

Vol. 5, No. 4, 1993

THE Italic Way

The newsletter of the Italic Studies Institute

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Equestrian Style: The Art of Jumping

Review: *Mussolini's Mistress*

Air Safety: Design by Burnelli

Italian Aviation



Italy's *Freccie Tricolori*
(Tricolored Arrows)



The Italic Way

Vol. 5 No. 4

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Letters

Address all letters to: LETTERS, The Italic Way, PO Box 818, Floral Park, NY 11001

READ!

Please accept my compliments on the contents of your newsletters, they are very informative. I have purchased *The Italian Frogmen*, *Italians and the Holocaust*, and *The Proud Italians*. They are three excellent books. I have loaned them to Italians who are amazed by what Italians have done culturally. You must be very proud of yourselves.

Andrew N. Morra,
Mount Vernon, NY

(Ed. Just a reminder, purchases from May 1993 onward earn members gift points. See p. 8.)



The 2nd Amendment: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of citizens to bear arms shall not be infringed."

to use this newsletter to divulge the political inclinations of one or few of the editors.

It seems to me that by associating Italian-Americans with so called Gun Control Politicians you wish to legitimize and disassociate them from a "Gangster" stereotype. This to me is, perhaps well meant, but nonetheless a distortion of reality.

Italian Americans, just like all other law abiding ethnic populations, should and must fight for their right to keep and bear arms. After all, how can we consider ourselves good citizens if we go against the wishes of our American forefathers?

(See the United States Constitution.)

Dario Gristina,
New York, NY

(Ed. The writer is a former Vice President of the Plenary Council.)

PROVOKE!

On behalf of the FIERI organization I would like to thank you for the thought-provoking and enriching discussion on the challenges of organizing Italian-Americans. I believe you have reminded us not to take the negative stereotyping for granted. May we all work together to accentuate the positive.

Roberto Ragone,
FIERI,
Manhattan Chapter

STAY APOLITICAL!

I was very much outraged by your article [regarding Gov. Florio and the NRA]. Although I was born in Italy, which now makes me the transcendental Italian American, I am now very much American and one of the things I love about this country is indeed the freedom and right to keep and bear arms. I am also a lifetime member of the NRA.

I have always enjoyed reading your newsletter. However, often political issues are embraced in a manner which I strongly disapprove. I believe it is wrong

HONORING THE PAST

Thanks so much for having our father involved with your video production [*American Visions*]. I think that Tony

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POST SCRIPTS

[DeNonno] did a terrific job; considering my father's age, Tony was able to capture his personality. What you see is what he is.

Our family will treasure this tape. Years from now we'll be able to look back and relive his life's experiences.

I hope the project goes well and we are proud to be a part of what he and other immigrants brought to this country.

**Bert De Tomaso,
New York, NY**

BLOOD RELATIONS?

I wish to thank you for a back copy of your Spring 1989 issue. It is the first I have heard of Raphael Sabatini since I started the family tree ten years ago.

**Mrs. Madeline R. Gloret
Lakewood, CO**

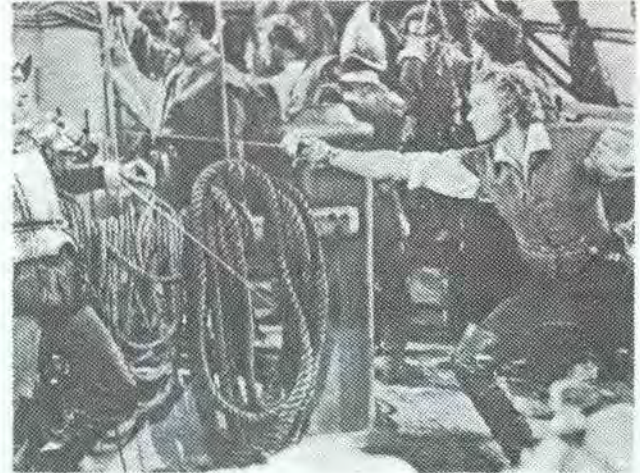
(Ed. For our new readers Raphael Sabatini was an Italian-English author. His works "Captain Blood" and "Sea Hawk" went on to become classic Errol Flynn movies.)

GRATIAS AGERE

(TO THANK)

On behalf of [our student] Laura Marmorah and myself, we wish to

**A scene from the swashbuckler
Sea Hawk starring
Errol Flynn.
Based on the
book by Raphael
Sabatini (below)**



thank the members of the Institute for fostering the study of Latin by your donation and commemorative coin. Laura was thrilled with the award.

**Sister Mary Sheridan
Sacred Heart Academy
Hempstead, NY**

STATUESQUE

In your Fall, 1992 issue you mentioned that only two monuments were erected in the U.S.A. celebrating the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage. In fact, an 8' bronze statue was erected on our main street at Columbus Circle. Also, I read of another commemorative



obelisk dedicated in Philadelphia, PA.
**Viola Cirio
Phoenix, AZ**

(Ed. We were later informed by Dr. Eugene Lombardi of our Advisory Council that the Phoenix statue has been relocated. The land upon which it stood for only nine months was sold. It now stands at 28th St. and Camelback Road.)

FUTURE ISSUES OF THE ITALIC WAY

- THE ITALIC FAMILY - Then and now
- MAFIA - Strangers among us
- ROMAN CATHOLICISM - Bearer of ancient rites
- CELTIC ITALY - The Irish side
- ITALIAN DEBT - What Italy Owes Italian-Americans



All'Italiana



Dr. Ugo Cerletti (1877-1963)
Introduced electroconvulsive
therapy in 1937.

SHOCKING NEWS

After the lobotomy, electric shock therapy was thought to be the most inhumane treatment for mental disease. First brought to light by Italian scientists Ugo Cerletti and Lucio Bini in 1937, the use of electric current to treat schizophrenia and depression had few vocal supporters even though it appeared to have some value. Electroconvulsive therapy (the healing is in the convulsion, not the shock)—as stereotyped in the movie *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*—took on an Orwellian sinisterism. Nevertheless, this Italic brainchild has been generally accepted by the mental health community. Although side effects such as memory loss make the treatment somewhat unpalatable, testimonials from many patients, including celebrity Dick Cavett, show electroconvulsive therapy to be the “roto-rooter of depression” as one recipient describes it. Come to think of it, plumbing was also an Italic specialty.

MISERIA INDEX DROPS

Despite *Lira* devaluation, corruption probes, suicide scandals and privatization traumas, Italy is showing signs of a significant economic upswing. The latest unemployment rate from the first

quarter of 1993 revealed that unemployment in Machiavelli country fell from 11.3% in the same period last year to 10.9%. In a Europe wracked by double digit joblessness—including Germany with its impoverished East—this is an enviable economic accomplishment. Britain stands at 11.4% and Spain at 21.5%. By the way, Italian workers have the lowest absentee rate among European industrial workers.

AMBER GENES

Jurassic-mania owes part of its origin to one Charles Pellegrino of Valley



A Jurassic Inspiration by Pellegrino

Stream, Long Island. For it was Pellegrino who first proposed the theory that dinosaur DNA could be recovered from prehistoric insects that were preserved in amber. The logic is valid. Mosquitos or other biting insects could very well have sucked a little blood from T-Rex and his contemporaries and gotten trapped in gooey tree sap before the blood was digested.

BENITO'S TREASURE

Four waterproof metal boxes recovered from Lake Garda were thought to contain documents, correspondence and other papers pertaining to Benito Mus-

solini. Il Duce's final fling at power, the Republic of Salo', was centered near Lake Garda. Some observers hoped that the contents would contain evidence of a secret agreement between Mussolini and Winston Churchill that would rewrite the history of World War II. Lending credence to that belief was the hastily arranged “vacation” to Lake Garda that the British prime minister took immediately after *Il Duce's* demise. Churchill, who, in fact, corresponded with Mussolini all through the war, allegedly absconded with some of the Italian premier's private papers.

PASSINGS

• **Piergiuseppe Beretta**, president of the legendary Beretta gun manufacturer, died last June in Gardone Valtrompia, Italy. The Berettas have been weapons makers for more than 450 years. In that time, the Beretta has become the official gun of the Italian police and armed forces. After outgunning the Colt 45, it became the standard for the security forces of the United States. The Beretta achieved eternal fame, however, as James Bond's weapon of choice.

• **Vincent S. Murino**, the man responsible for developing the five-day



All'Italiana



The would-be destroyer of Italy, Umberto Bossi

weather forecast, passed away on June 5th in Falls Church, Virginia. He had helped reorganize and streamline the National Weather Service, transforming it into the nation's foremost authority on meteorological events.

