



# tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

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## SEE YOU IN MILWAUKEE!

Dear members of IFAFA,

I hope you had a wonderful summer. Now is the time to get down to business.

We have an exciting conference coming up in Milwaukee, October 1, 2, and 3. It will be a time to renew old friendships and make new ones while we celebrate our Italian heritage. There are very interesting workshops scheduled, covering songs and dance, ancient crafts and new technology. We will also learn the results of a children's essay and art contest. This is why we work so hard at preserving our wonderful Italian customs: so that our children will continue them and pass them on to their children.

I hope to see many of you in Milwaukee. Even if you do not belong to a performing group, it will be an enjoyable Italian weekend. I remain,

Yours in Italian Folklore,  
Anna Marie Fiori

## ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS IN ITALY

Since there is no conclusive definition of the category of "ethnographic," this listing of museums which may contain folk materials is highly subjective, and it is certainly not complete. However, we will provide the names and addresses of museums in several regions in this and subsequent issues of *Tradizioni*. Please feel free to send in any additions or corrections that you discover in your travels.

First and foremost are two important museums dealing with ethnography in Italy. These two museums provide countless displays of folk costumes, tools, crafts, and other memorabilia

- Museo Nazionale delle Arti e Tradizioni Popolari, piazza Marconi 10, 00144 ROMA (RM) 06 - 5926148
- Sezione di Antropologia Museale dell'Associazione Italiana per le Scienze Etno-Antropologiche c/o Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente di Romagna, via Montevercelli 41, 47038 SANT'ARCANGELO DI ROMAGNA (RN) 0541 - 624703

In **Calabria**, you may want to visit:

- Museo della civiltà contadina, via G. Marconi, 88020 MONTEROSSO CALABRO (Catanzaro) 0963 - 325002
- Museo calabrese di etnografia e folklore, via San Giorgio, 89015 PALMI (Reggio Calabria) 0966 - 411020

In the region of **Abruzzo**, these museums provide good research opportunities:

- Museo delle Genti d'Abruzzo, via delle Caserme 22, 65127 PESCARA 085 - 693549
- Museo delle arti e tradizioni contadine, 65010 PICCIANO (Pescara)
- Museo etnografico, via Roma, 66042 BOMBA (Chieti) 0872 - 860226
- Museo della civiltà contadina in Val Vibrata, 64010 CONTROGUERRA (Teramo)
- Mostra delle arti e delle tradizioni popolari, 64044 FANO ADRIANO (Teramo)

If you find yourself in the northeastern region of **Friuli Venezia Giulia**, pay a visit to:

- Museo della vita contadina, Palazzo Falcon Vial, 33078 S. VITO AL TAGLIAMENTO (Pordenone) 0434 - 80405
- Museo Provinciale della Vita Contadina, Frazione Ligugnana, Piazza IV Novembre, 33078 SAN VITO AL TAGLIAMENTO (Pordenone)
- Museo Etnografico di Servola, via di Servola 42, 34146 TRIESTE 040-830792
- Museo Carnico delle Arti Popolari «Michele Gortani», piazza Garibaldi 2, 33028 TOLMEZZO (Udine) 0433 - 43233
- Museo del Lavoro Contadino, via del Buret 10, 33010 PAGNACCO (Udine)
- Museo Friulano delle Arti e Tradizioni Popolari, via Viola 3, 33100 UDINE (Udine) 0432 - 502872
- Museo della vita contadina, Comune di Fagagna, 33034 FAGAGNA (Udine)
- Museo della civiltà contadina del Friuli Imperiale, viale Vittorio Emanuele II, 33041 AIELLO DEL FRIULI (Udine) 0431 - 99507
- Collezione etnografica, 33020 FORNI AVOLTRI (Udine) 0433 - 72052.
- Centro etnografico, 33020 SAURIS DI SOPRA (Udine)
- Presepio di Teno, 33020 SUTRIO (Udine)

## TRADITIONAL FOLKLORISTIC EVENTS IN ITALY

### LA PARTITA A SCACCHI A PERSONAGGI VIVENTI

La vicenda della Partita a Scacchi risale al 1454 quando Marostica era una delle fedelissime della Repubblica Veneta. Avvenne che due nobili guerrieri, Rinaldo D'Angarano e Vieri da Vallonara, contemporaneamente s'accessero d'amore per la bella Lionora, figlia di Taddeo Parisio castellano del castello di Marostica.

Come era costume di quei tempi, si sfidarono in cruento duello per conquistare il diritto di sposare Lionora. Ma il castellano, che non voleva inimicarsi alcuno dei due calorosissimi guerrieri e perderli in duello, proibì lo scontro rifacendosi anche ad un editto di Cangrande della Scala, confermando ed aggravato dal Serenissimo Doge.

