



tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings!

Another IFafa conference has come and gone, and those who attended it had a great time! One of our newer members, Connie Muscenti, has provided us with an excellent review of the Pittsburgh conference, so I'll just wish you all well and let you read Connie's excellent article which follows.

Yours in Italian folklore,

Anna Marie Fiori

THE 2000 IFafa CONFERENCE IN PITTSBURGH

by Connie Muscenti

The Italian Folk Art Federation of America (IFafa) met in Pittsburgh for its annual conference on the beautiful autumn weekend of October 20, 21, 22, 2000. It was a time when old friendships were rekindled and new friends were made as people throughout the United States gathered to share their love for Italian folk music, dance and culture. This year's host for the conference was *I Campagnoli*, which, for the past 30 years, has carried on the traditions of Italian folk song and dance through their many performances throughout the United States and Italy.

Throughout the weekend, workshops were presented on Italian folk arts, dance and songs. Folk arts presentations included the ancient art of palm-weaving with Anna Marie Fiori and Gene Fedeli, ornament-making with Anna Marie Fiori, lace-making demonstrations with Virginia and Claire Suplee, and the intricate art of making altar foods like St. Joseph cookies with Gene Fedeli. There was also a beautiful and informative display of headpieces, wooden puppets from Sicily, folk instruments, and a variety of other Italian items and memorabilia.

Laura Vondas, who has put a tremendous amount of energy into researching her hometown in Tuscany, shared her video and led a discussion of this region. *[Editor's Note: Read more about this video on page 2.]*

World renowned opera singer and instructor, Lorenzo Malfatti, gave colorful and inspiring singing workshops on the importance of using *perfect* Italian diction along with some insight regarding the history of Italian music. Everyone who participated in his workshops came out with a deeper respect for the Italian language and a renewed sense of pride regarding its beauty.

Mary Ferro Salopek, who has been immersed in Italian folk music, dance and culture for as long as she can remember through her mother, Jane Ferro, led this year's IFafa Chorus. Mary is also the co-director of *I Campagnoli*.

Dance workshops were presented throughout the day. Blaise Panizzi, *I Campagnoli's* co-director and choreographer, taught two of *I Campagnoli's* favorite dances. Blaise has shared many dances at IFafa conferences throughout the years and his energy and enthusiasm continue to be an inspiration. And this year, for the first time, Federica Calvino Prina, came all the way from Italy to present several traditional Italian dances that have recently been published in her new *Traditional Italian Dance* book/CD compilation. Federica, a graduate in classical guitar at the Conservatory of Milan, is a passionate enthusiast of Renaissance and Baroque dance. Having danced in prestigious halls in Italy and abroad, researching traditional Italian dances is another of her many projects. Her workshops provided informative and interesting cultural information regarding the repertoire that she taught.

During Saturday's lunch break we were all delighted with the charming song and dance presentation by *I Piccoli Campagnoli*, the affiliated youth group of *I Campagnoli*. *I Piccoli Campagnoli* are directed by Mary Pat Petrarca.

The IFafa 2000 Conference culminated in a sensational *Festa Folcloristica* on Saturday evening. The audience was graced with song and dance performances from San Jose, California's *Il Quartiere Italiano*; *Tradizioni Viventi* from Milwaukee, Wisconsin; *I Gagliardi Italiani* from Canton, Ohio; the IFafa 2000 Chorus; Pittsburgh's *I Campagnoli*, and *Amici*, an Italian dance band.

One of the many highlights of this conference was the guest appearance of Beppe Gambetta, one of today's most prominent acoustic guitarists. Beppe's concerts and recordings include original as well as traditional tunes and songs influenced by music from his native Italy. He graced us with two beautiful songs from his *Serenata* CD which also features Carlo Aonza, mandolinist for La Scala Orchestra.

The evening was filled with a celebration of people sharing their love of the Italian culture through song, dance, and food. Happily exhausted after a very busy weekend, we left with the exciting anticipation of sharing everything we learned with those back home.

