



tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

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HER MEMORY WILL LIVE ON IN IFAA

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you as your acting President. The wonderful, vivacious woman we all loved, Jane P. Ferro, passed away in November. After a six-month battle with lung cancer, she went to join her beloved husband, Leonard. Never again will we have such a president. Jane was a talented musician, a singer, a writer, and a dance choreographer. She was a person who took time to listen and act on what she heard. She also was a loving person. Jane had a personality that could charm the leaves off the trees. Even the most difficult person would respond favorably to her reasoning.

Since Italian music and heritage were so important to Jane, her twin children, Mary Ferro Salopek and Vincent Ferro, have established the Jane P. Ferro Music Scholarship Fund. Donations in her memory can be sent to: The Italian Sons and Daughters of America, 419 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Cards of condolences to the family can be sent to Mary Salopek and Vincent Ferro, 1000 Valora Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15220.

Yours in folklore,
Anna Marie Flori

[Editor's note: This letter was sent out previously to directors of current performing group members, but we wanted to publish it again in *Tradizioni* for those who may not have already received this information.]

Mamma!

by Prof./Cav. Philip J. DiNovo

When I think of mamma, I think of two words: love and sacrifice. We venerate mothers who sacrifice of their time and energy for the children. Their sacrifice is in favor of a good end, a loving choice. Mothers sacrifice a great deal of personal freedom when they choose to have children. Most mothers found that the good obtained in motherhood outweighs the cost.

Mamma, *sento la mano tua, stanca* (mamma, I feel your tired hand) ... *Sento e la voce ti manca* (I hear your voice and I miss you) ... My mother had five children; my paternal grandmother had nine children. Those words are very, very true. My mother was born in the United States; she was Italian and American. Her mother was born in Italy. She was in poor health so my mother left grade school to help her mother raise my mother's five sisters. My mother urged her children to marry Italians, and three of us did; two didn't. She often used the word *puttana* (whore) when talking about very bad behavior. Women knew not to smoke in front of my mother.

My two sisters hated Saturdays; they had to get up early to help my mother clean the house. Our home was so clean, you could eat off the floor. Oh, how my sisters hated Saturdays! And yet, my sisters are as clean as my mother was. I am sure that my sisters thought that my mother was old-fashioned, yet they built their identity from my mother. *Una buona femmina* was part of my mother's strategy in bringing up her daughters.

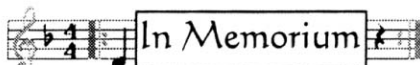
We were a handful. She didn't want to break our spirit. She was strict, but she had to be. I am sure she wished for more wisdom and a little more strength.

Dutifully, my parents named their four children after their parents. When my youngest brother was born, he was given my dad's name. My mother always wanted one of her grandchildren to be given her first name, Rose. My mother passed away on October 10, 1967, at the age of fifty-seven. After she passed away, one of my nieces was named Holly Rose.

The stress on my mother and grandmothers was staggering. Their needs were subordinated to those of their children. The women in my life worked ceaselessly for the good of their family. All those squabbles they settled, all those boring and routine jobs, a child that needed extra attention, short nights and tired days, and washing that never reached bottom. If that wasn't enough, all those meals, and all the cold food after the children had been served. Suffered pain, broken confidences, and disappointed expectations were all part of their lives. My mother lost an infant. The path of suffering is a mystery because it can only be traveled by the sufferer and God.

As I get older, I have become more reflective. I think of all the sacrifices my parents made for us. I wish I had thanked them more and let them know how much I appreciated all they did for me. Only a mother knows the joy that their children bring. The rewards are bountiful as children grow older. My parents were very proud of their children, and our success brought them joy.

It is quite an adventure to be a mother. It was fulfillment to my mother. I thank God for my mother, grandmothers, and godmother, and, if you feel as I do, you, too, are blessed. Mamma, fond memories have slowly blotted out the rawness of sorrow. I look forward to being with you in heaven one day.



In Memorium

Remembering Jane Ferro

I was introduced to Jane at my first IFAFA Conference in Des Moines in 1988. I remember feeling somewhat intimidated, thinking that the name *Ferro* was certainly appropriate; this woman seemed as unbendable as iron! But I soon came to learn that, behind that commanding attitude, was a heart of gold, a fervent and unwavering love of all things related to Italy, and a caring concern to spread that love to everyone she met, even if she had to hit you over the head with it! Now that was something we could share!

In the past four or five years, especially working with Jane on *Tradizioni* and providing dance and InterNet workshops at conferences, I feel I came to know her as well as one can when communicating mainly by email. During the last couple of years, we would often email one another almost weekly, sometimes for IFAFA business, sometimes just to talk about our families and the importance of passing on the Italian heritage and the love of that heritage. She was a role model for her family – and for all of us – in that capacity.

