



tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

Editor: Jackie Capurro

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Review of the 2015 IFafa Conference in Philadelphia!

[Nancy Coviello attended her first IFafa Conference and reported back to the Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society in Washington, DC, of which she is a member. She wrote this article for the AMHS newsletter and gave us permission to use it here in Tradizioni as well. Thanks, Nancy!!]



Friday October 2nd, the conference opened with a membership meeting to discuss the status of the group and announce board plans for the coming year. The meeting was followed by a public event which included food, wine, music and dance. Members of the organization taught anyone who wanted to learn a series of dances including the *Scopa* or Broom dance, the *Tarantella Villaggio* or the "Chaos" dance, and the *Codiglione* which is the Italian version of the Corillon dance or a Cotillon dance. [Nancy Coviello is pictured at left, holding the broom from the *La Scopa* dance.]

Saturday at the conference was SPECTACULAR! I really enjoyed it! The conference day started at 8:45am and ended at 5:00pm with a one hour lunch break. During this period, there were numerous classes on a variety of subjects such as learning dances like the *Tarantella Girgente* from Agrigento, Sicily, and *Tarantella Bim Bom Ba* from Campagna. I participated in this session and it was not too hard to learn; it had stomps and spins and the group moving together in a circle. There were also sessions on history of the Italian National Anthem, Choir (where we practiced two songs, *Torna a Sorriente* and *Reginella Campagnola*), Making of Traditional *Bomboniere Abruzzesi*, Italian Village Life Through Folk Songs, and the *Malocchio*: Healing and Italian Superstitions. [Paul Torna is shown at right demonstrating the process of removing the curse of the *Malocchio*, Evil Eye.]



The Saturday evening portion started at 6:00pm with a cocktail hour. This was followed by a dinner banquet called *Festa Folcloristica*. In addition to the meal, it included a parade of costumes which were quite colorful and diverse representing many parts of Italy. There were three costumes from the Abruzzo region. Those from the Choir Class, including me, sang the two songs we had learned earlier in the day: *Torna a Sorriente* and *Reginella Campagnola*. There were three different dance

performances by groups from Philadelphia, Milwaukee, and Connecticut. There were also group dances where the event attendees were invited to join. Through the evening, live music was played by Munier Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra. The entire evening was a celebration to the Italian Folk Arts, and I thought it was a great success.

-- Nancy Coviello, Washington, DC



At left, conference participants learn a lively circle dance during a Saturday workshop.

Below, at the Saturday evening *Festa Folcloristica*, participants from the public join costumed IFafa members in a lively Quadrglia.

Nancy took numerous pictures and added them to a drop box folder where participants are welcome to view them.

Link to the full set of pictures from Friday evening on DropBox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yI3zldzyovhoqj1/AAA2GE8i3WNwrO9oPKUXaZEVa?dl=0>

Link to the full set of pictures from Saturday on DropBox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2nmf5z7a5lhj9e2/AABIDeEDR1x7T81xM88C12Q8a?dl=0>



Happy Birthday, Patricia Civitate!

Several birthday cakes were offered to conference participants in honor of Patricia Civitate, director of *Il Trattenimento Italiano* of Des Moines, IA, whose birthday happened to fall on the same date as the Friday evening activities of the conference. "Mrs. C" has attended every IFafa Conference since 1981!

IFafa Officers at the 2015 *Festa Folcloristica*

Executive Officers of the IFafa Board of Directors: (L-R) Jackie Capurro, Secretary; Rose Giarrusso, Treasurer; Joyce DeLaurentis, Vice-President; and Leslie Gigliotti, President.



IFAFIA MEMBER NEWS

***Balliamo!* Performs at the Dante Club in Sacramento, CA**



During the 2015 holiday season, Balliamo! dancers performed for the Women's Auxiliary of the prestigious Dante Club in Sacramento, CA. The Dante Club has been one of Sacramento's most respected social-gathering institutions since 1926. The aim of the club is to encourage friendship and social activities for members and families and to sustain the Italian heritage and serve the community. Balliamo! certainly helped them to sustain the Italian culture during their holiday show!