A Tuscan Legacy

At the Pittsburgh IFAFA Conference in October, 2000, Laura Baccelli Vondas presented "A Tuscan Legacy," a 30-minute professional video of Pittsburgh's Tuscan heritage, beginning with the late 1800s through 1971. The video presents a general history of the *Lega Toscana* (the Tuscan League), family histories, Tuscan proverbs, and live interviews. The background music is of Lucchesi native Giacomo Puccini, plus authentic folk songs of the region and popular Italian songs of the time. Mrs. Vondas is a Pittsburgh native and a communications professional whose ancestors were from the city of Lucca in Tuscany.

To Order the Video

If you would like to order a copy of this wonderful video, the cost is \$20.00, which includes postage and handling. Please send a check (payable to Laura Baccelli Vondas) to:

Mrs. Laura Baccelli Vondas
1657 Beechwood Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Be sure to include your complete name and address. Please allow three weeks for delivery.

Support Italian Documentaries on PBS

This video is a very professional production, yet Mrs. Vondas has had difficulty convincing PBS stations that there is an audience for such documentaries. If you've enjoyed similar productions about the Italian heritage recently on TV, please write to your local PBS station and ask them to run *A Tuscan Legacy* on their station in your area. Please encourage other members of Italian organizations in your area to write as well. Mention that you are a member of the International Folk Art Federation of America, a nation-wide organization which supports the advancement of the Italian heritage in the United States and abroad. You may refer your PBS station to Mrs. Vondas at the address above.

Balliamo! Hosts Dance Workshop

Dr. Placida (Dina) Staro, from Bologna, Italy, was brought to Sacramento, California, on November 1, 2000, by former IFAFA members Marie di Cocco and Celeste di Pietropaolo. Dr. Dina presented a workshop on traditional dances of Italy to approximately 45 members of the folk dance community of Sacramento, including members of *Balliamo!*

At the workshop, Dr. Dina taught three dances of a Slavic nature from the Val di Resia which is in the northeastern section of Italy. Then she taught dances from the Val di Savena which is located between Bologna and Florence. These dances included *la Monferrina*, *la Veneziana*, *la Contraddanza*, and *la Roncostalda* with a *Tresca*.

Dr. Dina is also an accomplished musician on the violin. To accompany the second set of Val di Savena dances, she played her violin while Celeste joined in on the accordion, which added immensely to the enjoyment.

Celeste di Pietropaolo and Dr. Dina are heavily into dance history and research, emphasizing the traditional style of those dances found in hidden villages throughout Italy. From 1983 to 1992, Dr. Dina taught History of Folk Traditions and Folk Dancing at the "Paolo Grassi" school (former "Piccolo Teatro") in Milan. Since 1992, she has lived in a little village in the Appenines south of Bologna and has done extensive research, study and recording of the local music and dance.

--Doris Beckert, Director, *Balliamo!*

A Straw Suitcase

by Charles G. Carluccio, M.D.

My name is Charles Goldhammer Carluccio, Jr. Doesn't Goldhammer seem like an unusual name to be associated with Carluccio, clearly an Italian name? Therein lies a tale.

Many, many years ago, my grandfather Giambatista arrived in New York from southern Italy, 11 years old, carrying a straw suitcase with all his belongings.

Somehow, a paisano noticed him, all alone, took him under his wing and gave him a place to sleep and a shoe-shine box. He taught him how to shine shoes properly and sent him off to Wall Street.

Hard-working, respectful and bright, he attracted the attention of an executive named Goldhammer who became, not only a steady customer, but a mentor who guided him in his education and saw to it that he became a citizen.

When my grandfather did become a citizen, he promised Mr. Goldhammer that he would one day name a son after him ... not that simple a task.

Years later, the priest at St. Ann's Church in Hoboken, NJ, was taken aback, to say the least. "He cannot be named Goldhammer. It is not a Catholic name. In fact, it is Jewish."

