



SOCIETÀ DANTE ALIGHIERI  
IL MONDO IN ITALIANO  
COMITATO DI CANBERRA

# Dante Review

*"To preserve and disseminate Italian language and culture"*

ISSN 1441-8592 Periodico bimestrale del Comitato di Canberra della Società Dante Alighieri - 2nd Floor Notaras Multicultural Centre 180 London Circuit  
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## Regular Events

**DMV rehearsals  
on Thursday 5-7pm**

**Conversation groups  
on Thursday 7-9pm  
until 19 November**

**Enrolments for Term 1 2016  
(starting 16 February) close  
on 5 February**

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**It's that time  
of the year again!**

## Come to our *Farewell Party*

**Our wonderful Dante Musica Viva Choir  
and other performers will provide  
lively entertainment.**

**Then chat with other members  
while enjoying our refreshments  
(donation welcome).**

***Our culinary competition is taking a rest this year***

**7pm Thursday  
26 November**

***Function Room, Notaras Multicultural Centre  
180 London Circuit, Civic - entry via Civic Square***

# *News from the office*

## **Office Hours**

The Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra Inc. office hours are:

**10:30am - 2:00pm Tuesday to Friday**

For enquiries please call the office on **6247 1884** or send us an email to **info@danteact.org.au**

Visit us at **www.danteact.org.au**

We are also on *Facebook*: click 'like' to be up-to-date!

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## **Library**

The Dante library is open during office hours. It includes the following sections: Reading, Education, Literature, Youth, Geography, History, Art, Music, Cinema.

All members are welcome!

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## **Committee Members**

### **President**

Professor Franco Papandrea

### **Vice-Presidents**

Yvette Devlin; Tamsin Hong

### **Treasurer**

Mario Rosi

### **Committee members**

Luigi Catizone, Francesca Foppoli, Giuliana Komnacki, Alessia La Cavera, Nicola Patini, Bruno Santagostino Baldi

*Journal Editor*: Yvette Devlin

*Note*: the journal editor wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Alessia in compiling this issue.

## **Upcoming Events**

**4 November**: conversation groups @7pm

**8 November**: Festa italiana in the Embassy Gardens (see p.3)

**11 November**: conversation groups @7pm

**18 November**: conversation groups @7pm

**19 November**: Term 3 ends

**26 November**: end-of-year function @7pm

**1 December**: enrolments for Term 1/2016 open (enrolments will close on 5 February)

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## **Upcoming Public Performances of Dante Musica Viva**

**8 November at lunchtime**: Italian Festa in the Embassy Gardens (see p.3)

**22 November at lunchtime**: Italian Community Festival in Saint Gregory's Hall, Queanbeyan

**26 November @7:15pm**: Dante's end-of-year function

## **2016 Membership Fees**

Reluctantly the Dante Committee recently agreed on the need to increase the annual Dante Membership fee for 2016 to \$40 from the current \$30.

We will continue to honour the 50% discount for pensioners.

As a not-for-profit society, we need to keep a vigilant eye on our costs which tend to increase each and every year, and ensure we do not trade at a loss.

The new 2016 fees are applicable for renewals effective from 20<sup>th</sup> October.

Mario Rosi

*Treasurer, Dante Alighieri Society Committee*





FESTA  
*Italiana*

IN THE  
EMBASSY GARDENS

**A TASTE OF ITALY**  
*and a celebration of Italian culture*

*Italian food, live entertainment, raffle and much more*

*Everyone invited - Free entry*

**11 am to 4 pm – 8 November 2015**

**Italian Embassy**

**78 National Circuit Deakin**



# Modi di dire

## *Sayings*

by Francesca Foppoli

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Dopo *Acqua* e *Aria*, finiamo il 2015 con altri due elementi della natura:

### ***Fuoco e Terra nei Modi di Dire***

- **Com'è andata oggi?**
- **È stata una giornata di fuoco.**
- *How was your day?*
- *It was a day from hell.*

**L'esperienza non c'entra: a guidare così veloce stai giocando con il fuoco.**

*Experience has nothing to do with it; by driving so fast you're playing with fire.*

**Si spera che questa iniziativa non sia solamente un fuoco di paglia.**

*One hopes that this initiative is more than a mere flash in the pan.*

**Marco si butterebbe nel fuoco per lei.**

*Marco would go through fire and water for her.*

**Lo so, me lo dicono tutti che dovrei tenere i piedi per terra.**

*I know, everyone tells me that I should be more down to earth.*

**Mi sento un po' a terra oggi: l'esame non è andato molto bene.**

*I feel a bit down today – the test didn't go too well.*

**Non mi è piaciuto quel romanzo: la trama non sta né in cielo né in terra.**

*I didn't like that novel. The plot does not make any sense.*

**Non mi sono accorta di avergli fatto mancare la terra da sotto i piedi.**

*I didn't realise that I pulled the rug out from under him.*

# L'angolo della lingua

## *Language corner*

by Yvette Devlin

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We'll finish the year by looking at a few tricky words – they look similar in the two languages but don't necessarily have identical meanings.