I BARBARI

Lost in all the hubbub of Italy's political renaissance is the threat posed by the loathsome Lombard League. Despite the fact that the *tangentopoli* (kickback) scandals that toppled the old political order occurred predominantly in the northern region of Lombardy, the League's stomping grounds, Umberto Bossi and his pseudo-teutons have steadily gained in the polls. After Italy's parliamentary elections in June, the League was estimated to hold 17% of the nation in thrall. What's more, the League's campaign of calumnies helped it garner 55 seats in the parliament in this year's general election. Barbarian Bossi's chief targets were the South and Roman misgovernment. Although he changes his tune to fit the prevailing political winds -- conciliatory in victory, bellicose in barnstorming -- Bossi's intent is clear: the dismemberment of the sovereign state of Italy. Sadly, he is making headway,

A recent poll in *La Repubblica* revealed that 18% of those asked believe Italy will become a confederation of sovereign regions within ten years. Furthermore, 26% remain doubtful whether Italy will remain a single united country. Only 56%



Chas. Bonaparte,
Founder of the FBI.

think the nation will hold indivisible. Unless the Italian state puts a halt to Bossi and his band of Longobards, the tragedy of 476 A.D. will reoccur. And the new dark ages will surely follow.

MANCUSO'S MGM

Guess who's coming to manage MGM? Paramount Studio's Frank Man-

cuso apparently received a proposition he couldn't resist. Credit Lyonnais, the French bank that owns MGM, decided to oust the lackluster Alan Ladd, Jr. Their choice of Mancuso was undoubtedly based on Frank's track record of hits at Paramount. Mancuso was the head honcho who unleashed the corpulent Frankie Coppola in the *Godfather* trilogy. Perhaps he can now lure Coppola to MGM to film a gangster flick for the nineties. With Credit Lyonnais backing and lush French locales, Coppola would have free rein to direct a blockbuster about Europe's fastest growing organized crime cartel, the Corsican mob. Would Gerard Depardieu, Catherine Deneuve and Alain Delon lend their considerable acting talents to a *French Connection III*?

WHAT GOES

AROUND...

When asked during his confirmation hearings if he is sensitive to ethnic concerns, newly appointed FBI director Louis J. Freeh answered from the heart. In fact, Freeh related to the senators that his own mother, an Italian-American, was rejected years ago by a Wall



Louis Freeh,
New FBI Director

Street firm just because she was of Italian descent.

The Freeh appointment as head of America's top police force makes him the second Italian-American to oversee the FBI. An Italian-American created the FBI in 1908. That was Attorney General Charles Bonaparte who signed the original directive.



World Notes

[We present this section to inform our readers of events and trends that may be of interest with regard to ethnic opinions or cultural values.]

THE ROMAN WAY

Classical Italy's legacy to engineering continues to find a place in our lives. Try living without cement, the arch, the dome, or plumbing. And now, an old Roman cure for beach erosion is being tested around the world.

The modern way to protect beaches is to build unsightly jetties or merely to keep trucking in tons of sand. Both time and tide have shown up the fallacies in such methods. By contrast, the early Italians dispersed nature's force by creating a series of underwater stone islets, parallel to the beach but staggered from each other to keep sand from flowing through.

The "new" method is being used on Cyprus, Venezuela, and Mexico. Closer to home, it appears that the Long Island community of Asharoken will consider this Italic solution to its continual sand loss. (We thank Wm. J. Turner of Northport, LI, for this tidbit.)

FUK CHING FAREWELL

Fifteen gangsters sporting pompadoured black hair, charcoal double-breasted suits with white carnations and black sunglasses came to pay their last respects to four reputed organized crime figures on Canal Street. The



Can we save our shoreline using Roman engineering?

mourners carried machine guns, but, in keeping with the Triad code of silence, dispensed with any fireworks. The only sound was that of a mother wailing for her ignoble son in the Fujianese dialect. The deceased thugs were believed to be members of the local chapter of an Asian Murder, Inc. known as Fuk Ching. The Fuk Ching crime family has been linked to Chinese smuggling, extortion, gambling and slavery activities in the United States. This past May, four tentacles of this Oriental octopus were hacked off in a grisly gangland shootout. Two of the four mobsters killed in the rub-out were brothers of Ah Kay, the alleged mandarin of all mandarins of the Fuk Ching family. These hits are not okay with Ah Kay, and law enforcement officials fear an all-out

gang war may soon erupt in Chinatown. Maybe that's why there are no sharp utensils in neighborhood dining rooms.

SERBIAN STEALTH BOMBERS

The very notion of foreign involvement in the recent bombings in Rome, Milan and Florence is too farfetched for journalists to contemplate, much less investigate. That would take valuable time away from their frenzied schedule. Time better spent sipping *cappuccino* while perusing Italian dailies for sensationalistic angles to promote their Italy-as-anarchy party line. However, even a cursory look at the number of NATO air bases in Italy and Sicily reveal the Italian Republic's vulnerability. If NATO attack aircraft buzz Belgrade or bomb Sarajevo, the Serbs have threatened to retaliate by launching a wave of terror bombings in Italy, the nearest target. Some Italian investigators have linked the bombings in their cities to foreign sources, possibly Serbia rather than the Mafia. In contrast, foreign correspondents such as Alan Cowell of the *New York Times* have not followed up this lead. They are too busy pumping disgruntled waiters and street mimes for conspiracy theories. No less than the Italian police are their prime suspects. Serbia? Where's that?



The Blues Brothers or the latest in funeral fashion?

World Notes



KING OF THE POLLS

All hail King Carlo of the polls. Despite Italy's dizzying political climate, Italian Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi had the highest approval rating (60%) of all the G7 leaders assembled at the Tokyo summit this past summer (President Clinton: 37%). His is an admittedly caretaker administration, but the technocrat-turned-premier has managed to gain the confidence of the business community and the trust of the Italian people. Ciampi, who radiates competence, used his first opportunity on the world stage to grill President Bill Clinton about the U.N.'s inept handling of the Somalia mission. The Italian prime minister made a strong and compelling case for his nation's leadership role in that hot spot. Italy is at a crossroads, and Ciampi faces an exceedingly difficult path. He must tread softly yet carry a big stick to pave the way for a Second Republic.



Italy's Prime Minister Ciampi rates the highest in popularity among the leaders of the seven industrial giants.

OLE ERITREA

The former Italian colony of Eritrea is slated to receive nearly \$30 million in aid from Italy, through the World Bank. The money, along with technical assistance from the former mother country,

will attempt to put this former victim of Ethiopian aggression back on a sure footing now that its war of independence has been won.

As colonial masters go, the Italians were a relatively benevolent lot. They were builders and settlers, not exploiters (*mercantilism* was an English form of parasitism), and never truly reaped the economic benefits of colonialism. They left Libya before oil was discovered. And they expended their resources in building schools, roads, hospitals and cities in Somalia and Eritrea and even Ethiopia. During the 1930's, some 50,000 Italians called Eritrea home. Now, only about 700 remain. Recently, after Eritrea gained a hard won independence from Ethiopia, a Western diplomat reiterated a much-told Eritrean tale: "The Italians built Eritrea. The British dismantled it and the Ethiopians destroyed it." Though they didn't profit from their enterprise in Eritrea, the Italians left its inhabitants a far richer legacy.

DENMARK'S ITALIAN MIRACLE

When something was rotten with the Danish economy, Denmark looked southward for inspiration. In 1991, Denmark stopped brooding about its negative trade balance with Germany by taking a page from Italy's book of economic miracles. Specifically, the Danes duplicated the success of Emilia-Romagna, the birthplace of Benito Mussolini. As recently as the 1970s, Emilia-Romagna in northern Italy was the country's fourth-poorest region. Its



Could Bosnian Serbs be behind the bombings?
What do the waiter and the street mime know?

economy was based on a loose and decentralized system of small crafts. Unemployment registered at 20%. Hope was negligible. However, by tapping their rich Italic tradition of unity, the residents of the region forged their rag tag craft shops into one small-craft colossus. Unemployment plummeted to zero and Emilia-Romagna emerged as Italy's second wealthiest region.

CHINESE CATAPULT

Just when the Italians had achieved a modicum of respectability, the International Monetary Fund changes the rules—and statistics—of the game. Under the "old" exchange rate system, Italy was the fifth most powerful industrial economy, with a per capita income of \$19,911. Under the "new" purchasing-power parity method, it drops to number seven. China, which had never been counted, comes in from left field as the number three economic power. Even under the new rules, however, Italy's per capita income is \$16,896; China's per capita income remains an impoverished \$1,450. Political correctness, not industriousness, has catapulted Cathay into this unaccustomed spot.



Editorial

CIVIL WAR

At the invitation of the Italian Embassy and NIAF (National Italian-American Foundation) a delegation of ISI attended a summit of Italian-American organizations in Washington this past July. What began as a managerial seminar developed into a pointed self-examination of what we are in business for. The Institute observed that the Italian-Americans of Hollywood had essentially declared war on the rest of us. At stake is nothing less than our cultural patrimony — our ethnic identity. The actors, producers, authors, and filmmakers who incessantly harp on the *Mafia* and *cafone* characterizations to earn their wealth and fame need to be dealt with. That means sending them clear, personal messages and denying them any honor or recognition. If this be war let's man the ramparts.

