



SOCIETÀ DANTE ALIGHIERI
IL MONDO IN ITALIANO
COMITATO DI CANBERRA

Dante Review

"To preserve and disseminate Italian language and culture"

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Regular Events

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

**Conversation groups
on Thursdays 7-9pm
recommencing 1 June**

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**Italy's national day
is celebrated on 2 June**

**the date in 1946 when
the Italian people voted
for a Republican form of government**



**And here is the first of the twelve Fundamental
Principles of the Italian Constitution:**

Art. 1

**L'Italia è una Repubblica democratica,
fondata sul lavoro.**

**La sovranità appartiene al popolo,
che la esercita nelle forme e nei limiti
della Costituzione**

**You can read all 12 Fundamental Principles
and their English translation
in this edition of the Review (p. 5-7)**

News from the office

Office Hours

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

9:30am-1:00pm Tuesday to Friday

For all 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!

Library

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

Committee Members

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Committee members

Luigi Catizone, Julie Docker,
Sonia Fortuna, Alexandra Luppino

Journal Editor: Yvette Devlin

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

Upcoming Events

2 May: Term 2 formal courses start

28 May: Italy's National Day celebrations at Italian Cultural Centre (see below)

1 June: Term 2 conversation groups start (7-9 pm)

8 June: conversation groups (7-9pm)

15 June: conversation groups (7-9pm)

22 June: conversation groups (7-8pm)

22 June: The European Union now and in the future (TBC). 8pm Function Room at Notaras Multicultural Centre

29 June: conversation groups (7-9pm)

**Come and join us
in the celebration of
ITALY'S NATIONAL DAY
LA FESTA DELLA REPUBBLICA**

**Sunday 28 May
from 11 am to 3.30 pm**

at the

**Italian Cultural Centre
80 Franklin Street Forrest**

**You will find
Italian food and coffee**

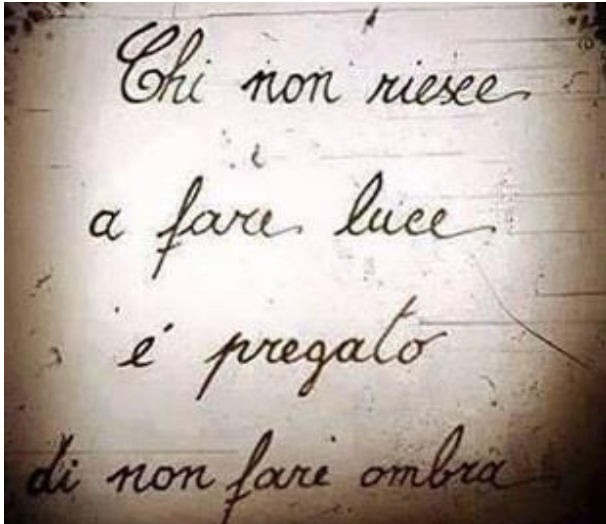
**as well as
live musical entertainment**

**with accordion-player
Lucio Ventresca**

**and the
Dante Musica Viva choir!**

Modi di dire

Sayings - Francesca Foppoli



È stato un giorno speciale quando la figlia ha dato alla luce il loro primo nipotino.
It was a special day when their daughter gave birth to their first grandson.

È sempre stato un mistero, ma ora i parenti vogliono far luce sul passato della famiglia.
It has always been a mystery but now the relatives want to shed light on the family's past.

Dopo quello che è successo, è indispensabile fare le cose per bene e alla luce del sole.
After what happened, it is vital to do everything above board, out in the open.

Temo che Giacomo ci abbia aiutato solo per mettersi in buona luce.
I am afraid that Giacomo helped us only to look good.

Ciò che hai detto ai tuoi genitori non mi metterà in buona luce.
What you said to your parents will not reflect well on me.

Alla luce dei fatti, il Comune ha deciso di affidare il lavoro a una nuova azienda.
In view of the facts, the Council decided to offer the contract to a new firm.

C'è stato grande entusiasmo per i reperti venuti alla luce qualche giorno fa.
There was great enthusiasm for the artefacts discovered a few days ago.

L'angolo della lingua

Language corner - Yvette Devlin

There are little pitfalls in the translation of *it's OK, it's worth it* and *it's enough*. The correct translation is *va bene, ne vale la pena* and *basta*.

If you were to start off with the Italian verb *è* for *it's*, you would be using two verbs in the same mode and tense, which would be wrong. So don't say "*è va bene, è vale la pena, or è basta*".

The little word *ci* is very useful in many contexts. Start using it without fear!

Firstly, it is used for location where you don't want to repeat the noun:

Al mare? Ci vado tutte le domeniche.
The coast/sea? I go there every Sunday.

Io ho visitato Uluru: ci sei stato anche tu?
I visited Uluru: have been there too?

Secondly, it can mean 'about something':

Bisogna pensarci sopra – è una questione seria.
We need to think about it – it's a serious matter.

Thirdly, it's buried in some expressions:

Ci tengo ad andare all'opera a Verona.

I'm keen on going to the opera at Verona.

Non ci mancava che questo!
This is the last straw!



L'angolo della poesia

Poetry corner - Yvette Devlin

Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922-1975) is one of my favourite intellectuals of the XXth century, for many reasons. Firstly, he was talented in a number of artistic forms (poetry, prose, essays, film directing, painting); secondly, he constantly questioned the establishment and decried hypocrisy among the rich and powerful, including the church and politicians; thirdly, he was half Friulian – his mother was born in Casarsa (Pordenone) not far from my birthplace. After being assassinated on a beach near Rome in 1975, he was buried in the Casarsa cemetery next to his mother, who died after him. Pasolini wrote some early poetry in Friulian as he loved the earthiness and simplicity of people from the countryside of this region. The poem I present below is in Italian and was composed while living in Rome. He often wrote about young men living squalid lives without a purpose. I like this poem's imagery.

