

Famous Italian Women Issue

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*The Newsletter of the
Lancaster Italian Cultural Society
Volume 21 & Issue 3 August 2019*



L'Osservatore Lancastriano

President's Message

Carissimi Amici,

Buona l'estate ai nostri membri!

Please save the date for our next event, the **Summer Picnic**, on September 8th, at 12 PM. We hope you can join us for this Italian themed old-fashioned family picnic, with food and fun activities for all ages.

The picnic location is the Salunga Park Pavilion, located next to the fire station, 19 W. Main St., in Landisville.

Also, please save the date for the return of LICS Spaghetti Dinner, which will be held at St. Philip the Apostle Church in Millersville, on October 26, 2019. **Yes, the Spaghetti Dinner is back! Details soon...**

Articles in this issue focus on some famous Italian women, historical ladies who would impact Italy and the world.

Cordiali saluti,

Rudy DeLaurentis



May General Meeting Report

by David Ferruzza

It was a "Great Meeting"!

On May 19, 2019 about 80 members and guests gathered to enjoy food for the body and for the mind.

For the body – An Italian Buffet.

For the mind – Our own member, historian and artist FRED RODGER presented *Florence and the Birth of the Renaissance*.

Fred's talk guided us through hundreds of years of Italy's formative history: From the provincial pride of individual states and their warfare against each other to an eventual

unification of the various states on the Italian Peninsula into a country, Italia, in March, 1861.

Fred showed and described the works of Italian artists, explaining how color and position on paintings were used to convey deep meaning to a largely unschooled population. He directed our thoughts back to the 1300s and 1400s when



artists began to explore how to depict space and depth, transforming their work from one-dimensional, almost inanimate art, to vibrant paintings with perspective and volume.

We all left with smiles on our faces from having learned some Italian history and some aspects of Renaissance art -- all presented by Fred with good humor.

Side note: To parallel the theme on art, one of the displays was a table loaded with some of the hundreds of "Thank You" creations sent to LICS by K-12 students whose art education has been enhanced by "Adopt-a-Classroom" support from LICS's "Education Initiative."



LICS Attends the Humanity Fest

by David Ferruzza

On Saturday morning April 27, LICS was one of about 20 organizations with displays in Musser Park. LICS's marquee hosted about 80 visitors who put a pin in a world map to show where their ancestors were born. While in LICS's marquee, they learned a little about LICS. We gave them flyers: One telling about LICS, one with a few recipes, one telling about trips. Several of the visitors gave us their email addresses so we could provide them with further information. Among LICS's representatives were four new members: Josephine & Sebastiano Santore, and Eric & Emily Badaracco; along with board members Steve Iovino, Nella Seward, Rosemary LaFata, David Ferruzza and Mary Cae Williams.



Above: LICS put up a marquee at Lancaster's celebration of diversity known as Humanity Fest.

Maria Montessori
by *Mary Cae Williams*



Maria Montessori was born on August 31, 1870, in Chiaravalle, near Ancona in the Marche Region of Italy. It was the era of Italy's Unification, when the many, separate city-states and small kingdoms on the Italian Peninsula were being united into one country. Maria Montessori grew up in a time that saw major advances in industry, science, and medicine throughout the Western world. In her life, she embodied the energy, optimism, and creativity of the times. As a physician, she stepped out of traditional roles assigned to women. As an educational innovator, she stepped onto the world stage, promoting a fundamental change in approaches to teaching and guiding children's development. As a woman of faith, nominated three times for the Nobel Prize, she advocated for peace in the world.

When Maria was a young woman, she chose to study engineering, a field not considered appropriate for women. As time went on, however, she became interested in medicine. Persisting against many obstacles, she graduated with a degree in medicine, becoming one of the first women in Italy to achieve this. During her medical studies, for example, she was prevented from participating in anatomy classes alongside male students. She had to complete her work after the others had left for the day. Her father brought her into the lab and then took her home each night when she had completed her

assignments.

Dr. Montessori accepted a position as an assistant doctor at the Psychiatric Clinic, University of Rome, working with "defective" children. Today, we would consider these children to be intellectually challenged, have learning differences, or to be experiencing other non-normative development. They were kept in bare surroundings with little or nothing to occupy their hands or minds. The story goes that she observed a young child, sitting on the floor, taking crumbs and arranging them in different ways. An attendant said something like, "See, they are so damaged that they play with crumbs." According to the story, Maria realized that the child was making order out of the only materials available. From this observation, she began to research the work of others and to experiment on her own, to provide these children with materials that would occupy their hands productively and stimulate their minds.