**Etichetta** means *label* as in **ti piace l'etichetta di questa bottiglia?** = *do you like the label of this bottle?* but it also means *good manners* which is rendered in English by using the French word *etiquette*. Another Italian word for *etiquette* is **galateo**.

The English verb *to apply* can be translated as **far domanda/richiesta** oppure **applicare, usare/valersi di**. Look at these contexts: *you have to apply a light layer of varnish* = **bisogna/si deve applicare uno strato leggero di vernice**; *they have applied for many jobs* = **hanno fatto molte domande di lavoro**; *these rules only apply to Europeans* = **queste regole si applicano solo agli europei**; *he applied good judgment in solving the problem* = **ha usato buon senso nel risolvere il problema**; *while visiting Switzerland she was able to apply all her linguistic skills* = **nel visitare la Svizzera ha potuto valersi di tutte le sue capacità linguistiche**.

The English *to affirm* can be translated as **affermare/asserire/dichiarare** but also as **confermare** in a legal sense. Check these examples: **il ministro ha affermato/dichiarato che i limiti di tempo erano scaduti** = *the minister stated that the deadline had passed*; **l'erede ha confermato di essere il nipote del defunto** = *the heir affirmed he was the grandson/nephew of the deceased*.

### ***Per ridere un po'!***

*Una giovane ed inesperta ballerina si esibisce davanti all'insegnante nel balletto La morte del cigno. Ansiosa chiede com'è andata e l'insegnante, scuotendo la testa, le risponde: "Povera bestia..."*



# L'angolo della poesia

## *Poetry corner*

by Yvette Devlin

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November 2015 marks the 40th anniversary since the untimely death of **Pier Paolo Pasolini**, murdered at Ostia, near Rome. He was 53. Born at Bologna on 5 March 1922, it is now said that he was one of the artists most persecuted in life and possibly most honoured in death. More and more people now see him as a visionary thinker and a major figure in Italian literature and art.

He was a multi-talented man: columnist, essayist, poet, novelist, artist, actor, film director, intellectual and political figure surrounded by controversy. During his childhood and youth he spent a lot of time at his grandmother's house in Casarsa (Friuli) where he acquired familiarity with the local language – friulano. He is buried there, next to his mother, and his grandmother's house has become the Centro Studi Pier Paolo Pasolini. From 1941 to 1953 he wrote some 60 poems in friulano. Here is a very short one in the series "Poesie a Casarsa".

### **Il nini muàrt**

Sera imbarlumida, tal fossàl  
a cres l'aga, na fèmina plena  
a ciamina pal ciamp.  
Jo ti recuardi, Narcis, ti vèvis il colòur  
da la sera, quand li ciampanis  
a sùnin di muàrt.

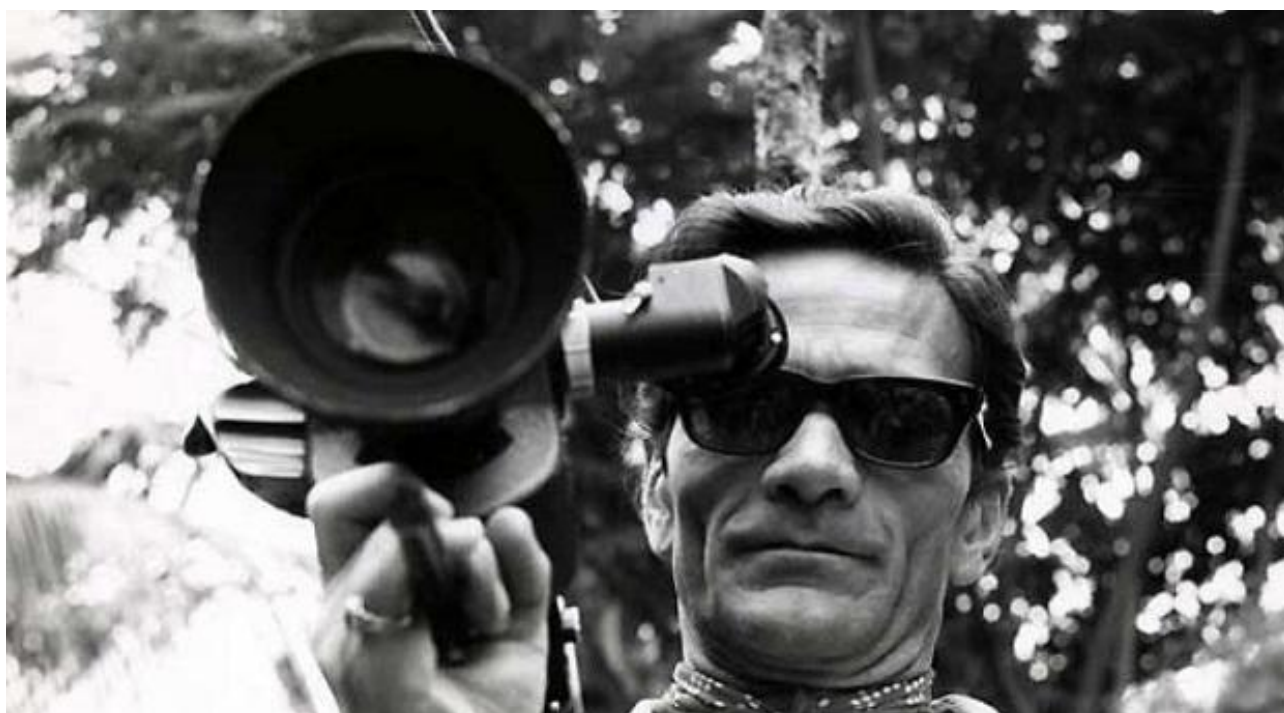
### **Il fanciullo morto**

Sera luminosa, nel fosso cresce l'acqua, una  
donna incinta cammina per il campo.  
Io ti ricordo, Narciso, avevi il colore della  
sera, quando le campane suonano a morto.