-JLM

GOLF OUTING

On August 16, the Institute held its first Golf Outing sponsored by Paine Webber. I am pleased to report that we exceeded our fund-raising goal. In light of this success, we have decided to make the Golf Outing an annual event. I want to thank each of you who participated, along with PaineWebber for its sponsorship. A special thank you goes to Elizabeth Polizzi and Tom Piazza for their time and commitment in making this event such a success. Congratulations to the following prize winners: First Place: PaineWebber (Peter Rees, Barry Buchsbaum, Sandy Puleo and Chris Vince); Second Place: Petrocelli Electric (Joe Rutigliano, Jeff Meaney, Jeff Duarte); Third Place: Pritchard Industries (Tony Abbatiello, Bob Sokolowski, Tony DiMaulo); Longest Drive: Tony Abbatiello; Closest to the Pin: Tony DiMaulo. See you all next year!

-A. Crecca

RATIONAL PEACE-KEEPING

When called upon in 1982 to preserve the peace in Lebanon after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, the Italians responded with caring instead of carpet bombing. They set up hospitals and shelters and nursed the wounded and the dying. As a result, they were the most widely respected members of the multinational peace force that included American, British and French forces. And, thanks to meticulous military planning, the Italians did not suffer any casualties. The United States lost nearly 300 of her young sons and the French a lesser number when car bombs easily penetrated defense perimeters. Today's Italian peacekeepers in Somalia have attempted to restore order and bring food and medical supplies to their former colony. That lasted until someone at the U.N. decided to participate in the civil war -- the very same mistake that was made by the U.S., Brits, and French in Lebanon. Now a U.N. commander, General Howe has chided the Italians for dealing with the dread warlord Aidid. He has said that the Italians are jeopardizing the U.N. mission by not shooting first and asking questions later. He has taunted the Italians, claiming they are not "carrying their weight." The U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has stated that the Italian commander, General Bruno Loi, was insubordinate. The Egyptian was shocked that General Loi had consulted his superiors in Rome. Even NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw smugly reported that the Italians would be removed to the countryside where (snicker) there were no hostilities. In fact, Rome has ordered the pull-out of its troops from Mogadishu in protest.

For daring to remind the UN of the original intent of their mission, General Loi was made a pariah. For daring to support him, Italy earned the scorn of its erstwhile allies. The humanitarian groups, such as Irish Concern, which have more in-country experience than the UN, support Italy's rational stance. Shouldn't we all expect rational judgement from the UN?

-RAI

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Forum of the People



In Somalia, Machiavelli vs Rambo

By Frances Kennedy

(reprinted from the *New York Times* 7/22/93.

Ms. Kennedy is a BBC correspondent in Rome)



The United Nations has been painting Italy as a troublemaker, a disobedient child who thinks it knows better than its elders. When Rome dared to raise its concerns about the increasing bloody course of the humanitarian mission in Somalia, it was quickly and publicly slapped down by U.N. officials from ground commanders to the Secretary

General. Such high-handed behavior does little for the U.N.'s image and, worse still, it risks obscuring the real issue: that the methods and scope of the peacekeeping operation need to be reviewed.

The criticisms voiced by Rome, after three of its soldiers were killed in an ambush by followers of Gen. Mohammed Farah Aidid, are based on its heavy military presence in Somalia, its belief in dialogue to reach a settlement and its colonial links to Somalia.

No nation likes to see its soldiers return in body bags. With 2,600 troops, Italy is the second biggest force in Somalia and its troops are in one of the most dangerous areas of Mogadishu. In six weeks, the Italians destroyed nearly two tons of arms in Somalia without a single shot being fired, but because of the ill-advised decisions of their U.N. commanders they became targets.

The Italians killed in the ambush paid with their lives for American air raids that had enraged and alienated the local population and not just the followers of General Aidid. The United States military attacks its target from the safety of helicopters and planes and the marines retire to their ships overnight. The Italians and the rest of the force remain on land, vulnerable to reprisals.

Italy's criticism is based not just on self-interest but on an entirely different conception of the peacekeeping mission. Italian politics is exceptional in its reliance on compromise, so it's hardly surprising that Rome places a high priority on negotiation. This flexibility has served well on the international scene.

Italy played a crucial role in securing the accord that ended 16 years of civil war in Mozambique. It has also been discreetly active in promoting dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians. Italian soldiers in the multinational force in Lebanon were praised for their good relations with all parties.

The American military command, which has imposed a Rambo approach on the U.N. force, distrusts what it sees as Machiavellian maneuvering by Italy. It prefers to clearly identify an enemy — General Aidid — put a price on his head and go in with guns blazing, irrespective of the human cost. Until recently, General Aidid — now defined as a war criminal, terrorist, the Saddam Hussein of Africa — was Washington's best friend in Somalia. Then something changed; perhaps American officials realized he was stringing them along. The first fruit of this about-face was the U.N. forces' attack on his radio station in which 24 Pakistanis were killed. This prompted an escalation that has seen the death toll rise.

Against this spiral of violence, the much-maligned head of the Italian contingent, Gen. Bruno Loi, sought to prove a point after the ambush of his men at the strategic Checkpoint Pasta, named for an old pasta factory nearby. Resisting pressure from the U.N. command for retaliatory attacks, he negotiated with neighborhood elders and clan representatives to retake the post. The atmosphere was tense as the Italian tanks crawled through a potentially hostile crowd, but the barricades were dismantled one by one. Had the Italians used force, the result probably would have been another bloodbath. It was this independent behavior that incurred the wrath of the Secretary General, who tried to have General Loi taken off the job.

The third reason for Italy's challenge to the U.N. operation is that Rome feels it knows what makes Somalia tick. Part of Somalia was an Italian colony until the humiliating defeat of Mussolini's troops in World War II. In 1950, Italy became the administering power in the run-up to independence, creating the base for a close and cordial relationship. Even if Rome's reputation was tarnished by its support for the President turned-dictator Mohammed Siad Barre, its investment and technical support created a reserve of goodwill.

The Italian Ambassador to Somalia, Enrico Augelli, was the only foreign diplomat to remain in Mogadishu as the country

(continued on p. 19)

The Italic Way



REVIEW

Il Duce's Other Woman

By Philip Cannistraro and Brian Sullivan, William Morrow & Co., Inc., 685 pp.

Can a brusque fascist dictator find love and happiness with an ardent Jewish feminist? No, this is not the plot of Mel Brooks' latest film satire, but the subject of an intriguing book about the strangest bedfellows of all time: Benito Mussolini and Margherita Sarfatti.

Before Bill Clinton knew Jennifer Flowers, before John F. Kennedy flirted with Marilyn Monroe, before Lyndon Johnson socialized with Nancy Dickerson, before Dwight Eisenhower assayed Kay Summersby, Benito Mussolini fashioned a lifelong if illicit love affair with one of Italy's leading intellectuals. That the rough hewn son of a Romagnol blacksmith could ever win the approval, much less the heart, of a



Margherita Sarfatti

vides of Benito Mussolini. While not free of the usual character assassination, particularly in the later chapters, it certainly rebukes the fashionable but ludicrous "hollow man" depiction. We witness Benito as ink-stained editor of a struggling newspaper. We learn of Mussolini's trials and tribulations as his

Can a brusque fascist dictator find love and happiness with an ardent Jewish feminist?

bourgeois Venetian Jew is startling enough. However, it is Cannistraro and Sullivan's main contention that truly titillates the reader. According to the authors, Sarfatti supplied Benito with the intellectual and moral underpinnings of Fascism. This delicate yet determined art critic molded the fiery revolutionary passions that raged within Mussolini. He conquered her heart and body and she provided coherence to his inchoate patriotic urges. Although Il Duce was an inveterate bed hopper, Margherita Sarfatti may have been the only woman he ever truly loved, including Donna Rachele, according to the authors.

What makes *Il Duce's Other Woman* especially compelling is the unexpectedly full-bodied portrait it pro-

political creed evolves from radical left wing socialism to an ardent Italian nationalism. Mussolini's valor in the First World War is well documented, as is his compassion toward Margherita and her cuckolded husband Cesare after the loss of their son Roberto in combat. And we are also privy to Benito's political opportunism in his relations with D'Annunzio, Balbo and Giolitti.

Students of history will be pleased to find an accurate account of Caporetto and Vittorio Veneto. Indeed, Cannistraro and Sullivan go to great lengths to present the significance of Italy's victory in the war to end all wars and the widespread disillusionment following the betrayal at Versailles. The authors are poignant in their descriptions

of the courage of the Italian fighting man in the blood soaked trenches of that conflict. And it is against the backdrop of World War I that the bond between Mussolini and Sarfatti deepens into love.