***Vivaci* Performing for the St. Nick's Community in Philadelphia**

Every year in mid-October, the local community around St. Nicholas Paris Church in South Philadelphia celebrates with a street festival. *Vivaci* Dance Troupe joined with the community for a day full of exuberant dancing and joy.





"The Victors" - Victor Peck (R) and Victor Gugliuzza (L)

In Memoriam: Victor Peck

We only recently learned the sad news that long-time IFAFA member Victor Peck had passed away in March of this year. Many of you will remember Victor and his constant companion, Vic Gugliuzza, as "the Victors" who attended IFAFA conferences from the 1990s through 2009.

Before his retirement in 1992, Victor Peck worked for the Nazarene Publishing House in Kansas City, MO, for 23 years. He was head of the Dock, overseeing the inventory and shipments. After both Victors had retired, they turned to their passion for folk dancing, teaching Dutch and Italian folk dancing at local community centers for decades. They enjoyed collecting music (records, tapes, and CDs), sheet music, and dances.

"The Victors" both loved dance of all kinds, but especially international folk dance which they had done for over 40 years. They had a special interest in Schottisches from various countries.

Victor P and Vic G participated (and sometimes founded) several groups in Kansas City, MO, involved with dance and culture. They were members of the International Folk Dancers of Kansas City, UNICO, the Ethnic Festival board, and Scuola Vita Nova (a charter school where all students were exposed to the cultures, languages, and arts of numerous countries).

Victor Peck was a wonderful correspondent, an expert in the -- perhaps old-fashioned -- art of letter-writing. Then in 2002, they bought a used computer for \$100, and started taking computer classes in their 70s (Peck) and 80s (Gugliuzza). Victor thrilled to the development of computer programs and email (he sent me his first email letter in March 2003!) which allowed him to print multiple copies of his typed letters or send numerous emails at once to his many friends. And he did have MANY friends, including several IFAFA members, with whom he corresponded several times a year with his down-home, newsy letters about what he and Vic G. were up to.

Upon learning of Victor's passing, I pulled out my 2-inch thick folder of letters I've received from him since the year 2000 after we had met at the Milwaukee conference in 1999. His letters contain a wealth of information about dances throughout Italy and Europe, learned through curiosity and research.

Aside from writing letters, Victor loved writing poetry and short stories. He was a published poet, with three poems in the Library of Congress. He was also writing a book that he planned to publish about things and events from his childhood. He occasionally sent me drafts of some of his poems and stories.

The following reading, *Doors*, is one that he sent to me in January of 2004, with the note: "This is a first draft of something that I might put into the book I am writing." As you read it, I'm sure that you will realize, as I did, that this sums up the caring attitude that both "Victors" readily embraced. It is most appropriate to share it here.

-- Jackie Capurro

DOORS

by Victor Peck

I have often thought about what doors have been opened to me. Just which one would mean the most and would be the greatest. I've come to a conclusion after many years.

Sometimes this door has been hard to open and other times it has been easy. It depends who is opening the door from the other side for me. I might have been waiting unknowingly for the other person to open the door. That person might have opened it right away. When it is opened, it is a wonderful Blessing, because that person is opening that door to FRIENDSHIP and inviting me in to know them. If I am honest, sincere, compassionate and caring, they will be my friend for life. In opening that door for me, they are letting me enter into their Life. In doing this, I learn of their disappointments, doubts, and fears. I also learn of their joys, happiness, and laughter. With these things comes the learning of the talent that God has given these friends. All the time I am learning these things about them, they are learning the same about me. I get amazed at the talent of the friends that I have. Then I think how wonderful it is that God gave each friend a talent that I can learn something about, broadening my mind and my world. Oh yes! I am so Blessed with Friendships of so many people and what they have done for me and given to my Life. If you are one of my friends, I want to say God Bless You and Thanks for what I've gained from knowing you. If you're not my friend, just open the door ... I'll be there.

