



NCIC NEWS

Fall edition
September 2019

Connecting
our
Community

Message from the President:



Dear Friends / Cari Amici,

Welcome to the 2nd edition of NCIC News!

As summer comes to a close, let us marvel at the beautiful tapestry of colours that will soon adorn our trees.

Fall is a new beginning for all, and shortly, the National Congress of Italian Canadians (National Capital District) will be in full force, presenting a very busy, vibrant and rich Program for 2019 / 2020.

The first edition of our Newsletter in June, brought us many positive reviews. Our subscribers were very pleased with the diverse content and the fact that they were being kept abreast of community happenings. Within these pages, you will see a list of our past events as well as many of our upcoming ones for 2019. The variety of speakers, presentations and exhibits truly showcases the Italian Canadian Historical Centre (Centro Storico Italo-Canadese) as the hub of the cultural community. The National Congress of Italian Canadians thanks the many associations and groups that have partnered with us and helped sponsor the many happenings.

As many of you are aware, the Historical Centre was built with funds from the Community Historical Recognition Program in 2011-2012.

The CHRP was funding set aside by the Federal Government to acknowledge the dark chapter in Canadian history, that of the internment of Italian-Canadians during the Second World War. The National Congress of Italian Canadians (NCR) received funding from all levels of government to erect the Centre. However, it is important to underline that the Centre does not receive on going funding.

The Centre opened its doors in January 2013. Two years ago due to the kind generosity of anonymous donations, a full audio-visual system was installed. This has allowed for the presentation of films, musical artists, literary and cultural presentations and, this past April, in partnership with the Fogolar Furlan Association during their 50th Anniversary celebration, we were able to livestream the culinary talents of Chef Gianni Ceschia as he presented a sampling of Friulano cuisine. With so many ongoing activities, the Historical Centre requires funds to offset the costs of regular maintenance due to wear and tear as well as the yearly fee paid to Villa Marconi for the use of utilities and insurance coverage as stipulated in the original contract.

Although your free will donations have been most generous and greatly appreciated, much more funding is required, and for this reason, on Saturday, October 5th, The NCIC is hosting their annual fundraiser with monies raised going towards the upkeep of the Centro Storico. At this event, we are so pleased to honour and recognize two dedicated groups within our community, St. Anthony's Church Ladies Aid and the Volunteers of Villa Marconi. It would be our great pleasure to have you join us that evening. Ticket information is available on the attached poster.

Once again, on behalf of the Executive of the National Congress of Italian Canadians (NCR), I thank you for your ever-present support and look forward to seeing you at our many activities over the next few months.

Grazie,

Trina



National Capital District





**"Come to our events;
bring your family and friends"**



POSTER GALA

*Preserving the Past...
Enriching the Future*



CONGRESSO NAZIONALE DEGLI ITALO-CANADESI

National Capital District
PRESENTS

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING GALA

TO BENEFIT

ITALIAN CANADIAN HISTORICAL CENTRE

PROUDLY HONOURING

St. Anthony's Church Ladies Aid

and

The Volunteers of Villa Marconi

For their Volunteer Service to the
Italo-Canadian Community

Saturday, October 5, 2019

Cocktails 6:00 p.m. ~ Dinner 7:00 p.m.

TICKETS \$75

Includes two
Bottles of Wine per Table
Live Music
by Di Stasio from Montreal

Marconi Centre
1026 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON K2C 0A6

Trina Costantini-Powell 613-526-4315
Carla Minoli Lappa 613-521-4291
Corrado Nicastro 613-225-6372

Our Executive:

- Trina Costantini-Powell President
- Michael Aquilino Vice-President
- Carla Minoli-Lappa Vice-President
- Grace Disipio Secretary
- Anna Gaudio Treasurer

Directors:

- Enza Baiamonte
- Enzo Bertorelli
- Lorenzo Bonera
- Bruno Giammaria
- Antonio Cellucci
- Dr. Maria Assunta Cuffaro
- Mario Cinel
- Tony Cuffaro
- Corrado Nicastro
- Josephine Palumbo Past-President

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ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH LADIES AID

1948-2019

The Second World War was over and men worldwide were returning to their cities and homes for a time of peace. Ottawa was no exception. Many men in the Ottawa Italian community returned with a renewed spirit to create a Legion. One of these men, Domenic Disipio, suggested to his wife Mary that the wives should also get together to form a group to support their men in this Legion effort.

In September 1948, approximately 10 women met this challenge. However, for various reasons, the men's attempt to form this Legion failed but the spirit of the ladies endured. Since these women had no Legion to support, Father Jerome Ferraro, OSM, Pastor of St. Anthony's Church, seized this opportunity. He approached the women with the suggestion that they become a group with the mandate of aiding the Church, St. Anthony's School and the community. As more and more women heard about this initiative, the numbers grew.