The death of Margherita's young son Roberto and Mussolini's heartfelt response to the tragedy forever linked these starcrossed lovers. Years later, after Mussolini became prime minister the couple watched as a shooting star crossed their path during a nocturnal stroll. It was an omen. But an ill-fated omen, to be sure. Both Sarfatti and Mussolini yearned for a new Italy based on Roman ideals. They never envisioned the tumult that toppled those dreams.

Margherita Sarfatti is a little known figure in Mussolini lore. That a contemporary of George Bernard Shaw and Albert Einstein made love to that fascist brute, Benito Mussolini, must have been an embarrassment to revisionist scholars. So they ignored the existence of the voluptuous Jewess who helped create Fascism and Il Duce. For all its flaws and prejudices, *Il Duce's Other Mistress* brings Margarita Sarfatti to life. It is relentless, intellectually vibrant and rich in historical and political detail.

- RAI



A young and hirsute Duce

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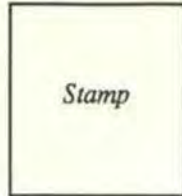
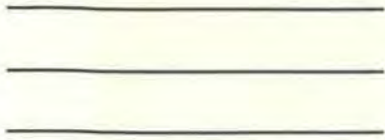
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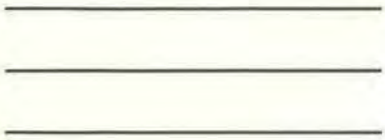
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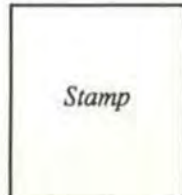
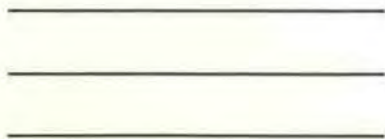
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Ed Bonardi, President



Focus

ITALIAN AVIATION

by Don Fiore & John Mancini

What greater flight of fancy than the fantasy of flight? And who but the Italic people are so steeped, nay, so obsessed with giving wings to their thoughts? Since Leonardo's grand designs for aeroplanes, helicopters, and parachutes, the Italic mind has relentlessly pursued the quest of the heavens. Soaring but a few feet above the fertile soil of their homeland or rising miles above launching pads in distant lands, the progeny of Italy have been an indispensable part of the history of aviation.

BALLOONS TO SATELLITES

From ballooning to space travel, the 20th Century has witnessed that same spirit of adventure that was a hallmark of Italians in all the preceding eras. Whether it was the first dirigible flight to the North Pole by General Umberto Nobile in 1926 or Ben Abruzzo's historic balloon crossing of the Atlantic in Double Eagle II in 1978, the wind and sky beckon the stalwart Italic aviator. And beyond the stratosphere, space has seen the trace of the fine Italian hand. Only this year, the third Italic astronaut, Lt. Commander Mario Ronco, walked and worked in space. The first astronaut of Italian descent (actually Italo-Swiss), however, was Commander Wally Schirra in 1962, '65, and '68. The second was Franco Malerba. And,



Italian industries are constructing modules for the United States space station.

though he did not pilot a craft, mission control director Rocco Petrone won the accolades of the nation for his leadership in the planning and execution of Apollo 11, the first landing on the moon. Today, Italian satellites orbit the globe for communications, tracking weather and even continental drift. These satellites are launched variously by the European Space



The *Columbia*, designed by Sicilian immigrant Giuseppe Bellanca, missed beating the *Spirit of St. Louis* by only two weeks.

Agency (to which Italy contributes 15%), NASA, or from Italy's own San Marco launch site off the coast of Kenya. As recently as this past June, NASA's space shuttle Endeavor launched the Spacelab Module built jointly by McDonnell Douglas and Italy's Alenia Spazio. The Italian aerospace industry includes some 70 hi-tech firms employing 51,000 workers.

LINDBERGH'S FIRST CHOICE

Our own heroic efforts in the air have been influenced by the Italian spirit. Charles Lindbergh's first choice for his solo flight across the Atlantic was a monoplane designed by Giuseppe Bellanca, the most modern plane of its day. Instead, he had to settle for the *Spirit of St. Louis*, a plane without a front windshield. Lindbergh's feat in such a restrictive craft was all the more amazing. And history records that a Bellanca (flown by Clarence Chamberlin) easily surpassed the Lone Eagle's flight just two weeks later, with a passenger aboard.

Italian aviation engineering and design, like its automotive and nautical counterparts, have won the praise of professionals the world over. It may surprise most to learn that the first jet airplane, the Caproni-Campini 11, was developed and flown in Italy in 1938. Or that the Macchi M.C.202 fighter was considered one of the best warplanes of World War II. In fact, the Italian Army was the first to use airplanes in combat against the Turks during the Libyan War of 1911. Even the concept of strategic bombing, used so effectively by the Allies in the Second World War, was originally developed by First World War air chief Giulio Douhet. Today, Italy's air force literally paints the sky with Italian colors during performances of the famed *Frecce Tricolori* (Tri-colored Ar-



Focus

rows) air acrobatic team.

PIONEERING TECHNOLOGY

Italian aviation took off with the establishment of the *Regia Aeronautica* (Royal Air Force) in 1923. As a wholly separate branch of the armed forces, the *Regia Aeronautica* was imbued with the spirit of the early Fascist Era. Aviation was to be the symbol of a reawakened Italy. Even Mussolini learned to fly, a hobby he demonstrated to Hitler in later years by taking the controls of a warplane over the Russian Front. His anxious passenger was not amused. But the real drive behind the new air force was Air Marshall Italo Balbo, of Ferrara. Balbo was to push the *Regia Aeronautica* to the limits. Under his talented command, Italy became a world leader in aviation, setting records in almost every category of flight. His most memorable achievement was the crossing of the Atlantic with 24 Savoia-Marchetti seaplanes in formation. This feat dispelled forever the notion of an isolated



Caproni's early attempts at a mega plane. This monster was powered by six 1,000 horse power engines and could carry 11,000 pounds to an altitude of two miles.

America. (See Perspectives Section)

All through the 1920's and 30's Italians made great strides in the air. While we fondly remember names like Emilia Erhardt, Wiley Post, Wrong Way Corrigan, and Charles Lindbergh, Italy was producing men and women such as Francesco De Pinedo, Mario de Bernardi, and Carina Negrone.

Here at home, Americans of Italian descent were blazing new trails themselves. Cesare Sabelli, a decorated flyer of the First World War, was the first to issue an airborne radio transmission in 1928. A Texan named Vincent Burnelli experimented with wide-bodied fuselages especially designed for safety and increased lift. A precursor to the "flying wing", Burnelli's prototypes were the other branch of fixed wing aircraft, the branch that was sacrificed for speed. (See Perspectives section). And, as already mentioned, Giuseppe Bellanca pioneered monoplane design, front end propellers, and air-cooled engines. His plane *Columbia* established the

Atlantic record two weeks after Lindbergh, flying to Germany in 42 hours, a non-stop flight of 3905 miles. In 1931, his "Miss Veedol" made the first non-stop flight across the Pacific to Japan, 4,500 miles in 41 hours. During World War II Bellanca's manufacturing company produced fighters and bombers for the American war effort. (We might also note that Giuseppe Bellanca's nephew, James Fanto, is a member of our Institute.)

* * *

To demonstrate the impressive array of accomplishments by Italian and Italian-American aerospace pioneers, we submit this list of milestones in aviation history:

- 1505 Leonardo Da Vinci begins applying his research on the muscular and skeletal structures of birds toward the construction of a heavier-than-air flying machine.
- 1643 Physicist Evangelista Torricelli produces the first laboratory-created vacuum.
- 1670 Italian Jesuit Francesco de Lana draws up designs for a vacuum-lift airship.
- 1782 Physicist Tiberio Cavallo proposes the use of hydrogen as the prime mover for lighter-than-air flying machines.
- 1783 Francesco Zambecari and Michele Biaggini launch a series of experimental hydrogen balloons in England.
- 1784 Following the lead of France, Italy becomes the second land to witness human flight as Paolo Andreani and Carlo and Agostino Gherli conduct a 20 minute aerial excursion over Milan in a hot air balloon.

Carina Negrone, the "Italian Amelia Earhart," establishes a new women's world altitude record in 1935, attaining 39,511 feet in a Caproni CA.161.

- 1784 Italian aeronaut Vincenzo Lunardi conducts the first manned balloon ascent in England.
- 1808 Carlo Brioschi and Pasquale Andreoli ascend 25,000 feet in a combination hydrogen-hot air balloon.
- 1828 Vittorio Sarti of Bologna draws up plans for a helicop-

(continued p. 15)



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Italian Aviation (from p. 13)

ter-like flying machine which uses two steam-driven coaxial rotors for lift.