I don't know how many of you use email frequently. I am "hooked up" at work and at home, and there are times when I open up my email to find 30 or more messages; I usually dread having to go through them all. But I always scanned the list to see if anything had arrived from Jane because I knew that it would become a highlight of my day. I truly miss receiving those little messages from her.

We are all proud of everything that Jane achieved during her lifetime, and we can only hope to accomplish as much ourselves. I think of Jane often. As much as we try to carry on where she left off, she is irreplaceable.

—JSC

ITALIAN-AMERICAN WEB SITE OF N. Y.

One of the most complete web sites almost exclusively for Italian Americans is the *Italian-American Web Site of New York*, founded by Joe Anastasio. Anyone in search of an Italian-American organization, whether it be NIAF (the National Italian American Foundation), ISDA (Italian Sons and Daughters of America), Sons of Italy, UNICO, or NOIAW (National Organization of Italian American Women), will certainly find it at this web site, plus more. Through this site, you will also be able to locate Italian books, music, food, and other products to buy on the InterNet. If you type in "<http://www.italian-american.com>" or just type in "Italian American Web Site of New York" in your computer search engine, you will be able to access the site.

Mr. Anastasio has graciously given us space on his site under "Italian Organizations." Just before press time, our new multi-link website created by Jackie Capurro had just been placed on-line! You can reach the IFAFA page directly by entering "<http://www.italian-american.com/itafa/welcome.htm>". There are still some minor glitches that are being resolved, but it is up and running, so check back often. I feel very positive that this will surely bring new members into IFAFA: we've already had several contacts! Check it out: you'll like what you see!

—AMF

I CAMPAGNOLI FACE A DOUBLE LOSS

I Campagnoli dance troupe of Pittsburgh, PA, had to face two losses last year. Jane P. Ferro, director, and Mary Ella Bertolo, dancer, both passed away in late 1998.



Mary Ella and her husband Henry joined *I Campagnoli* in 1965. She was known for her magical renditions of true Calabrian *tarantelle* which she learned from her father and which she demonstrated in performances throughout Pennsylvania, from Florida to Colorado, and on the troupe's Italy tour. She was known among *I Campagnoli* dancers as the "Queen of the Tarantella."

Mary Ella leaves behind her husband Henry, a daughter and four sons, and nine grandchildren.



Jane P. Ferro took over the direction of *I Campagnoli* from its founder Lorenzo Malfatti in the early 60s. She and her husband Leonard, who passed away in 1995, led the group in new directions, traveling far and wide to share the love of their Italian folklore. Above all, Jane directed music with a fervor that inspired excellence and dignity.

Some of Jane's favorite performances were their debut at Carnegie Hall in 1964, the opening of Disney's Epcot Center in Florida, a series of performances in Italy, and Luciano Pavarotti's birthday celebration at the Pittsburgh Civic Arena.

At Pavarotti's birthday "party," sponsors were fearful that Italian folk music would not be accepted by the 500 "high-brow" opera fans. Their fears were calmed when the famed tenor led the way by singing along as *I Campagnoli* opened their show with *Quel Mazzolin' di Fiori*!

Jane leaves the legacy of her love of Italian folklore to her daughter Mary Ferro Salopek who will continue the direction of *I Campagnoli*, her son Vincent who is a classical guitarist, her five grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.



Jane and Mary Ella will be sadly missed by members of both *I Campagnoli* and IFAFA. They were stellar examples of our Italian-American heritage.

[Some of the information in this article was taken from articles printed in two Pittsburgh newspapers: *The Union* and the *Post-Gazette*.]

IFAFA MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS

IFAFA offers its congratulations to . . .

- Our Founder, Cav. Elba Gurzau, who celebrated her 90th birthday on April 17! Her family threw her a big birthday bash in Philadelphia.
- Maria Miletta Chobany on successful completion of her term as President of the Italian Club of Dallas, Texas. She is one of the directors of ICD's Folk Performing Groups *I Colori Italiani* and *I Piccoli Colori*, and recipient of ICD's prestigious *Emilio Biondi Award*. Maria co-chaired the 1993 IFAFA Conference in Dallas and is a familiar leader of conference workshops, especially for children.
- Lucia (Lucy) Caracci Cullens on her investiture as Honorary Vice Consul of Buffalo, NY, June 26, 1998. Lucy is Director of *Il Coro Alpino* and chaired IFAFA's 1997 Conference in Buffalo.

CANZONE: L'INVERNO È PASSATO

Here's an appropriate song for leaving winter behind and celebrating the arrival of May.

