



FERRAGOSTO! *By Lynn Indelicato*

So, what is Ferragosto? In the simplest terms, Ferragosto is a holiday that takes place on August 15th every year in Italy. It is, in fact, probably the most popular holiday in Italy other than Christmas day. While the official holiday is just one day, the 15th of August, it is generally accepted that the whole month of August is holiday season in Italy. Families head to beaches, mountains, or family homes. Celebrations are marked with traditional foods and festivals, complete with fireworks and bonfires, depending on the specific region of Italy.

The term *Ferragosto* derives from the Latin expression *feriae Augusti* (Augustus' rest) indicating a festivity set up by the Emperor Augustus 18 BC. Ferragosto was an addition to the existing ancient Roman festivals which fell in August, like the *Vinalia rustica* or the *Consualia*, which celebrated the harvest. The ancient Ferragosto had the purpose of linking the main August festivities to provide a suitable period of rest, also called *Augustali*, necessary after the hard labor of the previous weeks. It was a time when everyone felt they could relax after the hard work of the harvest and, unusually, a period when the nobility mixed with the laboring classes. The Romans feted the gods of agriculture and those associated with the change of seasons. Roman women feted Diana, goddess of hunting but also, because of her association with the phases of the moon, of maternity.

The festivities included horse racing, and the labor animals like oxen and donkeys were rested and decorated with flower garlands. The horse racing tradition survives today in the guise of the **Palio Dell'Assunta**, which takes place on August 16th in Siena.

With the arrival of Christianity, the Catholic church in Italy celebrates the feast of the Assumption on August 15th, a Roman Catholic feast day celebrating the belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, at the end of her earthly life, was assumed physically into heaven. It is interesting to note that the origins of this feast day itself have been lost in time. It's

not even sure where or when the popular belief relating to the assumption began – though certainly in the 4th and 5th centuries it was appearing in texts. It has been speculated that the feast was introduced by the Council of Ephesus, though this remains open to debate.



The popular tradition of taking a trip during Ferragosto arose under Mussolini. In the second half of the 1920s, during the mid-August period, the government organized popular trips through the Fascist leisure and recreational organizations of various corporations, and via the setting up of the "People's Trains of Ferragosto", which were available at discounted prices. For many families, it was during these trips that they saw the sea, mountains, and Italy's many artistic marvels for the first time.

Some surviving traditions of the modern Ferragosto

Up until the start of the 20th century, Rome continued to celebrate the festival by setting up an impromptu lake in the capital's Piazza Navona! The Piazza would be flooded, and people would either be sprayed with water or pushed into the piazza's pool – linking the church festival with older rites which concentrated on Neptune and purification through water.

The ancient rites associated with the festival concentrated also on purification by fire, so it's no surprise that in the countryside especially there are still bonfires lit in and around Ferragosto. In some places, like Trapani, Sicily, there are processions where townspeople using torches burn grass alongside the procession.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



This column has always been about the comings and goings of the IACC. If you have been to the club recently you certainly have noticed two obvious changes: the new entrance to the parking lot and the newly seal-coated parking lot. The new entrance to the parking lot was done for safety and ease of use. This will make it much easier for delivery trucks. They will no longer have to make a tight turn around vehicles in our parking lot. The new entrance

also directs taller vehicles away from our new canopy. This new, improved traffic flow will allow drivers to properly discharge their passengers by the door. Additionally, the new flow moves noisy vehicles away from our garden area. This is especially important during wedding ceremonies. We also seal-coated the parking lot, complete with new ADA complaint handicapped striping.

This month will be busy with Ferragosto Celebration, Italian-American Day at Saratoga, and Cigar Night Fundraiser event. Please come out and support these activities.

Last and certainly not least, it is with great sadness I report that Past President Tony Mirabile passed away in early July. Words cannot properly express how valuable Tony was to this organization and to me personally. He was a true gentleman at all times. He was a great volunteer, always eager to help out. On behalf of the IACC, I want extend our condolences to his family and appreciation for sharing him with us for all these years. Tony, may you rest peacefully in God's loving arms.