Giambatista, not one to be easily put off, said, "Well, then, I'll have to take him to the Rabbi."

The priest reconsidered, and my father became Charles Goldhammer Carluccio.

When I was born, this heritage became mine. When my son graduated from law school, his name covered the entire width of the program — Charles Goldhammer Carluccio, III.

And his son, my grandson, loves signing his full name, Charles Goldhammer Carluccio IV, and proudly refers to himself as *The Fourth*.

Why do I tell this tale? For several reasons, the most important being my delight — no, my joy — in seeing my grandson's appreciation of his heritage and his wonder at the tale of his great-grandfather, an eleven-year-old boy, coming from Italy all alone with a straw suitcase.

Dr. Carluccio is a graduate of the University of Bologna Medical School, Bologna, Italy. He did his residency in psychiatry at the Psychiatric Institute, Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital in New York. He has been a member of the Holy Name Hospital staff in Teaneck, NJ, since 1966. Dr. Carluccio held the position of Chief, Dept. of Neuro-Psychiatry from 1966 to 1981, and is a Diplomate, American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

Note from the Editor: Do you have an interesting story about your family history, about your ancestor(s) who emigrated from Italy, about traditions that they brought with them and passed on to you? If you'd like to share such a story with our readers, please send possible submissions to be considered for future publication (see page 6).

FROM EARLIER ISSUES OF TRADIZIONI

Note from Editor: In response to a suggestion from Cav. Elba Farabegoli Gurzau, I will be including an article from the earliest issues of Tradizioni in each current issue. We realize that many of our newer members may not be familiar with some of the information that was presented in those early issues. --JSC

Italian Folk Instruments

by Rose Grieco

Since folk instruments are usually constructed out of easily available material, it is interesting to note how the personality of the region is often reflected in the musical creations of the area.

In the cool north, one finds the simple *ocarina*, a wind instrument shaped like an elongated egg with finger holes. The instrument takes its name from *oca* (goose) because of its shape. The *Gruppo Ocarinisti di Budrio, Bologna*, comprises an entire company of *ocarina* players.

On the isle of Capri, the *Putipù* Band, said to have originated with the Greeks, includes the following instruments. The *cupa-cupa*, or *cro-cro*, is a kind of friction drum consisting of a cloth drawn tightly across the top of a small barrel with a reed in the center; it is played by drawing up and down on the reed which must constantly be kept wet. The *scetavaiaasse*, two notched wooden sticks adorned with tin discs, is played violin fashion. The *acciarino*, a wooden triangle enclosing a small iron, rings softly when hit with an iron rod. The *triccabballacco*, of Moorish origin, is composed of three square wooden hammers, attached at the bottom, so that the two outer ones can be beaten against the one in the middle.

On the island of Sardinia, one of the most ancient instruments, the *launeddas*, is played for dancing, singing, and accompanying processions. According to Alan Lomax, "the *launeddas* is a wind instrument of three cylindrical tubes of cane with simple reeds which the player inserts in his mouth. The cheeks are used as bellows; respiration is entirely through the nose. One cannot be precise about the origin of the *launeddas*, however, prehistoric bronze statuettes of *launeddas* players dating back to 1000 B.C. have been found in Sardinia."

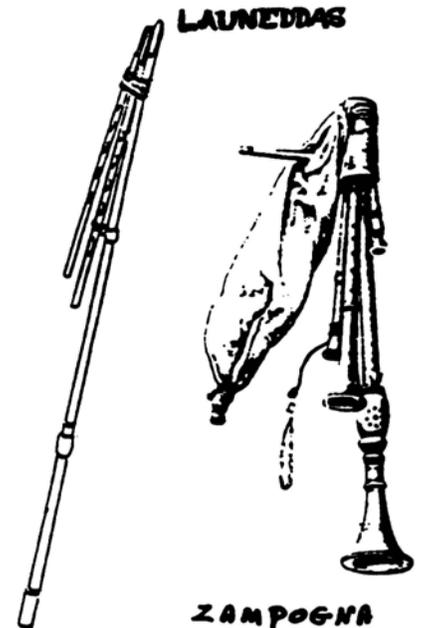
The *ciaramella* is a primitive oboe. Along with the *zampogna* (bagpipes), it is heard in the cities during the Christmas season, when shepherds come down from the mountains of Abruzzi to play their haunting music. The *fischietto* is a reedless fife, carved by shepherds.