Un lungomare

Un lungomare. Lumi bianchi, schiacciati.
Vecchi lastrici, grigi d'umidità tropicale.
Scalette, verso la sabbia
nera; con carte, rifiuti.
Un silenzio come nelle città del Nord.
Ecco ragazzi con blu-jeans color carogna,
e magliucce bianche, aderenti,
sudice, che camminano lungo le spallette
- come algerini condannati a morte.
Qualcuno più lontano nell'ombra calda
contro altre spallette. E il rumore del mare,
che non fa ragionare ... Dietro il largo
d'un marciapiede scrostato (verso il molo),
dei ragazzi, più giovani; pali; cassette
di legno; una coperta, stesa sulla sabbia nera.
Stanno lì sdraiati; poi due si alzano;
guadagnano l'opposto marciapiede,
lungo luci di bar, con verande di legni marci
(ricordo di Calcutta... di Nairobi...)
(Una musica da ballo, lontana,
in un bar di hotel, di cui arriva
solo un zum-zum profondo, e lagni
cocenti di frasi musicali d'oriente).
Entrano in un negozio, tutto aperto...
tanto più pieno di luce quanto più povero,

senza un metallo, un vetro... Riescono,
ridiscendono. Mangiano, in silenzio,
contro il mare che non si vede,
ciò che hanno comprato. Quello
disteso sulla coperta non si muove; fuma,
con una mano sul grembo. Nessuno
guarda chi li guarda (come gli zingari,
perduti nel loro sogno).

Here is the translation by Lawrence R. Smith, found in his anthology *The New Italian Poetry – 1945 to the Present*. The spelling is American, and the translation includes a line or two I find dubious.

A sea promenade

A sea promenade. White lights, crushed. /
Old paving stones, gray from tropical dampness. / Steps, down to the black / sand; with papers, trash. / A silence like that of the Northern cities. / Here are boys with blue jeans the color of carrion, / and white, clinging, filthy / sweaters, who walk along the parapets / - like Algerians condemned to death. / Someone farther away in the hot shadow / against other parapets. And the sound of the sea, / which stops you from thinking... Behind the open space / of chipped sidewalk (toward the pier), / some younger boys; piles [I would say 'poles'], wooden / boxes; a blanket, also on the black sand. / They're stretched out there; then two get up; / they get to the sidewalk on the opposite side, / along the lights of the bars, with porches of rotten wood / (memory of Calcutta... of Nairobi...) / (Dancing music, far away, / in a hotel bar, from which only / a deep humming arrives, and bitter / lamentations of oriental musical phrases). / They go into an open air shop... / the poorer they are the more full of light, / without metal, without a window... They go out again, / go down again. They eat, in silence, / in front of the sea you can't see, / what they've bought. That guy [I would say 'the boy'] / stretched out on the blanket doesn't move; he smokes, / with a hand on his lap. No one / watches to see who's watching them (like gypsies, / lost in their dream).

Cenno storico

A bit of history - Helen Kulhanek & Yvette Devlin

Venerdì 24 febbraio ho assistito ad una presentazione sui Principi Fondamentali della Costituzione Italiana, scritta nel 1946-1947 ed entrata in vigore nel gennaio del 1948.

Dopo il disastro della II Guerra Mondiale e gli anni del fascismo, la priorità era di elaborare una costituzione che servisse tutti gli italiani in modo uguale, perciò i Principi sono stati scritti usando solamente 1357 parole delle quali 1200 sono molto comuni. Si voleva che nessuno si sentisse incapace di comprenderla.

La nuova Costituzione fu elaborata da tre gruppi che collaborarono nella sua stesura: i cattolici; la sinistra/il comunismo e i liberali intellettuali che si sentivano legati ai principi del Risorgimento. Furono assistiti nel loro lavoro da professori, linguisti, giuristi, poeti, artisti e storici. Si vede l'influenza dei tre gruppi sui Principi Fondamentali.

Il nemico comune era il fascismo o il totalitarismo mentre invece il popolo intero era il centro dell'attenzione.

È interessante notare che i primi due Principi Fondamentali sono comparsi due anni dopo nell'International Bill of Human Rights.

Ed: sono lieta di presentare i dodici principi fondamentali in questa edizione della newsletter per segnare la ricorrenza storica del 2 giugno – la festa nazionale italiana.

La presentazione cui si riferisce Helen è stata fatta all'ANU da Gian Marco Farese, un ricercatore italiano con un'ovvia passione per la Costituzione. La traduzione in inglese dei dodici principi è di Farese ed è riportata in un libricino reso disponibile alla conferenza cui ha partecipato anche l'ambasciatore d'Italia Pier Francesco Zazo che ha colto l'occasione per ricordarci le tappe principali della storia del paese.

Si legge nel libricino di Farese che 21 donne

fecero parte dell'Assemblea Costituente tra cui spicca Nilde Iotti del Partito Comunista Italiano. Ho poi scoperto che solo cinque donne, incluso la Iotti, fecero parte della Commissione per la Costituzione, composta da 75 membri. Bisogna ricordare, d'altronde, che le donne italiane ebbero il diritto di votare per la prima volta alle elezioni e al referendum del 2 giugno.

Da notare che il 54% degli italiani che il **2 giugno 1946** votarono al referendum sulla forma di governo da adottare dopo il periodo fascista scelse la Repubblica e il 46% la Monarchia – una scelta cruciale per il paese. Per me, di particolare interesse tra i dodici principi fondamentali sono la centralità del lavoro (sia come diritto che dovere), la solidarietà, la promozione della cultura, la protezione dell'ambiente e il ripudio della guerra.

Yvette Devlin

PRINCIPI FONDAMENTALI/ FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Art. 1

L'Italia è una Repubblica democratica, fondata sul lavoro.

La sovranità appartiene al popolo, che la esercita nelle forme e nei limiti della Costituzione.

Italy is a Democratic Republic, founded on work.

Sovereignty belongs to the people and is exercised by the people in the forms and within the limits of the Constitution.

Art. 2

La Repubblica riconosce e garantisce i diritti inviolabili dell'uomo, sia come singolo sia nelle formazioni sociali ove si svolge la sua personalità, e richiede l'adempimento dei doveri inderogabili di solidarietà politica, economica e sociale.

The Republic recognises and guarantees the

Cenno storico

A bit of history - Helen Kulhanek & Yvette Devlin - cont'd

inviolable rights of the person, both as an individual and in the social formations where human personality is developed, and requires that the duties of political, economic and social solidarity be fulfilled without any possible exemption.

Art. 3

Tutti i cittadini hanno pari dignità sociale e sono eguali davanti alla legge, senza distinzione di sesso, di razza, di lingua, di religione, di opinione politiche, di condizioni personali e sociali.

