



Fall, 2015

THE VOICE OF THE SWAN A Voxé du Cigno

Newsletter of the S. F. Chapter of the Liguri nel Mondo

Best wishes to all for a Happy Thanksgiving!

Our summer event, the Liguri nel Mondo annual picnic in August, was a great success. Everyone attending enjoyed the lovely afternoon at the Calegari Vineyards, while listening to the music of Coro Allegro and our accordionist, George Campi, and feasting on a delicious barbeque lunch. Thanks to all who brought the wonderful appetizers to share and to those who helped out on the day of the event. Mille grazie to Don and Patsy Calegari and their crew for all their hard work and for allowing us again to enjoy a fine day at their vineyard.

Don't forget the December 4th Festa di Natale at the Basque Cultural Center. Hope to see you all there!

I have recently returned from a visit to Italy. As usual, I enjoyed my trip, but did not spend enough time in the city of Genova. Perhaps in the future I will make hotel reservations before leaving San Francisco, so I'll be certain to spend more time there.

The Italian economy does not seem to be doing well. There were more complaints by the citizens than usual. Sadly, I did see many "Vendesi" (For Sale) or "Affitarsi" (For Rent) signs in the area.

While I was there, I did find a few good places to eat which I'd like to share:

Òstàia U Pellegrin – Frazione Romaggi, San Colombano Certenoli

This family-run restaurant is located on the twisty road from Calvari to Cichero.

Great ravioli! Everything I had there was excellent! I give this restaurant 5 stars!!

Trattoria Settembrin – 34 Via Vecchia Provinciale, (Graveglia) Carasco

This is another restaurant known for their ravioli and pansotti. I had the pansotti, and a couple in our party had ravioli. Both dishes were excellent! My wife ordered the rabbit, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

Albergo della Posta – 39 Via Giacomo Matteotti (main street in town), Torriglia

This is an old established hotel, pensione and trattoria. The business is under new management. Very friendly service and simple but well-prepared food at a good value. We had several nice lunches there. Please keep it in mind if you should be in the area. The former owner wanders around the restaurant saying hello to the guests.

Osteria da Vittorio - Via Brighetti 33, Chiavari - in the Centro Storico.

The best farinata anywhere! Everything else is delicious as well. We were in Chiavari for 3 days and had lunch there all 3 days. Most of the diners in this fairly large Osteria were locals. Do not miss the farinata! I had it 3 days in a row.

La Pineta – Via Gualco 82, Genova, in the Struppa area of the Val Bisagno.

Known for their “alla brace” meats and seafood grilled on an open wood fire. This is a beautiful restaurant with a very appealing outdoor dining area. We had the mixed seafood appetizer, which was outstanding, as was our “secondo” of mixed meat grill. This is a great Michelin rated restaurant located in a green oasis on the hills of Genova. Website: www.restorantelapineta.org.

Cantina Reggiana – Via Giuseppe Raggio 27, Chiavari

We did not eat here, but it came so highly recommended that I must mention the name and location. Several people who live in Chiavari told me that it was not to be missed. Unfortunately, they were closed for their “*ferie*”, vacation, when we were there. Too bad, we would have loved to try it.

In Favale, I recommend **I Cupelli**, a pizzeria, trattoria, and bar – right in the center of town. Keep it in mind if you should ever be in Favale di Malvaro.

I noticed that food trends, like here, change frequently in the Ligurian restaurants. It seems that every restaurant now features “*trofie al pesto*”. I did not see any *trenette*, the classic pasta for pesto. To me, *trofie* are the gnocchi-like pastas made with 50% white wheat flour and 50% chestnut flour. My mother used to make them and use a sauce made with heavy cream, very soft cheese (teleme), garlic and parmigiano. (Not recommended if you have a cholesterol problem!) The *trofie* served nowadays are pasta shaped like a screw without a head, made with white wheat flour. I personally do not care for them because they always seem a bit too “al dente” for my taste. They can be purchased here in SF at some specialty stores.

Just a few tidbits for those who may be interested:

- You can find words translated from Italian to Zeneize at this website: www.zeneize.net/itze/main.asp
- This website translates words from Italian to Zeneize and vice versa: www.paroledigenova.net
- For those who use Facebook and are interested in very current news from Val Fontanabuona, go to (and “like”) “Comitato Salviamo la Fontanabuona”
- I know that a few of our members are familiar with and have visited Lascito Cuneo in Calvari. I do recommend a visit if you are interested in the history, culture and traditions of the Entroterra Ligure (Inland Liguria).
- There is a lovely online video of Torriglia on Youtube.com. Enter “Borghi d'Italia Torriglia” in the search box to locate the video.