At some point, her "defectives" demonstrated the ability to read, calculate, and write, often in ways that were in advance of their normally-developing peers in the state run schools. This amazing success brought attention and fame to Dr. Montessori. Benito Mussolini asked her to take charge of all Italian education, but their collaboration was short-lived, because Montessori's method emphasized growth and development along individual lines rather than training children to conform to a series of predetermined lessons. Dr. Montessori spent the rest of her life refining and expanding her method, curriculum, and learning materials. She started schools in India and the Netherlands as well as providing the model for schools to be started in the United States. Today, there are Montessori schools all over the world.

Living through two world wars, the rise of Fascism, the dropping of the atom bomb, and the rapid advance of technology used for war, Dr. Montessori responded by developing her concept of peace through education.

She believed that the causes of war were rooted in what she called the "deformation of the human spirit" through restrictive methods of education that pressured children to conform to pre-existing expectations rather than supporting them to develop according to their inborn capacities. She spoke and wrote that it was adults, still suffering from this stunting early experience, who were vulnerable to the lure of warfare and the propaganda of demagogues. Her work to lay the foundations for peace in the world gave her international acclaim, including nomination for the Nobel Peace prize.



Dr. Maria Montessori died of a cerebral hemorrhage on May 6, 1952 at the age of 82. For some, her work is a guiding light to a better and more enlightened way to treat children with respect. Her writings require teachers to be guides, to consider themselves as assistants in each child's journey to discover her own talents, interests and abilities, and to provide each child with the tools needed to master the skills required to be independent, capable, and contributing adults. To others, she is a quaint footnote in the history of educational theory. To many, she is simply unknown. Regardless of the perspective one has on her work, she stands out as a pioneer for women's rights, an innovator in education, and a voice for promoting peace in the world. She was an Italian, who shared her values, insights, and abilities with the world.

Source: **Maria Montessori: A Biography** by Rita Kramer



Italian Women of Note

Prior to Maria Montessori, there were several women who made or changed Italy; famous and pioneer women in the fields of politics, sciences, arts, medicine, mathematics or education.

Some women were active in astronomy, botany, medicine, natural philosophy, mathematics, teaching patronage, and translation during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, as some of their sisters had been during the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Often families and teachers educated women in science and other fields in order to increase their own prestige. Interestingly, there was a widespread belief amongst Italian men that some women were exceptional, and raised above their status (as women), and therefore could receive an education on par with men.

In chronological order are examples of nine more exceptional women:

Trotula of Salerno (11th and 12th centuries), lived sometime in the eleventh century in Salerno in southern Italy and she occupied the chair of medicine at the School of Salerno. She was the author of many medical works, the most notable being *Passionibus Mulierum Curandorum* (The Diseases of Women). She wrote it to educate male medics about the female body, because such knowledge was generally lacking.

The book comprises sixty three chapters and gives information about menses, conception, pregnancy, childbirth, as well as general diseases and their treatments. Her work influenced physicians in the following centuries.

Saint Catherine of Siena (1347 – 1380), a lay woman associated with the Dominican Order, was a mystic, activist, and author who had a great influence on Italian literature and the Catholic Church. Canonized in 1461, she is also a Doctor of the Church.

Catherine acted as an ambassador and counselor to Popes Gregorio XI and Urbano VI. As such, she

participated in an active manner in the Great Western Schism or Papal Schism which would forever change the life and course of history in the Italian peninsula. She is one of the only three women saints, along with Teresa of Avila and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, to have been declared Doctors of the Church.

Dorotea Bucca (1360-1436), was a doctor and professor of Medicine at the University of Bologna. She was one of the first scientists to open the science field to women in Europe. She was the first female professor to be accepted onto the board of the university of Bologna, where she became a chair of Medicine and Philosophy for over forty years.