Lento assai

1. L'in-ver-no è pas-sa-to, l'a-pri-le non c'è più. È
 2. La bel-la al-la fi-nes-tra là guar-dain su-e in giù. L'a-

ri-tor-na-toj! mag-gio
 pet-ta il pro-mes-so al cas-to del cù-cù. Cù-cù, cù-cù, l'a-là

pri-le non c'è più. È ri-tor-na-toj! mag-gio
 guar-dain su-e in giù. L'a-s-pet-ta il pro-mes-so al cas-to del cù-cù.

SURFING THE WEB: ITALIAN-STYLE

Marvin J. Nicchio, President of the Italian American Cultural Society of El Paso, is a tireless and dedicated worker in the cause of spreading all things Italian. Marvin contacted Anna Marie after seeing our temporary IFAFA web page on the Italian American Web Site of New York. As soon as our complete IFAFA web page is up and running, Marvin will also add us as a link on his site. To check out his site now, enter: <http://www.ElPasoinfo.com/italian/>. You may also email him if you would like to receive his regular email newsletter. His email address is: lacs@dzin.com.

Another person who contacted us through our web site is Meri DeLorenzo Howard. She has sung in an Italian folk-singing group for many years. She now has a website of Italian folk music and wants to carry on a dialogue with people all over the world who are interested in Italian folk music and culture. You may visit her website at <http://home.fiberia.com/italfolk>.

FIERI of Long Island, NY, continues to participate in the planning of the Italian American Cultural Museum on Long Island. If you are interested, please contact Lisa Menitti at (516) 542-4545 for location and information. The museum now has a home page at <http://homepage.usr.com/m/museum>.

For an on-line resource for Italians, Italian Americans and enthusiasts of Italian culture created by future FIERI San Francisco President, Laura Pazzaglia, please check out <http://www.virtualitalia.com>.

RAI International, Italy's radio and television system, has created a website to help the general public discover some of Italy's lesser-known popular events. The site is free and available for research, study or documentation. To date, the site contains more than 2,000 images selected from over twenty festivities. Visit the RAI site at www.raiinternational.rai.it/festa.

POINT (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together), the American Network of Italian Genealogy, would like to send you information about its organization, about what POINT can and cannot do for the Italian Genealogist and the Italian Family Historian. If you are interested, you may send a request for information by email to POINT's founder, Tom Militello, at point01@aol.com, or check out POINT's web site at <http://members.aol.com/pointhompg/home.htm>.

MEET OUR ITALIAN FOLK TROUPE The Italian Folk Group of Auburn, New York

The Italian Folk Group of Auburn, originally known as *I Compari e le Comari*, was organized in 1986 by Carmelo Signorelli, then age 65. At the time, Carmelo was a member of the Italian Heritage Society of Auburn, which sponsored the group.

Carmelo became interested in his Italian heritage after a visit to Italy several years ago. He says, "As I toured the country, I was amazed at the extent and richness of Italian art, architecture, and history. I was so impressed that, upon my return, I joined the Italian Heritage Society, became active in it, and, before long, formed the folk group."

They began as a singing group, adding a dance or two the following year. In 1987, they had one dance and a dozen songs; they now perform more than 22 dances and over 100 songs! They sing to piano, electric keyboard, or accordion accompaniment, and dance to recorded music.

Under the auspices of the Italian Heritage Society, the folk group participated in a number of Italian festivals and cultural fairs until 1990, when the Italian Folk Group became independent of the Society.

As an independent organization, they have organized and presented two major functions of their own, "An Afternoon in Italy" and "An Evening in Italy." Each included a full-course dinner followed by the group's performance. Both events

sold out the capacity of the house, over 300 attendees!

The members of the group wear Italian folk costumes during performances, but do not represent specific regions. Each member is responsible for making or obtaining his or her costume. Each season, the members work on adding to their costumes to make them more authentic. Carmelo's wife, Emily, serves as the costuming director for the group. Some costume information was obtained from Cav. Elba Gurzau's book; other costumes were fashioned by observing costumes worn by Italian folk troupes in the U.S. and in Italy.

Their sources for dance information have been, again, Cav. Gurzau's book, as well as videotapes and instructions from other performing troupes. They do modify some dances, mainly by eliminating hopping, which Carmelo states is "too strenuous for us old folks." He also occasionally works out dances of his own, using authentic simple figures taken from other Italian folk dances.

Most of the group's participants are senior citizens who take great pride in their Italian heritage. The members belong to Auburn's Retired Senior Volunteer Program and travel throughout Central New York to perform songs and dances at nursing homes, adult homes, churches, schools, and festivals, including the New York State Fair. What a wonderful role model they are for us all!



