

La Rondine

In 1943, major events occurred that

shook all of Italy and changed the

course of Italian history forever. In

July, Dictator Benito Mussolini's own

Grand Council gave him a jolting vote of no-confidence. In less than

24 hours, King Victor Emanuel III

had Mussolini imprisoned and

named General Badoglio as Prime

Minister. Within two days, the new

Badoglio government dissolved the

Fascist Party while simultaneously

affirming that Italy would remain

allied with Germany. In less than

three months, Italy abandoned its

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alliance with Germany and surren-

dered unconditionally to the Allies.

The next day, the King, his son

Prince Umberto II, and Badoglio flee

Rome for Brindisi – leaving the army

leaderless and directionless – and in

the process abandoning the King's

daughter and daughter-in-law to fend

for themselves. In his slide presen-

tation, speaker Valerio Bianco, will

discuss the occurrences leading to

these events. Occurrences which

included disastrous defeats in Rus-

sia and North Africa, Allied invasion

of Italy, relentless bombing of Italian

September 2003

" Italy – 1943" presenter Cav. Valerio Bianco

Next Meeting

Wednesday

September 17th

Cocktails- 6:30p.m.

Dinner- 7:00p.m.

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"Despite the fact that the tower, along with its accompanying cathedral and baptistery, are outstanding examples of Tuscan-Romanesque architecture, it is the fact that the tower leans that for over 800 years has made it so fascinating."

"The Leaning Tower of Pisa" by Domenick Alessi

With all due respect to Gustave Eiffel and his lace-work masterpiece of the golden age of iron and steel engineering , the *campanile* of Pisa is ,and has been for centuries, surely the world's most famous tower. Interestingly, whereas it was engineering excellence that made the Paris tower so famous, it was an understandable lack of engineering knowledge that made Pisa's even more famous. The tower of Pisa is famous because it leans; something which, as everybody knows, wellengineered structures are not supposed to do. Despite the fact that the tower, along with its accompanying cathedral and baptistery, are outstanding examples of Tuscan-Romanesque architecture, it is the fact that the tower leans that for over 800 years has made it so fascinating. The obvious guestions are - why does it lean and what can be done about it? And it was upon these building-related issues that our speaker Dominic (Mickey) Alessi focused his slide presentation. The tower of Pisa stands 179 ft. tall and

consists of 7 arched stories or levels capped with an 8th story bell chamber. Construction started in 1173 and had progressed steadily to about 5 ft beyond the third level when it was noted that the supporting soil had settled non-uniformly and that the tower leaned north about 0.2 degree. Work was stopped in 1178 and the first bells were then installed in the third level. Ultimately there would be seven bells, each tuned to the musical scale and each given its own name. Eventually they would all be installed permanently (1665) in the completed 8th level bell chamber. In 1272, construction resumed but during the first 10 years of work, the tower settled unevenly another 12 to 16 inches into the ground and continued to incline. But the leaning was now to the south and would continue in that direction at an arc-rate of about 1.5 mm (.059") per year. The question was "why the settling?" After all, the cathedral and baptistery, both built earlier and relatively close to the tower, had never manifested such

was both a spectator and a participant in many of these occurrences. He will then address the key question – how did the events of 1943 contribute to modern Italy's present governmental form, organization and structure? Valerio Bianco is a Cavaliere of the Republic of Italy and a long time member of the Italian Club of St. Louis.

cities, and widespread food short-

ages. As a teen-age member of the

Partisan freedom fighters, Valerio

settlement. Knowledge of soil mechanics was virtually non-existent in the 12th century. Had present techniques of soil testing and analysis been available, studies would have revealed that not only was the soil marshy-clay mixed with fine sand and shells but also contained subsurface foundations of earlier structures and, most importantly, that load-bearing characteristics of the terrain varied greatly throughout the complex. Those conditions combined with the fact that the tower is an extremely heavy structure with a relatively small foot-print explained the differential settling. Work proceeded with construction of the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th floors but with the walls of those levels built perpendicular to the ground rather than inline with the inclination of the walls below. The 7th cornice was reached in 1278 and construction stopped again. The 7th floor was completed in 1319 and the bell chamber about 1370. In retrospect, it appears that the long periods of intermittent construction inactivity were providential

L'Angolo Del Presidente by James Tognoni

My dear fellow members:

Time to turn another page and get ready for the coming of fall. Probably my favorite time of year. I think about the changing colors of the trees. The smell of the trees and plants as their leaves drop and decay to mix with the soil. So many activities and opportunities for getting out and enjoying the new season. Remember to consult this publication. Il Pensiero and the web site www.ltalySTL.com for ucoming dates on different activities, festas, and many others things which might appeal to your likes and taste. Before you know it the holiday season will be upon us. The cycle of

time does not wait for us. It is always said that time and each new day is a gift not to be wasted. Sometimes we get so busy in our day-to-day routines doing things that "have" to be done, that we forget about making time to do things we enjoy and that enrich our soul and spirit. So as the days get shorter, allow time to read, listen, visit and share all the wonderful things and people that are part of our individual worlds and the world at large.