In Sicily, there is the *quartara*, a water jug highly decorated in vibrant reds and yellows. It is held with both hands and moved gracefully around while the player breathes into it, almost spitting, in order to create a sound like the hooting of an owl. At times, the *quartara* player hurls the jar into the air, then catches it to continue his playing, much to the delight of the onlookers. The *maranzanu*, jaw harp or jew's harp, called *scacciapensiero* in Naples, gives out a strange, twanging sound when strummed with the thumb or index finger while held between the teeth. The *cian-cian* is a donkey collar adorned with sequins, mirrors, and bells.

Other ancient instruments are the tambourines, bagpipes, and the wooden or cane flute.

These are some of the Italian folk instruments which I have seen or heard in live performances.

Rose Grieco, former member of IFAFA, now deceased, was a lecturer, author, international folk-dance teacher, and founder of the Italian Folklore Group of Montclair, NJ.



CLAY TOY OCARINA



FISCHIETTO

ART BY ANGELO GEPPONI



QUARTARA



ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS IN ITALY

In this issue, we continue with a listing of Italy's "ethnographic" museums which may contain folk materials for research purposes. Please feel free to send in any additions or corrections that you discover in your travels.

In **Piemonte**, the following museums in the provinces of Alessandria, Asti, and Cuneo may provide some good research material. (In our next issue, we'll continue with the Piemontese provinces of Novara and Torino.)

Museo della Cultura Popolare Alta Val Barbera, presso la Canonica 15060 CARREGA LIGURE (Alessandria)

Museo della civiltà contadina della Bassa Langa e Alto Monferrato, via della Maddalena 14037 CASTAGNOLE DELLE LANZE (Asti) 0141 - 878231

Museo di Arti e Mestieri di un Tempo, c/o Castello Medievale 10010 CISTERNA D'ASTI (Asti) 0141 - 979118

Museo Bersano delle Contadinerie e Stampe antiche sul vino, piazza Dante, 24 14049 NIZZA MONFERRATO (Asti) 0141 - 721273

Museo delle contadinerie, piazza Castello 14055 CASTIGLIOLE D'ASTI (Asti) 0141 - 966031

Museo di Civiltà Contadina, via V. Alfieri, 19 14040 CASTELNUOVO CALCEA (Asti)

Museo della vita contadina dell'Ottocento, 14022 CASTELNUOVO DON BOSCO (Asti) 011-9876976 9927177 9876106

Museo della Civiltà Contadina, Castello Marchionale 12060 BAROLO (Cuneo) 0173 - 56277

Museo Etnografico della Provincia di Cuneo, via Leutrum 12100 CUNEO (Cuneo)

Museo Etnografico Coumboscuro, fraz. S. Lucio de Coumboscuro 12020 MONTEROSSO GRANA (Cuneo) 0171 - 9877

Civico museo di Arti e Tradizioni Popolari, Castello degli Alfieri 12050 MAGLIANO ALFIERI (Cuneo)

Museo Etnografico delle Alpi Occidentali, via Roncaia, Cascina Marquet 12012 BOVES (Cuneo) 0171 - 388227

Museo etnografico, Fr. Chialvetta, 12021 ACCEGLIO (Cuneo) 0171-99.017/99.005

Museo etnografico, Fr. Tolosano, 12025 DRONERO (Cuneo) 0171-98.61.64.

Museo Civico - sez. etnografica 12100 CUNEO

Italy in Song and Dance Dinner Show

Last fall, the Italian Folk Group of Auburn, *I Compari e le Comari*, presented a dinner show and performance of Italian folk dance in Auburn, New York. People attended the sell-out event from throughout Central New York.