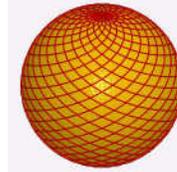


Artemisia Lomi Gentileschi (1593 – 1653). Considered the first great female Italian painter, Artemisia was the first female painter to become a member of the Accademia di Arte del Disegno in Florence, at a time when women did not have the possibility of studying anatomy or drawing from life. Painting during the Baroque Period, she is considered one of the most accomplished painters in the generation after Caravaggio, who influenced her work. In her honor, LICS created the Artemisia Gentileschi Art Award (for young artists).

Elena Cornaro Piscopia (1646 - 1684). Elena Cornaro Piscopia was a Venetian mathematician and the first woman in the world to be officially awarded a university degree. She

graduated from Padua University in 1678.

Celia Grillo Borromeo (1684 – 1777), was a Genovese mathematician and scientist who was famous for her ability to solve every mathematical problem presented to her. In 1728, Borromeo discovered the so-called Clelie curve : $q = mf$, shown below.



She was also versed in linguistics and spoke eight languages.

Maria Gaetana Agnesi (1718 – 1799), is credited with writing the first book discussing both differential and integral calculus. She was an honorary member of the faculty at the University of Bologna. Some mathematicians consider her the first important woman mathematician since Hypatia (a neoplatonist philosopher of the fifth century A.D. and the first notable woman in mathematics).

Eleonora de Fonseca Pimentel (1752 – 1799), was an Italian poet and revolutionary connected with the Neapolitan revolution and one of the few personalities capable of importing the values of the French Revolution into Italy. She became a reference for the Neapolitan culture and one of the leaders of the revolution that overthrew the Bourbon monarchy and installed the republic in January 1799.

Virginia Oldoini (1837 – 1899), known as La Castiglione, was an Italian aristocrat, and the cousin of Camillo, Count of Cavour, who was a minister to Victor Emmanuel II, king of Sardinia (that included Piedmont and Savoy). When the Count and Countess traveled to Paris in 1855, the Countess was under her cousin's instructions and Virginia became special agent for the cause of Italian unification. She achieved notoriety by becoming Napoleon III's mistress. Virginia is remembered as a subject of 700 different photographs in which she re-created the signature moments of her life for the camera.

Source material for *Italian Women of Note*, edited by RD:
<http://slowitaly.yourguidetoitaly.com/2012/03/15-women-who-changed-italy/>,
 by Slow Italy®.



Selfie of Virginia Oldoini, taken in 1863.



Membership Report

As of July 2019, we have 185 members/families.

Welcome New Members!

Marian Caroselli & John Mason

Daniel & Heidi Cicala

Tony & Susan DelVecchio

Steven and Margaret Miller

James and Kathleen (Moretto) Spencer

Janet Townsend

Thank you for joining our family!

Get Well Wishes to:

John Scheuerman, Jr., son of Dee and John Viscardi.

Our Condolences to:

Anthony Lombardo Sr. and Family on the passing of his wife, Theresa "Terri" Lombardo.

Sam and Joan Fulginiti on the passing of his sister, Doris Elaine Flory.

Congratulations to:

Andrea and Tim Hoover on the birth of a daughter, Madison Grace. She is the granddaughter of Sylvia and Bud Handwerk.



Costco Italian Products

I'm pleasantly surprised by the quantity and quality of Italian foodstuffs from our local Costco store. I find the imported cheeses, olive oil, vinegar and pesto to be outstanding in taste and in value.

The cheeses include a 24+ month aged Parmigiano-Reggiano, a Pecorino Romano, fresh mozzarella, and Mozzarella di Bufala (a mozzarella made from the milk of domestic water buffalo), when available. The latest import is Lemon Ricotta, which is delicious and tastes like lemon cheese cake. A slice of the lemon ricotta with some fresh berries and a drizzle of aged balsamic vinegar (Aceto Balsamico di Modena) is a wonderful dolce (dessert).

The Kirkland Signature Extra Virgin Olive Oil Toscano (from Tuscany) is excellent for salads, dipping and on just about anything. The vibrant green Extra Virgin Olive Oil is from olives grown in the hills of Tuscany, which are picked beginning in mid-October. Cold-pressed, within a few hours of harvesting, the oil displays a full-bodied elegant aroma with a distinctive, rich, fruity overtone.