President Jim Sano

August Calendar

View our complete online Calendar at italianamerican.com

Every Monday	Italian Grand Buffet Men's Bocce League
Every Tuesday	Women's Bocce League
Wednesday, August 5	Foundation Board Meeting, 6:30 P.M.
Thursday, August 6	Cigar Night
Saturday, August 15,	Ferragosto Celebration
Wednesday, August 12	Women's League Meeting, 6:15P.M.
Wednesday, August 19	Saratoga Race Track General Membership Meeting and Board Meeting 6:00 P.M.
Every Friday	Friday Night in the Pavilion

Save the Date

Saturday, September 12 *Blood Type Ragù*, a one man play

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Monday - Friday 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

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Please submit articles, suggestions, or comments to:
Rachel Cameron, Editor, rcamero@nycap.rr.com

FINDING OUR IMMIGRANT ANCESTRY by Angelo F. Coniglio

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Once an immigrant ancestor's name and town of birth have been determined, we can begin the search for his/her vital records.

After your search of family records, censuses, and passenger manifests, presumably at least an approximate year of birth is known. If not, try to estimate: How old was your ancestor when he died or in what year? How old was he when he married? You should have a range of years which are a reasonable approximation of his birth year. If you have a day, month, and year from a marriage document, death record, headstone or other secondary source, consider it approximate, until you find a *primary* record.

If you have unlimited funds,

knowing the town name, you *could* travel there. In or near the *Municipio* (Town Hall), most towns have an *Anagrafe* (Registry Office) where all the birth, marriage, and death records for its citizens are kept in large registers. Church records are usually kept in a similar fashion at each parish or sometimes at a central diocesan church. Unless your ancestral town is a large city like Rome or Palermo, you will have to speak Italian or pay an interpreter to help in your search. If you speak the language your immigrant ancestor spoke a hundred years ago, your dialect may not be understood.

If you plan on visiting your ancestor's town for genealogical research, be forewarned that you may need several days before you gain access to the records you seek. State and church holidays, daily siestas, and other delays generally mean that you cannot just plan ahead to spend a morning in a town and find what you seek in the way of genealogical records. An example follows.

My wife Angie and I went to Sicily in 2006. We planned to land in Catania, rent a car to drive along the north coast, then swing down from Palermo to my parents' birthplace, Serradifalco, in Caltanissetta Province. We would be passing close to Angie's ancestral village of Mussomeli, in the same province.

Therefore, we thought we would make a quick stop there to resolve a question we had about the surname of one of her great-grandmothers. We found the public cemetery in Mussomeli. However, though it was open, other visitors told us that there was no attendant because it was Italian Liberation Day. We began looking for my wife's ancestors' headstones and learned something about Sicilian burial customs.



The same friendly visitors told us that we would not find stones from the early 1800s for two reasons: 1) the earliest burials were not in public cemeteries, but in churchyards. Only after disease transmission was understood later in the 1800s were laws passed to require consecrated public cemeteries, outside of town limits, and 2) in the 1800s cemetery plots were not bought, but rented. When the deceased's family petered out or moved away, if the rent was not paid, the remains were disinterred and placed in common ossuary chapels.

Disappointed at not finding any useful information, we decided that after we had settled in at our destination, we would return to Mussomeli, a half-hour drive away, to expand our research. The next day we scheduled two hours around lunchtime to go back to the *Municipio* and find out more about the cemetery. At the town office, we were told that 'il *Prufissuri*', the caretaker of the cemetery, was there each day after siesta, at about 3 PM. We decided we'd come

Continued on page 4

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back the next day. When we pulled into town the next day at 3:30 PM and drove toward the cemetery, we found the road blocked by the town's weekly street market. This was on *the* only road to the cemetery! In response to our queries, we were told that the market would last until sundown. Oh well, tomorrow was another day!

We returned the next day at 3 PM, made it to the cemetery, and parked near the office. The office door was locked, and a note in the window said "Gone to town on an errand, will return shortly." After a few minutes, a car pulled up and an elderly gentleman stepped out, unlocked the office and entered. I went up to the service window and asked "Are you *il Profissuri*?" He sheepishly answered, in Sicilian "Well, I'm the custodian, they call me the Professor." I asked "May we see the cemetery's register of burials?"