Decise perciò, invece, che Lionora sarebbe andata sposa a quello dei rivali che avesse vinto la partita al nobile gioco degli scacchi: lo sconfitto sarebbe diventato lo stesso suo parente, sposando Oldrada, sua sorella minore. L'incontro si sarebbe svolto in giorno di festa nella piazza del Castello da Basso, a

pezzi grandi e vivi, armati e segnati delle nobili insegne di bianchi e neri con le antichissime regole e cerimonie che la nobile arte comanda, in presenza del Castellano, della sua nobile figlia, dei Signori di Angarano e di Vallonara, dei nobili e del popolo tutto. Decise anche che la disfida fosse onorata da una mostra in campo di uomini d'arme, fanti e cavalieri e fuochi e luminarie e danze e suoni.

Ecco dunque scesero in campo gli armati: arcieri ed alabardieri, fanti schiavoni e cavalieri; poi il Castellano e la sua nobile corte con Lionora trepidante perché segretamente innamorata di uno dei due contendenti; la fedele nutrice, gentiluomini, dame, l'araldo, il capitano d'armi, falconieri, paggi e damigelle, vessilliferi, musici, massere e borghigiani; e poi ancora i bianchi e i neri con Re e Regina, torri e cavalieri, alfieri e pedoni ed i due contendenti che ordinarono le mosse.

Infine, per la vittoria, c'erano fuochi e musica secondo l'ordine del castellano. Madonna Lionora aveva segretamente fatto sapere al contado che il Castello da Basso sarebbe stato illuminato da candida luce qualora la vittoria fosse arrisa al cavaliere di cui era innamorata, affinché tutti potessero partecipare alla sua gioia.

E così oggi tutto si ripete come la prima volta, in una cornice di costumi fastosi, di cortei pittoreschi, di gonfaloni multicolori, di marziali parate, di squisita eleganza. Su tutto domina una nota di singolare gentilezza cui si è ispirata la rievocazione dell'antica vicenda che dal buio dei tempi lontani torna a rivivere oggi quasi per miracolo di fantasia. I comandi alle milizie vengono ancora oggi impartiti nella lingua della "Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia." La Partita a scacchi a personaggi viventi viene giocata a Marostica sulla piazza, che costituisce una gigantesca scacchiera. Ha luogo il secondo venerdì, sabato e domenica di settembre degli anni pari.

### THE HUMAN CHESS GAME

The story of the Human Chess Game dates back to 1454 when Marostica belonged to the Venetian Republic. Two noblemen, Rinaldo D'Angarano and Vieri da Vallonara, fell in love with the beautiful Lionora, daughter of Taddeo Parisio, who was the Lord of Marostica's castle.

As was the custom at that time, they challenged each other to a duel to win the hand of Lionora. The Lord, not wanting to make an enemy of either suitor or to lose one of them in a duel, forbade the encounter turning to an edict from Cangrande della Scala, confirmed and authorized by the Venetian Doge.

He decided, instead, that the two rivals should play a chess game: Lionora would take the winner as her husband. He furthermore decided that the loser would in any case join his family, marrying Oldrada, the younger sister.

The game was to take place on the square in front of the Lower Castle on a feast-day with armed, living persons carrying the noble insignia of Whites and Blacks, following the ancient rules and rituals that the noble game deserved, in the presence of the Lord, his noble daughter, the Lords of Angarano and Vallonara, the noble court and the entire population. He also decided the challenge should be honored by an exhibition of armed men, foot-soldiers and knights, with fireworks and dances and music.

Thus the armed men entered the field: archers and halberdiers, foot-soldiers and knights; then the Lord and his noble court with an anxious Lionora, who was secretly in love with one of the two rivals; her faithful nurse, noblemen and their ladies, the herald, the master of arms, falconers, pageboys, maidens, standard-bearers, musicians, farmers and villagers; and then finally the Whites and Blacks with their kings and queens, rooks and knights, bishops and pawns; and the two suitors, who would decide the moves.

Finally, for the victory, there were fireworks and music according to the Lord's orders. As Lady Lionora had secretly informed the population, should the winner be her beloved, the Lower Castle would be illuminated by white light, so that everybody could share their joy.

This event is repeated today just like the first time, in a framework of sumptuous costumes, picturesque processions, multi-colored banners, military parades, and exquisite elegance. A note of unique courtesy dominates everything: it inspires the whole recreation of this ancient story which, from the darkness of remote times, still lives today as a miracle of fantasy. The orders are still given to the cast of characters today in the dialect of the *Serenissima Republic of Venezia*. The Human Chess Game is played on the Piazza of Marostica which resembles a giant chessboard. It occurs every even-numbered year on the second weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) of September.

Article adapted from Marostica's website:  
[www.telemar.it/marostica.htm](http://www.telemar.it/marostica.htm)



MAROSTICA, VENETO

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

The Italian Dance Group of Milwaukee is proud to host the 19th Annual Conference of the Italian Folk Art Federation of America. We look forward to seeing you at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel in Milwaukee the first weekend of October! For questions regarding the conference, contact Linda DeSanctis at (414) 329-3242, or send email to «ItalianGrp@aol.com».