È compito della Repubblica rimuovere gli ostacoli di ordine economico e sociale, che, limitando di fatto la libertà e l'eguaglianza dei cittadini, impediscono il pieno sviluppo della persona umana e l'effettiva partecipazione di tutti i lavoratori all'organizzazione politica, economica e sociale del Paese.

All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religious belief, political opinion, personal and social conditions. It is the Republic's duty to remove the economic and social obstacles, which, by limiting de facto the liberty and equality of citizens, impede the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political, economic and social organisation of the Country.

Art. 4

La Repubblica riconosce a tutti i cittadini il diritto al lavoro e promuove le condizioni che rendano effettivo questo diritto.

Ogni cittadino ha il dovere di svolgere, secondo le proprie possibilità e la propria scelta, un'attività o una funzione che concorra al progresso materiale o spirituale della società.

The Republic recognises the right of all citizens to work and promotes the conditions which can make this right effective. Every citizen has the duty to perform, according to personal capabilities and choice, an activity or function which will contribute

to the material or spiritual progress of society.

Art. 5

La Repubblica, una e indivisibile, riconosce e promuove le autonomie locali; attua nei servizi che dipendono dallo Stato il più ampio decentramento amministrativo; adegua i principi ed i metodi della sua legislazione alle esigenze dell'autonomia e del decentramento.

The Republic, one and indivisible, recognises and promotes local autonomies, implements the broadest measure of administrative devolution in the services which depend on the State and adjusts its legislation principles and methods to the requirements of autonomy and devolution.

Art. 6

La Repubblica tutela con apposite norme le minoranze linguistiche.

The Republic protects linguistic minorities by means of specific norms.

Art. 7

Lo Stato e la Chiesa cattolica sono, ciascuno nel proprio ordine, indipendenti e sovrani. I loro rapporti sono regolati dai Patti Lateranensi. Le modificazioni dei Patti, accettate dalle due parti, non richiedono procedimento di revisione costituzionale.

The State and the Catholic Church are independent and sovereign, each within its own order.

Their relations are regulated by the Lateran Pacts. Modifications to the Pacts, to be accepted by both parties, do not require a constitutional amendment.

Art. 8

Tutte le confessioni religiose sono egualmente libere davanti alla legge.

Le confessioni religiose diverse dalla cattolica hanno diritto di organizzarsi secondo i propri statuti, in quanto non contrastino con l'ordinamento giuridico italiano. I loro rapporti

Cenno storico

A bit of history - Helen Kulhanek & Yvette Devlin - cont'd

con lo Stato sono regolati per legge sulla base di intese con le relative rappresentanze.

All religious confessions are equally free before the law.

Religious confessions other than Catholicism have the right to organise according to their statutes, as long as these do not conflict with the Italian legal system. Their relations with the State are regulated by law on the basis of agreements with the respective representatives.

Art. 9

La Repubblica promuove lo sviluppo della cultura e la ricerca scientifica e tecnica. Tutela il paesaggio e il patrimonio storico e artistico della Nazione.

The Republic promotes the development of culture and of scientific and technical research.

It protects the landscape and the historical and artistic heritage of the Nation.

Art. 10

L'ordinamento giuridico italiano si conforma alle norme del diritto internazionale generalmente riconosciute.

La condizione giuridica dello straniero è regolata dalla legge in conformità delle norme e dei trattati internazionali.

Lo straniero, al quale sia impedito nel suo paese l'effettivo esercizio delle libertà democratiche garantite dalla Costituzione italiana, ha diritto d'asilo nel territorio della Repubblica secondo le condizioni stabilite dalla legge. Non è ammessa l'estradizione dello straniero per reati politici.

The Italian legal system conforms to the generally recognised norms of international law. The legal status of foreigners is regulated by law in conformity with international norms and treaties.

A foreigner who is denied, in their country, the effective exercise of the democratic liberties guaranteed by the Italian Constitution has the right of asylum in the territory of the

Republic, in accordance with the conditions established by the law. Extradition of a foreigner is not admitted for political offences.

Art. 11

L'Italia ripudia la Guerra come strumento di offesa alla libertà degli altri popoli e come mezzo di risoluzione delle controversie internazionali; consente, in condizioni di parità con gli altri Stati, alle limitazioni di sovranità necessarie ad un ordinamento che assicuri la pace e la giustizia fra le Nazioni; promuove e favorisce le organizzazioni internazionali rivolte a tale scopo.

Italy repudiates war as an instrument of offence against the freedom of other peoples and as a means for resolving international disputes; agrees, on conditions of equality with other States, to the limitations of sovereignty that may be necessary to a world order which can ensure peace and justice among Nations; promotes and encourages international organisations aimed at this scope.

Art. 12

La bandiera della Repubblica è il tricolore italiano: verde, bianco e rosso, a tre bande verticali di equali dimensioni.

The flag of the Republic is the Italian tricolour: green, white and red, in three vertical stripes of equal dimensions.

Roma, 27 dicembre 1947: De Gasperi, De Nicola e Terracini alla firma della costituzione italiana a Palazzo Giustiniani



Gordon Bull's presentation on Giotto

Susan Reye

On Thursday 9 March 2017, Gordon Bull, Senior Lecturer at the ANU School of Art, introduced us to the life and works of the great Florentine artist of the early Renaissance, Giotto di Bondone, focusing particularly on Giotto's masterwork, the Scrovegni Chapel.

Giotto's date of birth is unknown – it was some time between 1267 and 1275. He died on 8 January 1337. An innovator just before the flowering of the Renaissance in the *quattrocento*, he is one of the most significant figures in western art. His work moved away from the stylised, codified Byzantine style to a more naturalistic approach. It marked the beginning of direct observation as the basis of art; he painted according to what he saw.

To illustrate this, Gordon showed us images of three large altarpieces that are displayed in the same room in the Uffizi gallery in Florence. All three depict the Madonna and child surrounded by angels. They are by Cimabue (1240-1302), Duccio di Buoninsegna (died 1319) and Giotto. Cimabue's *Maestà of Santa Trinita*, painted between 1280 and 1290, is static and 'codified', with no use of perspective. The figures seem to float in a field of gold; they are not of this world. Duccio di Buoninsegna was a contemporary of Giotto, but belonged to the Sienese school of painting, which was much less innovative than the Florentine school. His *Madonna Rucellai*, painted in 1285, still belongs to the stylised, two-dimensional world of Byzantine art. Giotto's *Madonna di Ognissanti*, painted around 1310, is dramatically different from both of these works. It has a sense of real-world volume and space, and his Madonna is recognisably human.