He answered "Nicholas has the key to the registers." I asked "Where is Nicholas?", and he responded "He's not here today." After changing our schedule on four successive days, we could not go back another time. Our search of the cemetery's register will have to be done on a future trip!

Fortunately, you may be able to find images of many original records without having to do extensive travel. Next time, I will start to explain just how to do it.

Coniglio is the author of the book The Lady of the Wheel, inspired by his Sicilian research. Order the paperback or the Kindle version at <http://bit.ly/SicilianStory>

Coniglio's web page at <http://bit.ly/AFCCGen> has helpful hints on genealogic research. If you have genealogy questions, or would like him to lecture to your club or group, e-mail him at

COMMUNITY NEWS *Santa Pasquini*

Italian-American Day at Saratoga Race Course will be held on **August 19th** from **11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.** The day-long festivities will include Italian music, dance, entertainment, crafts, and food in the Saratoga Pavilion. Musical entertainment will include singers, a strolling accordion player who will greet visitors at the grandstand and clubhouse entrances, a guitar player singing old Neapolitan songs, and dancers (adult dancers and young dancers from the IACC group) under the direction of Louise Giuliano with assistance from **Christine Marando**.



The American Italian Heritage Museum has Works of Art on display by some of our local artist, including our own Art Director, **Victor Consiglio**. The exhibit will be there until the end of September.

Chair Yoga is Coming to the IACC !

In September, Chair Yoga will resume after our summer break. Yoga instructor, Tracy Swanson, will teach this class called "Chair Yoga". Chair Yoga is a gentle form of yoga that is practiced sitting in a chair or standing, using the chair for support. Everyone can do this. The class will be a 10-week program on Thursday evenings, beginning on Thursday, September 17th through November 19th. The one-hour class will be held upstairs in the IACC Boardroom and begin at 6:30 PM. Classes are open to men and women

Please call the Membership Office at 456-IACC (4222) to sign up.

Prices: \$60 for 10 week session



Men's Bocce League

Mondays at 6:30 P.M.

The regular season will end on August 31st.

Official teams have now been formed.

For information, contact

Jim Sano at 577-6158.

Bowling



IACC Bowling starts on

Monday, September 21st at 6:30 P.M.

at Westlawn Lanes. Price is \$3.50 per

game and \$2.00 for shoes. We play

two games. For information, contact

Maria Marchio at 438-9067.

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55+ Club *By Sharon Patrei*

Hello everyone!

We hope you are having a memorable summer! Our day at the Turning Stone Casino was great fun as expected. There will be no meeting in August, as we will be going to Saratoga Race Track on August 19, in order to share in the Italian-American Day festivities. We will reserve a few tables for our group to enjoy an afternoon of wagering (and hopefully winning). We will meet in the IACC parking lot at 10 A.M. and form a car pool. Please call me at 765-3283 with questions or concerns.

2015 IACC Swimming Pool Schedule

POOL PHONE 690-7258 (to check conditions)

Members **MUST** have their membership card available while at the pool

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
May						23	July continued						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
31							26	27	28	29	30	31	
June	1	2	3	4	8	6	August						1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30					23	24	25	26	27	28	29
July			1	2	3	4	30	31					
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	September	1	2	3	4	5	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	6	7					

Noon - 8:00 P.M. 3:30 P.M. - 6:30 P.M. 10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M. Noon - 5:00 P.M.

NEW MEMBERS AND THEIR SPONSORS

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Jaime & David Evans	Anthony Demetriou and Allison Hicks
Stacey Gouvitsas	Christine Marando
Carl & Laura Konopka	Cain Scalzo
Geraldine Kraushaar	Maria LaMorte
Stacy & Rocco Marando	Cain Scalzo
Vince & Diane Martiniano	Cain Scalzo
Madelaine Tarullo	Cain Scalzo

Traditionally, *Ferragosto* marks the start of Italy's vacation period. So if you're in a city in Italy during the second half of August, you may find a number of restaurants and shops closed for vacation, *chiuso per ferie*. However, near tourist sites, there will be some open. If you are going to be in Italy during this period, it is always worth checking whether there will be a special Ferragosto celebration where you are staying. You'll find celebrations in many places in Italy on this day and the days before and after, often including music, food, parades, or fireworks. Here are a few top Ferragosto Festivals:

- Rome's *Gran Ballo di Ferragosto* fills Rome's squares with live dance performances. There's a different type of dance in each square.
- Diano Marina in Liguria holds a festival of the sea with a good fireworks display

In Tuscany, Montepulciano holds a historical pageant and games.