LA FESTA DEI CERI — GUBBIO, UMBRIA

Una delle più originali cerimonie tradizionali è la Festa dei Ceri a Gubbio che a luogo ogni anno il 15 maggio. Gubbio celebra questa festa in onore di Sant'Ubaldo, il patrono della città. Per tutta la festa, la città, piena di standardi, bandiere e brillanti costumi, presenta un aspetto festoso. Ci sono riti, festeggiamenti e giubilo generale. Tutti i lavoratori appartengono a una delle tre corporazioni anziani: una per i mercanti, una per i muratori, e una per i contadini. Il colore delle camicie degli uomini indica a quale corporazione appartengono; il nero rappresenta i contadini, il blu per i mercanti, e il giallo per i muratori.

Ogni corporazione ha il suo proprio patrono. Le statue dei tre santi, i patroni, vestite di stoffa preziosa, sono poste in cima ai pesanti strutture di legno, chiamate "Ceri." I Ceri, che assomigliano ad enorme candele a forma di orologi a polvere, hanno 28 piedi di altezza e pesano circa 400 libbre. Il giorno prima della festa, alcuni ragazzi trasportano i Ceri per le vie della città. Il giorno della festa, di buon mattino, i giovani sfilano tenendosi a braccetto e cantando. Per la festa, i Ceri sono posti su piattaforme che corrispondono al loro peso, e sono trasportati da squadre di dodici uomini. L'elevazione dei Ceri ha luogo sulla piazza di fronte al Palazzo dopo la benedizione dal Vescovo. I Ceri sono fissati sulle loro pesanti piattaforme, sono trasportati intorno alla piazza tre volte, e poi sono portati attraverso tutta la città. Dopo una giornata di processioni, festeggiamenti e canti, incomincia l'incredibile Corsa dei Ceri. Le squadre, con i loro carichi preziosi, corrono su una strada ripida che arriva al santuario di Sant'Ubaldo, 3.800 piedi sopra la città. Con le tenebre viene la fine della festa dei Ceri, e Gubbio si trasforma con la luce di migliaia di candele che vengono ascese lungo i muri e le torri.

One of the most original traditional ceremonies is the *Festa dei Ceri* in Gubbio which takes place each year on May 15th. Gubbio celebrates this festival in honor of Saint Ubaldo, the patron saint of the city. For the festa, the town is festive with banners, flags, and bright costumes. There are rituals, feasts, and jubilation. All workers belong to one of three ancient guilds: one for merchants one for masons, and one for farmers. The color of the shirts worn by the men indicates to which guild they belong; black represents the farmers, blue for the merchants, and yellow for the masons.

Each guild has its own patron saint. The statues of the three saints, dressed in fine fabrics, are placed atop heavy wooden structures called *Ceri*. The *Ceri* which resemble huge hour-glass-shaped candles, are 28 feet high and weigh about 400 pounds each. The day before the festival, youths carry the *Ceri* through the streets of the city. Early in the morning the day of the *festa*, youths parade arm-in-arm, singing. For the *festa*, the *Ceri* are mounted on platforms that match their weight and are carried by teams of twelve men. The raising of the *Ceri* takes place on the square in front of the palace, after a blessing by the Bishop. The *Ceri* are bolted to their heavy platforms, carried around the square three times, and then taken all through the town. After a day of processions, feasts, and songs, the incredible Race of the *Ceri* begins. The teams, with their precious cargoes, race up a steep road to the sanctuary of Saint Ubaldo, 3,800 feet above the city. With the darkness comes the finale of the *Festa dei Ceri*, and Gubbio is transformed with the glow of thousands of candles which have been lit along the walls and towers.

IFAFA CONFERENCE -- OCTOBER 1, 2, AND 3, 1999

Sheraton Four Points Hotel - Milwaukee - Airport
4747 South Howell Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207
414-481-8000 / 800-558-3862

Mark your calendar and make plans now to attend the 1999 IFAFA conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The conference will take place at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Milwaukee. Reservations should be made before September 1, 1999. The hotel rate for the conference is \$95.00 per night, per room, for 1 to 4 people.

Tentative Program of Activities

Dance workshops (We guarantee that those attending the 1999 IFAFA Conference will leave with beautiful dances that they can use at home.)