### **Dead Boy**

(translation by Stephen Sartarelli)

Radiant evening, water rises in the ditch, a  
woman with child walks in the field.  
I remember you, Narcissus; you were the  
colour of evening when the bells toll the  
knell.



# Our poetry reading event

## *From the Cantico delle creature to Lingua Romana*

by Susan Reye

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On Sunday 11 October 2015 at Manning Clark House we held our first Italian poetry reading.

Twenty-five people were present, mostly Dante members who had never attended a poetry-reading event before. The chairman of the Manning Clark House Board, Sebastian Clark, was a most welcoming host.

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**Geoff, Mark, Yvette, Luke, Orlando, Mario and David after the readings at Manning Clark House**



The poetry ranged from the Middle Ages to the contemporary. Appropriately, the first poem was the *Cantico delle Creature* by St Francis of Assisi which dates from about 1224 and is widely considered to be the earliest poetic text in Italian literature. It was recited for us by David Wilson who then gave us a taste of a lesser known talent of the great scientist Galileo Galilei, by reading an extract from a somewhat ribald poem, *Capitolo contro il portar la toga*, written for satirical effect in Dante's terza rima. Mario Serellini then recited lines by Dante himself – the Paolo and Francesca episode from the *Inferno* – and followed it with a charming poem in the Roman dialect which Mario's uncle wrote to celebrate the marriage of Mario's parents.

Having left behind the middle ages, we fo-

cused on the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with Orlando Di Iulio reading *Pianto antico* by Carducci and D'Annunzio's *I Pastori*, which describes the shepherds (of Orlando's native Abruzzo) moving their flock to greener pastures in autumn. Yvette Devlin then read two poems, by Pier Paolo Pasolini and Mario Gargante, in the language of her native Friuli, following them with Leopardi's *Il sabato del villaggio* and two light-hearted short poems in the Roman dialect by Trilussa.

Finally, three professional poets, Luke Whittington, Geoff Page and Mark O'Connor presented their work, written in English but with connections to Italian poetry and to their own travels in Italy. Luke combined a reading of his poem *Pavese* with two by the Italian poet himself *La puttana contadina* and *Gente spaesata*, as well Luke's own poem about a village where he had stayed, *Polgeto, Umbria*. Geoff read his English translations of three Quasimodo poems, with Yvette reading the original Italian. Geoff then added a few short, amusing poems on travelling in Italy from his books *Adventures of a Monoglot* and *Shifting Windows*. Mark O'Connor read three of his poems (in English), *The Olive Tree*, *Umbrian Farm* and *Lingua romana*.

To end a most enjoyable afternoon, we listened to a recording of Fabrizio de André singing *Via della povertà*, his Italian version of Bob Dylan's *Desolation Row*, before discussing what we had heard over a *rinfrasco*.

[Ed's note: Susan Reye is a long-term Dante member. The feedback received on the poetry reading event has been unanimously positive, with Sebastian Clark congratulating Yvette for "a wonderful afternoon of poetry at the House"].

# Cenno storico

## *A bit of history*

by Yvette Devlin

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The first few days of November are significant days in the Italian calendar.

All Saints Day is celebrated on 1 November. It's a public holiday and a religious celebration in honour of all saints, and Catholics are expected to attend Mass.



On 2 November (All Souls Day) Italians commemorate their dead. Traditionally they visit cemeteries, clean the graves and place fresh flowers on them. The flowers typically taken to the cemetery are chrysanthemums (which in Australia are given to mothers (very much alive) on Mother's Day!). But many Italians also bake and eat special biscuits and other food to mark the occasion. The most common are the biscuits, appropriately called "fave/favette dei morti", "ossa di morto"; and the bread buns "pane dei morti" (broad beans, bones and bread of the dead).

4 November celebrates the end of World War 1. The so-called Great War ended officially in 1918 with the entry of the Italian troops in Trento and Trieste. This day is also celebrated as marking the completion of Italy's unification which was achieved through the

effort of armed forces drawn from all regions of Italy, in the true spirit of unity.

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La giornata del 1° novembre è conosciuta come Ognissanti. È una festa nazionale e festa religiosa di precetto (quindi i cattolici dovrebbero andare a messa) in onore di tutti i Santi.