Carmelo Signorelli, the group's director, was very appreciative of the many hours that the group's members rehearsed for the show. He says, "That they are all seniors makes their accomplishment all the more remarkable."

Carmelo and his group take pride in doing something positive for the Italian-American image, knowing that, by their cultural activities throughout the course of the year, they are helping to counter-act the negative stereotype that is often perpetuated in films and television.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your nice article "The Presepio in Italy" in the Volume 19, 2000, No. 3, issue of *Tradizioni*. It was well-written and informative. However, I believe there is one error. Hence my reason for writing.

You say, "After the adoration, St. Francis said mass using the manger as an altar." St. Francis never became a priest. He was a brother. Brothers do not say Mass. Therefore I don't believe St. Francis ever said Mass.

I'd appreciate a response to this letter -- at your earliest convenience.

Peacefully in the Lord,

Kathryn Mastriaco
Yonkers, New York

Dear Kathryn,

Thank you for asking about this. My research had led to some confusion on my part, so I wrote to the Franciscan Order, and received the following response from Fr. Greg Plata. I'd like to include it here to clear up any confusion for all of our readers.

Jackie Capurro

Hi Jackie,

Here's the scoop on St. Francis and the celebration of the Mass at Greccio. The reader was right: St. Francis did not celebrate Mass that evening in the cave at Greccio (which today still has the original friary and cave), but rather he preached at the Mass. St. Francis was ordained as a deacon, which allowed him to preach the Gospel. Here's where the confusion often lies. As Franciscans, the most important gift we offer to the Church is the witness of our brotherhood. So, we call each other "brother." Within our brotherhood, there are some of us who are ordained, and some who choose not to be ordained as priests. We are all seen as equal in our fraternity and brotherhood, we all dress in the same religious habit of a friar (which in Latin means "brother,") but only the priests celebrate the Sacraments, especially the Mass.

I hope this clarifies some of the confusion. By the way, the importance of Greccio was to promote a simple fact: that God loved us so much, He became one like us in the person of Jesus, even sharing in our poverty. At that time, Christmas was just another ho-hum holiday. It was Francis and his early friars who celebrated it in grand style, a tradition that continues today.

Peace and all good in the Lord,

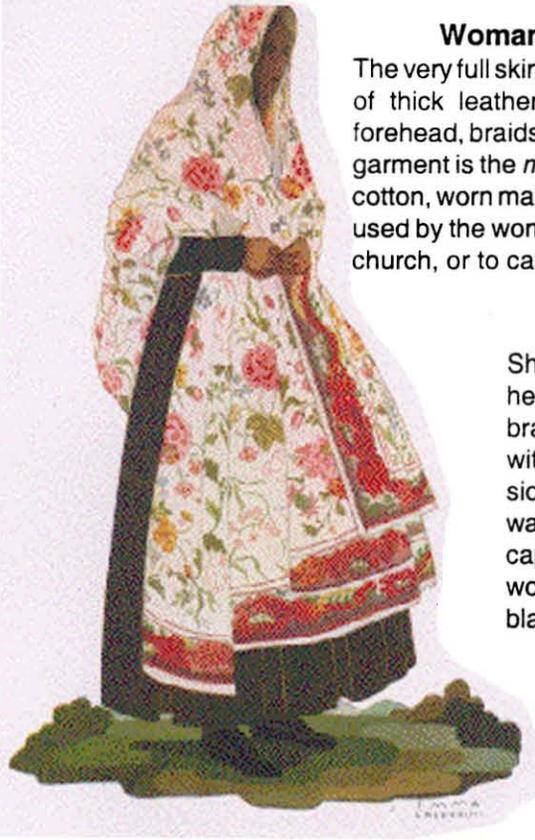
Fr. Greg Plata, OFM
Pulaski, Wisconsin

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. In this issue, we highlight two costumes from the region of Liguria.