Considering that he lived seven centuries ago, we know quite a lot about Giotto's life.



Gordon Bull during his presentation

Partly, this is because he was very successful and became rich, and records of his property transactions have survived. Moreover, he knew two of the most important Italian writers of his time, and they referred to him in their works. In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri described how, as an artist, Giotto eclipsed Cimabue (*Purgatorio*, Canto XI). Giotto also appears as a character in Book 6 of the *Decameron*, by his friend of

Boccaccio.

There is a story that Dante visited the Scrovegni chapel while Giotto, surrounded by his family, was working there. Dante wondered aloud how someone who created such beautiful images could have produced such plain children. Giotto's reply was that he created his pictures in the day, but his children in the dark. According to Boccaccio, Giotto was the ugliest man in Florence.

Writing much later, in the sixteenth century, Giorgio Vasari recounted some of the legends about Giotto. One was that Giotto, as a child, was a shepherd boy and used to draw his flock on rocks in the field. When Cimabue saw these drawings, he recognised Giotto's talent and insisted that the boy become his pupil. (Actually, Gordon told us, Giotto's father was a blacksmith.) Another story is that the Pope sent a messenger to Giotto asking for a sample of Giotto's work. Giotto took a piece of paper and, in front of the messenger, drew a perfect circle freehand and told him to take that to the Pope. The messenger was dismayed, but the Pope recognised how remarkable a feat this was. This story is historically unreliable, but it illustrates Giotto's reputation for supreme skill.

As the rising star of his time, he was commissioned by the wealthy banker Enrico de-

Gordon Bull's presentation on Giotto

By Susan Reye - cont'd

gli Scrovegni to decorate a chapel that Scrovegni was having built in Padua. The chapel may have been intended as atonement for Scrovegni's sins. Banking was considered morally doubtful at the time, because the Catholic Church prohibited usury, ie lending money at interest.

Giotto spent two years (1304-1306) painting the Scrovegni Chapel. The walls and ceilings are all in fresco, ie the pigment was applied to wet plaster. Giotto used a technique that was new at the time, putting on the wall only a small patch of wet plaster that could be painted in a single day. The result was very durable. Unfortunately, because blue pigment was very expensive, Scrovegni insisted that it be painted 'secco' ('dry'), ie on top of the already dry fresco. So the blue is much more worn than the rest.

The paintings are in three rows: the top row depicting the life of the Virgin and the lower two rows the miracles and life of Christ, together with panels depicting vices and virtues. The west wall contains a depiction of the last judgement, which Michelangelo went to see before painting his own last judgement in the Sistine Chapel.

Gordon showed us slides of some of the narrative cycle panels, and pointed out that there is a sense of people standing in space, occupying a volume, with natural postures and gestures. Architecture is drawn so as to give a sense of three dimensions, but it does not comply with the rules of perspective, which were yet to be developed. The surrounding landscape, however, is not depicted in a naturalistic way. Nonetheless, Giotto creates an observed, not idealised, world and depicts real, observed, people. One technique that Giotto uses is the placement in the foreground of a painting of figures seen from the back, drawing the spectators into the scene. He also used shading – light and dark tones – to create volume, for example in the folds of garments.

Gordon urged those of us who have not yet seen the Scrovegni Chapel to do so. You need to book at least three days in advance and are allowed only 15 minutes inside, but it is worth the effort, he assured us. Even though he had studied reproductions of the paintings for years, the first time he saw the real thing he was overwhelmed by it – it is one of the most beautiful things he has ever seen in his life.

Gordon Bull's sense of humour is appreciated by the audience



Mark O'Connor presentation on Shakespeare

Susan Reye



Mark O'Connor presents his research into Shakespeare's Italian-ness

Our cultural presentation on 6 April 2017 was a talk with the intriguing title “Shakespeare as an Italian”, given by Canberra-based poet and university lecturer, Mark O'Connor.

Most of us were aware that some of William Shakespeare's plays had Italian settings. *Romeo and Juliet*, set in Verona, comes immediately to mind. But it was surprising to learn that in about a third of his plays all or part of the action takes place in Italy.

Moreover, many of his plots were taken in whole or in part from Italian sources. Some of these sources were from ancient Rome. Plutarch provided the basis for Shakespeare's Roman history plays - *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* – and he drew on a number of stories by Ovid. In addition, he borrowed the plots or plot elements for many other plays, including some that are not set in Italy, from more recent Italian works.

Shakespeare clearly had a fondness for *il bel paese*, even though in England at the time

Italy was linked to “popery” and Italians were considered suspect. One of Shakespeare's contemporaries, Thomas Nashe, attacked “the Italianate pen” that “pilfers” others' works and “in disguised array, vaunts Ovid's and Plutarch's plumes as their own” or “must borrow invention of Ariosto and his countrymen”. (Preface to Greene's *Menaphon*).

Why would Shakespeare have been so attracted to Italy as a setting for his plays? In the minds of the Elizabethans, it was a place of luxury, glamour, advanced culture, artistic licence and sexual freedom, but also of “popery”, Machiavellian scheming, poisoning (the Borgias), corruption and lust. Italy, said Mark, was the “happy hunting ground” of William Shakespeare's imagination.

Italy's exoticism was also dramatically useful. For example, a love story such as *Romeo and Juliet* had to be compressed into two hours on stage. An English audience could more easily believe that the hero and heroine would fall in love at first sight one evening (even though the hero was in love with someone else a few hours earlier) and that they would marry the very next day, if they were hot-blooded Italians.

Some people have suggested that Shakespeare must have lived in Italy, or even that he was an Italian. They argue that he seems to know a lot about certain Italian cities where his plays are set. However, Mark pointed out that he did not seem to know much about how to get from one Italian town to another, and made some basic errors, such as giving Milan a sea coast. Perhaps, Mark said, he was just a good researcher.

Did Shakespeare speak Italian? In Mark's view, he could easily have learnt Italian, relying on the Latin he had learnt from childhood, and with the help of acquaintances such as John Florio. Florio, whose father was Italian, was a linguist and

Mark O'Connor presentation on Shakespeare

Susan Reye - cont'd

translator and was tutor to Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of Southampton. However, it is also possible that Shakespeare read Italian works in translation. Such translations were available in England in Shakespeare's time, and the novellas in particular were popular.