Il 2 novembre gli italiani commemorano i loro morti. Per tradizione, visitano i cimiteri, puliscono le tombe e vi mettono dei fiori freschi. I fiori che di solito si portano sono i crisantemi (che in Australia si usano dare alle madri – ancora vive – per il giorno della mamma). Ma gli italiani amano anche preparare e mangiare cibo particolare per la circostanza. I più comuni sono i biscotti ai quali vengono dati nomi appropriati come "fave/favette dei morti", "ossa dei morti" e anche i panini "pane dei morti".

La fine della I Guerra Mondiale si celebra il 4 novembre. La cosiddetta 'Grande Guerra' terminò ufficialmente nel 1918 quando le truppe italiane entrarono a Trento e Trieste. La giornata del 4 novembre segna anche il completamento dell'unificazione d'Italia, conseguita con l'intervento di forze armate provenienti da tutte le regioni d'Italia nello spirito di unità.





# The Italians in Australian museums

## *Mathew Trinca's cultural presentation*

by Susan Reye

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The guest speaker at our cultural event on 1 October 2015 was Dr Mathew Trinca, Director of the National Museum of Australia. He spoke about “The Italians in Australian museums: how we represent the Italian diaspora through objects and their stories”.

Dr Trinca is particularly well qualified to speak on this subject, not only because of his experience in the running of museums and academic studies, but also because of his own family background. His father and his mother's parents were from the Valtellina region in northern Italy. His maternal grandparents came to the Perth Hills in the 1920s and his mother was born there. His father was born in the small town of Grosotto, and migrated to Australia in the 1930s. He worked in Melbourne, then took up gold mining in Kalgoorlie. After the war, while working on building sites in Perth, he heard of other Valtellinesi living in the Perth Hills and went to see them. Within six months he had married a young woman he

met there, Dr Trinca's mother. Typically for Italian migrants, Dr Trinca's parents had a fixed idea of advancing themselves, not by working for somebody else, but by creating their own small business - in their case a poultry farm.

This, said Dr Trinca, is a typical story. There is a commonality of experience among Italian migrants of the mid-20th century, up to the 1970s and perhaps 80s: the shock of the new – dealing with a different culture, acquiring a new language – and the struggle to earn a living through hard work, usually by establishing your own business.

Initially, Australian museums tended to value British and Irish history, and not so much the background of other Australians. Slowly, after World War II, the realization grew that as Australian society changed, institutions had to change as well. In the 1980s, there was a movement to go beyond the Anglo-Celtic core. At that time Italian migrants were a very large group and from the 1980s onward,

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**Mathew Trinca answering a question after his talk on “The Italians in Australian museums: how we represent the Italian diaspora through objects and their stories”**





# The Italians in Australian museums

## *Mathew Trinca's cultural presentation*

by Susan Reye - cont'd

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they featured largely in exhibitions about the migrant experience. The Italian experience was at one time the symbol for all non-English-speaking migration to Australia.

The story of Italian migration was one of difficult lives in the physical, material world. Since museums display actual objects, they are particularly well-placed to present that story, by showing us life as something physically lived, rather than as a narrative trail. Dr Trinca showed us some typical objects from Australian museums, and described the stories behind them and what they tell us about the experience of Italian migration.

1. A fruit picking bag of Carmelo Mirabelli, a Sicilian immigrant, who also donated to the museum the bicycle on which he travelled between farms in Mildura and Shepparton for six years, as well as a Remittance Record Card, which records the money he sent back to his mother and sisters in Italy. These items show that a sense of duty to family remained. Italian migrants did not sever ties. In their minds they were living in both countries. Such stories are the bedrock of how we have depicted Italian migration: the hardship of work, making one's way, establishing oneself, founding a family, sending money home.

2. Crucifix and cincture of Father Luciano Rocchi, who arrived in Melbourne in 1951. The Catholic faith was very important to Italians, but very different from the Irish version. The Italian church considered support to Italian migrants to be important and the fact that priests were sent to Australia by the Italian church re-informed Catholic

practice in Australia.

3. Pagone Panettone cake box. The Pagone family was originally from Sicily. Again, they saw small business as the way to get ahead. Italians contributed to reinvigorating small business in Australia.

4. A music stand of the Mokambo Orchestra, a dance band founded by two musician brothers in the 1950s in Melbourne. This reminds us of migrants' desire for fun and their longing to hear the sounds of Italy. It reflects the idea of an enclave, recreating the homeland. However the orchestra was so popular that it breached the walls of the enclave, since non-Italians also came to hear them and they were even on radio.

5. The soccer boots of Rino Mazzocato, who played for local team Brunswick United Juventus. Today, teams based on a particular ethnicity are not accepted, but in the 1950s and 1960s there was very strong competition between ethnic teams.

Australian museums are doing quite well at representing the heyday of Italian migration, Dr Trinca suggested, but there is a risk of preserving in aspic the way we understand the Italian experience. We should not see the Italian-Australian story as confined to the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The story continues. There is a new surge of Italians migrating to, or at least sojourning in, Australia, with more than 20,000 arriving in 2013. The prospect of economic advantage for this new generation of migrants is the same as for Dr Trinca's father. Museums should take account of this phenomenon.