Friends are the most important thing a person can have. May God Bless and take care of me and all my friends. Because I have grown to Love each one for who they are. Thanks for being my friend.



Victor proudly carrying a regional banner at the 2004 Conference

Bomboniere Presentation and Workshop

Even if you were not able to attend the workshop during the 2015 conference, you can partially share the experience through this handout which participants received. Workshop attendees followed a PowerPoint presentation on the history and production of *bomboniere* and then used a variety of materials to create *bomboniere* of their own.

-- Jackie Capurro, San Jose, CA

Locations Mentioned during the Presentation

- Sulmona: a city and *comune* of the province of L'Aquila in the Abruzzo region, east of Rome, the home of widely-known manufacturers of confetti
- *Museo dell'Arte e della Tecnologia Confettiere Pelino* (Pelino Museum of *Confetti* Art and Technology) is located in the Pelino Factory in Sulmona and contains displays of the history and production of confetti .
Website: <<http://confettimariopelino.com/museo/>>
- Avola: a small town in Sicily, between Siracusa and Ragusa, known for growing high-quality almonds, perfectly shaped for *confetti*

Definitions

- *bomboniera* (plural: *bomboniere*) = favor
- *bonbonnière* = original French for *bomboniere*
- *bon-bons* = French candies
- *confetto* (plural: *confetti*) = confection, in this case referring to sugar-covered almonds used to make *bomboniere*
- *torrone* = a honey and almond nougat candy, a specialty of Siena and the Tuscany region, but found throughout Italy
- *croccante* = almonds (or other nuts) hardened in honey, similar to our peanut brittle

- *coppa amatoria* = 'loving cup' painted ceramic wide-bowled cup given by men to their betrothed in 15th century Italy
- *jardin* = garden in French, possibly the origin of the word for Jordan almonds
- *bassine* = the large copper (or steel) drums in which the almonds receive their sugar coating
- *Ministero delle politiche agricole, alimentari e forestali* = Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry
- P.A.T. (*Prodotto agroalimentare tradizionale*) = Traditional Agricultural Product, an official approval for traditional Italian regional food products marketed abroad

- *battesimo* = baptism
- *prima comunione* = first communion
- *cresima* = confirmation
- *laurea* = graduation
- *fidanzamento* = engagement
- *nozze* (or: *matrimonio*) = wedding
- *salute, fertilità, lunga vita* (or: *longevità*), *felicità, e ricchezza* = health, fertility, long life (or: longevity), happiness, and wealth (riches). These are the five qualities of life wished for the newlyweds, represented by the five *confetti* in each wedding *bomboniera*
- *torta di bomboniere* = 'cake' fashioned with *bomboniere*



Easter *bomboniera* made by Gina Jorgenson



Modern *bomboniera* made by Natalija Gotovnik

Summary

The tradition of giving small favors or gifts at major life events has evolved from ancient times as a result of custom, society, and available materials. Confetti as we know them now evolved from earlier forms of honeyed almonds to the sugar-coated almonds after sugar became readily available and affordable in the 15th century, when confetti were known to be produced in Sulmona and, later, sewn into floral formations by the nuns in Sulmona's Convent of Santa Chiara.

These creations only became known as *bomboniere* in the 18th century, when the tradition of exchanging elegant boxes filled with candies became the fashion in France and Italy, and eventually became a tradition amongst the commoners as well.

Confetti in Sulmona are usually made from Sicilian Avola almonds, prized for their shape and flavor. The almonds are coated by rotating them for hours in large copper boilers called *bassine*. The *Confetti di Sulmona* are recognized by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry on their list of traditional Italian food products for international marketing purposes.