- Cappelle sul Tavo, near Pescara on the Abruzzo coast, celebrates with the *Palio of the Pupe*, huge effigies paraded through the streets at night. During the procession, they eventually explode with fireworks.
- In Siena the world-famous horse race, with its roots in the middle-ages (and back to Roman games where horse racing figured strongly), the *Palio del' Assunta* takes place on the 16th

Festa del Mare, Diano Marina [Liguria] August 15th - **There is a** sea festival with fireworks.

Palio del Mare, Alassio [Liguria] August 15th - **Watch a** very pretty festival in which small boats light up the sea with candles **followed by** fireworks.

Madonna della Madia [August 14th - 16th] Monopoli [Bari, Puglia] - **There is a** water festival in which locals re-enact the salvaging of a Byzantine icon of the Madonna that had been washed up on the beach in 1117.

Festa della Madonna del Ponte, Caltagirone [Sicily] August 15th - People make their way on their knees towards a statue of the crucified Christ.

Palio delle Contrade, Garda [Lombardy] August 15th - **Watch a** horse race, a fishing regatta, and a parade of locals in historical costumes.

Bruscello, Montepulciano [Tuscany] - **There is a** traditional show held on the cathedral steps **where the** performers speak in rhyme.

Sagra del Tortello, Melo [Cutigliano, Pistoia, Tuscany] August 15th - **Enjoy the** Pasta Festival.

Sassari in Sardinia holds the *Festa dei Candelieri* that dates back to the 16th century. In this exciting festival held on August 14-15, you'll see a race with teams of men bearing huge and very heavy candles.



The actual holiday celebrations vary throughout the country, but suffice it to say that Ferragosto was, is, and will continue to be one of Italy's most important and dearly held festivals! It's an inclusive one, from its roots, so wherever you are - be it in the mountains or at the seaside, and you have the opportunity to celebrate whether in Italy or at any of the number of celebrations throughout the world as Italians everywhere celebrate, don't be shy in wishing people around you a *Buon Ferragosto!*

Written with excerpts from *ItalyMagazine*, *About.com*, and an article originally published in www.visit-rimini.com

Ferragosto Celebration

A re-creation of the most important day of summer in Italia as a gift to IACC Members



On Saturday, August 15 starting at 2 P.M. – Bonfire at sunset. A big party day for the entire family with a menu for festeggiare to thoroughly enjoy.... Antipasti, Porchetta, Suckling Pig, Roast Beef, Pasta with Meatballs, Salad, Fruit, Bread and Butter, Dessert, Coffee and Tea. Other beverages available for purchase.

IACC Members and Children under 12 will enjoy Ferragosto for FREE

Non Members may join us as guests of members for \$10.00 pp and may pay at the door (cash only).

Play bocce, swim in the pool, or play horseshoes. Bring lawn chairs for the Bonfire.

Yankee Trip

by Jim Sano

On Wednesday, June 24, several members of IACC went on the annual trip to Yankee Stadium. The day was blessed with perfect weather and an even better performance by the Yankees with the Yankees recording a 10-2 victory over the Phillies. The day was topped off with our usual dinner stop in the Arthur Avenue Italian section in the Bronx.



It has been my pleasure to coordinate these trips for the IACC over the past 30 years.



WOMEN'S BOCCE LEAGUE

The Women's Bocce League will play until Tuesday, August 11th. All games begin at 6:30 P.M. Ideally, each team should have five players, but four players are still acceptable. Any and all ladies of the IACC are encouraged to join. Anyone who has played in the past can tell you how much fun we have.

If you haven't played in the past, please give us a try—no experience needed!!