# The Italians in Australian museums

## *Mathew Trinca's cultural presentation*

by Susan Reye - cont'd

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Also, museums should be recording and representing how the second and subsequent generations experience their "Italian-ness". He asked the audience to consider what objects they would choose for this purpose. Items that are significant to Dr Trinca personally might be:

– an Alfa Romeo, representing his fascination with Italian cars;

– a camp oven used by his father on the goldfields;

– a small curved knife of the type carried by Valtellinesi men, like the one his father always had in his pocket;

– the hat worn by his father as a member of the Artiglieria da Montagna;

– the title deeds to a small mountain shack which Dr Trinca owns in Italy, maintaining his links to his family's country of origin;

He challenged the members of the audience to think of how they would document and represent their own ties to Italy.

*[Ed's note: Susan Reye is a long-term member of the Society and regularly attends conversation evenings. At this cultural presentation there were over 40 Dante members present as well as the Director of the Cultural Office at the Italian Embassy Anna Rita Tamponi and the Defence Attaché Col. Antonio Coppola]*

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**Mathew Trinca (centre) with some of the audience - Pauline, Myriam, Anna Rita, Franco, Antonio and his son**



# In memory of a friend

## *Manlio (Lio) Pancino*

### 1931-2015

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Lio, as he was known by friends and colleagues, was born in San Stino di Livenza (Venezia) one of four brothers. His father passed away when the children were still young and they were raised by a devoted mother.

Lio came to Australia in 1952. I had the pleasure to know him and his, then, fiancée Margaret, in 1956 soon after my arrival in Canberra. It has been a long relationship between our families and we have seen our children grow up together. Lio was a person always ready to hold out a helping hand whether it was for a family member or a friend or the Italian Community.

He took active part in a number of roles in different organisations dedicated to the preservation of the Italian heritage, for the knowledge of our descendants and for the diffusion

of the Italian culture amongst the Australian population. For this he was recognised by the Italian Government in 1992 when he was awarded the title of 'Cavaliere della Repubblica Italiana'.

The Italian icons of Canberra, namely the Italo Australian Club, the Dante Alighieri Society and the Italian Cultural Centre have all benefited from his assistance. He was an honorary life member of The Dante Alighieri Society. We also must not forget his contribution as a committee member to the success of the Italian Cultural Festival held in Canberra in 1978.

To Margaret, his wife of 57 years, his four children and his six grandchildren we extend our deepest condolences.

*Cellina Benassi*



*In  
Loving  
Memory*



# Dante Musica Viva - Know your choir

## *Profile of Rod Fenwick*

by Yvette Devlin and Rod Fenwick

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*Through our series "Know your choir" we present various members of Dante Musica Viva – singers and musicians – who have contributed significantly to the life of the choir. This time we feature our guitarist Rod Fenwick. Here is his story.*



I had a pretty average Aussie childhood - born in Crookwell NSW in the late 1950s and raised in Goulburn NSW in the 1960s. I'm the eldest of five with one brother and three sisters. As a teenager, I raced bicycles with the Goulburn Lilac City Cycling Club (imagine me in lilac!) and was a member of the Air Training Corps, where I got to ride in air force helicopters and cargo planes.

Why music? My dad's father was a musician in several bands that toured the NSW country region in the 1930s. My dad worked long hours as a mechanic, supporting his family but, somewhere in there, he must have had a yearning to connect with music. When I was around 12 he bought a guitar but did not have the time to learn it. I remember picking it up (totally out of tune) and trying to play along with the solo in Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues". Mum took pity on me and found a music teacher located half way between our home and my high school. I had weekly group lessons before school for a

year. I remember carrying that guitar to the lessons, leaving it there when I went to school and then picking it up on the way home. Carrying a school port and a guitar on a bicycle was a challenge. Anyway, all I remember from that very short musical period is learning to play "Yankee Doodle Dandy".

After finishing university I wanted another shot at playing the guitar, so I bought one and took lessons for a while. I also wanted to learn a language, so I enrolled in German classes. One of the students there mentioned a bush band that was looking for new players. This led to me joining Woollies Home Band, a bush band named after the woolshed at Yarralumla homestead where we played many dances. After strumming three chords badly for several years I knew I needed more lessons. My new teacher was a founding member of the Canberra Mandolin Orchestra (CMO). He encouraged me to join and helped me learn the classical guitar parts. During my time in the CMO I met and played music with mandolin players Louise (Ibbotson) and Francesco (Sofa) and bassist Ben (Loudon).

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**Rod Fenwick looking pleased after a concert**



# Dante Musica Viva - Know your choir

## *Profile of Rod Fenwick*

by Yvette Devlin and Rod Fenwick - cont'd

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In 2003 my wife said “I’d like my next significant birthday in Italy”. So, we made plans and took some private lessons then had a fabu-



lous holiday in Italy. On our return, I decided “German: nein, Italian: si” and enrolled immediately in Italian lesson and conversation classes with Dante Alighieri in Canberra. I think it was around 2006 that Francesco mentioned he was starting an Italian music group that would rehearse after the Dante conversation classes. I joined him for one or two sessions but did not persist. I was keen on the Italian language but could not commit to the rehearsals.

