italian community gives \$7,500 to Operation Go Home

### Total of \$27,500 to date

by Colin Donelle

His voice was low and raspy as he spoke and his hands and feet were in a constant nervous motion. He softly discussed his life on the street - his experiences during and after. His name was Joe, and for four years, until he turned 18, he had managed to survive on the streets until he needed help.

"If someone wants up, this gives the opportunity to lift them up," he said to the audience. It was a personal identification of the work and success of Operation Go Home, one of the many faces that has been given another opportunity at a better life.

OGH is an organization that allows homeless youth to get off the streets, providing them with a chance for renewal and the opportunity to be reunited with family and friends. On March 31, the Outreach Benefit Gala and Silent Auction was held at the Ottawa Congress Centre to raise money for OGH.

Created by Rev. Norman Johnston in 1971, OGH was initially set up in Ottawa, but has since branched to Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver, with plans to locate in even more cities. Mayor Bob Chiarelli, one of the many supporters of OGH, discussed its great attendance and success rates.

"This has truly been an incredible history . . . to have so high a degree of success," said Chiarelli.

Last year alone the organization was able to assist 8,603 youths nationwide, a compelling figure for additional financing from all levels of government. "This is definitely something I support - as an individual and as a representative of the City of Ottawa," Chiarelli added.

CTV news anchor Max Keeping, who also donated \$1,000 to OGH, spoke about how the organization has the ability to show youths that people do care about them.

"When a kid picks up the phone and says I need help, there's someone there," said Keeping.

Throughout the evening, as MCs Jim Watson and Kevin Nelson heckled one another on stage, hundreds of items were auctioned off. Some of the live auctions consisted of an autographed Mario Lemieux hockey jersey, the rental of a Harley Davidson for a weekend, a Congress Centre package, a season ski pass for four and the entire collection of Labatt Blue mini-Stanley Cups.

The auctions were expected to raise over \$30,000 according to OGH President Rev. Sterling Irvine. "We now have an operating budget of over \$250,000 per year, so every dollar is crucial," said Irvine.

Since Irvine is retiring at the end of the year he was very reflective on the history and future of the organization. He hoped for future expansion into other cities and increased funding so that more and more youths could be helped. "It's not only about getting youths off the streets, but to provide the access to job opportunities and proper schooling."

Jim Watson, who is a patron member of the organization, echoed these sentiments, discussing the need to get youths off the streets. "There are too many people who need OGH's assistance and involvement."

Continued on page 5

## The Guglielmo Marconi Scholarship

Guglielmo Marconi received many honours and several honorary degrees for his work in telecommunications. In 1909 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics for the development of wireless telegraphy, he sent as delegate to the peace conference in Paris of 1919, was nominated to the Italian senate in 1929 and chosen president of the Royal Italian Academy (1930).

Now Canadian researcher can receive the honour of working in the name of Marconi to continue his dream. Inspired by the work of Marconi, the Italian government is offering a nine-month scholarship to Canadian citizens wishing to pursue research and internship programs in Italy in the field of telecommunications.

Post-graduate students, professionals, teachers and specialists in this field who meet the necessary requirements will be selected and start their program in November. Knowledge of Italian is mandatory unless applicants have applied for self-directed research or the course or research they are doing is held in their language.

The monthly stipend is 1.2-million lira, however the scholarship does not cover airfare and room and board. The deadline for applications is June 15, 2001. For more information, contact the Embassy of Italy, Cultural Office, (613) 232-2401 or visit [www.italyincanada.com](http://www.italyincanada.com).

Community / Comunità

# Madonna Della Risurrezione and the memories of a little girl

by *Oliviana Mingarelli*

One of the first memories I have of my childhood is attending mass at St. Rita's elementary school on Sunday mornings. Some of you may not know that gymnasium of St. Rita's was the location of the Madonna Della Risurrezione parish's Sunday mass before the construction of the church.

There were masses held at other schools as well, in order to respond to the high demand for an Italian liturgy. When I attended St. Rita's for mass, our parish was fairly small but everyone always felt like they belonged.

Every week at mass my sister Chiara and I would be surrounded by old people (at that age old was anyone over 25) who would tell my parents how cute we were. People seemed to enjoy pinching my chubby cheeks which, to my horror, have remained that way! Everyone was friendly and had something to say, most commonly "Oh what a pretty dress!" or "You've grown so much since I last saw you!" which was really only a week ago.

Having a church ceremony in a gymnasium has its definite advantages. Whenever mass was over, some of the other children and I would try to use whatever gym equipment had been left out. Our most popular diversion was using the chin-up bars attached to the wall.

Many fond memories were formed within the walls of St. Rita's school. However, it is important to note that the parish did not assemble and dissolve itself every Sunday for two hours. It was active all week long planning activities for the children and various social activities for families.

For example, every year the parish organized a celebration for the coming of La Befana. On the chosen day, each child would receive a personalized gift from the old woman. I remember that one year my mother was going to be the Befana.

As she sat in her chair giving out gifts to the other children, I was sure that my sister and I would get the best gifts of all since we had an "in" with the gift giver. It was like being Santa Claus' daughter! Could there be

anything better?

We were sadly disappointed when we got our gifts and they were not any more or less extravagant than any other gift. I was humiliated because I had told all the other children that I was going to get the biggest and most expensive present.

There were many other activities organized by the parish, but the largest undertaking the parish ever undertook was the building of the church which now exists at 1621 Fisher Ave. Though the parish existed long before the church was ever built, its completion in 1990 fulfilled the need of the community. Madonna Della Risurrezione is now home to over 500 registered families.

The development of the parish to where it is now took many years and the dedication of many families, however it has all been worth the work. To celebrate this, on June 1 to 3, the parish of the Madonna Della Risurrezione organizes a festival to reflect our presence as an Italian Parish.

During these three days the Fisher-Meadowlands-Baseline community is witness to a party unlike any other. Everyone, whether of Italian descent or not, is welcome to join in the festivities that include food, concerts, music and a procession.

This year the festival will keep many of their popular activities but they will also be adding something new; a night specifically for the younger parishioners. There will be a DJ and a tent set up for dancing and having an overall great time.

The festival is really great for children. I remember going every year and getting my face painted, eating whatever deserts I could lay my hands on and running away from the clown.

The last thing I wish to mention, which used to be a favourite time for me, was being an alter server. It is a great way to include the children into the mass and it gives them a feeling of importance. My sister and I, who had the honor of being the churches very first alter servers, cherish our participation in the parish.

We would arrive at church approximately half an hour early every Sunday in order to dress ourselves, including the formal white robes. Each of us had something to carry down the aisle with the priest at the beginning of



Construction began on a church in the early 1990s, though the parish was founded in 1978.

the mass and throughout the ceremony we would have to pay attention in order to not miss our cues. One of us would prepare the holy sacrament and the other would prepare the wine.

Not only were we asked to be alter servers at masses but also at certain marriages and baptisms. I felt like I was contributing to the parish, and as a child of 10, that feeling is sometimes hard to come by.

My years within the parish of the Madonna Della Risurrezione are very dear to me and have left me with the feeling that it is indeed a place for people of all ages. I encourage people to attend the coming festival in June, it is a great way to meet new people and get a feeling for the parish's unique atmosphere.