Bomboniere are shared at major family events. In Italy, these are most often religious in nature, related to the Catholic Sacraments, as well as major life events, so you will find them at baptisms, first communion, confirmation, graduations, engagements, weddings, milestone anniversaries, and sometimes birthdays. They may be used as placeholders for the guests, distributed by the honorees, or fashioned into a *Torta di Bomboniere*, resembling a large wedding cake where each “slice” is an individual *bomboniera*. Bomboniere can range from very simple bags of confetti, tied with ribbons and decorated with small charms, to elegant creations where small bags of confetti may be attached to expensive figurines or plates of silver, crystal or ceramic. Modern couples often choose to provide their guests with more practical bomboniere attached to small kitchen utensils, photo frames, corkscrews, wine stoppers, or cheese graters.

Traditionally, confetti are used in odd numbers (5, 3, or 1) to fashion a *bomboniera*. Five-petaled flowers, especially, are given at weddings to symbolize health, fertility, long life, happiness, and wealth.

The color of the confetti (and often the ribbon) will depend on the occasion.



Soccer *bomboniera* made by Lisa DeSanctis

Celebration	Color of <i>Confetti</i>
Wedding or Confirmation	White
First Communion	White (occasionally mixed with pale blue or pale pink depending on the gender of the child)
Baptism of a Male Child	Light Blue and/or White
Baptism of a Female Child	Light Pink and/or White
Wedding Engagement	Green
Graduation	Red

In addition, each landmark marriage anniversary year has its own color of *confetti*:

Rosa		1 Anno, Nozze di Cotone	Pink, 1 Year, Cotton Wedding
Fuxia		5 Anni, Nozze di Seta	Fuschia, 5 Years, Silk Wedding
Giallo		10 Anni, Nozze di Stagno	Yellow, 10 Years, Tin Wedding
Beige		15 Anni, Nozze di Porcellana	Beige, 15 Years, Porcelain Wedding
Luce		20 Anni, Nozze di Cristallo	Crystal, 20 Years, Crystal Wedding
Argento		25 Anni, Nozze d'Argento	Silver, 25 Years, Silver Wedding
Verde Mare		30 Anni, Nozze di Perla	Aquamarine, 30 Years, Pearl Wedding
Blue		35 Anni, Nozze di Zaffiro	Blue, 35 Years, Sapphire Wedding
Verde Scuro		40 Anni, Nozze di Smeraldo	Dark Green, 40 Years, Emerald Wedding
Rosso		45 Anni, Nozze di Rubino	Red, 45 Years, Ruby Wedding
Oro		50 Anni, Nozze d'Oro	Gold, 50 Years, Golden Wedding
Avorio		55 Anni, Nozze d'Avorio	Ivory, 55 Years, Ivory Wedding
Bianco		60 Anni, Nozze di Diamante	White, 60 Years, Diamond Wedding

Regional Italian Folk Costume

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 a costume from the region of *Basilicata*.

Donna benestante di Potenza

Well-to-do Woman from Potenza

Shirt of white linen with rounded neckline embellished with delicate crocheted lace; full gathered sleeves trimmed with beautiful embroidery. Blouse of violet silk gathered at the shoulders, with short sleeves edged with tiny fringe. Stiff corset of blue cloth with suspenders, with silver embroidery; sleeves of the same blue cloth, embroidered, tied to the blouse with ribbons. The skirt of dark blue cloth is gathered at the waist, smooth in front and buttoned in the back. The full apron is of black taffeta. The neck scarf is of rose-colored damask. Dark knit stockings and black leather shoes. Hair combed back and gathered in braids. Necklace of gold with pendants; large gold earrings.



2016 Directory of Italian Festivals in the U.S.

This year's directory, compiled by the Order Sons of Italy in America® (OSIA), lists 361 Italian festivals held in 45 states plus the District of Columbia with at least one *fiesta* each month. The directory supplies each festival's name, month, city, state, and contact information.