I will close by saying that our August meeting was very enjoyable. The overview of the work done on the Leaning Tower was very interesting. The presentation calendar for the remainder of the year looks great, as well as, the film and opera series resumes on September 19. Please note the schedule on page 4 of this publication. The Italian Club will also participate in the Columbus Day activities on Sunday, October 12 at Berra Park. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us. We look forward to being together at our next meeting on Wednesday, September 17th when member, Valerio Bianco, will discuss "Italy—1943".

Ciao,

Jim

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Jim Tognoni, President; Dominick Alessi, presenter; Peter Puleo, member of the Program Committee



"The Leaning Tower of Pisa" *cont'd*

in that they allowed the subsoil to compact under the structure's massive weight. Had construction continued without delay, the tower would have toppled. Over ensuing centuries, a number of engineering initiatives were undertaken - in some cases more harmful than beneficial - to reduce or stop the rate of inclination. These included such dubious ideas as trenching around the tower base and boring numerous holes in the masonry foundation and the underlying soil. Despite well-intended efforts, the tower continued to move at the rate of 1.2 mm per year and was finally closed in 1990 for fear of possible collapse. Beginning in 1992, a series of successful strengthening projects were undertaken and the lean was decreased by a total of 17" (44 cm) to an overall present value of about 13.5 ft (4.1 m). Stabilization work was completed in 2001. Theoretically, the now-stable tower could be brought back to the vertical, but it was decided to let it remain leaning. After all, a leaning tower is just too good of a tourist attraction to lose. Presenter Dominic Alessi is a retired construction industry executive and a graduate of the Washington University School of Architecture.

by Gene Mariani

Our sincerest condolences to Marie Tramelli Morrison on the death of her husband, George Hirt Morrison.

Congratulations, Anna Amelung!

Kudos and thunderous applause to IC member, Dr. Anna Amelung on her July presentation, entitled "A Real-Life Survivor; the story of Madame Chouteau", at the annual convention of the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF) in Martinique. Instead of the usual talk, the creative, multi-talented, and energetic Anna presented the story of one of the most famous women in early St. Louis history in the form of a puppet show, done entirely in the French language. Under her direction, the puppets, script, props, artwork and research were done by students in her French 4 and 5 language courses at University City High School. Her play showed the stresses prevalent at the time of the founding of St. Louis by Pierre Laclede and Auguste Chouteau, and the important role played by the courageous and unconventional Marie Therese Chouteau in the development of our city.

Congratulations, Alberto Isidore!

Congratulations to member Alberto Isidore on his lecture on "Robust tracking of uncertain trajectories" which he delivered at the Spring meeting of the prestigious Mittag-Leffler Institute in Stockholm, Sweden on May 27, 2003.

Isidore is a professor at both the Washington University School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the University of Rome. The Mittag-Leffler Institute functions under the auspices of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

TERZA PAGINA

I capolavori della poesia italiana

a cura di Barbara Klein

Baldassare Castiglione (Casatico, Mantova 1478-Toledo, Spagna 1529) fu nunzio pontificio. Affiancó alla carriera diplomatica quella letteraria. Il suo capolavoro Il libro del Cortegiano fu pubblicato nel 1528.

Superbi colli, e voi sacre ruine

di Baldassare Castiglione

Superbi colli, e voi sacre ruine, che 'l nome sol di Roma ancor tenete, ahi, che reliquie miserande avete di tante anime eccelse e pellegrine!

Colossi, archi, teatri, opre divine, trïonfal pompe glorïose e liete, in poco cener pur converse siete, e fatte al vulgo vil favola¹ al fine.

Cosí, se ben un tempo al tempo guerra fanno l'opre famose², a passo lento e l'opre e i nomi il tempo invido atterra.

Vivrò dunque fra' miei martír³ contento: che se il tempo dà fine a ciò ch'è in terra, darà forse ancor fine al mio tormento.

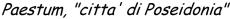
¹ squallido avvenimento ² che sfidano il tempo

³ affanni

In giro per l'Italia

a cura di Barbara Klein





Paestum, a circa 35 chilometri a sud di Salerno, è la più bella e ben conservata città della Magna Grecia. Fu fondata dagli Achei di Sibari come centro commerciale marittimo, al principio del VI secolo a.C., e le fu dato il nome in onore del dio tombali della "Tomba del Tuffatore". greco del mare. Alla fine del V secolo a.C. cadde in potere dei Lucani, che cambiarono il nome greco in Paistos.

Occupata per breve tempo dai Greci con la spedizione di Alessandro il Molosso, fu rioccupata dai Lucani nel 331-30 a.C. durante le guerre sannitiche. Nel 273 vi fu dedotta da Roma una colonia latina; forse municipio con la "lex Iulia", divenne colonia cittadina in eta' sillana.