## A brief history

The history of the parish really began with the concern of one woman: Alice Bartolo. Bartolo was a spokesperson for all the Italian families looking for a place of worship.

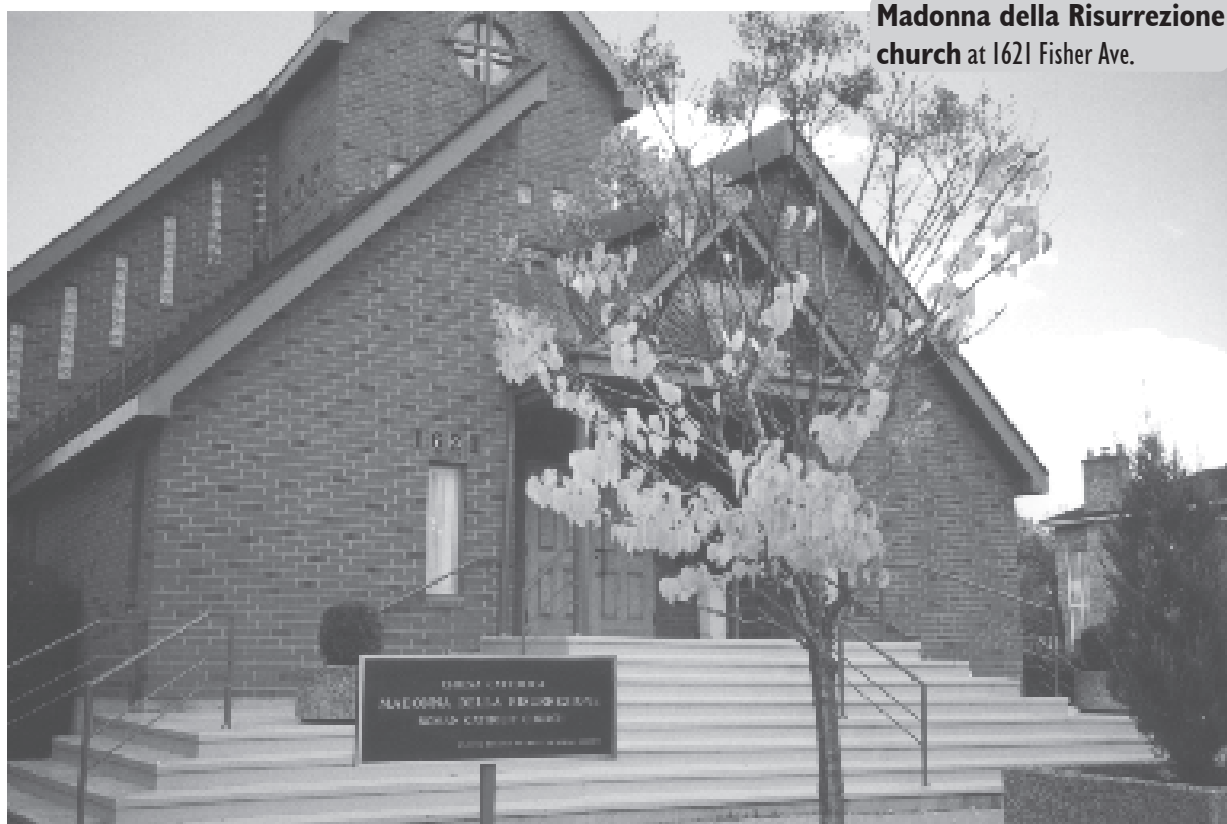
Especially sensitive to the children who were in need of spiritual guidance, Bartolo approached Father Toni Ostan, who had administered to the spiritual needs of the Inuit in northern Canada, to celebrate the Eucharist in Italian.

The first mass was held on the first Sunday of November 1978 in the gymnasium of St. Victor's school, to a small but happy group of Italian families. From the enthusiastic response to the trial masses, the service continued at various locations as a branch of Holy Cross Parish.

As the community grew, so did involvement in the parish. Through the efforts of the parish council, Father Ostan's pet project, Accademia Giovanile, was established. The after-school program was created to assist parents with the social, cultural and religious aspects of their children's education. Also, Italia Nova, a bimonthly newsletter for the community, was initiated.

Two diocesan decrees helped to forward the progress of the community and the church. The first in May of 1980 recognized the need for two Italian language parishes in Ottawa and the second in April 1984 officially granted Madonna della Risurrezione the status of "parish."

In 1985 the parish acquired the property at 1621 Fisher Ave. which was used as a canonical residence until construction began. The building, which opened its doors officially on Sept. 23 of 1990, was designed by local Italian architect Filippo Piazza who created the front of the church to represent an abstract of the Madonna with a veil flowing down from her extended arms.



Madonna della Risurrezione church at 1621 Fisher Ave.

PHOTO: OLIVIANA MINGARELLI



Community / Comunità

# Va sempre bene

di Marta Fortini

Ricordo quando, giovanissima, aspettavo il frate che, abitualmente, passava casa per casa a raccogliere l' elemosina. Ringraziava dicendo "Pace e bene" e metteva quello che riceveva nell' ampia bisaccia. Era subito dopo la guerra, e mi chiedevo, allora bambina, quante mie coetanee avrebbero beneficiato di quelle provvidenziali offerte, della carità che questo devotissimo e generosissimo frate andava racimolando.

Questo è rimasto uno dei tanti misteri legati alla mia infanzia. Uno dei tanti misteri senza risposta.

Quasi altrettanto Così come è un vero enigma l'immagine che mi sono foggia in questi anni di Padre Marcello Brodeur.

È infatti difficile per me e tanti di noi capire come in tutti questi anni Padre Marcello abbia potuto visitare ammalati, occuparsi della scuola, delle funzioni religiose, delle feste solenni, dei poveri, del suo orto, della manutenzione degli edifici, della sua salute, partecipare ai vari comitati, far avanzare i progetti in cui era coinvolto, ritelefonare a chi lo chiamava, preparare spiritualmente i fedeli alla comunione, alla cresima, ai battesimi, ai matrimoni, ai funerali; occuparsi di questo e di tanto altro, occuparsi..occuparsi....

E rispondere, a chiunque gli domandasse dove trovava tanta energia, solo con un gentile "Va sempre bene.. " Frase, questa, che, pronunciata dal parroco, dalla guida spirituale della nostra comunità, ha spesso regalato fiducia e serenità a chi lo frequentava e lo ascoltava.

Ho un ricordo su tutti. Qualche mese fa, un caro amico passò a miglior vita. Padre Marcello arrivò subito, nel momento del decesso, recando così un enorme sollievo ai famigliari, che sentirono la sua presenza davvero come un dono della Divina Provvidenza.

Non sono stata l'unica ad apprezzare Padre Marcello. Molte altre persone nella nostra città hanno avuto occasione di

conoscere la sua cortesia e la sua pazienza durante gli innumerevoli pellegrinaggi da lui organizzati, in Canada ed in Terra Santa.

Ora, dopo dodici anni di servizio nella sua parrocchia, Padre Marcello ci lascerà. Domenica scorsa, il 22 aprile, i parrochiani hanno voluto salutare questo nostro fantastico sacerdote e amico organizzando una speciale giornata in suo onore.