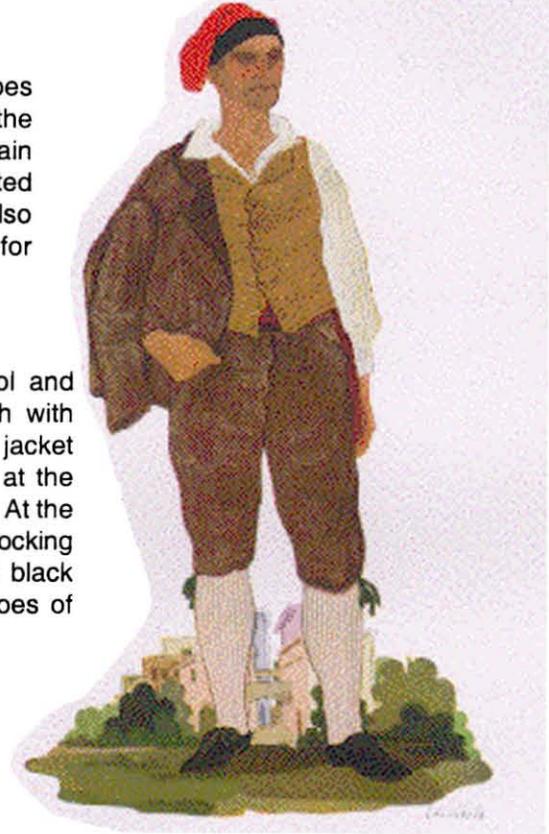
Woman of Genoa wearing a *mesero*

The very full skirt and vest are of wool. Knit stockings. Shoes of thick leather laced up the front. Hair parted at the forehead, braids gathered at the nape of the neck. The main garment is the *mesero*, a large rectangular shawl of printed cotton, worn mainly for warmth. However the *mesero* is also used by the woman to carry her baby, to cover her head for church, or to carry market purchases.



Man of Biassa

Shirt of coarse homespun fabric of wool and hemp. Waistcoat of [beige] woolen cloth with brass buttons. [Brown] double-breasted jacket with straight collar. [Brown] pants, open at the side, tied below the knee with cotton cord. At the waist, a [red] sash of wool with [red] fringe. Stocking cap of [red] woolen cloth, bordered with black woolen cloth. Woolen knit stockings. Shoes of black leather.



La Giostra del Saracino, Arezzo

La Giostra del Saracino ad Arezzo è un antico gioco cavalleresco che affonda le sue origini nel Medio Evo. Ripristinato in rievocazione storica nel 1931, la Giostra del Saracino si corre ad Arezzo nella splendida cornice di Piazza Grande la terza domenica di giugno e la prima domenica di settembre. E una sfida contro il Buratto, un simulacro che rappresenta il Re delle Indie, tra i quattro quartieri in cui è divisa la città: Porta Crucifera, Porta del Foro, Porta S. Andrea e Porta S. Spirito.

La Giostra è preceduta dall'esibizione degli Sbandieratori della Giostra e del Saracino, accompagnata dal rullo dei tamburi e dal suono delle chitarre del Gruppo Musici. Poi c'è l'entrata in piazza di tutto il corteo storico della Giostra. Oltre trecento figuranti negli splendidi costumi d'epoca fanno il loro ingresso in Piazza Grande, accompagnati dal calore e dagli applausi dei quartieristi stipati nelle tribune e ai lati della piazza. Alla testa degli armati del Quartiere entra il Maestro d'Arme, e poi completa lo schieramento il Capitano del Quartiere con i Cavalieri di Casata.

Poi è la volta dei cavalieri (due per ogni quartiere) che vanno a misurarsi nella carriera, lancia in resta, contro il Buratto, Re delle Indie. Il quartiere che realizza con i due giostratori il punteggio più alto vince la Giostra del Saracino. Al Rettore del quartiere vincitore viene consegnata la Lancia d'oro che poi viene portata in trionfo per le vie della città fino alla Sede del Quartiere.