Please call me, 424-7463, to join our Women's Bocce League. Donna Zumbo, President **WBL**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
THE BRUNCH IS COMING
SUNDAYS BEGINNING AUGUST 9



Sundays in Albany are about to get a little bit more delicious! The Italian American Community Center of Albany and the talented chefs at Treviso have announced the creation of a Sunday brunch extravaganza. Executive Chef Ryan Huneau reveals the menu will feature a chefs curving station, fresh Belgian Waffles, warm doughnuts, continental breakfast pastries, warm muffins, omelet station, and much, much more. The brunch will run from 10:30 A.M. — 2:30 P.M.

Treviso is located at 257 Washington Avenue Extension. For more information on the brunch call the Treviso office at 456-0292.



Jacqueline C. Fontaine, Associate Broker, GRI
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Women's League

Hello Ladies,

As summer pressed on, the Women's League enjoyed a wonderful evening by the pool last month. Several of us participated in the water aerobics class given by Michelle Sano. She is such a wonderful teacher and really had us burning the calories, so we could enjoy our poolside dinner! Thank you so much Michelle!

We are in the process of planning some great events for the coming year, but the Women's League has decided on one in particular. We are planning a "Giving Tree" this year for Christmas. Many of you probably know what this is, as they are a staple in many of our churches around Christmastime. The concept is basically the same. We will be working with Catholic Charities to create our list of needed gifts. More complete details will be in the next issue of *Siamo Qui*. With this in mind, if anyone has any ideas or charities, please drop me an email at dzumbo13@hotmail.com or let us know at a meeting.

This month we are pleased to have a member of the New York State Police K-9 Unit to come to our August 12th meeting with his dog for a presentation. We all realize the importance of these K-9 units. We will meet in the Pavilion for this presentation and for dinner. Our dinner choices this month are: Baked White Fish, BBQ Chicken, or Penne Vodka. Entrees will be served with a Caprese Salad and Sauteed Veggies. We will have "Sundae Bar" for dessert. Please call **Maria DeNitto** with your reservation at **456-2216** by **Sunday, August 9th**. The price remains at \$20.00. **Cancellations** must be made by **Monday, August 10th**. Please remember the cancellation policy remains in effect.

Please join us for what will be an exciting presentation and dinner for our next meeting on **Wednesday, August 12th** at **6:30 P.M.** in the **Pavilion**.

Donna Zumbo, Women's League President

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August Birthdays



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Joseph Lombardo
Giacomo Mancino

Carole Mann
Margaret Marshall
Richard Mazzaferro Sr.
Caterina Mesiti
John Metallo
Agatha Novak
Theresa Nowicki
Jean Padula
Rose Padula
John Pelersi
Mike Peters
Mike Petilli
John Pioggia
Elizabeth Richards
Carla Rossi
Kathleen Ryan
Phyllis Scafidi
Cain Scalzo
Diane Simeone
Rebecca Tearno
George Urciuoli
Charles Vivacqua
Alice Wyld
Donna Zumbo

Condolences

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of long time active member, **Anthony Mirabile**. Tony was a Past President, Past Chairman of the House Committee, and member of the "party boys". Condolences to the entire Mirabile family.

Condolences are sent to **Alice Ann Wyld**, wife of **Herm Wyld**, and the entire Wyld family. Herm was a long-time active member and a respected retired teacher and coach.

Please contact Anna Acconi at aacconi111@aol.com or 966-8664.

LIMONCELLO

Submitted by Maria La Morte
In English and Italian



To one litre alcohol add 10 lemons to macerate for five days.

Uno litro di alcool. Metter dentro 10 limoni a macerare per cinque giorni.

Boil two litres of long-lasting whole fat milk for three min. Add four cups sugar.

Bolire due litri di latte intero a lunga conservazione per tre minuti. 1g e 800 gr di zucchero.

As soon as it cools to tepid, add two envelopes vanillin.

Appena intiepidito aggiungere due bustine di vanillina.

When completely cooled, mix all together, strain and store in freezer.

Quando tutto e' freddo aggiungere il latte e alcool insieme, infine filtrare e conservare nel congelatore

Sottile = thin (dough)

Vanillina = vanillin = artificial vanilla flavor



Community Center

*a place where family and friends
can meet, eat, play and
celebrate Italian heritage*

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