The aptly named St. Anthony's Ladies Aid(Auxiliary) was born. The first Madame President was Eleanor Menchini Guzzo. The ladies started to meet once a month on Sunday afternoons but as most of the women were in their twenties with small children, this time frame proved to be most impractical. Sundays were family days and so their meetings were moved to Thursday evenings and eventually to the first Wednesday of each month.

The monthly meetings became the highpoint of these young women's social lives. The meetings were convened at 9:00 PM in order to accommodate their children's bedtime and they would last until well after midnight.

Though the meetings were mainly held to serve their parish, school and community, a social network was formed where long lasting friendships were born. They supported one another as a sisterhood of neighbours and friends through births, marriages, deaths and personal strife. They had the added bonus of also enjoying an evening away from their domestic lives.

While most church groups met in the confines of the Church, this group chose to assemble in homier surroundings. The basement of Mary Disipio's home at 77 Norman Street became their new headquarters and was affectionately known as "The Cave". The name was coined by a visiting Archbishop from Montreal who while attending one of their meetings spoke and in his broken English, stated that he enjoyed meeting with the ladies in their cave. The ladies loved the name and it stuck.

Members continued to meet there for 45 years , with everyone taking turns to set up , provide coffee, tea and fruitbread and wash the china cups after the meeting. The format of these monthly meetings was very formal in the early years. The group was governed by strict rules and a constitution adhered to by the Executive. An example of the early rules were: "A fine of 5 cents was payable for a missed meeting, miss three meetings without a good cause and you were excused from membership, and no woman was eligible for membership if she was divorced or separated." Those items have since been removed. In September 1993, meetings were moved to the Church where they remain to this day.

Today, the Ladies Aid follows an updated constitution and continues to be governed by an Executive. Some notable presidents were Lena Cuccaro(25 years) and Jennie Prosperine. Because of Mrs. Prosperine's involvement in the Ottawa Italian community for a plenitude of years, the Ottawa Women's Filo have an award in honour of this pioneer and it is given out annually to a woman "in recognition of outstanding service to the Italian Canadian community."

The Ladies Aid are very dedicated to their religious values and their Outreach programs. A current venture finds some of our members taking part in the "Friendly Visiting Program" sponsored by UIM. This involves regular visits to lonely and isolated seniors in our community who have requested some companionship. The group has a spiritual advisor who is the pastor incumbent of the Church. The Ladies Aid continue to support St. Anthony's School, Villa Marconi and the Dalhousie Food Cupboard.

For many years they also helped out at functions for St. Patrick's Home and the Italian-Canadian Professional Businessman's Association. The annual St. Anthony's Day procession, now in its 100th year, still remains a highlight. Every June, since 1948, the Ladies Aid take their spot and walk the familiar route with so many of the other Church groups. The men who carried our banner considered it to be quite the honour.

One of our benefactors, Lorne Kelly, founder of Kelly Funeral Homes, carried our banner for many years.

A mural of "Lorne and the Ladies" can be seen under the Preston Street overpass in Little Italy.

This mural, created by Karole Marois, was a gift of appreciation, by Mr. Kelly, to the Ladies Aid. Another important friend and benefactor was Mr. Angelo Licari. The Ladies Aid also put on their annual pasta feast during the St. Anthony's Day celebration. Another lasting event is the annual Communion Mass and breakfast held on the first Sunday following Easter, catered by the Knights of Columbus.

The Ladies Aid annually hold a bake sale and many of those delicious recipes can be found in their cookbook "The Spirit of our Kitchen". As much as the ladies accomplished in outreach and parochial duties, they also enjoyed each other's company outside of meetings. Having grown in age, familial and life experiences together, they socialized on many trips and events. Past excursions have taken them to both Expo 67 and St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal as well as to Villa Colombo in Toronto.

To this day, annual shopping excursions find many of the members in Syracuse, Watertown, Montreal and New York City. Many weddings and baby showers were held and for sure the daughter of a Ladies Aid member was sure to get the infamous "vacuum cleaner". To be a member of their bowling league at Queenston Lanes on Preston Street or their many Christmas dinners and anniversary parties was to find oneself amongst plenty of food, fun, laughter and reminisces. In 2018, the Ladies Aid marked their 70th anniversary.

Although the demographic surrounding the environs of St. Anthony's Church has changed and the ladies may no longer be physical neighbours like so many years ago, they continue to share this life long bond as members of St. Anthony's Ladies Aid.