Alla messa solenne, celebrata da Padre Marcello e da altri cinque sacerdoti tra i quali il Padre Provinciale dell' Ordine dei Servi di Maria, ha fatto seguito un pranzo al Saint Anthony Soccer Club, e un bellissimo pomeriggio animato da musicisti e cori. Durante il pranzo Padre Marcello è passato ad ogni tavolo, salutando cordialmente e amichevolmente i presenti. È stato un evento trascorso per tutti in amicizia e con tanta allegria.

Nel suo intervento, Italo Tiezzi che ha funto da cerimoniere, ci ha esortati a mettere enfasi e tenacia nelle belle cose che la vita ci offre. Padre Marcello è stato per tutti noi un punto di riferimento importante e forte, e ciascuno di noi ha voluto quel giorno ringraziarlo a suo modo, chi con la sola presenza, chi con la musica e con i canti (come lo straordinario coro parrocchiale, che lo stesso Padre Marcello ha definito con orgoglio " il miglior coro nel Canada!").

Padre Marcello è rimasto alla guida della nostra comunità con discrezione ed umiltà, senza esibire onorificenze o vanità, semplice-mente facendosi amare e rispettare per ciò che a tutti noi ha trasmesso di sé: l'idea di un grande sacerdote e un grande uomo, totalmente dedito al servizio ed alla preghiera.

Ringraziamo dunque con il cuore Padre Marcello per quello che ha ci ha dato, e diamo il benvenuto al nuovo parroco, Padre Paul McKweon, con le stesse parole di cui, indubbiamente, si sarebbe avvalso Padre Marcello. Che ancora una volta, dunque, tutto vada "sempre bene"!

# Associazione Pretorese

by Colin Donelle

In 1997 the Associazione Pretorese celebrated its 25th anniversary with a large festival organized by board members. With a desire to put on a grand production of *The Miracle of St. Domenic e Lu Lupe*, the association paid for the airfare of the three main actors and a priest.

"It was spectacular...it brought together the community, and even those outside the community," explained president Carlos Bucciarelli, adding that close to 1,500 people attended.

The Associazione Pretorese was created on June 19, 1972 by Francesco Di Tiero and Emidio Peloso. They first came up with the idea of uniting the Pretorese after a construction worker from Pretoro was killed and Di Tiero was fundraising to assist the family. Once he realized the large number of citizens from the town of Pretoro, Di Tiero got organized and the community established a place where they could meet on a regular basis.

According to the their constitution their goals are to promote their district, form an understanding amongst Canadians about their culture, promote community involvement and provide support for other organizations. To date, they have been successful in achieving their goals.

"We've been really lucky," said Bucciarelli of the help they have been able to provide.

The list of organizations they help support include the Children's Hospital of Canada, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Children's Wish Foundation, the Shepherds of Good Hope, Villa Marconi, and they sponsor various sports teams.

Another reason for their success is the involvement of youth in the association. The lack of youth is a common characteris-

tic for many Italian associations that often leads to problems.

"We're one of the few associations with youth involvement," Bucciarelli said, citing that the average age of board members is around 40.

Bucciarelli contributes this to their ability to focus on the unique cultural aspects of their region, instead of doing the typical wine and dance routine, a fundraising staple of many organizations. Their different approach has been demonstrated at their annual Christmas Party, where last year they had every child bring in a toy to be given to Toy Mountain and the leftover food was given to needy charities.

Another historical event the Associazione Pretorese runs every year is the Grape Harvest Dance at the end of September. Still their greatest contribution to the Italian community is their annual performance of *The Miracle of St. Domenic e Lu Lupe*.

Held the first Sunday of May, the play tells the story of two villagers whose child is stolen from them by a wolf. The husband and wife then pray to St. Domenic to have their child sent back and the wolf eventually returns the child.

"It's completely intact (as to Pretorese history), even with the all-male actors," laughs Bucciarelli. Narrated in Italian, English and their dialect, the play has been able to cross language barriers, bringing in a diverse audience.

The president would also like to cross physical barriers and see the association offer an exchange program with Italy. But they are not complaining about the success they have had crossing ethnic and cultural lines and establishing a strong association where others have failed. As Bucciarelli put it, "we've been very lucky."

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## Community unites to get youths off the streets

Continued from page 3

Organizer Peter Crosby raised another fundamental point, asking if we did not have this organization, than who would do the work?

"No one organization has the one solution to this problem (of homeless youths), we must all work together."

Crosby also mentioned how supporters must not only help on days like this one, but on other days such as National

Youth Day on June 16.

Among the various supporters were the Italian Canadian Community Centre, which gave a check for \$7,500 and over the past three years has contributed over \$27,500.

This evening highlights the outcome, not of individuals, but of humanity's working together for the betterment of all, to give our future generations the equality and opportunity that all children should have - whether here in Canada or around the world.

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...and let us know what you think.

Memories / Ricordi

# Una filosofia semplice

di Luciano Pradal

Pur essendo orfano della mamma dall'età di setta anni, mi ha sempre sorpreso l'istinto e la filosofia delle madri che ho incontrato nella mia vita. E sono molte, credetemi.

Le mamme sono dotate di una filosofia semplice, insieme istintiva e forgiata da anni di esperienze.

Recentemente, qui in Ottawa, Maria Zanette, mamma, nonna e da qualche mese vedova, ha notato un piccolo annuncio sulla rivista mensile *I Trevisani nel Mondo* e mi ha chiesto se era possibile ottenere il libro di Renato Pagotto intitolato *Elogio del buonsenso. La filosofia di mia mamma*.

La vita della madre di Renato si può riassumere in poche parole: famiglia, lavoro e preghiera.

Era una donna di grande forza morale, che riuscì ad oltrepassare la novantina nonostante il fisico minato da molti acciacchi. Rimasta presto, quando ancora giovanissima, orfana di mamma, con cinque sorelle e un fratellino di due anni, si trovò a dover lavorare senza tregua per scarsità di manodopera maschile. Imparò a far da sarta. Fu profuga, emigrante. E soprattutto, più tardi, allevò la sua famiglia molto spesso da sola, perché il marito era costretto a guadagnarsi il pane girando da un cantiere all'altro, in Italia e all'estero.

Renato documenta i commenti della mamma e quasi non ne menziona mai il nome, come per incoraggiarci a vedere nella sua mamma la nostra mamma, una mamma universale.

Ecco alcuni brani del suo libro:

«*Si sta male perché si vuole: perché non si va d'accordo.*»

È difficile contestare simile considerazione. L'esperienza della vita induce a cercare delle spiegazioni plausibili dei mali del mondo. Che gran parte dei mali, a cominciare dalle guerre, dipendano dall'uomo, come causa

principale dei nostri mali, non è difficile ammetterlo. Ecco una componente essenziale del problema del male, senza alibi di maniera: la nostra incapacità di andare d'accordo!

19 Novembre '86

La televisione locale trasmette una manifestazione studentesca per rivendicare una palestra.

«*Tutti pretendono di avere. Se poi si ricorre alle tasse tutti si mettono a protestare.*»

Il buonsenso popolare è del tutto evidente: non si può volere una cosa e rifiutare l'altra che le è connessa.

16 aprile '94

Siamo in passeggiata. Ascoltiamo gli uccellini che in questa primavera ci rallegrano. Osservazione:

«*Loro, almeno, sono sempre contenti!*»

Non lo dice con tristezza. Lo rileva con un distacco significativo. Come se quell'allegria richiamasse qualcosa tante volte desiderato e che non si è potuto avere. Sia come singoli sia come collettività. Si vorrebbe tanto essere felici, ma pensa la vita a ridurre le nostre aspettative! Filosofia esistenziale.