- 1833 Aeronaut Francesco Orlandi attempts to provide his balloon with dirigibility by equipping it with propellers and a rudder.
- 1844 A model of a dirigible based on plans drawn up by mechanical engineer Muzio Muzzi is displayed at a New York exhibition.
- 1877 An unmanned, steam-powered helicopter built by Enrico Forlanni ascends to a height of 60 feet.
- 1887 A "Sezione Aerostatica" (military observational balloon fleet) is established by the Royal Italian Army Engineers.
- 1904 The Aero Club of Italy is founded by Italian aviation enthusiasts.
- 1905 Italy's first functional dirigible, the *Italia*, is built and piloted by Almerico da Schio.
- 1909 The first aeroplane wholly designed and built in Italy (by Aristide Faccioli) is successfully flown at Torino.
- 1910 The Italian Parliament allocates 10 million Lire for the creation of the eight-plane Royal Italian Army Air Service.
- 1911 Italy becomes the first nation to deploy airplanes and dirigibles in battle upon the outbreak of the Italo-Turkish War. Visual and photographic reconnaissance, assault, propaganda distribution, artillery spotting and surface-to-air radio communications are attempted for the first time.
- 1914 Gianni Caprone designs the world's first long range, heavy duty bomber.
- 1917 Soldier-Poet Gabrielle D'Annunzio leads a series of mass strategic bombing raids over enemy territory during World War I.
- 1918 Italy's wartime aeronautical production peaks at an



Italy was the first nation to utilize an aircraft for reconaissance and air support, during the Italo-Turk War of 1911-12

average of 130 planes per week.

- 1919 Lt. Francesco Brack-Papa pilots a Fiat biplane from Rome to Paris, completing the first non-stop flight between two European capitals.
- 1919 Lt. Antonio Locatelli completes the first round trip flight over the Andes Mountains (Buenos Aires - Santiago, Chile - Buenos Aires) at 21,000 feet in an Ansaldo SVA.
- 1920 Also using Ansaldo SVA biplanes, Lt. Arturo Ferrarin and Lt. Guido Masiero fly 11,500 miles from Rome to Tokyo.
- 1921 The world's largest semi-rigid airship, the 1,000,000 cubic foot T-34 "Roma", designed by Gaetano Crocco, Celestino Useuelli, Umberto Nobile and Eugenio Prassone, is purchased by the U.S. Army.
- 1923 The Regia Aeronautica (Royal Italian Air Force) is founded.
- 1924 Col. Francesco De Pinedo leads a fleet of Italian planes on a 1,700 mile cruise to Northern Europe.
- 1925 Col. Francesco De Pinedo completes a marathon 30,000 mile aerial tour of the Orient in a Savoia Marchetti S-16 biplane, flying from Italy to Japan via Australia.
- 1926 Col. Umberto Nobile conducts the first aerial crossing of the Arctic Ocean with the Italian-built semi-rigid airship "Norge."
- 1926 The first Italian commercial air network is opened.
- 1926 Major Mario De Bernardi attains a record-shattering speed of 296.84 mph with a Fiat-powered Macchi M-52 seaplane.
- 1927 The *Santa Maria*, a Savoia Marchetti S-55 seaplane piloted by Francesco De Pinedo and a two-man crew, becomes the first foreign airplane to fly to the U.S. as part of a 27,000 mile tour of the Western Hemisphere.

(continued p. 20)



Perspectives

[Highlights of historical records that shed light on modern times]

1933: Air Armada

by Don Fiore

Chicago in 1933 was a grim metropolis. Crime and corruption had taken their toll on a hapless population. Hooligans and bootleggers preyed on the innocent as crooked politicians peddled their blarney from smoke-filled rooms. The Great Depression was in full swing. And joblessness, social upheaval and despair remained the order of the day. Chicago hardly seemed the place for a reawakening of the human spirit. But the windy city's downtrodden inhabitants hadn't counted on Italian heroes from the sky.

Sixty years ago, On July 15, 1933, Italy's *Regia Aeronautica* (Royal Air Force) electrified Chicago and the world by doing Charles Lindbergh one better. After a daring two week trek across the Atlantic in perfect formation, a squadron of Savoia Marchetti aircraft alighted on the azure waves of Lake Michigan. Led by Air Minister Italo Balbo, these masters of the sky inaugurated the Century of Progress World's Fair and signaled a new era in aviation.

As the Chicago Sunday Times would later declare:

"The powerful genius of the



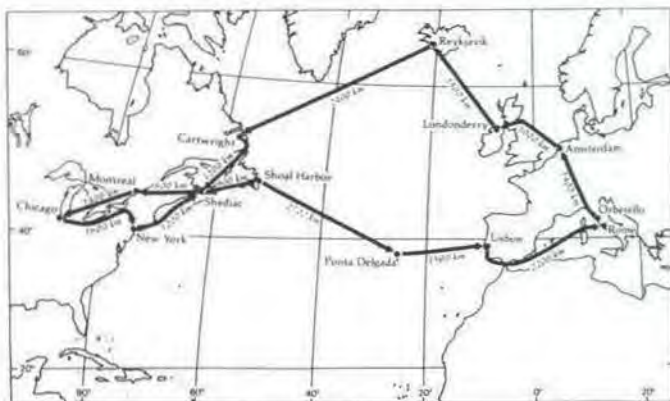
The Savoia Marchetti SM.55 was a tough and durable flying machine that had given the Italians 15 Atlantic crossings before the Chicago flight. It was all-Italian: body, engines and instrumentation.

Italians, their masterful scientific research and mechanical precision, and their ancient instinct for exploration and navigation are fused in this great occasion that has turned the eyes of the world to Chicago. Balbo and his companions have crowned the Century of Progress with a crown that bears the jewels of science, organization and boldness."

In 1933, piloting a single vehicle safely over the ocean was still considered a highly risky proposition. Of the eighty-five recorded attempts thus far, only a mere twenty eight had been successful.

The very concept of completing the venture with an entire squadron was stunning in itself. But having tallied up a surprisingly formidable list of aeronautical achievements throughout the previous decade, the Italians had plenty of experience under their belt. From the North Pole to the southern tip of Africa, there was scarcely a corner of the world that hadn't already been reached by Italy's intrepid airmen.

Still, the young General Italo Balbo, who had led the *Regia Aeronautica* since 1926, wanted something more



The 20,000 km round trip in mass formation with a loss of only two airplanes was a technical and logistical triumph for Italian aviation.



Italo Balbo represented the Fascism even Americans admired.



Balbo's flight was the apex of Italy's popularity in America. What Italian would be honored by native Americans today? ("Chief Flying Eagle" Balbo)



grandiose. Accordingly, he organized massive aerial "goodwill visits" to Russia, Spain, and other distant points on the globe. The squadron slated for Chicago was his most ambitious mission. It was the capstone of his career.

When the swashbuckling Balbo and his airmen arrived, all of Chicago rejoiced in celebration. After a brisk

As one of the most memorable events of the Century of Progress World's Fair, and certainly of the entire era, the 1933 cruise captured the imagination of millions. However, the Italians failed to capitalize on this achievement in subsequent years, opening up the enterprise to some criticism. Unlike their unabashed idolatry of Charles Lindbergh (later a

board an airline for a flight overseas or watch a NASA shuttle or lunar commander interact with Mission Control, Italo Balbo's legacy lives on.

Balbo, though a founding father of Fascism, was an outspoken opponent of the Italian-German alliance, anti-semitism and Italy's entry into World War II. He was killed by friendly fire over the skies of Tobruk, Libya, in 1940. He was an honorable man and a patriot whose trailblazing aerial feats made the impossible route. ****

From the North Pole to the southern tip of Africa, there was scarcely a corner of the world that hadn't already been reached by Italy's intrepid airmen.

march through the World's Fair grounds, the aviators were led to nearby Soldier Field stadium where they were formally welcomed by Chicago Mayor Edward Kelly, Illinois Governor Henry Horner and over 60,000 cheering spectators. To honor this unprecedented flight a street in Chicago's Loop was rechristened "Balbo Drive." The Italians were then whisked off to begin a whirlwind, three day schedule of banquets, tours and receptions. So intense were the successive festivities that Balbo had to politely insist that his hosts allow the aviators some rest. The fleet lifted off from Lake Michigan at dawn on July 19, and after brief but tumultuous landings at New York and Washington, headed home spent but triumphant.

Nazi sympathizer), some writers dismissed Balbo's feat as the crowning publicity stunt of the glory-craving Fascist regime.

What has gone unnoticed, however, are the striking parallels between Balbo's mission and our own Apollo space program of the 1960's. Once we "beat the Russians to the moon," there were no plans to continue a sustained exploration of the solar system. Similarly, the Kingdom of Italy also failed to follow up its great success.