Two of the current, active members have been there since 1948. Not too many organizations can record that. Many of the members ranging in age from 30-92 represent multi-generations.

Sadly, in June 2019, The Ladies Aid dissolved their Association. It is an honour to be recognized by the National Congress of Italian Canadians (National Capital District). If you are ever visiting the Hall underneath the Church, check out the shadowbox that contains many pictures and memorabilia of years and events gone by. The Italian Canadian Historical Centre will one day house the many memories of this beloved parochial association.

May the sisterhood of Christian charity, faith, good works, Italian ancestry and fun continue as a reminder of all the Ladies Aid members who have gone before us. *Originally written to mark the 65th anniversary of the Ladies Aid; updated in 2019 to reflect current reality.

Trina Costantini-Powell, Past President,
St. Anthony's Church Ladies Aid 2004-2016



The Volunteers of Villa Marconi

Dating from the mid 1990's, The Volunteers serve as a lifeblood of support for the many programs that serve both the residents and families of Villa Marconi making it a very special place within our community.

Their special presence is felt within the L'Eta D'Oro group and their monthly luncheons and bake sales. Movie and pub nights, Monday night Bingo, weekly mass and Family Council and the tuck shop are so humbly tended to by so many in our community. Kudos to those with a green thumb that maintain the beauty of the floral landscape and vegetable gardens.

Roasting chestnuts and seasonal decorating does not happen by itself. To be present at their Valentine Sweetheart Luncheon is to see true love embodied. These are just some of the many duties performed by the wonderful Volunteers of Villa Marconi.

This is why the National Congress of Italian Canadians (National Capital District) is humbled to pay homage to these fine men and women of our community.

We hope to see many present on the evening of October 5th as the NCIC honours two of the most deserving organizations.

Trina Costantini-Powell

**President, National Congress of Italian Canadians
(National Capital District)**

**Presidente, Congresso Nazionale degli Italo Canadesi
(Distretto della Capitale Nazionale)**

Past and Upcoming Events 2019

February 28- "The Rising Tide"-By Mark Frutkin. This event was in collaboration with Dante Alighieri Society as part of their Salone Culturale.

March 13-Nicola Campomasi -Restoration on Parliament Hill and recognizing the Italian Canadian presence with respect to workmanship. This event was in collaboration with the Dante Alighieri Society as part of their Salone Culturale.

March 24- Dr.Licia Canton, Italian Canadian writer reading from" The Pink House" and some of her other works (NCIC sponsored)

March 28-Giovanni Caboto Scholarship Awards-Presented by the NCIC Foundation and the NCIC Ottawa

April 14-Angelo Sgabellone - "I Terroni" (NCIC Sponsored)

April 25-Orazio Rizzi - A Presentation on the Second World War (NCIC sponsored)

April 27-Fogolar Furlan and the NCIC present Chef Gianni Ceschia(OMNI TV) discussing and demonstrating the cuisine of Friuli . This is in honour of the 50th anniversary of the Fogolar Furlan Association of Ottawa. (IHC)

May 16-"Leonardo Il Fiorentino"- A discussion on Leonardo Da Vinci by Professor Angelo Mingarelli, Carleton University. This event was in collaboration with the Dante Alighieri Society as part of their Salone Culturale.

June 7- "The Art and Passion of Guido Nincheri" presented by Author Melanie Grondin and grandson of the late artist Roger Nincheri. Ottawa Italian Week Festival

June 10- Italian Documentary Film Screening-"Three Portraits and The Fiancée"Ottawa Italian Week Festival

June 15-16 (10-4PM) - Lego Exhibit with Buildings Blockd Brick Artist Deborah Higdon NCIC in collaboration with The Societa Sicula, Villa Marconi and Integrated Touch Physiotherapy.

October 5-"**FUNDRAISER GALA**" **NCIC and IHC** see poster on page 2.

October 16- (7 pm) Jonathan Rotondo, Presentation of his book "AIRBORNE" (NCIC-IHC Sponsored)

October 20- (2 pm) Award winning Author Gianna Patriarca-Book and Poetry Reading (NCIC-IHC, and the Ottawa Italian Women's Filo Sponsored).

November 10- (2:30 pm) NCIC Annual Remembrance Day Ceremony
Orazio Rizzi will give an historical account of the events of World War I.
(IHC sponsored)
Info: 613-816-4315

The Centro Storico (ICHC)

has become the cultural hub of the community
we welcome our Organizations
and Associations, Groups and Clubs
to share their special recipes
and the material with us.

We would like to hear from you if wish to...

- became a member;
- provide us with feedback or suggestions;
- renew your membership;
- or simply, say hello.

E-mail: ottawancic@gmail.com

On the web: www.ncicottawa.com

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

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