19 maggio '94

Camminiamo in silenzio, accanto ad altre persone anziane, all'interno della Casa di riposo. Mia madre s'avvicina lentamente a un'altra anziana seduta é, sorridendo, le fa una carezza dolce. Quell'anziana le prende la mano e gliela bacia, in silenzio. Riconoscente.

Come una piccola attenzione rimette l'animo in pace con la vita!

Filosofia del buonsenso nei gesti della vita quotidiana.

## Moms make a difference

by Cathy Bourguignon

You don't have to be a beautiful British princess saving the world from landmines, a rich software developer or a six-figure sports hero to make a difference in life. My mother was none of these and she made a difference in the lives of those around her.

In June 1940, when my mother was 18, her father was sent to a concentration camp in Petawawa because of his Italian ancestry. Being without a mother, the child authorities of the day wanted to remove my mother and her six siblings from their home on Rochester Street. With determined will and a strong sense of family values, my mother fought the RCMP and the authorities on this. The children stayed together under her care. As a teenager, she made a difference.

As the years unfolded, she married and had four children of her own. She had a sense of humour, love of life, presence as "commander in chief" and ability to solve problems with a family. Sunday Italian meals were her trademark. She never cooked for six but 26 (in case friends dropped in). As a mother and friend, she made a difference.

Her spirit and energy to help others. Whether it was the parent-teachers' association, volunteering to visit the sick at St. Vincent's Hospital, canvassing for the Red Feather Appeal, serving on the executive of St. Anthony's Church Ladies Aid, or simply sitting on parish council, her work was a testament to her sense of commitment. As a community volunteer and a servant of her faith, she made a difference.

In other areas of her life, she aided so

many local and federal politicians in their political conventions, she could handle the back-room politics with the best of today's spin doctors. As a political activist, she made a difference. With her love of music, which she shared with her siblings, and her love of Frank Sinatra's music, which she shared with us all, she made a difference.

In 1993, my mother, Kay Pavia, passed away. No matter what the occasion, we are always reminded of some anecdote, gesture or sense of giving spirit that was hers. The small differences she made during this last century will be forever etched in the hearts and minds of many in the lives she touched. Her epitaph at Notre Dame Cemetery reads: "Kay Loved Life and Life Loved Kay" but it could easily read "She made a difference!"

## Cancer Society holds Daffodil Dinner-Dance

by Laura D'Amelio

On April 28, the Daffodil Dinner Dance, hosted by the Canadian Cancer Society, brought together community members at St. Anthony's Italia Soccer Club just off of Preston Street.

Good food and great music topped the evening which focused on the impact of cancer on numerous lives and fundraising to strengthen cancer research.

The role of master of ceremonies for the evening was shared by Caroline Redekopp and Pasquale Iannitti.

MPP for Ottawa Centre Richard Patten was on hand as a guest of honour. Patten spoke of his experience with cancer which he was diagnosed with just a year ago. He also gave his thanks to the research and advancements of many doctors who dedicate their lives to fighting this disease.

One of those doctors is Dr. John Bell, another guest of honour for the evening. Bell has been involved in cancer research for the past 20 years.

This annual event raised \$17,000 for cancer research last year and organizers hope that the final count from this year's gathering will reach \$20,000.



MPP Richard Patten spoke of his experiences with cancer and thanked researchers for their work.



Members of the organizing committee, including Fulvia Marcantonio, address the guests at the Dinner Dance.

PHOTOS: ANGELO FILOSO



Interview / Intervista

# Ada DiNardo

## One woman's journey to Canada

by Fiona Story

Ada DiNardo never expected to leave Italy and come to Canada. She grew up on a farm in the tiny town of Roccamontepiano, in the province of Chieti, with her two younger brothers Rocco and Ettore and younger sister Maria. Ada's parents had planned for her to marry, stay in Italy and raise a family of her own.

In 1939 she followed that plan and, at the age of 20, married Palmerino DiNardo, a man living in the same village. One year after their marriage, he went off to fight in World War II and never came back. He was proclaimed missing in action.

Sixty-one years later, sitting at her son's dining room table, her feet barely touching the ground, Ada says she decided to move to Canada due to the conditions of life offered by post-war Italy.

"I wanted something better, a better life," she shrugs.

So Ada changed her parent's plan. In 1949, Ada wrote to Palmerino's cousin Rosa Tiezzi in Canada who applied for Ada to immigrate and work as a maid in her house, even though there was no room for Ada.

"In those days the immigration bureau would go and inspect the house where you'd be staying," says Ada. "Rosa showed them her mother-in-law's room and made excuses and said it would be my room."

Despite her parents protests, Ada packed and left for Canada. She turned down an offer of marriage from Rocco DiNardo, another soldier in the war who lived in her village.

Using the money she had received from the government in compensation for the loss of her husband, Ada paid the 400 lira needed for the to Canada.

"The boat trip took ten days and I was sick by the second day."

It was on this tiny boat, Brazil, that Ada first met her good friend, Rosina Talarico, who was coming to Canada to get mar-

ried, as Ada found out in later years. Marriage was a common method of immigration to Canada and one of the easier ways. Ada went the hard route.

"Tell her about the captain on the boat," her son George prods from across the table.

Ada shakes her head and shushes him with her hand, proclaiming that is not an interesting story. She waits a moment and tells it anyway.

Ada had landed her own room on the very tiny boat, courtesy of the captain who developed quite the crush on her. By the second night, the captain came to Ada's room and asked her to marry him, stating he hated his job and wanted to settle down with someone.

"I told him to leave or I'd scream," she says, adding that she avoided him for the rest of the trip.

The boat docked in Halifax and Ada had to take a 24-hour train ride to Montreal. When she finally arrived in Ottawa, Rosa Tiezzi brought her to stay at Franco DiNardo's home, the uncle of her late husband.

Ada's first job was working in laundry on Rochester Street before moving on to the Ottawa Civic Hospital three months later, steam-pressing laundry. She worked eight hour days, five days a week and on Saturdays until one in the afternoon for \$18 a week. It was good pay at the time.

"You have to work some place," she says. "I liked it. I was happy."

One year later, she applied for her sister to immigrate to Canada and Maria eventually came to work at the Civic too. Some time after 1953, her brother Rocco joined the sisters and Father Ferraro helped him get a job shoveling snow at the train station.

Her second brother, Ettore, became a Roman Catholic priest and is currently serving as the parish priest for an Italian community in New Jersey.



Ada and her husband Rocco.

Ada did not know any English upon her arrival in Canada and picked it up one word at a time.

"One word here, one there. I learned one a day, one tomorrow."

She did attend English classes in the evenings at St. Anthony's School, however, a man she didn't know asked her out one night and this scared her so much that she never went back.

Ada's lack of English did impede her in the workplace when she was starting out. She was very timid in the use of the language and would continue her work without bathroom breaks because she did not want to ask someone to take her place. After she developed a bladder infection, she began to make use of the language and even started to act as a translator between the Italian patients and the medical staff.