Did Shakespeare refer to, or draw on, Italy's greatest poet, Dante Alighieri? Apparently not, though one passage has been identified as possibly showing an acquaintance with Dante's work. It is possible to see a similarity between the fate of adulterers Paolo and Francesca in Canto V of the *Inferno* and a speech by Claudio in *Measure for Measure*. Having been sentenced to death for fornication, and fearing what will happen to his spirit after death, Claudio says:

"To be imprison'd in the viewless winds, And blown with restless violence round about The pendent world"

Could Shakespeare have studied in Italy? It has been speculated that he might have studied at the Venerable English College in

Rome. In guest books signed by visitors to the College during the relevant years, there are three signatures that it has been suggested could refer to "Stratford". Some Englishmen did study for the Catholic priesthood there, but it was risky. A substantial proportion of them were arrested and executed when they returned to England. Mark said it was possible that Shakespeare could have spent an influential few weeks there, but long-term study seems unlikely.

Many theories have been advanced arguing that William Shakespeare from Stratford-upon-Avon was not really the author of the plays. Mark attributed this to some people's need to feel that Shakespeare was 'one of them'. He quoted James Joyce: "Shakespeare is the happy hunting ground of all minds that have lost their balance." (*Ulysses*, Chapter 9)

One theory that has been put forward is that Christopher Marlowe faked his own death in 1593 and went to live in Italy. There, the theory goes, he wrote plays set in the cities

Mark O'Connor addresses a large audience



Mark O'Connor presentation on Shakespeare

Susan Reye - cont'd

where he lived or that he visited, and sent them to Shakespeare who presented them as his own. John Florio and Florio's father have also been suggested as the "real Shakespeare".

Another suggested candidate is Emilia Bassano. She was part Italian, multilingual, educated and she wrote and published poetry. She was the mistress of a cousin of Elizabeth 1, Lord Hunsdon, but when she became pregnant by him she was married off to Alfonso Lanier. Lord Hunsdon later became patron of The Lord Chamberlain's Men, the acting troupe of which Shakespeare was a member. It is possible that Emilia was the "dark lady" of Shakespeare's sonnets. In Mark's view, her proto-feminist attitude could have educated Shakespeare about women and she could have been a model for his heroines, but she is not likely to have written his plays or poems.

So it is unlikely that Shakespeare was, literally, an Italian. However, in the end, said Mark, not only was Ben Johnson right when he said that Shakespeare was "not of an age, but for all time" but his work also crosses all bounds of gender and nationality. He belongs to the world.

Plays in which some or all of the action is set in Italy are:

All's Well that Ends Well,

Antony and Cleopatra

Coriolanus,

Cymbeline

Julius Caesar

The Merchant of Venice

Much Ado About Nothing

Othello,

Romeo and Juliet,

The Taming of the Shrew

The Tempest

Titus Andronicus

The Two Gentlemen of Verona

The Winter's Tale

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What fabulous fun we had in February

Yvette Devlin

Yes, I know, February was a long time ago... But for those of you who missed out in three great celebrations of Italian culture, I thought I'd mention them so that you can get ready for next year's events that highlight Italian culture.

First, on 11 February I enjoyed a night of high-quality performances at **Opera by Candlelight** at the Albert Hall. Local musical impresario Carl Rafferty put on an evening featuring opera arias by Italian composers (Verdi, Rossini, Puccini, Bellini, Donizetti, Leoncavallo, Vivaldi and Giordano) and well-known songs from musicals. The young performers were almost uniformly highly skilled, especially Carl's oldest daughter Kate who now lives and sings in Vienna.

Second, on 17 February P&P Events (Paola and Patrizia) put on an amazing evening of entertainment for Carnevale – the '**Casanova Grand Ball – a Venetian Affair**'. It was held in the foyer of the National Museum of Australia and featured a parade by models in elegant Venetian costumes. Over 200 people attended the chic 'ballo in maschera' with most of them wearing at least a mask on the face and some wearing elaborate costumes.

Then from 17 to 19 February the **National Multicultural Festival** offered a kaleidoscope of colours, flavours and sounds. Performers from all over the world proudly featured the culture of their country in music and dance, while their more practical counterparts presented hundreds of dishes to the 280,000 people who flocked to the centre of town to enjoy the festival.

One of the countries featured was Italy. Our Dante Society was an active participant. On Saturday morning the Dante Musica Viva choir performed on one of the stages for 40 minutes in a range of popular Italian and Neapolitan songs; on Sunday the Society had an information stall to promote Italian language and culture to passers-by, and a



Bruna and Ottavio performing a Sardinian folk dance

few choir members turned up - with Francesco and Rod on the guitar - to sing a few songs in front of the stall to entertain the crowd.

The Dante was also a major participant in the **Piazza Italia** series of stalls that sold Italian food and drinks. A number of Italian associations collaborated in setting up this Italian space, sharing in the costs of the food and drinks sold, in the roster of volunteers working at the stalls, and in the profits at the end of the week-end. Our President Franco Papandrea was one of the main promoters of the Piazza Italia concept, and a constant presence at the festival especially in his efforts to sell calabresi biscuits called Mostaccioli! Thanks to the Dante volunteers who gave some of their time to work at the food stalls: Luigi (who was almost a permanent feature), Nicola, Lyndall, Ondina, Elda, Denise, Vittorio, Linda, Tamsin and me.

Apart from Piazza Italia, on the Saturday the Italian Embassy had a stall in the European Village, located in a street reserved for the 28 countries that make up the European Union.

The opportunity to enjoy Italian culture in its varied forms is certainly high during February!

Know your choir

A profile of Yvette Devlin



Yvette with her grandpup

I was not born with any singing talent at all but an innate love of music, rhythm and dance in my heart. (I can claim some good DNA: my father, who died when I was 9 months old, had migrated to France as a teenager and taught himself music while living there. He actually played the saxophone and banjo in a dance band for several years!)

Of course I could hear myself hit wrong notes and would often get quizzical looks from polite people (they were probably thinking: why are you singing?) or laughter from my own daughter and my tuneless ex husband.... On the other hand, the comment that I often heard along the lines of “anyone can learn to sing” gave me hope that one day.....