Nonetheless, the Italian effort marked a turning point in the history of aviation, for it involved an unprecedented number of planes and participants in a meticulously planned, logistically challenging operation. Whenever we



In commemoration of Balbo's valorous achievements, Dr. Stefano Cacciaguerra Ranghieri, the Italian Consul General at Chicago, and Gen. Sandro Ferracuti, the Italian Air Attache in Washington, are working to restore and rededicate the badly eroded Roman Column monument in Italo Balbo's honor in Chicago's Burnham Park.



Perspectives

The Equestrian Revolution

By Pam Gleason

Around the turn of the century, a young Italian cavalry officer named Federico Caprilli singlehandedly revolutionized the art of horseback riding and confirmed Italy as the undisputed leader in equestrian style and technique.

Soon after entering the Italian Cavalry School in 1886, Caprilli realized that his riding instructions were hopelessly archaic. The art of riding, which blossomed in Renaissance Italy, had become saddled with the nineteenth century. Caprilli rode to the rescue with his *sistema d' equitazione naturale*. This heretical horsemanship eventually cleared all hurdles and was adopted as the official method of the Italian cavalry. It is still the universally recognized way to ride horses across country and over jumps.

A "LESS THAN MODERATE HORSEMAN"

Federico Caprilli was born in Livorno on April 7, 1868 to a wealthy middle class family. His father died when he was young, and his mother soon married an ex-garibaldino (i.e., a Garibaldi Red Shirt) who transferred the family to Rome. Aspiring to be a cavalry officer, Federico went to military college and later entered the Pinerolo Cavalry School where his instructors initially characterized him as a "less than moderate horseman." Nevertheless, he was sent for a second term at the school graduating second in his class.

From the time he was a boy, Caprilli was convinced there were major flaws with the way he was being taught to ride. Students were instructed to hold the reins tightly at all times, never to allow their horses to pull their heads down, and to lean back when jumping. The result was horses that did not enjoy their work, and riders were exhausted from fighting with their mounts. Certain he could find a better way, Caprilli began experiments with his own mount, both riding her and observing her as she ran free in a paddock. In order to determine how she could most easily carry weight, he strapped a dummy to her back in various positions, looking for the best way to place it. His results proved that, although the theories behind the then-current methods of riding were sound, the realities of riding rendered them inappropriate. This style of horsemanship traces its roots to the Greeks and the military historian Xenophon.

THE CLASSICAL SEAT

Xenophon wrote and published a treatise called the *Art Of Horsemanship*. This book remained the only known riding and training manual until the Renaissance, when horsemanship,

along with all the other arts, experienced a rebirth in Italy. Around the middle of the sixteenth century, three major figures emerged in equestrian circles; Federico Grisone in Naples, Giovanni Battista Pignatelli in Rome and Cesare Flascchi in Ferrara. The riding schools in Rome and Naples attracted students from all over Europe, and Grisone's *Gli Ordini di Cavalcare* (1550), the first modern book on horsemanship, was translated into many languages and widely distributed.

The Classical Seat, as taught by the great Italian masters,



Capt. Federico Caprilli, Italian Cavalry
Circa 1906

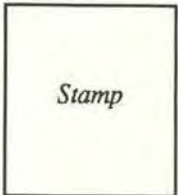
was essentially designed for riding highly-trained horses in a riding hall or enclosure. Riders learned to sit back and encourage their horses to lift their legs high and perform many intricate movements.

The trouble with the Classical seat is that it was designed for giving performances in a riding hall, not for going across country. The Classical principles of riding dictate that the rider must alter the horse's natural way of going so that he carries his weight evenly balanced between his front and his rear, holding his head high and his neck arched. Although horses may look pretty while being ridden this way, they are unable to go very quickly or negotiate obstacles efficiently.

(Continued on p. 28)



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Macchiavelli vs Rambo (continued from p 9)



descended into chaos. He has painstakingly established contact with virtually every clan or subclan in the country, following the U.N.'s mandate to encourage broad participation by all sectors of Somali society to promote political settlement. Mr. Augelli was withdrawn to Rome last month to avoid a head-on confrontation with Adm. Jonathan Howe, the U.N.'s special representative in Somalia, who did not appreciate the independence of Italy's military or political representatives on the ground.

[Recent] events clearly reveal the inadequacies of the post-cold-war U.N. The Somalia operation was supposed to restore its credibility after the fiasco in the former Yugoslavia. Instead the Somali people's faith in the neutrality and goodwill of the U.N. is being undermined, and there are damaging divisions in the peacekeeping forces. A unified central command is essential to any operation, but it needs to reflect common goals, not those of just one country, in this case the United States

The appointment on [July 20th] of an Italian military official to the Secretariat's peacekeeping operation, while an obvious attempt to appease Italy, is being welcomed in Rome. So is the scheduled meeting of Italy's Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Bruno Bottai, with the Secretary General. But patching up the diplomatic rift will not resolve fundamental concerns about the military operation. Are the means actually achieving results or becoming an end in themselves?

Are the military decision-makers becoming dominant in what is meant to be a humanitarian mission?

Does the U.N.'s approval of the use of force to impose peace in Somalia need clarifying?

Unless these issues are resolved, there is the risk that Italy may pull out [which it has from Mogadishu]. Worse yet, foreign forces may find themselves still in Somalia years after the U.N. mandate expires in October. ****



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Sum'88	Fall'90
Fall'88	Win'91
Win'89	Spr'91
Spr'89	Sum'91
Sum'89	*Fall/Win'92
Fall'89	Spr/Sum'92
Win'90	Fall '92
Spr'90	V.5.N.3



Italian Aviation (from p. 15)

Milestone highlights of the tour also include the first two-way flight over the Atlantic and the first flight over the Brazilian jungles.

- 1927 The Newfoundland Post Office issues the world's first commemorative stamp honoring an individual aviator. The subject is Francesco De Pinedo.
- 1928 General Italo Balbo leads a mass flight of 61 planes on an air cruise to Spain.
- 1928 Arturo Ferrarin and Carlo Del Prete break the world's non-stop distance record, flying 4,467 miles in 51 hours from Rome to Touros, Brazil, with a Savoia Marchetti S-64 monoplane.
- 1928 Italy's commercial air network is extended to 2,915 miles, displacing Great Britain's as 3rd largest in the world.
- 1929 Italo Balbo leads a mass flight of 35 planes to the Soviet Union.
- 1930 Umberto Maddalena and Fausto Cecconi set a new closed circuit distance record of 5,089 miles with a Savoia Marchetti S-64bis.
- 1930 Francesco Lombardi, Franco Mezzotti and Mario Rasini, each flying a Fiat AS.2 biplane, complete a 24,000 mile aerial circumnavigation of the African continent.
- 1931 Balbo leads a close-formation flight of 12 Savoia Marchetti seaplanes from Italy to Brazil.
- 1933 Balbo leads 24 Savoia Marchetti seaplanes over the Atlantic to the Century of Progress World's Fair at Chicago.
- 1933 Stunt aviator Lt. Tito Falconi sets a new world's record for flying upside down by maintaining that awkward position for 3 hours and 6 minutes.
- 1934 Lt. Francesco Agello sets the all-time world's speed record for piston-engine seaplanes, clocking at 440.681 mph in a Macchi MC-72.



Italy files the first prototype "jet-propelled" aircraft in 1938.

In 1939, Italy logs 43% of all world's records for airplanes and 73% of all world's seaplanes.

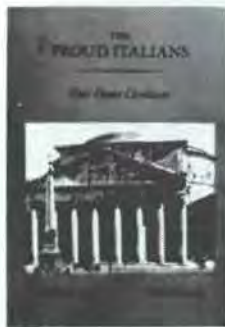
- 1935 Carina Negrone, the "Italian Amelia Earhart," establishes a new women's world altitude record, attaining 39,511 feet in a Caproni CA.161.
- 1937 Italian aviators set 17 new world records in speed, range, endurance and altitude classifications.
- 1938 Col. Mario Pezzi secures the all-time world's altitude record for a piston engine aircraft (56,046 ft.)
- 1938 Maj. Mario De Bernardi test flies the world's first jet propulsion aircraft, the Caproni-Campini CC.11.
- 1939 Italy logs 43% of all world's records for airplanes and 73% of all world's seaplanes.
- 1939 Italy's commercial air routes extend to 45,000 miles, linking 72 cities on four continents. A remarkable 94% reliability rate ranks Italian passenger service among the world's safest.
- 1947 L.A.I., Italy's first post-war commercial airline, begins operations.
- 1957 Alitalia is incorporated as Italy's national airline.
- 1958 The Fiat G.91 fighter jet wins first place in the NATO light tactical aircraft competition.
- 1964 The "San Marco," Italy's first artificial satellite, is launched into space.
- 1969 Italian-American scientist Rocco Anthony Petrone is named Apollo Program director.
- 1988 Agenzia Spaziale Italiana, the Italian space agency, is founded.