Meanwhile the Rocco DiNardo from her past had been released from a prisoners of war camp four years earlier and had made his way back to Italy. He had gone to Ada's parents' house to ask for her hand in marriage. Again.

"My parents wrote me and told me," she says, smiling. "I kinda liked him, you know."

Rocco's entrance into Canada was delayed by two years because her former husband had not been declared dead and a marriage to an immigrant only had a 90 day window. Ada credits Father Ferraro with helping her get a death certificate.

Once in Canada, Rocco DiNardo married Ada DiNardo in 1954 in a ceremony performed by Father Ferraro in St. Antho-

ny's Church.

Ada laughs, remarking how although she married twice, she has never had to change her name. George, her eldest son, speculates that DiNardo is as common a name in Italy as Smith is here.

Rocco and Ada have been married 47 years.

Four sons were born to the DiNardos. Giorgio, Giuliano, Italo and Elio. With the exception of Giuliano, who studied accounting and works at London Life, all are employed in computer and software-related fields.

In order to raise her children, Ada quit work. Four boys were a handful and her sons still remember fondly the door they broke fighting each other, which remains broken today, and the brand new couch they busted almost immediately after its arrival.

"What can you do?" Ada shrugs. "Take a stick to them?"

Ada returned to Italy only once after her arrival in Canada. Twenty-seven years after she left, Ada took her boys for a visit but said that Italy had changed and was not as she remembered it. She currently holds no desire to go back.

"I'm happy. I have my boys," she says. "When I was young I suffered but now I'm here. I'm proud of myself."

Ada has eight grand-children and they flock around her like bees to a flower, eager to hear her stories. Even in their forties, her sons still listen intently as she speaks of her life as do their wives.

Ada isn't the only one proud of what she's accomplished.



Ada Dinardo (second from right) with her parents (seated) and siblings.

Health / Salute



# Villa Marconi

## Health and Social Services Committee

### ANNOUNCEMENT

The group “Taking Care of your Health” is pleased to invite you to four workshops on the following topics:

**1. Are You Taking Care of an Ill Loved One? “Stress and Loneliness”**

Wednesday May 2, 2001: 2:00-4:00 pm  
Speaker: Cristina Begliomini, BA, BSW, MSW, Social Worker. The workshop will be held in Italian language only.

**2. Cardio Vascular Illness: Can we avoid them?**

Tuesday May 15, 2001: 2:00-4:00 pm  
Speaker: Nancy Lauzon, RN, BA, BScN, Health Promotion Nurse, Heart Institute. The workshop will be held in English language with Italian translation.

**3. Keeping Fit and Protecting our Mental Health: Challenging Depression**

Wednesday May 30, 2001: 2:00-4:00 pm  
Speaker: Cristina Begliomini, BA, BSW, MSW, Social Worker. The workshop will be held in Italian language only.

**4. Confronting and Living with Arthritis**

Wednesday, June 13, 2001: 2:00-4:00pm  
Speaker: Marian Falconair, Physiotherapist at the Arthritis Society. The workshop will be held in English language with Italian translation

Il gruppo “Prendiamo cura della nostra salute” ha il piacere d’invitarvi a quattro incontri, che avranno luogo a Villa Marconi, sui seguenti soggetti:

**1. Prendi cura di una persona cara malata? Stress e solitudine**

Mercoledì, 2 maggio 2001: 2:00-4:00pm  
Presentatrice: Cristina Begliomini, BA, BSW, MSW, Social Worker. La conferenza sarà presentata soltanto in lingua italiana

**2. Le malattie cardiovascolari: possiamo evitarle?**

Martedì, 15 maggio 2001: 2:00-4:00pm  
Presentatrice: Nancy Lauzon, RN, BA, BScN, Health Promotion Nurse, Heart Institute. La conferena sarà presentata in lingua inglese con traduzione italiana

**3. Teniamoci in forma e proteggiamo la nostra salute mentale: una sfida alla depressione.**

Mercoledì, 30 maggio, 2001: 2:00-4:00pm  
Presentatrice: Cristina Begliomini, BA, BSW, MSW, Social Worker. La conferenza sarà presentata soltanto in lingua italiana

**4. L’Artrite: viveria ed affrontarla**

Mercoledì, 13 giugno, 2001: 2:00-4:00pm  
Presentatrice: Marian Falconair, Physiotherapist all’Arthritis Society. La conferenza sarà persentata in lingua inglese con traduzione italiana.

Le groupe “Prenons soins de notre santé” sollicite votre participation à quatre séminaires, qui auront lieu à quatre séminaires, qui auront lieu à Villa Marconi, sur les sujets suivants:

1. “Donnes-tu des soins à une personne proche malade?” Stress et solitude

Le Mercredi 2 mai 2001: 2:00 à 4:00 pm  
Conférencière: Cristina Begliomini, travailleuse sociale. La conférence sera donnJe seulement en langue italienne.

2. Les maladies cardio-vasculaires. Pouvons-nous les éviter?

Le mardi 15 mai 2001 de 2:00 à 4:00 pm  
Conférencière: Nancy Lauzon, infirmière responsable de la promotion de la santé, Institut du coeur. La conférence sera donnée en anglais avec traduction en italien.

3. Restons en forme et protegions notre santé. Faisons défi à la dépression.

Le mercredi 30 mai 2001 de 2:00 à 4:00pm  
Conférencière: Cristina Begliomini, travailleuse sociale. La conférence sera donnée seulement en langue italienne.

4. Vivre avec l’arthrite en l’affrontant

Le mercredi 13 juin 2001 de 2:00 à 4:00 pm  
Conférencière: Marion Falconair, physiothérapeute, Société de l’arthrite. La conférence sera donnJe en anglais avec traduction en italien.

Refreshments will be served after each workshop. Please confirm in advance.  
For information and reservation please call the following persons:

Alla fine di ogni incontro sarà servito un piccolo rinfresco.  
Si prega di confermare in quanto i posti sono limitati. Per pernotazioni e ulteriori informazioni potete rivolgervi a:

Un goûter sera servi à la fin de chaque rencontre.  
Prière de confirmer comme les places sont limitées. Pour réservation et information appeler à:

- Cristina Begliomini, 727-6201 ext. 6660
- Pina Giorgio, 228-8628
- Maria Cesare, 225-3665
- Salvatore Lamonica, 733-9766

# 24 Maggio

## La Leggenda del Piave (E. A. Mario)

Il Piave mormorava calmo e placido, al passaggio dei primi fanti, il ventiquattro maggio:

l'Esercito marciava per raggiunger la frontiera, per far contro il nemico una barriera...

Muti passaron quella notte i fanti: tacere bisognava, e andare avanti!

S'udiva intanto dalle amate sponde, sommosso e lieve il tripudiar dell'onde.

**Era un presagio dolce e lusinghiero. Il Piave mormorò: “Non passa lo straniero!”**

Ma in una notte triste si parlò di un fosco evento, e il Piave udiva l'ira e lo sgomento...

Ahi, quanta gente ha visto venir giù, lasciare il tetto, poi che il nemico irruppe a Caporetto!

Profughi ovunque! Dai lontani monti, venivano a gremir tutti i suoi ponti.

S'udiva allor, dalle violate sponde, sommosso e triste il mormorio de l'onde:

**come un singhiozzo, in quell'autunno nero, il Piave mormorò: “Ritorna lo straniero!”**

E ritornò il nemico, per l'orgoglio, per la fame: volea sfogare tutte le sue brame...