- Mark and Lisa DeSanctis (Dance Directors: Italian Folk Dancers of Milwaukee, Wisconsin)
Quadriglia d'Aviano (Venezia)
Tarantella Fantasia
- Jackie Capurro (Artistic Director: *Il Quartiere Italiano*, San Francisco Bay Area, California)
Lo Sciotis di Lucignano (Toscana)
- Blaise Panizzi (Choreographer: *I Campagnoli*, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
Dance(s) to be announced

Other Workshops

- Song Workshop (Tribute to Jane Ferro): Led by: MaryEllen DiTuci. Bring back the songs that Jane Ferro used to teach at past IFAFA conferences and perform a medley of those songs at the Festa Folcloristica as a tribute to a wonderful person and someone who will be missed dearly by the Italian community.
- Lecture/Demonstration on the Italian *Ceppo* - Presenter: Al Borsari. Learn the history and significance behind *il Ceppo*, the "Italian Christmas Tree," and how to create your own this holiday season.
- Cooking Demonstration - Rosalia Ferrante and Alberto D'Amato, a wonderful combination of talent and personality, will dish up something scrumptious and send you off with the recipe.
- Italian Language Class: For those who don't already speak Italian, Enrica Tarantino will give people a taste of the beautifully romantic Italian language and compel them to learn more on their own.
- Headpieces/Costumes - Franca Orlando and Talia Salamone.
- Historical - Mario Carini. Topic to be announced.

Gala Banquet (Saturday Night) Beautiful costumes, regional banners, a great dinner, and, of course ... music and dancing.

Please cut your registration form here, and mail it to:

Linda DeSanctis, 9431 West Beloit Road, #301, Milwaukee, WI 53227
(Telephone: 414-329-3243 Email: ItalianGrp@aol.com)

Include your check (made out to IFAFA). List one participant per form, or attach a list of those attending.

Name _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Group Name _____ Director/Officer _____

The deadline for conference reservations is September 1, 1999. The deadline for reservations for the Festa only is September 25, 1999. Please indicate the number of tickets needed in each category, and carry out the dollar amount:

Entire Conference:

IFAFA Member (adults)	\$85	_____	\$ _____
IFAFA Member (students through high school age)	\$65	_____	\$ _____
Non-Member	\$110	_____	\$ _____
Saturday Workshops Only	\$40	_____	\$ _____
Festa Folcloristica Banquet Only (Saturday night)	\$35/\$40 at door	_____	\$ _____
Saturday Workshops and Festa Folcloristica	\$65	_____	\$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED			\$ _____

REGIONAL ITALIAN FOLK COSTUMES

We continue the series of descriptions of folk costumes taken from the book, now out of print, Il Costume popolare in Italia, by Emma Calderini, published by Sperling & Kupfer, Milano. For this issue, we present two costumes from the region of Umbria, the "green heart" of Italy.

Please remember that, if the name of the color appears [in brackets], it means that I have inserted the color that was used in the colorplate, and it may be that the color can be changed to the wearer's liking. However, when the original description includes the color of the item of clothing, it would be best to use that color.



Woman from the area around Spoleto
[White] blouse of heavy homespun linen, lightly gathered at the neck and the wrist, with or without lace. The [light blue-green] corset, supported by stays, is of heavy cotton fabric, with the opening in the back. Also of cotton is the full [black] skirt, gathered at the waist, and the lined apron [beige and red stripes on pale yellow background] which almost covers the skirt completely. On her head, a scarf of coarse wool or patterned cotton. A thick red coral necklace with a gold clasp. Cotton knit stockings. Ankle boots of strong leather.

"Ceralolo" of Gubbio

Cotton shirt, buttoned in front, loose fit (see the article, "*La Festa dei Ceri*," on page 4, for color choices). The white pants are also of cotton or wool blend. At the waist is a red woolen sash with short fringe. [Yellow] scarf tied around the neck. Red stocking cap and leather shoes.

The purpose of the ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA (IFAA) is to preserve and foster interest in Italian folk art; to research Italian folklore, traditions, customs, costumes, dances, songs, instruments, etc.; to act as a center for gathering, storing, and disseminating the information; and to bring together Italian folk performing groups and other interested individuals.

IFAA is an outgrowth of the Italian Folk Art Project initiated at the Nationalities Service Center (NSC) of Philadelphia in 1977. With the assistance of NSC and the leadership and dedication of Cav. Elba Farabegoli Gurzau, IFAA was incorporated May 7, 1979, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-profit cultural and educational organization.

I am interested in:

- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Performing Folk Group \$25.00
(if new, send for application)
- ☐ Supporting Organization \$25.00
(non-performing)
- ☐ Individual \$10.00
- ☐ Student/Senior Citizen \$5.00
- ☐ Contributing to the work of IFAA
\$ _____

Name:

Address:

City:

State/Zip:

Phone:

Contributions are tax-deductible.

Make checks payable to "IFAA"

c/o N.S.C.

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