In late 2008 my new neighbour (Giovanni Andriolo – one of the choir tenors) invited me to a party he was hosting where the Dante choir was performing. As soon as I walked in I recognised Louise, Francesco and Kathy (on keyboard) as musicians I had performed with before. The choir was singing with full voice, accompanied by great musicians and everyone was having a great time. Knowing so many people in that group and the fact that I wanted to pick up some more of the Italian language, it was a “no brainer” that I’d end up joining the Dante Musica Viva Italian choir.

I’ve been with the choir now for seven years.

I’ve made new friends, received wonderful hugs and generally feel “at ease” and “cared for” within the group. I learn something new every time I attend a rehearsal or a gig. I especially enjoy learning the history and meaning of each new song. My favourite performance pieces are the delicate “Va Pensiero”, the rowdy “Libiam” and “Funiculì Funiculà”, the cheeky “E Chi Che Toca” and the obvious “Chitarra Romana”. For the record, my absolute favourite Italian song, not yet on the choir’s repertoire, is “Che Sarà” (... con me porto la chitarra ...)

I guess I am now officially classed as an “Italian language and culture tragic”. I’ve taken private lessons with the wonderful Pauline, I have a stack of Italian text and reading books on the shelf, and made various attempts at group lessons and conversation classes. Bring on retirement!

Outside the choir, my wife and I are having a great time learning and playing ukulele together. My two adult daughters impress me with their musical skills (they can compose and sing - something I never could do). One more thing - I just bought a bass guitar....

# Italy's hot summer of 2015

## *My observations*

by Yvette Devlin

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In the words of an Italian journalist, Italy “is like a car with too many hands on the wheel and too many feet on the brakes” (una macchina con troppe mani al volante e troppi piedi sui freni). And another journalist, commenting on an official, reputable report that shows that on all economic and social indicators Italy's South is in dire straits (“even worse than Greece”), sardonically likened the report's conclusions to a doctor who says “there is nothing more that can be done for the patient – call the priest for the last rites”.

These pessimistic observations are reflected in what many ordinary Italians think: the country's governance leaves much to be desired; the economy is still in the doldrums; the political class (which safeguards its privileges) is incapable of agreeing on a positive course to boost economic activity; corruption and nepotism still stifle public life at all levels. Some people, exasperated, even nurture the secret desire of seeing all politicians blown up!

But then again ordinary Italians keep spending, eating out, going on holiday, attending cultural events and so on. In other words, despite the bad news and the whingeing, they get on with life regardless - and that's how it's always been in this resilient and creative country.

Each year on my return from my trip “back home” I share with you a few observations based on following the news and talking with people. So here's the latest.

An **African heatwave** hit Italy as well as other parts of Europe. It was the hottest summer in some 30 years – with temperatures

in the high 30s with high humidity for extended periods.

The **incessant arrival of boats full of migrants/refugees** and the frequent tragedies at sea were the major topic in all news reporting. In the first 8 months of the year some 116,000 people have arrived on Italy's shores while it was estimated that 2600 had died at sea. What the Italian media omitted to say, however, was that even greater numbers had landed in Greece (nearly 235,000). The issue was typically presented as if Italy alone was carrying the burden of the flood of people fleeing war and poverty in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and other African countries. The media and the Italian Government constantly advocated a greater involvement by the European Union. The flood of humanity arriving in Europe was described by the EU as the worst refugee



Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi



# Italy's hot summer of 2015

## *My observations*

by Yvette Devlin - cont'd

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crisis after WWII. A war of words developed between the Catholic church (who advocated compassion and reason) and the right-wing party La Lega which wanted to stop this “invasion”.

**The economy** showed some small signs of recovery and Prime Minister Matteo Renzi stressed this positive trend – “il paese si è messo in moto”. By the second quarter of 2015, Italy registered an increase of 0.7% of GDP on an annual basis, and a slight decrease in unemployment.

**Tax evasion** is a major impediment to Government's financial resources. Half of all taxpayers declared an income under 15,000 euro for 2013. But Italians expect free



services from the public purse – they don't join the dots and see that unless they pay their fair share of tax, the Government does not have the money to spend on hospitals, roads, education etc.

Some **90,000 young Italians left Italy in 2014** in search of better work opportunities in other countries. There was a concern that those with higher ambition and drive as well as skills were leaving, and that Italy would be

the poorer for that.

On the positive side of the ledger, there was a significant increase in the number of people taking **seaside holidays** compared to previous years, indicating an increase in optimism and disposable income. Sicily and Campania recorded the highest rises (+30% cf 2014).

**Pope Francis** maintains a high degree of popularity and appears frequently on TV news. The austerity he has introduced in the Vatican appeals to Italians as do the ease and simplicity with which he relates to people in general.

**Drug use by young people**, especially at discos, became a major issue when three young people died and seven were in a coma as a result of drug use at a well-known disco on the Adriatic coast. I came across the colloquial term “sballo”, which means “drug-induced trip”.

The **funeral of Roman mafia boss Vittorio Casamonica** featuring horses pulling an ancient carriage and a helicopter dropping rose petals, drew attention to the power exercised by organised crime in the capital. Many public officials knew of the planned showcase event but had done nothing to stop this totally inappropriate display of power and wealth. Were they complicit or intimidated? Who knows.