Vedeva il piano aprico, di lassù: voleva ancora sfamarsi, e tripudiare come allora...

- No! - disse il Piave. - No! - dissero i fanti, mai più il nemico faccia un passo avanti!

Si vide il Piave rigonfiar le sponde! E come i fanti combattevan le onde...

**Rosso del sangue del nemico altero, il Piave comandò: “Indietro, va', straniero”**

Indietreggiò il nemico fino a Trieste, fino a Trento... E la Vittoria sciolse le ali al vento!

Fu sacro il patto: Tra le schiere furon visti risorgere Oberdan, Sauro, Battisti...

L'onta cruenta e il secolare errore infranse, alfin, l'italico valore.

Sicure l'Alpi... Libere le sponde... E tacque il Piave: si placaron le onde...

**Sul patrio suolo, vinti i torvi Imperi, la Pace non trovò - “né oppressi, né stranieri”.....**

.....finchè un'altra guerra, vent'anni dopo, decise del destino di quelle terre redente, che, avulse dal patrio suolo, furono date ad un altro... “torvo Impero”. Ne seguì la diaspora degli Italiani della Venezia Giulia, dispersi per il mondo, partiti in volontario esilio piuttosto che cedere all'assimilazione slava.

Oggi questi Giuliani, ancora intimamente legati alla Madrepatria, ricordano la data del 24 maggio come inizio della loro liberazione dal giogo austriaco e dell'unione con l'Italia. Guardano ancora alla “*Leggenda del Piave*” come poetico ma tragicamente reale riassunto delle alterne vicende - Piave, Caporetto, Monte Grappa, Vittorio Veneto - eventi tristi e gloriosi, di quella guerra che l'Italia intraprese nella faticida data del 24 maggio e che finX coronata da vittoria.

Per celebrare la ricorrenza del 24 maggio, quest'anno i Giuliano-Dalmati di Ottawa riceveranno la visita dei loro corregionali provenienti da Chatham, Hamilton, Toronto e Montreal, domenica 20 maggio prossimo, per un fraterno incontro.

In tale occasione, la mattina, alle ore 11:15, nella chiesa Sant'Antonio, Mgr. Renato Volante, della Nunziatura Apostolica, triestino di origine, presiederà

una santa messa per onorare i caduti della guerra 1915-1918 e per implorare da Dio la pace del cuore per tutti gli esuli che, nonostante il tempo, la distanza e le fredde leggi di governanti insensibili, continuano - troppo spesso dimenticati - a vivere di ricordi, di nostalgia del suolo natio e di struggente speranza, fedeli all'ideale delle loro giovinezza “*Dio, Patria, Famiglia.*”

La sera di domenica 20 maggio prossimo, i Giuliano-Dalmati si riuniranno nella sala St. Anthony Soccer Club, alle ore 18:30, per festeggiare la ricorrenza della storica data con un incontro conviviale in allegria, seguito da musica, canti e danze.

Noi tutti Giuliani-Dalmato di Ottawa, italiani non per caso ma per scelta e per amore, invitiamo i nostri connazionali pij fortunati, italiani per nascita, ad unirsi a noi in gran numero, per riconoscere insieme il 24 maggio, una data che per tutti i “Fratelli d'Italia”, individui e associazioni d'arma, provenienti da qualsiasi provincia, rimane simbolo di successo, di redenzione, di unione e libertB.

Per informazioni e biglietti preghiera di comunicare con: C. Hribar (225-7469), R. Giurgevich (235-6979), D. Zanini (838-5785).

—Dolores S. Cavallero



## Arts / Arti

# How international ports sweetened the smell of the Roman Empire

by Heather Loubé

The ancient world was a smelly place. According to archaeologist Tom Parker, this made products such as perfumes and its ingredients valuable trading items in the Roman Empire. These valuable commodities and others were the reason for founding of the ancient settlement of Alia, created as a commercial port for the Roman empire and built on a road linking Syria to the Red Sea.

Parker's presentation at the National Library, "*Aila, A Roman Port on the Red Sea*", was the result of several seasons of excavations in what is now Jordan. He was in Ottawa in March to give a series of illustrated talks on the eastern Roman frontier as part of the extensive lecture program of the Archaeological Institute of America.

The AIA sends eminent archaeologists to share their discoveries with local archaeological societies throughout Canada and the United States.

Parker, a professor of History at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, has appeared on a number of television documentaries including *Ancient Mysteries* with Leonard Nimoy. Since 1971 he has been digging around the eastern limits of the Roman Empire in the Middle East.

Aila was located at the southern terminus of the road from Damascus known as the *via nova Traiana*. Connecting Syria to the Red Sea, this road was constructed early in the second century during the reign of the emperor Trajan. The building of this the line of communication along the edge of the desert followed Trajan's

annexation of the kingdom of the Nabataeans and its incorporation into the Roman province of Arabia.

The Nabataeans are best known today for the magnificent rock cut structures of their capital, Petra, a popular destination for travellers to Jordan. In antiquity, Petra was the hub of an international overland trade route linking China, India and Southern Arabia with the markets of the Roman empire.

The Nabataeans established Aila as a transfer point for luxury goods such as myrrh, frankincense and spices coming by ship. While the commercial importance of Aila was appreciated by the Romans, its strategic importance was underlined by the transfer of the famous X Fretensis Legion to Aila about 300 AD. This was the legion that had taken part in sieges of Jerusalem and Masada during the Jewish War.

The hard work of excavating in the heat of the Jordanian summer commenced, hoping to reconstruct the economy of Aila as an international port of the south-eastern frontier of the Roman Empire.

Several seasons of excavations have revealed a wide array of artefacts suggestive of the international trade which passed through the port. The find of a large pottery container with small fish bones in the bottom may indicate that Aila was also a manufacturing site for the favourite Roman condiment of garum.

In the desert environment, fuel required for cooking and manufacturing seems to have come from the dung of animals herded to the port for fresh meat.

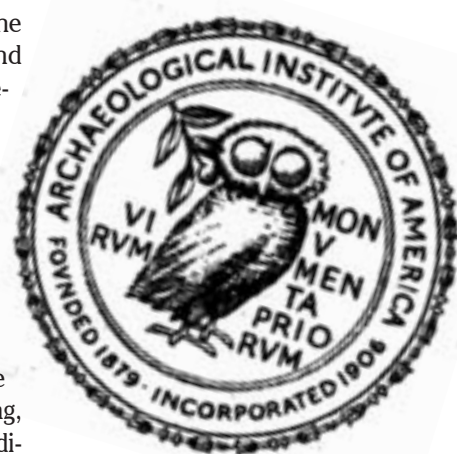
Parker reminded his audience that the ancient world was a smelly place and therefore valued perfume and its ingredients highly. Myrrh and frankincense, derived from the resin of a thorn bush native to Yemen and Somalia, were used not only in perfumes but also in cosmetics and medicines. Arabian frankincense, the most important variety in ancient world, was widely burnt as a religious offering.

Spices were also used for fragrance in perfumes, flavouring wines, cooking, and medicines. Such valuable commodities were unloaded from the ships onto camels at Aila. The camels with their 600 pound loads then headed for Gaza on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Although the existence of the commercial and military centre was known from ancient writers, the remains of ancient Aila were no longer visible. Showing his audience aerial satellite photographs of astonishing clarity and plans of scatters of surface artefacts, Parker demonstrated how he was able to pinpoint the location of the once prosperous port.