So, when Francesco Sofo back in 2005 suggested we set up a little Dante choir (“all welcome; no auditions”), I saw the opportunity to test the theory that anyone – even appalling me – could learn to hit and hold the right note. And after assiduously attending all rehearsals and performances, I

can say I can now hit and hold the right note – most of the time. I feel more confident about singing and thoroughly enjoy the experience of singing with others and bringing joy to the audiences that the Dante Musica Viva choir has entertained over the twelve years of its existence.

I would never be game enough to sing on my own but I can be part of a larger whole that can make sweet sounds. I “tune myself” by standing next to singers who can actually sing on their own too, and adjust my voice accordingly.

A further disadvantage in my musical background is that I’ve never learnt to read music. When I was young, I didn’t have the opportunity and now that I could do it and actually did try, I gave up after failing dismally. But as you know, we all find ways to compensate for our shortcomings. Having grown up with most of the songs and arias that we learn in the choir, I know the melodies. So, despite the fact that my voice naturally gravitates towards the alto range, I’ve opted for singing soprano as the sopranos get to sing the melody while the altos often have to sing the harmony – which would be hard to learn without reading music! And with those pieces that are not familiar to me, I have developed my own system that includes the use of arrows to show me when the notes go higher, lower or remain steady. Quite silly, but it works for me...

I get to stand in the front row of the choir, not because of my ability but because I’m short and also because I often need to teach choir members how to pronounce certain words or lines – I am their language consultant! And I also explain what the song is about, translating the words when necessary. I enjoy this role in the choir as I like teaching Italian. I am also the one who cannot stand still when the music gets going – there is a foot tapping, or a hand beating the rhythm, or hips slightly moving: now,

Know your choir

A profile of Yvette Devlin - cont'd

that is totally instinctive. Some people in the choir have told me to stop moving, but I do it unconsciously. Sorry folks!

That's my life as a chorister. Now here is my other life in a few paragraphs. I was born in a little country village of Friuli (Italy) a very long time ago, when subsistence farming was the norm and everyone was quite poor. My grade 5 teacher convinced my mother (who was a widow bringing up three little children with no external support) that she should send me to middle school as I was the studious type. Bless her soul, my mother Giorgia did that, and then on to another school in Rome where I continued my general education and acquired the useful skills of shorthand and typing in Italian, French and English. These proved very handy later in Australia as they enabled me to get a great job.

I migrated at the age of twenty to join my brothers (Angelo and Roger) and mum who had preceded me as migrants. They lived in Melbourne. A couple of years after arriving I got a job as secretary in the Dept of Modern Languages at the brand-new La Trobe University. Being surrounded by academics and students, I decided I wanted to study too - I was already getting bored with secretarial work. With support from a Commonwealth scholarship and my family, I got an honours degree in Romance Languages (Spanish and French) after which I embarked on a public service career. In 1981 I moved to Canberra as part of the centralisation of federal government departments. I worked mostly with the Dept of Employment and the Dept of Education, my last job being Director of Quality and Equity in Higher Education.

Straight after retiring from the public service, in early 2000 I started my association with the Dante Alighieri Society by leading an advanced conversation group on Thursday evenings. Over the ensuing years, I've contributed a fair bit to the life of

the Society in many other ways too - including coordinating formal classes and conversation evenings, developing the annual cultural program since 2005, writing articles for the newsletter and editing it since 2008, and doing a lot of the marketing. I have been on the committee for some sixteen years, including twelve as vice-president.

Apart from the Dante Society, over the last seventeen years I have also become involved with many other organisations and activities within the Italian community: the Board of Villaggio Sant'Antonio, the Committee for the Festa Italiana in the Embassy Gardens, the committee of the Fogolar Furlan, and freelance reporting on interesting community events for the Italian newspaper *La Fiamma*.

But all good things come to an end. And before moving to Sydney permanently this year, I wanted to share with you my extraordinarily happy experience with the choir. This I will definitely miss in Sydney! I am grateful to a lot of people in the choir, particularly Patricia, for being encouraging and making me believe I could do it, and that I could fit in well.

Yes, I will be leaving Canberra with a certain regret. I have made many wonderful friends here and I know that the Italian community appreciates my preparedness to lend a hand and participate in its activities. I am a totally proud Friulian/Italian and, of course, Australian!

I've now lived the first 20 years in Italy; 17 in Melbourne; 36 in Canberra and will finish my days in Sydney where my daughter Natasha lives. Also, for the last 20 years I have returned to my birth home in Friuli every year during the Northern summer. Objectively speaking, that's a very interesting and fortunate life!

Finally, I wish the Dante Musica Viva choir and the Dante Society many more decades of success.

President's Report to AGM 2017

Franco Papandrea

I am pleased to provide an overview of the management of the Dante Alighieri Society over the past year.

As the Society will shortly be celebrating a major milestone in its history, the 60th anniversary of its foundation in Canberra, it is fitting that we take a few moments to look briefly at how we got here.

As you would all know, the worldwide society of which we are part has the two-fold mission of promoting Italian language and culture, and of stimulating a desire among foreigners for Italian culture and society.

From what we can gather, the first committee of the Society established in June 1957 was certainly imbued with such a mission. The first president was the world renowned classical archaeologist, professor Arthur 'Dale' Trendall, then "Master of the House" at the university college that later

became the ANU who was an authority on the life and culture of the ancient Greek colonies of South Italy. Another admirer of Italian culture, the eminent historian and ANU professor Sir Keith Hancock was the vice president. The then ambassador was honorary president and together with the architect Enrico Taglietti made up the Italian component on the Committee. With such illustrious persons running the society there seemed to be little room for the common folk, and membership of the Society was seldom more than a handful. You could just imagine these personalities getting together in front of the fireplace in the Fellows Room at University House with a glass of port and a Cuban cigar in hand to discuss the masters and treasures of the classical age.