Project Italia

The Project Italia program isn't just films and videos. It is also an educational product line.

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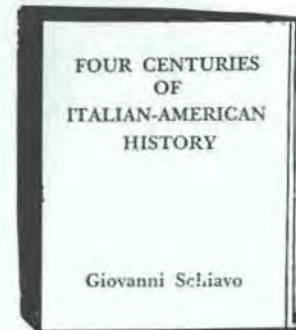
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Media Madness

[In which we present media material with commentary]



ITEM: Benetton, an Italian clothing manufacturer, has offered Cuban dictator Fidel Castro a job as head master at a new art school to be established in Italy in 1994.

COMMENT: Benetton has given new meaning to the term "publicity stunt." Their last one was a \$50,000 donation to the Malcolm X scholarship at the behest of Italophobic filmmaker Spike Lee. They have even done a centerfold of children's genitalia to demonstrate their compassion. Comrade Castro's record of butchery and economic devastation of Cuba must have some snob appeal for Benetton's executives. But who can account for taste?

ITEM: Barbra Streisand resents the Washington media's reference to Hollywood's outspoken stars as "nitwits", "bubbleheads", and "airheads."

COMMENT: Well, ex—cuse me! Singlehandedly, Hollywood has robbed the Italic people of 2,500 years of pride. Hollywood's "historians" and "scholars" have boiled Italians down to howling spectators at the Roman Colosseum, America's urban bumpkins, and masters of the criminal universe. Hey Barb, welcome to the club.



ITEM: Simon and Schuster publishes *The Mafia Cookbook* by Joseph Iannuzzi. Penquin Books publishes *Mafia Handbook* by Douglas LeVien and Juliet Papa.

COMMENT: If there were ever any doubt that gangsters with vowels at the end of their names are imbued with their Italian ancestry, these books will confirm it. The author of *The Mafia Cookbook* is a much-respected burglar, drug-pusher, loan-sharker, and torpedo who turned informer before he was fully initiated into the sacred rites of mafiodom. Simon & Schuster liked what he had to say and is betting that America will take *The Mafia Cookbook* to its heart. Among the culinary treats are "Monkfish Marinelli" to celebrate a burglary. LeVien and Papa, authors of *Mafia Handbook*, whet our appetites with such charmers as "Penne Tommaso Buscetta," named after the Sicilian turncoat.

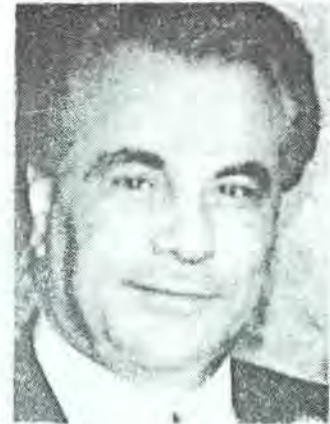
But why stop with Italian cuisine? Surely some intrepid publisher can promote stereotypes with creative dishes like Kasha Varnishes Levine (after inside trader Dennis Levine), Bagels Boesky (pictured), Beef Wellington a la Bush (S & L bandit and America's former First Son), Sausage & Mash MacNamara (fleece of GM for almost \$1 billion). Shall we go on? The point is: Italics are conditioned to take it. Would anyone else?



Media Madness

ITEM: Columbia Pictures is casting about for the lead in *Gangland*, the story of John Gotti.

COMMENT: Jailbird Dapper Don is well on his way to universal fame, if not fortune. No doubt every Italian-American actor worthy his *omerta*' will be itching to add another notch of defamation to his ever-maligned people. But can we trust Hollywood not to exploit Mr. Gotti's Italian ancestry? Fat chance! (By the way, Simon & Schuster published the original book by Howard Blum.)



ITEM: Correspondent Roger Cohen's report to the New York Times: "...But Italy's railways, urban transport systems, postal service and the like remained the laughing-stock of Europe."

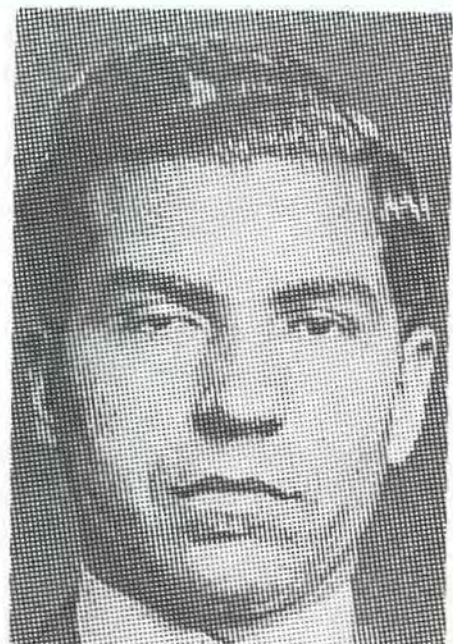
COMMENT: Say no more. This proves that Italy is a land of bumbling and inept people. But who is laughing at them beside Cohen — let's name names. Surely not the Brits who trail the Italians in industrial wealth or the Germans who consider getting a home telephone jack a major government procedure. The truth is Cohen does not know what he is talking about and his editors don't seem to care. It just fits the stereotype.

ITEM: A newly published book for children entitled *Ellis Island* lists only one Italian immigrant: gangster "Lucky Luciano, Homeland, Italy. Well-known criminal of the 1920's; later deported from Ellis Island."

COMMENT: The author, Catherine Reef, explained that the famous names she used were supplied by the Ellis Island staff. Not only was Luciano the only gangster to pass through Ellis Island, in the eyes of this author, but he was the only Italian of note.

It is not comforting to know that Lee Iacocca and numerous Italian-Americans spent so much time and treasure in restoring Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, and the Italic community has Mrs. Reef's book to show for it. Taken together with the Columbus-bashing last year and Robert MacNeil's *Story of English* (in which all criminal jargon is assigned to Italian-Americans), it makes you wonder just how far American ingratitude can go. Would any other ethnic group be this tolerant?

(Ed. We thank member Vincent Romano of the Commission for Social Justice, Order Sons of Italy, for this information. Mr. Romano sent a letter of complaint to the author.)





News of the Institute

PROJECT ITALIA

Project filmmaker Tony DeNonno and Production Assistant Michelle Delino Vricella have completed a trailer (i.e., a short promo piece) of interviews with a diverse group of Italian immigrants. Entitled *Italian-American Visions*, the video is part of the Institute's series of historical documentaries. The video will be featured at the September 16th Plenary Council luncheon. (Note: attendance at the luncheon earns gift points — see p. 25.)

GOLF OUTING

The 145 places at the August 16th outing were filled over one month early. In fact, there was a waiting list. The day was exceptional at the Hempstead Country Club, and 165 people attended the post-game dinner. Unfortunately, no one took the Hole-in-One prize, a 1994 Mercedes. Elizabeth Polizzi of PaineWeber and Tom Piazza, our fundraising chairman, did outstanding jobs putting this affair together and making it a financial success.



PLENARY COUNCIL AFFAIRS

May and June were exceptional months for Council activities. The Sixth Annual Dinner was attended by 700 guests — an anomaly during New York's unending recession. Social Chairman Pat Grecco praised Dinner Chairman Angelo Croce and his dinner committee for an amazing feat at a time when everyone is crying the blues.



Chairman Angelo Croce



Actor Tony LoBianco (l) awards gift as Prize Chairman Vincent Pizzulli (r) looks on.



Council members (second from left), Nicholas Pizzone, Michael LoRusso, Pat Grecco, Eugene Schronwski, and Michael Romano

In June, the Plenary Council hosted artist Gregory Perillo at its bi-monthly luncheon. Mr. Perillo is an internationally renowned artist of Indian and Southwest themes.





WASHINGTON SUMMIT

In response to invitations from the National Italian-American Foundation and the Italian Embassy, ISI sent a delegation to a summit meeting of Italian-American organizations on July 23rd in Washington, DC. Our attendees included President Albert Crecca, Treasurer George Ricci and Secretary of Programs John Mancini. Elio Grandi, our political liaison, and Project Italia advisor Michelle Delino Vricella, both from our DC office, also attended.

The summit included workshops on membership and media stereotyping, an address by NIAF president Frank Guarini and Ambassador Boris Biancheri. A portion of the day included a White House briefing on the economy with Laura D'Andrea Tyson (Head of the Council of Economic Advisors).

After a shocking video compiled and presented by Nick Addeo documenting the incessant Hollywood stereotyping of Italian-Americans, John Mancini urged the delegates to direct their efforts against the Italian-American perpetrators of this trash. Declaring that there was a "civil war" between Hollywood's Italian-American media people and the Italic community, the Institute delegation called for direct media attacks against Italian-American instigators.

