



Italian Historical Society of America

Newsletter

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BY JANICE THERESE MANCUSO

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Tutto Italiano **Benvenuto a *Tutto Italiano***

By most accounts, the Roman Empire is the longest lasting political structure in history. The city was formed in 753 BC by twin brothers [Romulus and Remus](#). [Palatine Hill](#), the tallest of the seven hills in Rome, was selected as the geographical location for Rome's seat of power. Romulus was the [first king](#), ruling until 716 BC. He was followed by six other kings until the monarchy was overthrown in 509 BC, and the [Roman Republic](#) was established.

From 509 to 27 BC, Rome remained a republic, but the assassination of Julius Caesar in 43 BC set a massive change to government in motion. Octavian – Caesar's adopted heir – negotiated a series of political moves that gave him the power to create a principate, "[a system of monarchy headed by an emperor holding power for life.](#)" Taking the name Augustus, the first emperor of Rome ruled until his death in 14 CE.

[Libraries were in existence](#) before Rome was founded, and private libraries were part of Rome's culture. Caesar intended to open a public library and Augustus had the same intention, but Gaius Asinius Pollio – a politician and soldier – consolidated his collection with public archives and "opened [the whole to the public about 37 B.C.](#) ..." a year before Augustus started to rule. [Augustus built two libraries in Rome](#), and "Roman libraries came to be the place where an author first released their work to the public, reading out loud to a small audience." (worldhistory.org)

Ruins of some of the libraries can be seen on Palatine Hill, but Rome has many historic and architecturally beautiful libraries open to the public. Some of the most visited include [Biblioteca Vallicelliana](#) (est. 1565), [Biblioteca Angelica](#) (est. 1609), and [Biblioteca Casanatense](#) (est. 1701).

[Rome's Transition from Republic to Empire](#)

[Palatine Hill, Archeological Wonder of Rome - Guided and Narrated Walking Tour](#)
(YouTube Video)

[Palatine Hill Images](#)

[The Principate of Augustus](#)

[Libraries in the Ancient World](#) (Scroll down for Roman libraries.)

[The Great Libraries of Rome](#)

Italian American Press

Help preserve Italian American heritage and history. Support authors of Italian heritage who write about Italian American and Italian culture and let them know you found their books on the Italian American Press.

Looking for a holiday gift? The [Italian American Press](#) offers a great selection of books

– culture, history, memoirs, art, family, food, the supernatural, the natural beauty of Italy, and more – for every interest.

Italian American Press Founder Ralph J. Ferraro Acknowledged by Mayor of Springfield, MA

Ralph was recently nominated for the Hero's Award in recognition of his community service. Ralph has a Master's in education and did graduate work in psychology, counseling, and educational administration. As an educator, he taught English, reading, psychology, public speaking, creative writing, and science fiction; and was involved with writing the curriculum guides for these and other courses. He served as Director of Health Education for the West Springfield School system, and helped create a Crisis Prevention Program, that was recognized by then-governor Michael Dukakis as having the best program in the state to help prevent substance abuse and other social problems.

In the literary field, Ralph was a founding member of a local writer's guild, wrote two novels and a guidebook on meditation and spiritual healing, and established the Italian American Press in 2001. He has conducted workshops and lectured on various topics such as stress-management, creative writing, and self-actualization; and has given motivation talks in local churches and colleges on a variety of subjects. Ralph and his wife Anne Marie received the local Italian Cultural Center's prestigious Serviam Award, an honor which recognizes individuals of Italian ancestry who have significantly contributed to the Italian-American community of Western Massachusetts. Ralph has retired from teaching at American International College, but is still actively involved in community projects.

Author News

Mark Tedesco, author of [She Seduced Me: A Love Affair with Rome](#)

Mark's book received a recommendation for teachers of Italian culture: "The author has a relationship with a city that he describes as magical. After living in Rome, he realized that everything in this place has a story: the people, the buildings, the statues, even the street corners. In this book he gathers these stories, having interviewed street performers, Romans, expats, historians and archaeologists. Reading this book transports the reader into another world and reveals the city through its stories that are informative, funny and insightful."

She Seduced Me: A Love Affair with Rome was published in Italian last September. Mark writes, "... during one of my visits to Rome, I asked a historical library near Piazza Navona called Biblioteca Vallicelliana if they ever host lectures or presentations in their incredible 16th-century lecture hall ... [and] I was invited to present the Italian version of the book on September 11, 2024. Drawing on my 25 years of experience as a high school history teacher in Los Angeles, I decided to use my classroom experience to develop a presentation that would engage the audience. Since most of my students were visual thinkers, I included many images, photos, and gifs to illustrate my points. I also planned to ask questions and encourage participation to engage my audience. I also asked my translator, an Italian professor in California who lives in Italy, to participate.

A clear indicator of a successful presentation is when the participants don't immediately leave the room. Most attendees stayed for a significant amount of time after the presentation, engaging in conversation, sharing stories, and making connections. I discovered three journalists were present; one is especially well-known in Italy. As I greeted old and new acquaintances in the 16th-century conference hall, I realized this interaction was the real reward. In Italy, I've learned that, ultimately, relationships are what truly matter. Observing the participants during the presentation and conversing with them afterward only reaffirmed this sentiment. In the end, it's all about the connections we make."