This early committee slowly morphed into a slightly more open group and attracted a small following of community members with elitist aspirations. It retained its link with

Here is the new Dante Alighieri Society Committee, elected at the AGM on the 20th of April 2017 (from left to right): Luigi Catizone, Gordon McCormick (Vice-President), Julie Docker, Alexandra Luppino, Franco Papandrea (President), Sonia Fortuna, Cristina Giusti (Vice-President), Tony Hanrahn (Treasurer), and Grant Doran (Secretary)



President's Report to AGM 2017

Franco Papandrea - cont'd

the classics area of the ANU with a succession of professors as presidents. When I came to Canberra in 1975, the Society had a small membership of about 20 and apart from the occasional talk by some eminent personality, its main activity was to run a couple of small adult Italian language classes at the ANU. As an ex junior member of the Dante Committee in Sydney I received several invitations to join the Society, but not being a fan of its elitist presumptions I declined.

Things began to change in the late 1990s when some people with a broader vision became active in what was by then an almost dormant Society. Under the leadership of Prof Joseph Lo Bianco assisted by Ottavio Bagozzi and others such as Sante and Loredana Modesti, the Society actively pursued a wider membership and greater attention was devoted to the teaching of Italian. Administration became more disciplined and the Society became an incorporated association with a new constitution in 1999. Funding from the Italian government in support of language classes was also secured and the number of classes began to grow rapidly. However, because many of the classes were too small to be financially sustainable, the Society suffered some potentially distressing financial pressures.

In the early 2000s, I finally agreed to join the reshaped Society at the urging of Joe Lo Bianco and was conscripted to its Committee to help with a major restructure of the society to safeguard its financial stability as well as expand its cultural and community activities. With Joe's departure to Melbourne at the end of 2003, I became President for what I naively thought was going to be a short period to complete the restructure and establish strong foundations for the future. Within a couple of years, the resulting financial strength enabled the Society, not only to withstand the rapid reduction and eventual loss of Italian government funding, but also to extend the range of services to

members. The Dante Alighieri Foundation was established to create a 'trust fund' that could be accessed to help sustain the Society in hard times. As you will hear a little later in the Treasurer's report, the Foundation has provided significant support to the Society during the course of the recent economic downturn.

We also attracted some very talented and committed people to the Committee who were instrumental to the success. Yvette Devlin, who unfortunately is about to leave us, has made a huge contribution. Other major contributors in this period include Margaret Mathews, Francesco Sofo, Sam Palma, Orlando di Iulio (urged and assisted by Catharina), Mario Rosi and Sue Hancock. The choir, our wonderful ambassador to the wider Canberra community, was established under the leadership of Francesco Sofo during this period and continues to make us proud. The Society has also become much more involved in Italian community affairs and is now probably the most active Italian organisation currently operating in Canberra.

As we reflect on the past 60 years, we have a lot to be proud of and our gratitude goes to the many people who have contributed greatly to the success. There are too many to mention tonight, but they will all receive appropriate recognition in a short history of the Society to be published as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations in June.

Coming to more mundane matters, the society's performance over the past year has been consistent with the anticipated depressed demand for language courses. Enrolment numbers are still declining but our consolidation efforts are beginning to pay dividends in terms of ensuring a reasonable balance between revenues and expenses. The first signs of a turnaround are beginning to emerge. For the first time in the past four years, we have been able to operate without financial support from the Dante Alighieri Foundation. Indeed, we have

President's Report to AGM 2017

Franco Papandrea - cont'd

recorded a significant surplus for the year and thanks to some extraordinary income from fundraising activities at the National Multicultural Festival, we were able to make a modest reimbursement to the Foundation in relation to the advances received from it in recent years.

Our language classes are primarily conducted in rented rooms at the Yarralumla English-Italian bilingual school, with smaller classes held at the Notaras Multicultural Centre where we can use appropriate spaces without incurring additional rental costs. The Notaras Centre is also used for our conversation groups, which despite the introduction of paid parking in Civic, regularly attract a substantial following.

The Society's cultural program has been offering an attractive and appealing range of cultural and social experiences to participating members. In addition to our lecture series we have continued to experiment the use of live teleconferences with Italian personalities. Two were held in 2016: the first early in the year at the Italo Australian Club and gave us an insight into the work of the mobile emergency assistance clinic which supports racers competing in the international Moto GP circuit; the second, at the Italian Embassy, gave us an insider view of the Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institute's contribution to medicine and of some of the art treasures within its historic headquarters in Bologna.

Our choir is in great demand and continues to be a formidable ambassador for the Society in Canberra and the broader region. The second of its CDs of Italian music is selling well and is available as a special when bought as twin set with the first CD. The choir continues to expand and anyone is welcome to join. We are indebted to its musical director, managers, musicians, lead singers and the growing number of members for their commitment and dedication.

The Society continues to be a key contributor to the Italian community's initiatives in Canberra. We helped organise the participation of Italian community groups in what has become known as "Piazza Italia" at the National Multicultural Festival. Most of the funds raised at the 2017 Festival will be going to assist the operations of the Italian Cultural Centre. The Society was also a key supporter of the Italian Earthquake appeal that raised more than \$50,000 and organised a spectacular multicultural concert to raise funds for the appeal. I take this opportunity to thank all the multicultural groups who performed free of charge and Domenic Mico who helped to organise the concert.

The Committee will be undergoing a huge, unplanned change at this meeting. I have already mentioned that Yvette is stepping down, but she is not the only one. The departures include Tamsin Hong (vice-president), Francesca Foppoli (classes and teaching coordinator) and Alessia La Cavera. We thank them for their outstanding contribution to the Society. Our special thanks also go to the Treasurer Tony Hanrahan and to the Secretary Cristina Hurley for their extensive commitment in managing the affairs of the Society and to all the other members of the Committee: Luigi Catizone, Pauline Adams, Nicola Patini and Bruno Santagostino Baldi.

I also gratefully acknowledge the support of our language class teachers and particularly of our volunteer conversation group leaders.

Last, but not least, I thank all members for their continued support of the Society's efforts in Canberra.

Franco Papandrea
President of the
Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra

OUR SOCIETY IS NEARLY 60 YEARS OLD!

Yvette Devlin



*Serendipity and good forensic work helped us discover, in 2015, that the Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra was founded in **June 1957**. We also discovered that the first committee was made up of eminent ANU academics and cultured people, with only one Italian among its members. This was Architetto Enrico Taglietti who had only been in Australia for a short while and who agreed to be the Society's first Secretary. Incidentally, Taglietti went on to design the Italian Embassy and the Ambassador's residence.*

We are planning a special celebration to mark this event in the month of June. Precise details will be made available at a later date.

We are also working on a booklet that sets out the Society's history.