At an evening reception with the Italian Ambassador, we asked His Excellency Ambassador Biancheri if his new administration would take a more open stand against disinformation in American newspapers concerning Italy. Ambassador Biancheri stated that since his recent appointment to the United States, his staff has written to a number of newspapers to redress untrue and biased reporting. But like many Italian-American groups, some of the Italian Republic's letters go unpublished in our press.



Pres. Albert Crecca, Sec. of Programs John Mancini, Amb. Biancheri, and Treas. George Ricci. (below) Amb. Biancheri with ISI Political Liaison Elio Grandi, Cav, Comm.



GIFT & MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

The gift campaign is off to a slow start and most points are being accumulated by membership renewals and product purchases. The \$1,000 drawing in November will be limited to members with 25 points. Thus far, no one has reached 25 points. Anyone who does his or her homework will have an incredibly good chance to win the prize.

MIDWEST COUNCIL LUNCHEON (CHICAGO) ****Reserve now****

A kickoff luncheon in honor of Italian-American Month is scheduled for October 14th at the Swissotel on East Wacker Drive in Chicago. Members of the real estate community and service trades will be the nucleus of this new Plenary Council. Our Project Italia video narrated by Tony LoBianco will be shown. There will be a \$250 door prize as well. Reservations can be made through Rene Fiore at (708) 832-8836. Lunch is \$25 per person, open bar.

PICNIC PLANS ****Reserve now****

The third annual Plenary Council picnic will be held at Platzl Brauhaus in Pomona, NY, on Sept 18th. Social Chairman Pat Grecco has added more fun for the children this year in the form of games and rides. As usual, there will be an inexhaustible supply of food and prizes given out. For tickets and information call (516) 488-7400.

SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON ****Reserve now****

The New York Plenary Council will be holding a luncheon at the 60 East Club (60 East 42nd St.) on September 16th, Noon. The program will include the premiere of *American Visions*, our latest Project Italia video about Italian immigrants. The cost will be \$25, plus a cash bar. (Note: Attendance earns gift points.)



PROFILES

A Safe Design That Went Nowhere

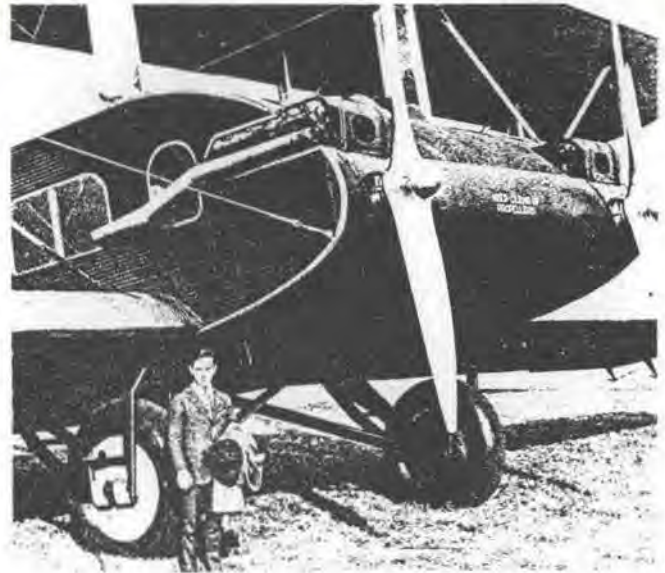
by Edmund J. Cantilli

Each air disaster investigation seems to turn up yet another new reason for an accident — wind shear, human error, structural cracks, engine malfunctions — but precious little criticism of the real cause of death: an airplane design that leaves passengers no margin for survival.

The key to flight is “lift”. Traditionally designed airplanes are built with sleek and narrow fuselages that contribute to “drag” not “lift”. Consequently, engines must be more powerful, takeoff and landing speeds greater, and structural components lighter. Vincent Burnelli, a Texan who did some of his best work on Long Island, developed a “lifting-body” design in the 1920s and built a number of successful planes on this principle throughout the 1930s.

In 1941, however, after Burnelli had won three government competitions to build Air Corps planes, President Roosevelt reportedly changed his mind about authorizing a go-ahead for the Burnelli planes when he found out that the project was being backed by Joseph Newton Pew, the chairman of the Sun Oil Co., who had helped finance the political campaign of one of Roosevelt’s rivals, Wendell Willkie.

By 1943, however, General “Hap” Arnold, Army Air Corps chief, disturbed by the continued suppression of Burnelli’s designs, assigned Col. Harold Hartney to review the history of the design, so that it could be placed on the record in case Arnold were ever accused of not having adopted the obviously superior design. In fact, one of Burnelli’s airplanes was used by French leader Charles de Gaulle in Africa during



Burnelli and his wide-body in 1924

of such disasters was “most distressing,” Hartney concluded, “which few seem to appreciate.”

The Burnelli lifting-body design provides a safer passenger cabin than a conventional airplane because the airfoil-shaped fuselage provides as much as 60 percent of the total lift generated by such an aircraft. This enables the airplane to be built with heavier, and therefore stronger, and therefore safer, structural parts.

A test pilot unintentionally proved this point when he

President Roosevelt reportedly changed his mind about authorizing a go-ahead for the Burnelli planes when he found out that the project was being backed by a supporter of Roosevelt’s rival Wendell Willkie.

World War II.

The Hartney report, which had supporting testimony from the best American minds in aeronautical science, was highly complimentary of the Burnelli design even though the War Dept. had labelled it “inefficient”.

Hartney gave great importance to the outstanding safety and economic features of the Burnelli design and warned of increasing numbers of fatalities in the future of American aviation because of higher and higher takeoff and landing speeds required of conventional planes. The prospect

crashed one of Burnelli’s airplanes in 1935. The three-man crew emerged unscathed from this 200-mph, cartwheeling accident, and the passenger cabin remained intact — all of which confirmed the exceptional crash-worthiness of his design.

Other attributes of the Burnelli design include:

- Provides a strong fuselage that shields passenger and crew;
- Carries fuel only in the outboard wing tanks, not under the passenger cabin;



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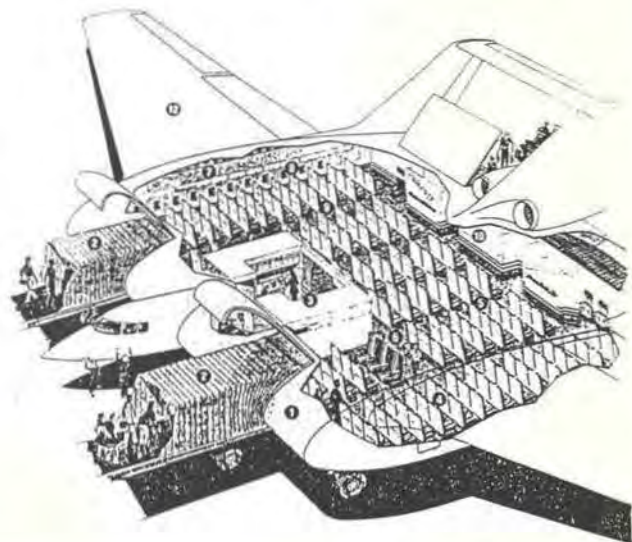


What a safe airplane would look like in accordance with Burnelli's concepts. Passengers would face the rear making seat backs more effective in a crash landing. (Charles A. SanGiovanni)

- Lands and takes off at speeds well under 100 mph, reducing the dangers involved in accidents that do happen;
- Uses heavier interior material that is both stronger and nontoxic when burning.

So why isn't Burnelli's design being manufactured? Probably because the retooling costs are prohibitive. No firm could expend the amount needed and remain competitive and profitable.

(Edmund J. Cantilli is a member of the Institute and professor of transportation and safety engineering at the Polytechnic Institute of New York and executive director of the nonprofit Institute for Safety in Transportation Inc. of West Hempstead).





Equestrian (cont'd from p. 18)

THE FORWARD SEAT

Caprilli's new system of riding was designed to get horses and riders across country safely with the least possible stress and fatigue. Caprilli believed in allowing the horse as much liberty as possible, and disdained the notion that it was up to the rider to alter his horse's balance, stating that "we should strive to leave a horse as nature fashioned him." Caprilli's studies showed him that it was easiest for the horse to carry his rider if the rider positioned himself forward, over the horse's center of balance. While jumping, the rider was to lean forward, allowing the horse the freedom to move his head and neck as needed. Unlike his predecessors, Caprilli believed in giving the horse a loose rein.

By challenging accepted equestrian dogma, Caprilli allowed both horseman and steed to ride in harmony and dignity. Federico Caprilli realized that the horse complements the rider. Together they can clear the horizon. Bold talk for a nineteenth century horse soldier but typical of a farsighted Italian equestrian.

(Ed. The author is also an equestrian and polo player.)



(Above) The perfect Italian seat, 1938, as developed by Caprilli. The rider is Capt. Ricci-Capriata.

(Left) The pre-Caprilli jump technique.

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