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1

- |   |
|---|
| 10:00AM Registration<br>11:00 Tour of Milwaukee's Italian Community Center (bocce and lunch - \$10.00)<br>3:00PM Singing Workshop<br>4:00 Palm Weaving Workshop<br>8:00 Welcome Gathering / Dance: Quadrille d'Aviano |
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### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2 - CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS (subject to changes)

ROOM #1	ROOM #2	ROOM #3: Dance Workshops
9:00AM Singing Tribute to Jane Ferro	9:00AM Cooking	9:00AM <i>Lo Sciottis di Lucignano</i>
10:00 Website	10:00 Children's Dance Forum	10:00 <i>Tarantella Tasso</i>
11:00 Italian Language	11:00 Palm Weaving/Lace Making	11:00 <i>Fantasia</i>
NOON LUNCH BREAK	NOON LUNCH BREAK	NOON LUNCH BREAK
1:00PM Italian Language	1:00PM Headpieces/Costumes	1:00PM <i>Fantasia</i>
2:00 Cooking	2:00 Historian	2:00 <i>Lo Sciottis di Lucignano</i>
3:00 Singing Tribute	3:00 Ceppo	3:00 <i>Tarantella Tasso</i>

*Saturday Evening: Festa Folcloristica*

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3

- |   |
|---|
| 8:00AM Breakfast and IFAFA Meeting<br>9:30 Mass |
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### IFAFA SERVICES DIRECTORY

Gene Fedeli is compiling information to update IFAFA's "Directory of Folk Art Services and Material." In this directory will be listed all current members of IFAFA, the services they offer, and materials they have available.

Please submit the following information: the name of your troupe (and English translation, if it is an Italian name), names of director(s) and/or contact people, mailing address, contact phone number (if desired), email address (if available), and website URL (if available).

In addition, send in information about the type of program you offer, whether you provide dancers, singers, musicians, etc. You might want to include a list of the dances and/or songs which you perform. Do you provide historical background information or other oral presentation (e.g. folk tales, descriptions of Italian holidays or festivals, etc.)? Do you have materials available for sale, such as videos, audiocassettes, or CDs of your troupe's performances; dance instruction booklets; or other Italian-related items? If you have a good-quality photo of your troupe in action, include that as well.

If you are a member of IFAFA, but are not a participant in a performance troupe, you may be listed as a resource as a lecturer in a topic in which you are well-versed.

Bring your information with you to the IFAFA Conference, if possible, or it may be mailed to Gene Fedeli, 3628 North Court Street, Rockford, IL 61103-2041. If you have email access, please send printed information to Gene electronically at his email address, «efedeli@ix.netcom.com». If you have questions about what is appropriate for your listing, please contact Gene as above, or by phone at 815-877-2888.

We would prefer to publish this directory by early 2000, so please submit your information as soon as possible. Please note that the directory is for **current** members; if you are not paid up in your dues, please submit your dues quickly as well. You may use the coupon on the back page of this newsletter.

### FOLK DANCES, COSTUMES AND CUSTOMS OF ITALY

Softcover book, 128 pages, which includes illustrations, 17 dances with description and notated music, information about Italy, costumes, customs, etc. Comes with recorded music to accompany the dances.

Price: \$20.00, plus \$3.00 for handling and postage.

Please make check or money order payable to Elba F. Gurzau and mail to Elba at:  
 1325 West Roosevelt Blvd.  
 Philadelphia, PA 19140  
 Phone: 215-324-1250

## REGIONAL ITALIAN FOLK COSTUMES

We continue the series of descriptions of folk costumes taken from the book, Il Costume popolare in Italia, by Emma Calderini, published by Sperling & Kupfer, Milano.



**A Man of  
Macchiagodena, Molise,  
in Holiday Attire**

Shirt of common cloth with a soft collar turned back over the lapel of the jacket. Waistcoat of red wool, with turned back lapels lined in white, double-breasted, with two rows of brass buttons. Short close-fitting jacket of blue wool, with straight stiff lapel, folded back and buttoned. It has pockets and is decorated with brass buttons down the front and at the wrist. Short close-fitting pants of dark brown wool, buttoned at the knee with brass buttons. Leggings of dark wool, common leather shoes. Sturdy felt hat with chin strap, cone-shaped, closed-off at the top. In this, it is customary to keep one's pipe, handkerchief, glasses — and even a meal.

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.

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 NSC  
1300 Spruce Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

### A Woman of Gioia del Marsi, Abruzzo

Blouse decorated at the neck with a frill of lace and on the chest with two initials embroidered in red. It is almost completely covered by a triangle of muslin that comes together in the front, tucked into the corset which is of fine blue woolen cloth, very stiff, with two large seams down the front. The detached sleeves, of the same woolen cloth, adorned with brocade ribbons, are tied to the straps of the corset (Fig. 1). Skirt of very heavy wool (plaid in muted colors of red, blue, and dark pink), very full and gathered at the waist. The full apron is of patterned cloth. White knit stockings. Shoes of leather, with ribbon and metal buckle (Fig. 2). The hair is gathered up in a metal clasp, braided with ribbons, covered with a handkerchief of fine muslin edged with lace.

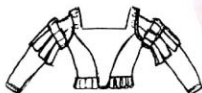


Figure 1



Figure 2



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.

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c/o Nationalities Services Center  
1300 Spruce Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107