La festa della mamma

Clelia Boscarato



Gustav Klimt - Madre con bambino

Popolo di mammoni! Questo è forse lo stereotipo che gli italiani, soprattutto quelli di noi che vivono all'estero, sentono ripetere più e più volte. Non c'è dunque da meravigliarsi se una delle feste più sentite in Italia è appunto la "Festa della mamma" che si festeggia ogni anno la seconda domenica di maggio.

Le origini di questa ricorrenza si possono far risalire all'antichità e alle religioni politeiste dei greci e dei romani: all'inizio della primavera, i greci festeggiavano Rea – la madre di tutti gli dei, mentre per i romani era Cibele – la grande madre – ad essere al centro delle celebrazioni per un'intera settimana. La figura materna, come metafora della rinascita della vita, ha sempre avuto grande importanza nell'immaginario umano e, dall'antichità fino ai giorni nostri, ha avuto un posto speciale tra le varie celebrazioni dell'anno.

Con l'evoluzione della società, delle varie culture e religioni, questa ricorrenza ha assunto significati differenti ed è stata accompagnata da diverse tradizioni, a seconda del Paese in cui viene festeggiata. Ma una cosa è rimasta universale: non importa in quale Stato uno si trovi, la mamma viene sempre celebrata.

Si deve però aspettare il 1870 per vedere apparire l'idea di avere una ricorrenza dedicata alla figura della mamma: la pacifista americana Julia Warde Howe propose di istituire il "Mother's Day" come giornata mondiale per riflettere sull'inutilità della Guerra. Decisamente una motivazione più profonda rispetto alla festa piuttosto commerciale dei giorni nostri. Ma è solamente nel 1907, grazie alla perseveranza di Anna Jarvis, che si istituisce la ricorrenza per la "Festa della mamma" così come la conosciamo noi.

In Italia la festa è stata riportata al centro del calendario odierno solamente nel 1957 da Don Otello Miglioni, un sacerdote di Assisi. Da quel momento in poi, la seconda domenica di maggio è diventata una giornata da dedicare alla propria mamma, coprendola i regali e piccole attenzioni per ringraziarla di essere, nella tradizione italiana, il collante della famiglia. Fiori e biglietti fatti a mano sono due dei regali più popolari da fare durante la "Festa della mamma": ricordo che la mia maestra, alle elementari, sospendeva qualsiasi lezione ordinaria il venerdì precedente la seconda domenica di maggio così da poter dedicare la mattinata a preparare i nostri biglietti di auguri. La specialità della mia maestra era il disegno a mano libera alla lavagna che noi dovevamo copiare a modo nostro su un foglio di carta, per poi scrivere le nostre più profonde dediche per la mamma.

Anche oggi, nell'era degli smartphone e social media, l'aspetto creativo della "Festa della mamma" rimane centrale, soprattutto nelle scuole, ma anche su vari siti e blog che si possono consultare per trovare delle idee facili e veloci per creare il perfetto regalo fai-da-te per l'occasione.

Insomma, che siate italiani, australiani, indiani o cinesi, ricordatevi di celebrare una mamma: che sia la vostra, la mamma dei vostri genitori o la mamma dei vostri figli, dimostratele tutto il vostro affetto!

Venzone (Udine): the most beautiful Italian village

Yvette Devlin

For the last four years a TV channel of the national broadcaster RAI in its program *Alle falde del Kilimangiaro* has run a competition to identify the most beautiful Italian village, based on such aspects as architecture, cuisine and nature. There were twenty finalists (one per region) and at Easter time the little town of Venzone (some 2000 inhabitants) was announced the winner.

Venzone was selected not only by an expert jury but also by viewers who had the opportunity to see and compare the twenty finalists featured in the program. It is situated in a picturesque location - surrounded by mountains, near the river Tagliamento, and has a particular flora and fauna. It was an ancient trade route from the Adriatic sea to the Eastern Alps, and it was fortified some 1300 years ago. Its beautiful town hall was built in the 14th century.

Venzone is one of the two Friulian towns (the other is Gemona) that were the epicentre of the disastrous 1976 earthquake that killed about 1000 people in the region. Venzone's centre was almost totally destroyed, including its cathedral, but in the years that followed it was faithfully rebuilt - a real success story. Indeed the judges noted that Venzone represented "one of the most extraordinary examples of architectural and artistic post-earthquake recovery."

Aerial view of the cathedral soon after the 1976 earthquake



A partial view of the façade of the rebuilt cathedral

The Venzone town hall, built some 700 years ago



2017 Calendar of activities

Formal courses

(6–8 pm Yarralumla Primary School or Dante Library - Notaras Multicultural Centre)

Term 1	Monday 6 February to Friday 7 April	(9 wks)
Term 2	Monday 1 May to Friday 30 June	(9 wks)
Term 3	Monday 24 July to Friday 22 September	(9 wks)
Term 4	Monday 9 October to Friday 8 December	(9 wks)

Thursday Conversation Groups

(7–9 pm Function Room, Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic)

Term 1	Thursday 23 February to Thursday 27 April	(10 wks then 4-wk break)
Term 2	Thursday 1 June to Thursday 3 August	(10 wks then 5-wk break)
Term 3	Thursday 14 September to Thursday 16 November	(10 wks) Total: 30 weeks

Cultural Activities

(8–9 pm Function Room, Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic)

9 March	Gordon Bull: Giotto
6 April	Mark O'Connor: Shakespeare as an Italian
22 June	Ambassador Sem Fabrizi: The European Union now and in the future (TBC)
20 July	Rory Steele: The earth and the abyss - the amazing life of Felice Benuzzi
5 October	Italian Trivia Night
2 November	Christopher Latham on an Italian composer (TBC)
23 November	End-of year function: Dante Musica Viva, cooking competition, refreshments

AGM (8–9 pm Function Room, Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic): **20 April**

CHOIR REHEARSALS (5–7 pm Function Room, Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic):
 every Thursday from 2 February to 7 December

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS during Term 2:

Easter: Good Friday on 14 April; Easter Monday 17 April; **Anzac Day:** Friday 25 April (during term break); **Queen's Birthday:** Monday 12 June (during term)

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Dante Alighieri Society of Canberra Inc.

PO Box 979 Civic Square ACT 2608

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- ☐ CHOIR \$10 (in addition to membership)

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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.

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