A large square outline thought to be the legionary fortress proved to be of disappointingly later Islamic construction. However, mud brick buildings and segments of the stone city wall provided greater but unexpected rewards.

Part of the later city wall was erected over an earlier mud brick structure which appears to have been a fourth century Christian church. It is this building which has been the special project of local archaeologist, Dr. Mary Louis Mussell, and



students from both Carleton and the University of Ottawa.

Reunited for Parker's lecture at the National Library, the students shared their experiences with an interested audience while enjoying the vin d'honneur graciously offered by the Mario Boffo, Cultural Attache for the Embassy of Italy.

The presentation on Aila was sponsored by the Ottawa Hull Society of the AIA, with support from the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies and the National Congress of Italian Canadians. Parker concluded his visit to Ottawa with two more lectures at the University of Ottawa and Carleton the following day.

The Ottawa Hull Society of the Archaeological Institute of America will be hosting a new series of illustrated talks beginning in the fall. They invite all interested in exploring new frontiers with archaeologists distinguished in their field. For further information, visit their Web site at <http://phrontisterion.uottawa.ca/aia>.

## Opinions / Opinione

## Storia dimenticata

di Carletto Caccia

Si capisce subito quando si ha un buon libro tra le mani. È questo il caso del libro di Deliso Villa intitolato "Storia dimenticata" la cui seconda edizione è stata curata dall'Ente Vicentini nel mondo. La storia dimenticata è quella dell'emigrazione italiana che, nel corso dei secoli, ha coinvolto 27 milioni di Italiani.

L'autore inizia con una rassegna concisa dei mali che affliggevano la giovane nazione italiana nella seconda metà del diciannovesimo secolo. Per dirla con le stesse parole dell'autore: "Nella nuova Italia tutto era diviso: la Destra tra conservazione e modernizzazione, la Sinistra tra riforme e rivoluzione, i Socialisti tra rivendicazioni e anarchia, i Cattolici tra rifiuto e conciliazione. Lo stato era molto fragile: poggiava su una sola classe, su una borghesia ancora scarsa, egoista, impaurita. Le classi popolari non avevano il diritto di voto. Per loro lo stato era un padrone abusivo da combattere con tutte le forze. L'emigrazione italiana nasce da questo contesto."

Tra i tanti citati nel libro, merita ricordare l'episodio dei contadini del Montello ai quali lo

stato confiscò i 6.000 ettari bosco su cui vivevano a migliaia, costringendoli ad emigrare in massa in Brasile dove coltivarono "le piane del caffè al posto degli schiavi negri appena liberati." Oppure l'episodio raccapricciante del linciaggio di 13 italiani New Orleans nel 1891, motivato unicamente da ragioni razziali. Nel libro si parla delle donne che rimanevano a casa mentre i mariti "facevano l'America" e si assumevano le responsabilità della famiglia e il peso di lunghe separazioni. Si parla dell'immenso contributo coesivo della religione che, indipendentemente dalla religiosità di ciascuno, ha unito con feste e processioni gli emarginati, che nelle chiese trovavano un centro di ritrovo non solo fisico, ma di identità.

Ai nostri giorni si raccolgono i frutti di due secoli di sofferenze, sacrifici e del grosso contributo economico dell'emigrazione. Gli emigrati italiani sono usciti dalle "Little Italies" per arrivare ai più alti vertici della vita politica, industriale e commerciale dei paesi in cui vivono.

Il libro di Deliso Villa ci aiuta a ricordare, perché dalla storia abbiamo molto da imparare.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### May 6, Sunday, after the 11:00am Mass

Refreshments for the Feast of St. Domenic

St. Anthony's Community Hall

### May 12, Saturday

The Miracle of St. Domenic

Lakeside Gardens

Hosted by the Associazione Pretorese

### May 13, Sunday

Museum's Day 2001

Billings Estate Museum

Free Admission all day 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

### May 19, Saturday

Feast of St. Leo

Hosted by the Circolo Sammartinese di Ottawa

St. Anthony's Soccer Club

### May 26, Saturday

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Bowling League of Castropignano

St. Anthony's Soccer Club

Arts / Arti

# Behind the scenes of *Il Trovatore* Sharon Graham as Azucena

By Laura D'Amelio  
and Fiona Story

The magnificent arias, artistic sets and powerful music combine to make a spectacular presentation of Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. What combines to be a story of love, power and jealousy on stage is the work of a talented cast and stage crew.

One member of this cast is Sharon Graham, playing the part of Azucena, a grief-ridden gypsy out to avenge her mother's death. In the rush of dress rehearsal Graham nods her approval of this role and states that she is "very honoured to perform this part." Both Azucena and Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* have been her favourite characters to play.

As a makeup artist hovers around Graham mixing colours and searching for the right brush, Graham explains her reasoning. She must speak over the sounds of a tuning orchestra and men in soldiers uniforms clamouring past the door.

"They are both so all-encompassing," says Graham from her place in the makeup chair, "they both have tremendous dramatic demands and also some of the glorious music God ever put on the page. They are both very fulfilling and very difficult emotionally."

Graham goes on to say that she loves parts that are psychologically intriguing, which most of Verdi's characters tend to be, slightly distracted by someone rushing in to tell her that her hair looks great. A jumble of straight and curly bits mixed in with her natural hair sits atop her head. She is "witchified" through the makeup and costume process, which is just one challenge to this role.

"Initially, when I was first learning the

part, vocally it was unbelievably demanding. And then, as with a lot of the great acting/singing parts I get to do, you have to find the line between singing and acting. You can't go overboard in the 'physicalisation' of the part that you tire yourself out so that you can't really sing it."

Graham has performed this role before, most notably in Edmonton and Calgary where the production was noticeably different. "There was not a rock, not a chair, not a wall," says Graham about the minimal set, "So this, to me, to have something to lean on is good. This much more traditional production that the one I did in Edmonton and Calgary."

After working across this country and in many other countries, Graham has had a positive experience in Canada. "I have met some wonderful colleagues who have now become dear friends of mine," says Graham of her Canadian productions. She adds that the Canadian opera scene compares "quite favourably" to the international stage.

The international opera star has picked up a few languages, including Italian, to help her along the way. Graham learned Italian as part of a young artist program in Chicago where her teacher, from La Scala in Italy, spoke no English, while Graham spoke no Italian.

"About a year later, I spoke Italian and he still spoke no English," says Graham with a laugh. Picking up Italian has been hugely helpful to her career she says, citing that it is very difficult to sing parts and pick up rhythms if you don't know what you are saying.

Graham came into the business "atypically" as she has no formal music training or education and wasn't raised in the art form as many young artists are. Once she began taking voice lesson she

found the challenges unparalleled.

"It's a totally unique art form," says Graham, who performed her first opera in her early twenties, "and I am also very much drawn to the complexity of the art form including the orchestra and the costume and the great people like Liz making me look wild." She gestures to the woman hunched over her forehead, painting black eyebrows almost an inch thick over her natural ones with a small brush. The makeup is supposed to look realistic from about 15 metres away.