The **35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the explosion in the waiting room of Bologna's station**, which resulted in the death of 85 people and the injuring of over 200, was marked by a major demonstration in front of the station. Demonstrators demanded to know the whole truth on the bombing and expressed disgust at

# Italy's hot summer of 2015

## *My observations*

by Yvette Devlin - cont'd

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the fact that the two people found to have placed the bomb have already been released from gaol. It is widely believed that investigations into the event were thrown off track.



**A view of le Langhe in Piemonte**

Another **anniversary** remembered was **the murder in 1975 of Pier Paolo Pasolini**, an intellectual, writer and film director. While a young man was officially found guilty of the murder, the truth on the real instigators is yet to emerge.

On the personal side, there were many highlights in this year's. My 98-yo zia Oliva is still alive and recovering well from a little stroke; my older brother Roger joined me in my birth home – the first time we were in it together since our childhood and so we had the opportunity to reminisce about growing up in the house and the village; a friend took me for a very pleasant drive around the Langhe, a hilly area in the Piemonte region famous for its Asti Spumante and Ferrero Rocher chocolate and Nutella, and now UNESCO World Heritage site; I was delighted that several Dante members (Tina Bain, Clare Conway with husband, Giovanni Di Zillo with wife, Luke Roberts with wife



**A scene from the opera  
Don Giovanni at the Arena di Verona**

and young daughter) came to visit me in Vivaro (Friuli) and became acquainted with my region; with Tina, I enjoyed seeing the Venice Biennale (where country entries range from the sublime to the ridiculous) and attended Mozart's opera Don Giovanni at the Arena di Verona; I admired once again Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel and Raffaello's rooms in the Vatican Museums; and – *dulcis in fundo* - I climbed the 320 steps to the top of the cupola of St Peter's Basilica to enjoy a breathtaking view of St Peter's Square.

All in all I had a fabulous time and can't wait to do it all again next year!



**Piazza San Pietro from the cupola.  
Note how people look like little ants**



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## **ITALIAN LANGUAGE COURSES IN ITALY**

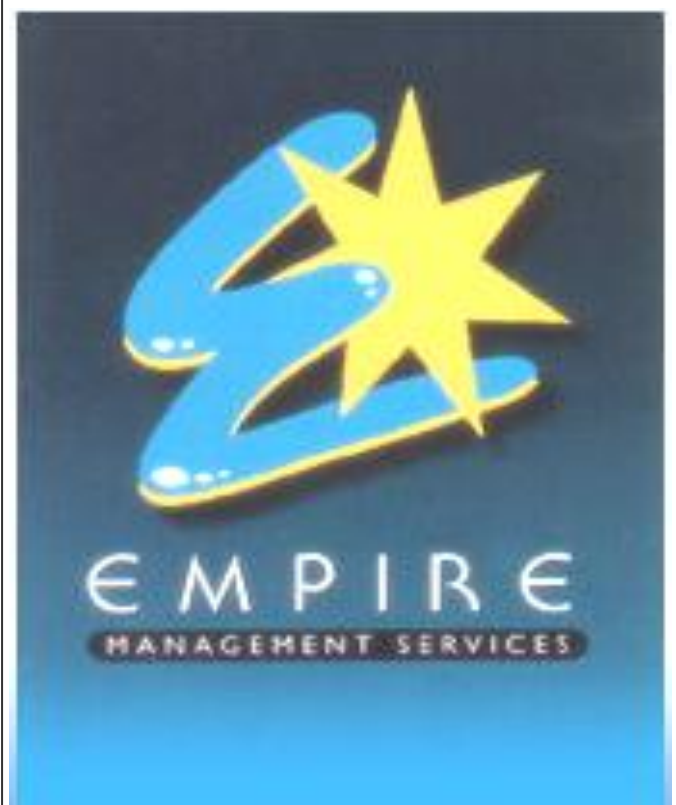
**Are you thinking about  
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# **Ambasciata d'Italia a Canberra**

## **2015 Cultural Program**

**8 March:** 'Italy, Art, History and Emotions' – an exhibition of the works of Princess Nike Borghese at the Crisp Galleries

**21 April:** Luciano Bellini – piano recital at the ANU School of Music

**3 June:** Christian Leotta – piano concert at the ANU School of Music

**4 July:** Henry Laska and Nicholas Milton with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra – an evening with Puccini

**22 September to 11 October:** Lavazza's Italian Film Festival at Palace Cinema

**10-11 October:** Windows to the World: Open Days at the Italian Embassy

**24 October:** Settimana della Lingua: Italian Language in Music and the Music of Italian – Conference at the Italian Embassy

**October:** Riccardo Minasi – a violin concert at the ANU School of Music (precise date yet to be determined)

**8 November:** Festa Italiana in the Embassy Gardens

**December:** selected contemporary artworks from the Farnesina collection at the residence of the ambassador (precise date yet to be determined)

For further information: Facebook: Education & Culture Italian Embassy Canberra or [annarita.tamponi@esteri.it](mailto:annarita.tamponi@esteri.it)