For more about Mark's work, visit <https://www.marktedesco.com/>

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Steve Decker, author of [Cambridge Street](#), Historical Fiction

In the early 1920s, the Tomaso family leaves Sicily and settles in Chicago. It's a difficult time for the country and more so for Italian immigrants, who must contend with discrimination and the dangers of criminality from those who should protect them.

[Please Tell Your Family Stories](#), article by Steve Decker in *Fra Noi*

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New in 2025 on the Italian American Press

The Rock in Our Story by Jerry Giuliano

A love story told through several characters. The descriptive settings, and the dialogue and sentiment of the characters bring this story to life. A book review and interview will be posted with the next IAP update.

Italian American Heritage Project

In 2018, the Italian American Heritage Project was established to provide educational resources about Italian American history, heritage, and culture. The website also addresses the Columbus Controversy by providing facts about Columbus, how the controversy started, and why it continues. Read [What is the Truth About Columbus?](#) To understand how Columbus became an important part of American history, read [Christopher Columbus: When Did the Hero Become a Villain?](#) (Some links are no longer active.)

[Lesson plans developed from the letters Columbus wrote after his first voyage.](#)

Keep your Italian heritage alive. An excellent source for learning about Italian American culture and heritage is a museum specifically established to focus on the Italian American experience. Many have virtual exhibits and tours available on their websites. [List of Italian American Museums.](#)

Talk with your children (no matter what age), grandchildren, other family members, friends, and educators. Tell them about the significant contributions people of Italian heritage have made to America ... and the world. [List of 75 contributors on Thirty-One Days of Italians.](#)

The groups opposing Columbus Day have an organized agenda to eliminate it from America. Although the statements of truth and facts posted on Italian American websites are filled with historical facts, they are not very effective in reaching and educating the intended audience. Columbus Day has lost much of its relevance in American history; but battles for his legacy in American history are being won. Even so, the war against Columbus and our Italian heritage continues. Indigenous People already have a designated day, and Native Americans have a day and a month to celebrate their culture.

Indigenous Peoples Day – August 9

Native American Month – November

Native American Heritage Day – Friday after Thanksgiving

Visit the [IAHP website](#) to read my articles, learn about the lesson plans, see the resources I've used, and support my work. Donate for a cause – preserving Italian heritage and Italian American history and culture through education. [All donations are tax-deductible.](#)

On Exhibit

[Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael: Florence, c. 1504](#)

November 9, 2024 to February 16, 2025

The Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries, Burlington Gardens, London, UK

Read my articles in [La Gazzetta Italiana](#)

Italian American News

[Special Olympian Makes Italian American Sports Hall of Fame History](#) (evanstonroundtable.com; November 10, 2024)

[Chicopee Honors Italian Heritage Month with Flag Raising](#) (thereminder.com; November 4, 2024)

[Oval Office Aspirants of 2024, Unite!](#) (italic.org; October 19, 2024)

[Pop Icon Frankie Valli](#) (franoi.com; October 17, 2024)

[NEW YORK, NEW YORK](#) (italic.org; October 1, 2024)

[The Columbus Statue has a New Home](#) (PDF, iacava.com; September 28, 2024)

[Wall Street Journal Hears from Us](#) (italic.org; September 12, 2024)

News about Italy

[Fees, Bans and Limits - How Mass Tourism is Transforming Italy](#) (yahoo.com; November 14, 2024)

[Italy's Mafia-Fighting 'Street Priest' Archbishop Domenico Battaglia to Become a Cardinal](#) (catholicnewsagency.com; November 14, 2024)

[Buffalo Mozzarella Launches 2024 Italian Cuisine Week Worldwide](#) (news.italianfood.net; November 14, 2024)

[Italy's President Sharply Rebukes Elon Musk over Comments on X about Migration Court Rulings](#) (msn.com; November 14, 2024)

[Homes Alone: Abandoned Buildings of the Italian Apennines – In Pictures](#) (theguardian.com; November 9, 2024)

[See Inside the Trevi Fountain's Renovation Process](#) (cnn.com; November 9, 2024)

[Italian President Mattarella Meets Chinese leader Xi in Beijing amid Complex Ties](#) (abcnews.go.com; November 8, 2024)

[Harris Snubbed Prestigious Italian American Organization](#) (washingtonexaminer.com; November 5, 2024)

[Italian Food Exports Set to Near €57B by Year-End](#) (news.italianfood.net; October 30, 2024)

[Squatters Beware!](#) (franoi.com; October 22, 2024)

[Italy and Switzerland Have Agreed to Shift Their Shared Border in the Alps](#) (cnn.com; October 1, 2024)

[Sicilian Cathedral's Stunning Mosaics Regain Golden Lustre](#) (msn.com; September 29, 2024)

Peace and Joy this Holiday Season,
Janice

Janice Therese Mancuso
Publisher, [Tutto Italiano](#)
Director, [Italian American Press](#)
Founder, [Italian American Heritage Project](#)
Founder, [Thirty-One Days of Italians](#)
Author of [Con Amore](#)
[Writer, Author, Researcher](#)