Mantenne tuttavia il privilegio unico di battere moneta bronzea fino ai tempi di Augusto e di Tiberio, in premio alla fedelta' dimostrata a Roma durante le guerre puniche. Continuo' ad essere un ricco centro agricolo anche durante il basso Impero. Agli albori del Cristianesimo Paestum ebbe i suoi martiri e nel 370 vi sostarono le spoglie dell'apostolo San Matteo. Fu sede vescovile sin dal V secolo e rimase sempre cristiana. Quando vi si sviluppo' poi la malaria, a poco a poco ando' spopolandosi e, distrutta dai Saraceni verso l'877, decadde definitivamente.

Dopo l'abbandono, di Paestum non si parlò più per secoli anche se i suoi templi si ergevano sempre solenni tra la fitta vegetazione e ben visibili dal mare. Un pó di merito per la riscoperta va ascritto a scrittori e poeti del '500 e '600 che, con le loro citazioni sui monumenti risvegliarono interesse e curiosità verso di esssa. Ma la "riscoperta" vera e propria ha inizio nella prima metà del '700 quando scrittori, poeti ed artisti di molte nazionalità (tra i quali Goethe, Shelley, Canova, Piranesi) cominciarono a frequentare e ad interrogare la vestiglia della rinomata città greca--moda conosciuta sotto il nome di "Grand Tour"-diffondendone la fama per tutta l'Europa.

Paestum e' probabilmente il centro archeologico piu' importante del meridione d'Italia, i suoi tre templi dorici vengono subito dopo il "Theseion" di Atene. Il piu' grande dei templi e' quello chiamato di Nettuno, costruito nel 450 a.C., che costituisce il piu' perfetto esempio di architettura dorica templare ma che era dedicato invece alla dea della maternita' e della fecondita' Hera Argiva; ha un porticato su colonne sui cui capitelli grava l'architrave (vedi la foto). Il tetto a doppio spiovente presenta dei magnifici frontoni triangolari che il tempo ha risparmiato: davanti vi sono i resti di due altari che dovevano servire per i sacrifici.

Vi e' poi il Tempio Italico che si presume costruito nell'80 a.C., dedicato a Giove, Giunone e Minerva. Fu eretto su un podio sopraelevato con una larga gradinata prospiciente, anch'essa con un altare davanti; vi erano in origine sei colonne sulla fronte e otto nei lati lunghi.

Il terzo tempio, quello detto di Cerere, era dedicato invece ad Athena. Fu costruito nel VI secolo a.C. con un portico di 34 colonne scanalate, le cui forme ricordano quelle della Basilica, allineata con il tempio di Nettuno; anch'essa e' un tempio e deve considerarsi il piu' antico, in quanto presumibilmente costruito nella meta' del VI secolo a.C. Dedicato alla dea Hera, e' cinto da un portico con 50 colonne doriche originarie.

Il vicino Museo Nazionale di Paestum presenta la storia della città e reperti archeologici, incluso gli ormai famosi affreschi

Buon viaggio in Italia!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS LA RONDINE

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Prossime Manifestazioni

FUTURE ITALIAN CLUB MEETINGS		ITALIAN CLUB'S FALL FILM & OPERA SERIES
September 17- "<i>Italy-1943</i>" Cav. Valerio Bianco		The Organizer (1964) Friday, September 19 Winner of four international film festival awards, with Marcello Mastroianni, "A rare motion picturebrilliant performance." In 19 th century Turin, an itinerant professor unites a ragtag group of textile workers in a strike against their factory, with unexpected consequences. (127 minutes)
	<i>"Canzone degli Alpini"</i> Gene Mariani and Chorus	Il Trovatore Friday, October 3 Giuseppe Verdi's opera of soaring melodies and grand passions, with Luciano Pavarotti. Tragic, mistaken identity of a baby sacrificed in vengeance, leads to a lifelong feud between two brothers. Their lives entangled with that of a gypsy who brought it all to pass. (133 minutes).
November 19-"Doge Dandolo of Venice" Prof. Tomm Madden December 17- Christmas celebration and the		Il postino (1995) This Academy Award-nominated story follows Mario, played by Massimo Troisi, a shy and simple minded postman on a remote Mediterranean island, who forms a friendship with exiled "poet of love" Pablo Neruda. Mario enlists Pablo's help in winning the heart of a beautiful woman. (115 minutes)
Panettone Players The Italian Club meets the third Wednesday of each month for dinner at		TurandotFriday, November 7Hear Placido Domingo sing "Nessun Dorma" in Giacomo Puccini's glorious and last opera . Zef- ferelli directs this monumental Met. Opera production. If the royal suitors of the cold Chinese prin- cess Turandot do not solve her riddles, they are executed. But against her will, "love wins out in the end." (134 minutes).
da Baldo's Restaurant Cocktails - 6:30p.m. Dinner - 7:00p.m.		Films will be introduced by Dr. Carla Bossola, and operas by Dorotea Rossomanno-Phillips. All programs are in Italian with English sub-titles and begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. Admis- sion is free. Sponsored by the Italian Club of St. Louis and the St. Louis Bocce Club. The St. Louis Bocce Club is located at 2210 Marconi Avenue, on the "hill," St. Louis, Mo. 63110. For further information contact Dorotea Rossomanno-Phillips at 535-9748 or e-mail: doro- tearp@aol.com.