The Joust of the Saracens in Arezzo is an ancient horseback contest whose origins are steeped in the Middle Ages. Brought back to life as an historical re-enactment in 1931, the Joust of the Saracens takes place in Arezzo splendidly framed in the Piazza Grande on the third Sunday of June and the first Sunday of September. It's a challenge against *il Buratto*, a larger-than-life dummy which represents the King of the Indies, by the four *quartieri* (neighborhoods) into which the city is divided: Porta Crucifera, Porta del Foro, Porta Sant'Andrea, and Porta Santo Spirito.

The Joust is preceded by an exhibition by the *Sbandieratori della Giostra* (who juggle and throw huge flags between them) and by the Saracen, accompanied by drum rolls and the clarions of the musicians. This is followed by the entrance into the *piazza* of the entire historical cortege of the Joust. More than 300 participants dressed in splendid costumes of the period make their entrance into Piazza Grande, accompanied by the warmth and applause of the neighborhood supporters packed into the stands and along the sides of the *piazza*. At the head of the armies of the *Quartiere* enters the Master of Arms with the Captain of the *Quartiere* and the knights from titled families completing the formation.

Finally, the attention is on the Joust (two for each *quartiere*) who have their confrontation at full speed, lance at the ready, against *il Buratto*, King of the Indies. The *quartiere* whose two jousters score the highest against *il Buratto* wins the Joust of the Saracens. To the Chancellor of the winning *quartiere* goes the Golden Lance which is then carried in triumph throughout the streets of the city to rest in the Seat of the *Quartiere*.

Meri's Italian Folksinging Page

Meri's Italian Folksinging Page has a new address: «<http://www.italianfolkmusic.com>». The old URL of «<http://pages.hotbot.com/arts/italfolk/>» is no longer valid, as you may have discovered if you tried to go to that address.

You will find several photos of the Italian Folk Art Federation of America Conference in Pittsburgh in October along with Connie Muscenti's article. There are also photos on the website of the *Performing Ecstasies* Conference in Los Angeles which I attended in October with an article about the activities.

I will soon be adding some photos from the March 24th visit of the Salentine group Zoë at a private party in Los Angeles. Zoë was in town to perform for the Oscar party for Dino De Laurentiis.

Because of so many requests, I am putting together a book of sheet music to go with the lyrics to the songs on the website. Pat Bennett from New York, who shares my passion for Italian folk music, is working with me on the book. This is an ambitious task so it will be months before we can give you an estimated completion date.

In the coming months, Meri's Italian Folksinging Page will have a section for e-commerce so that we can make it easy for you to purchase CDs of all the wonderful Italian folk groups out there in one place, in

U.S. dollars, using your credit card.

We are very excited about this prospect. We will also be producing a program on streaming audio that will change weekly so you can hear the music of the different groups.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR ME

If you are a solo performer or part of a group and have a CD that you would like us to carry on the website, please e-mail me and let me know.

Also, since we are taking on so much work to bring these new features to the website, we are looking for sponsors to help with costs -- especially sponsors who appeal to a national or international Italian-oriented audience. We will place banners on our website to bring customers to the sponsor's site. If you have a business that qualifies or are in a position to bring a business like that on as a sponsor, please let me know.

Please let your friends know the new address of my site. Spread the word!

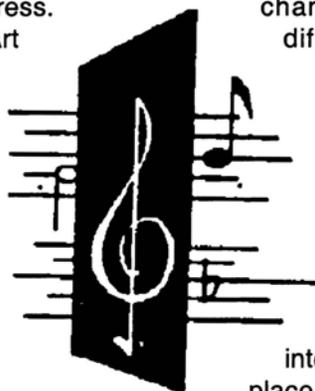
Grazie,

Meri DeLorenzo

Meri's Italian Folksinging Page

www.italianfolkmusic.com

italianfolk@lycos.com



The purpose of the ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA (IFafa) 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.

IFafa 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, IFafa was incorporated May 7, 1979, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-profit cultural and educational organization.

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