Basil pesto is one of my favorite dressings for pasta. We grow basil every summer and used to make pesto once a week. Even with many plants, it can be hard to have enough basil to last the summer. So now, I buy Costco's Kirkland Signature Expect More Italian Basil Pesto, which is essentially pine nuts, basil, extra virgin olive oil and cheese. Kirkland Signature uses 100% Genovese basil from Italy (where pesto originated). *Delizioso!*

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Fresh chopped basil can be added along with some grated parmigiano to the basil pesto to intensify and stretch the amount used to dress the pasta. I have also discovered **Barilla** Gluten Free Pasta, which is a good option for those trying to reduce their gluten consumption. The Barilla® Gluten Free Oven-Ready Lasagna is a delicious blend of corn and rice, and has a taste and texture like classic lasagna. Try it, you'll like it!

by Rudy DeLaurentis



Fall 2019 Italian Classes



As a service to LICS members and the Lancaster community, LICS is offering Italian Language classes to members and guests, on consecutive Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., in Room #11 at St. John Neumann Church, September 9 through October 28. The first section at 6:30 PM is limited to 14 students. If needed, a second section will meet at 8:00 PM.

The cost for the eight-week course is \$60.00/student for members who joined prior to July 31, 2019, and \$80.00/student for non-members.

Tuition is \$70 for students who enroll concurrently with becoming LICS members at the \$45 rate, thereby gaining full benefits of LICS membership through to the end of 2020.

The classes are casual and will introduce students to the basics of the language: Greetings, Pleasantries, Menus and Dining in Restaurants, Shopping, Directions, Important Words to Know in Italian, and some basic grammar.

The instructor, **Fiorella Spidaliere**, is a native born Italian speaker who has an extensive background in teaching Italian. Her beautiful voice and expressiveness make the language come alive. Prepare to have some fun, meet new people, & parla Italiano bene.

In Spring 2019, a student satisfaction survey found, "If friends interested in learning a little Italian asked me about this course, I would recommend it?" 75% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, and 5% were neutral.

Please register for classes before August 31, 2019. To register, call David Ferruzza, 717-569-6909 between 10 AM and 8 PM, or email him at - ferruzzad@etown.edu.



Italian Expressions, Ancora!

Stare con le mani in mano.

To hold your hands with your own hand. *To sit on your hands.*

Non ci piove.

It doesn't rain on it.

No doubt about it!

Chiodo scaccia chiodo.

A nail drives out another nail

You'll get over it.

Avere un diavolo per capello.

To have a demon for each hair.

To be mad as hell.

Da che pulpito viene la predica!

Look from which pulpit this sermon is coming! *Look who's talking!*

A buon intenditor poche parole -

Few words (are sufficient) for the good listener.

A poco a poco - By little and little

A prima vista - At first sight

A vostro comodo - At your leisure, at your convenience

Altro che! - Certainly;

I should think so.

Badate a' fatti vostri! -

Mind your own business!

Bene placito - At pleasure

Bravissimo - Exceedingly well done

Breve orazione penetra -

God listens to short prayers.

Capo d'anno - New Year's Day

Così fan tutti -

That is the way of the world.

Danari fanno danari -

Money makes money.

Del male non fare e paura non avere

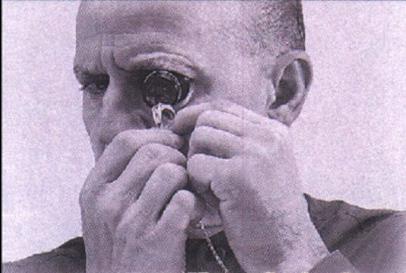
- Do no evil and have no fear.

Meglio tardi che mai -

Better late than never



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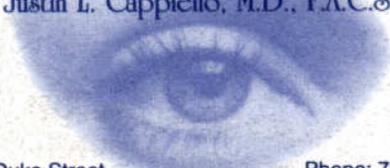
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L'OSSERVATORE LANCASTRIANO August, 2019

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Upcoming LICS Events

Please join us for some fun trips & programs!

Sunday, September 8th, at 12 PM - Summer Picnic
at the Salunga Park Pavilion, located next to the fire station,
19 W. Main St., Landisville, PA

Saturday, October 26th, Spaghetti Dinner at St. Philip the Apostle Church

Ladies Luncheon - 12:30 p.m., First Wednesday of the Month

Please call Dolores Biedenkapp at 717- 394-3823
for location and to make a reservation.