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## **2015 CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES**

### **FORMAL COURSES: 6-8 pm Italo-Aust Club in Forrest, Yarralumla Primary School or Dante Library in the National Multicultural Centre, Civic**

Term 1	Tues 17 /Wed 18 Feb to Tues 21/Wed 22 Apr	(10 wks then a 5-wk break)
Term 2	Tues 2/Wed 3 June to Tues 4/Wed 5 Aug	(10 wks then a 5-wk break)
Term 3	Tues 15/Wed 16 Sept to Tues 17/Wed 18 Nov	(10 wks)

### **THURSDAY CONVERSATION GROUPS: 7-9 pm Function Room NMC, Civic**

Term 1	Thurs 19 Feb to Thurs 23 Apr	(10 wks then 5-wk break)
Term 2	Thurs 4 June to 6 August	(10 wks then 5-wk break)
Term 3	Thurs 17 Sept to 19 Nov (10 wks).	<b>Total: 30 weeks</b>

### **CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: 8-9 pm Function Room, NMC, Civic**

**5 March:** Grazia Micciché (ANU) - The art of cooking and eating in Italy

**6 March:** videoconference with Italian author Pino Aprile: Terroni? Undeserved vilification of Southern Italians

**9 April:** David Wilson: Galileo v the Church – who was the hero and who the villain?

**18 June:** Gino Moliterno (ANU): celebrating the 750th anniversary of Dante's birth

**16 July:** Elizabeth Minchin (ANU): The garden in the ancient Roman world

**1 October:** Mathew Trinca of the National Museum of Australia: The Italians in Australian Museums: how we represent the Italian diaspora through objects and their stories

**11 October:** readings of Italian poetry – at Manning Clark House

**29 October:** Christopher Latham: Puccini – the populist revolutionary

**26 November:** end-of year function

**AGM:** 23 April (8-9 pm Function Room, NMC, Civic)

**CHOIR REHEARSALS:** every Thursday from 29 January to 10 December (5-7 pm Function Room, NMC, Civic)

**PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:** (all during our term break) Easter: Good Friday on 3 April; Easter Monday 6 April; Anzac Day: Friday 25 April

Receipt Number



## Enrolment form for Term 1 2016

Please note that students must be financial members of the Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra

### Please select course level

- ☐ **Beginner 1**    ☐ **Beginner 2**    ☐ **Beginner 3**    ☐ **Beginner 4**  
☐ **Pre-intermediate**    ☐ **Intermediate**    ☐ **Advanced**

Classes are held at the Yarralumla Primary School (Loftus Street, Yarralumla)  
or at the Dante Library in the National Multicultural Centre (Civic) and consist of 10x2 hour sessions

Enquiries: Tuesday to Friday (10:30am-2:00pm) Ph: 6247 1884 Email: [info@danteact.org.au](mailto:info@danteact.org.au)

**Name and Surname** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Suburb** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **(h)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(w)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(mob)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

### How did you hear about this course?

- ☐ Newspaper ☐ Internet ☐ Friend/Family ☐ Previous Course ☐ Other

Full course fee: \$295.00

Discounted course fee: \$265.50 (CONTINUING STUDENTS)

Textbook for Beginners and Pre-intermediate: *Italian Espresso 1*, \$70.00

Textbook for Intermediate and Advanced: *Italian Espresso 2*, \$70.00

Workbook: *Italian Espresso 1* and *Italian Espresso 2*, \$30.00

### Payment by cash, cheque or deposit

Please make cheque payable to: "Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra Inc"

or deposit at the National Australian Bank

Account name: Dante Alighieri Society BSB: 082 902 Ac No: 515 003 825

Please include your surname and initial as the reference when paying by EFT or send the deposit slip with your enrolment form. Your enrolment will be completed when payment confirmation is received.

We regret no refund, deferment or credit will be allowed (qualified cases considered according to the policies)

Signed  
(signature of student)

Received by  
(for the DAS)

# 2016 Membership

**Dante Alighieri Society Membership**  
Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra Inc.  
PO Box 979 Civic Square ACT 2608

**Receipt No**

**Subscription for membership (from 01/01/2016 to 31/12/2016):**

- ☐ INDIVIDUAL      \$40  
☐ CONCESSION      \$20 (pensioner)  
☐ CHOIR              \$10 (in addition to membership)

**Surname** \_\_\_\_\_

**Given Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Suburb** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (mob)

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Our newsletter is automatically made available to members electronically.**

However, if you prefer the paper version, please tick this box ☐

Is this a renewal? Yes / No

Are you interested in assisting with the activities of the Society? Yes / No

**I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Dante Alighieri Society.**  
**Copies are available from the Dante office on request.**

**SIGNED**

**DATE**

*Please make cheque payable to: "Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra Inc"*

*or deposit at the National Australian Bank*

Account name: **Dante Alighieri Society** BSB: 082 902 Ac No: 515 003 825

**Please include your surname and initial as the reference when paying by EFT**  
**or send the deposit slip with your membership application form.**  
**Your subscription will be completed when payment confirmation is received**