"Opera is just like looking at a great painting that you can look at for hours at a time," she concludes, "It's very complicated, it's something you can spend a lot of time with before you really even understand it."

The cast has been very busy preparing for the long-awaited performance. "Because of the demands of the repertoire, we aren't out a lot sightseeing," says Graham who quickly asks for recommendations on a good Italian trattoria in the area in case she has time to visit one.

She doubts she will have the time though and she was probably right. Graham left April 29, the day following the last show, to return home to her six-year-old daughter Francesca in California.

## Opera Lyra wraps up another successful season

by Monique Moreau

Ending their 2000-2001 series, Opera Lyra Ottawa paid tribute to the one-hundredth anniversary of the death of Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi by performing his classic opera, *Il Trovatore*. In its sixteenth year under the general direction of Tyrone Paterson, this is Opera Lyra's first production of the piece.

Opening on April 23 at the National Arts Center, *Il Trovatore*, sponsored in part by the Italian Cultural Centre of Eastern Ontario, was hailed as an "explosion of lust, murder and revenge". Playing to a nearly full house with English and French supertitles, the opera was very well directed.

Renowned Czech stage director Ludec Golat featured his talents in creating fantastic scenes, most of which provided the right amount of movement and artistry but did not distract the audience from the music and the singing, the essence of opera in the end.

*Il Trovatore* tells the story of corruption and passion, linking the Count di Luna, the gypsy Azucena and the duchess Leonora. These characters are over the top and large than life, which must be taken into consideration when casting these roles.

"You need strong voices to handle these characters," says Patterson. He believes that the character Leonora, played by Barbara Livingston, is one of the most difficult roles to sing, for it requires not only a decisive strength but a lightness as well.

At a reception held by the Italian Cultural Centre and the Embassy of Italy after the performance, the cast joined members of the audience to celebrate the performance. Many members of the Italian community were in attendance for a presentation of a poster of the opera, signed by the cast, to the Italian Cultural Centre of Eastern Ontario Inc., for their contributions to the production.

Also in attendance was Lenny Lombardi, president of Chin radio, based in Toronto. Lombardi was in Ottawa in part to strengthen his bid to the CRTC for a new FM station in Ottawa.

"There is definitely a market here," insists Lombardi. Chin is a multi-language radio station that broadcasts in over thirty languages.

Among the five principle singers - all making their Opera Lyra Ottawa debut - is Barbara Livingston, who plays the principle role of Leonora. She was "not too nervous this go around," she says. "This is my third time singing this role so it has allowed me to focus on the freedom of my character."

Making her debut later than most opera singers, she is a classic Verdian soprano. When asked about the stamina required for her role, she is quick to respond that she builds strength off the music and the energy of the audience. "The audience definitely has an effect on the show. You can feel it when they're enjoying themselves."

Overcoming a sinus infection just before the run of the opera, Ms. Livingston performed beautifully. "I could do it again right now!" she exclaimed.

Opera Lyra's 2001-2002 season is fast approaching with another company debut: Richard Strauss's *Salome*, followed by Puccini's *La Bohème*. The company will also join the NAC Orchestra for the Black and White Soirée, as well as presentations of Mozart and the Magic Flute from their Young Artists Programme. For subscriptions and more information please contact Opera Lyra Ottawa at (613) 233-9200 or Ticketmaster at (613) 755-1111.



After enjoying *Il Trovatore*, members of the Italian community gather at a reception to chat with the artists.



PHOTO: ANGELO FILOSO



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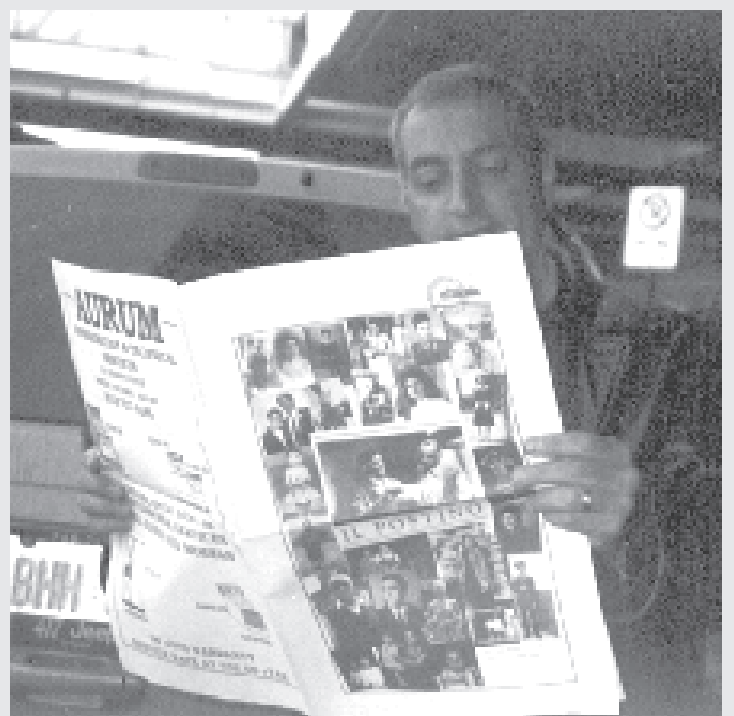
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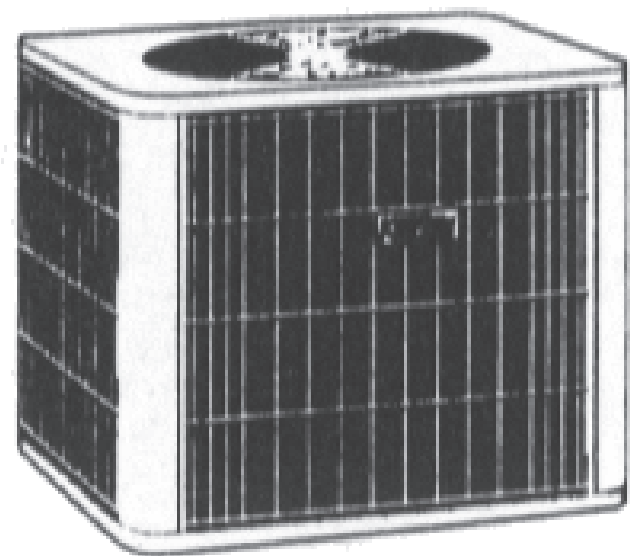
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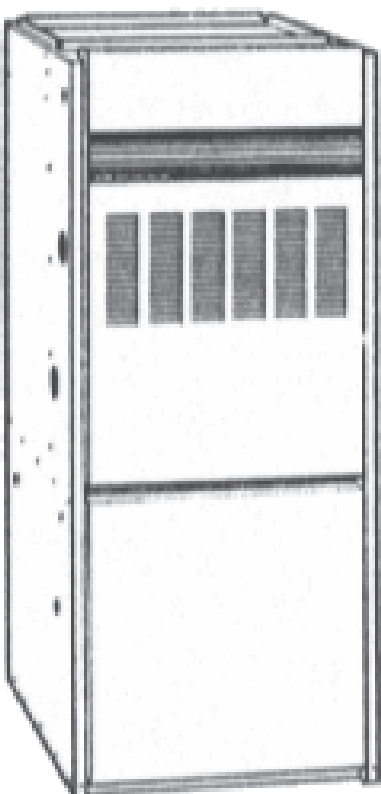
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