The custom of honoring favorite saints with outdoor ceremonies was brought to America more than 100 years ago by the early Italian immigrants. The festivals vary in size and character. Some consist of only the saint's statue, a band and a procession while others are colossal celebrations that last several days and include symphonic bands, entertainers, food stands, rides and fireworks. A familiar sight at most festivals is the saint's statue covered with money or jewelry, later donated to the local church or saint's society.

The oldest festival is believed to be the *Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel* in Hammonton, NJ, which this year celebrates its 139th anniversary in July. The biggest festival is the *Feast of San Gennaro* held every September in New York City, which attracts about one million people. Large festivals can also be found in West Virginia (*Wheeling's Upper Ohio Valley Italian Heritage Festival* in July and *Clarksburg's Italian Heritage Festival* in September) and in Wisconsin (*Milwaukee's Festa Italiana* in July), among others.

According to Sons of Italy research, the five states with the most festivals are: New York (61); New Jersey (50); California (34); Pennsylvania (35); and Illinois (26). Other states with significant numbers of festivals include Massachusetts (21), Ohio (20), Connecticut (14) and Florida (14).

Italian festivals are held coast to coast. Some festivals include such traditional events as the flight of the angels (*la Festa della Madonna del Soccorso di Sciacca* in Boston in August); the greased pole contest (the Feast of St. Peter in Gloucester, MA in June); and the Dance of the Lily (*Festa del Giglio*), in which about 100 men carry a five-ton platform through the streets for hours (in Brooklyn and East Harlem and in July and August).

To add your festival to next year's directory, please contact the OSIA headquarters in Washington, D.C. by mail, fax, or e-mail. [No telephone calls, please]. Send the name of the festival, month held, city, state and a contact person or organization with a telephone number and/or email address. **Deadline:** December 15, 2016.

Send to:

Sons of Italy Festival Directory
219 E Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Fax: [202/547-0121](tel:2025470121)

Email: communications@osia.org

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Founder's Fund

The Elba Farabegoli Gurzau Founder's Fund was originally established as a living memorial to the founder of the Italian Folk Art Federation of America. Contributions for any intention, i.e. birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion, as well as in memoriam, are used only for artistic endeavors.

Donations may be made payable to "IFAF A – Founder's Fund" and mailed to: IFAFA, c/o Treasurer, 103 Greenbrier Drive, Carnegie, PA 15106.

When sending a donation to commemorate an event, please: Identify the occasion and give the full name of the individual to be honored. Also give the full name and address to whom the announcement is to be sent. The contributor should also provide his/her name, address, and telephone number.

A special letter, announcing the contribution and naming the contributor, will be forwarded to the honored person or family, and an acknowledgement will be sent to the contributor.

FOLK DANCES, COSTUMES AND CUSTOMS OF ITALY

by Elba Farabegoli Gurzau

Softcover book, 128 pages, including black-and-white and color illustrations. Seventeen dances with description and notated music, information about Italy, costumes, customs, etc. Comes with recorded music to accompany the dances, your choice of CD or audiocassette.

Price: \$25.00 plus \$3.95 for handling and postage.

Be sure to specify CD or cassette.

Please make check or money order payable to IFAFA and mail to:

IFAF A Treasurer
103 Greenbrier Drive
Carnegie, PA 15106

Contributors to this Issue of *Tradizioni*

The editor would like to thank the following people for contributing articles and/or information for this issue:

Doris Beckert

Nancy Coviello

Caterina Dattola Dawson

OSIA: Order Sons of Italy in America

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

IFAF A 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.

Membership in IFAFA

You may also join online!

<http://www.italianfolkartfederation.org/EN/Membership.asp>

\$25 Extended Membership

\$22 Extended Membership (under 18 or over 65)

\$15 Basic Membership

\$12 Basic membership (under 18 or over 65)

Contributing to the work of IFAFA: \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Contributions are tax-deductible. Make checks payable to IFAFA Mail to:
IFAF A Treasurer, 103 Greenbrier Drive, Carnegie, PA 15106