SAN MARCO D'URRI

The November 23, 1969 issue of *Life* magazine had the following headline on page 151: "A \$340,000 Miracle for San Marco." The article started as follows: "Clinging to the rocky Ligurian hills above Genoa is San Marco d'Urri, an Italian village so poor that generations of its sons have gone away to seek fortune".

Among those who left was Leopoldo Pietro Saturno. He, like many of the emigrants from "A Valle" (as we called San Marco d'Urri when I was a child), settled in Reno, Nevada. He arrived in 1879 and started working as a farm hand, and in due course built a modest fortune in ranching and real estate, as well as in other endeavors. He died in 1919. Two of his sons, Victor and Joseph, also became wealthy, having inherited their father's talent for investment.

"Peter" Saturno, as he was known during his adult life in Reno, was an orphan who had been adopted by the Avanzino family of San Marco d'Urri. He never forgot the kindness he received from his adoptive family and the townspeople, and frequently made mention of it to his sons. Fifty-six years ago, forty years after the death of their father, the two brothers from Reno changed the lives of all the inhabitants of the small mountain village in the comune of Neirone by their generosity and in honor of their father who had grown up in that town.

The Saturno brothers had an announcement sent to each inhabitant of the town. The letter stated that "a matter of interest to you" would be announced. The matter of interest was that each person from San Marco d'Urri would be given 25 shares of Bank of America stock. The 25 shares were valued at 800,000 Lire or about \$1,215, which at that time was a small fortune for the townspeople. The largest family in town had 8 persons who received shares totaling about \$9720. The total amount donated by the brothers amounted to \$340,000 in stock, the amount in the title of the *Life* article

Somewhere I read that the reason they gave their donation in shares was so that the people could use the dividends paid by the stock and still retain the shares. Many of the people sold their shares and used the money to fix and modernize their homes. Over the years, I have wondered how much the original shares (including any splits plus the quarterly dividends) would be worth today. I believe it would amount to a vast sum of money.

I happened to be in Italy in 2009 and attended the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Leopoldo Peter Saturno's birth (also the 50th anniversary of the gifts by his sons in his honor). San Marco d'Urri has now been divided into two towns. The church is still in the town called San Marco d'Urri. The other town is called Lezzaruole. One town has a statue of the two brothers, Joseph and Victor, and the other has statues of Saturno and his wife. Both towns are fairly well inhabited, and the housing is in good condition in comparison to surrounding towns.

PANISSETTE

10 ounces flour (300 grams, about 1 1/4 cups)
1 quart water (4 cups)
salt

Panisetta is made with panissa, a polenta made with *ceci* (garbanzo bean) flour. Although this is a very simple dish, it does take some patience to make. This recipe will serve 2-4 people and can be doubled if needed.

Using a whisk, sift the flour into a pot of boiling salted water and immediately stir until smooth and there are no small or large lumps remaining. Heat the mixture and continue stirring constantly for at least 45 minutes until it thickens. (The batter will sink to the bottom and stick to the pan if left unattended.) Pour it onto a slightly oiled cookie sheet and spread to about 1/2 inch thick. Allow the batter to cool, then refrigerate until hardened. (Overnight is okay.)

When ready to cook, slice the panissa into pieces that resemble French fries. Have a deep pan ready with hot oil and proceed to deep fry the pieces until crisp and golden. Gently remove from the oil, and allow to dry on a rack. Sprinkle with salt and serve hot. You will love them! I do.

You can find these at a couple of restaurants in San Francisco. I have had them at Castagna on Chestnut Street and they were excellent. They are also on the menu at Belga on Union Street, but I have yet to try them there.

UPCOMING LIGURI NEL MONDO EVENTS...

December 4, 2015 (Fri.) Festa di Natale, Basque Cultural Center, SSF

WELCOME to the following new Liguri nel Mondo members who joined since the last newsletter: Bennie & Beverly Anselmo, and John Del Monte.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS for those wishing to join the Associazione can be downloaded from our website: www.SFLiguri.com, or by sending a request to: Liguri nel Mondo, P.O. Box 29358, San Francisco, CA 94129

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