

Il Gazzettino

August 2017

Message from the Board

We have had a busy summer of activities and we are gearing up for an even busier Fall season culminating in our first ever Festa Italiana Hawaii on October 7! Your help will be needed – watch for details in future emails from the Board...

Cordiali saluti,

Friends of Italy Society of Hawaii Board
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Upcoming Events

Italian language classes

August 7, 20, 27

September 3, 10, 17, 24

October 1, 8

Festa Italiana Hawaii



Save the date: October 7

Upcoming (and Ongoing) Events: Italian Language Classes

FOISOH held its first ever Italian language course titled “Italian for Beginners” this past August 7. Additional classes will be taught on

August 20, 27

September 3, 10, 17, 24

October 1, 8

Unfortunately, this class is now at full capacity so registration is no longer open for this course.

This is a basic conversational course covering the basics of the language. Students will learn, for example, how to talk about their job, go shopping, order at a restaurant and ask other questions when traveling in Italy. They will learn all the expressions they need, as well as basic grammar and pronunciation. They will learn basic vocabulary (adjectives, nouns, adverbs); verbs will be introduced in dialogues, and they will also learn how to put your Italian into practice in everyday situations.

The class is taught by Dr. Carlo Andrea Malanima, a native speaker from Italy and a member of the FOISOH Board. Dr. Malanima was a Fulbright scholar at the prestigious Julliard School of Music. During his career as a musician Dr. Malanima has been a member of some of the most important orchestras of Italy including Teatro Alla Scala and the Academia of Santa Cecilia of Rome. He has also performed in the major concert halls of the world including Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Sidney Opera House, and the Wiener StaatsOper.

Our thanks to Dr. Malanima for offering to teach this course!

Upcoming Events

FESTA ITALIANA HAWAII– Coming for Fall 2017

FOISOH is planning to have the first ever FESTA ITALIANA HAWAII this fall on October 7– Save this date!



Pizza, pasta, wine, cheese, bread, gelato - all the most delicious dining delights seem to hail from Italy. Festa Italiana Hawaii will offer the opportunity to taste the many amazing flavors of Italy in one extraordinary evening in Honolulu's vibrant Kaka'ako District.

Festa Italiana Hawaii will also highlight Italian culture by showcasing the works of artists and musicians whose work is inspired by Italy as well as Italian cars and clothing and handbags from well-known Italian car makers and fashion houses.

Festa will be held on **Saturday, October 7, 2017 from about 4:00-10:00 p.m.** on Cooke St. (between Pohukaina and Auahi) and Wade Warehouse.

Visit our website <http://www.friendsofitalyhawaii.org/> for more information and look out for additional emails from the FOISOH Board.

Past Events

We have had a very busy summer. Listed below are the some of events that we have sponsored:

- **Sunday, June 25:** Aperipranzo potluck at Kapiolani Park
- **Sunday, July 23:** FOISOH Brunch at Outrigger Canoe Club



- **Sunday, August 7:** First class of “Italian for Beginners”



- **Friday, August 18:** Blind Wine Tasting at Hawai'i Loa Ridge Clubhouse
- **NOTE:** The *Gazzettino* needs participants to take photos of these events and send them to me at ethridgemark@yahoo.com

Feature Story

ROBERT W. WILCOX: THE HAWAIIAN GARIBALDI

By Mark Ethridge

In the Fort Street Mall facing King Street stands a statue of a dashing young man dressed in a late 19th century- Italian military uniform. The man is Robert W. Wilcox, the charismatic leader of two failed uprisings during the tumultuous period of the last days of Hawaiian monarchy and the early days of the Republic of Hawaii.



His biography is briefly summarized on the front panel of the statue which was erected in 1993:

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**“Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox
February 15, 1855 - October 23, 1903**

Robert Wilcox was born at Honuaola, Maui in 1855 the son of Captain William Slocum Wilcox and Kalua Makoleokalani who descended from Maui royalty. He was known to the Hawaiian people as "Ka Liona Hae O Ka Pakipika" (The Roaring Lion of the Pacific)

He was extremely popular among the Hawaiian people as an educator and legislator. He served as Hawaii's first delegate to Congress from 1900 to 1902. Wilcox led two counter-insurgency movements in 1889 and 1895 against the foreign interests which had seized control of the Hawaiian Government. Tried for treason, he was found not guilty by a jury of Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians under the ethnic jury system then in effect. In 1895, he again organized an army to overthrow the Republic of Hawaii. The Republican forces suppressed the counter-revolutionaries and Wilcox was court-martialed and sentenced to death. Sanford B. Dole, President of the Republic of Hawaii gave him a full pardon in 1898 after the U.S. Congress intervened.

First married to Gina Sobrero of Italy, Wilcox took as his second wife Princess Theresa Owana Kaohelalani Laanui.

After serving as Hawaii's congressional delegate, Wilcox died in 1903 while campaigning for Sheriff of Honolulu. The Home Rule Party, composed largely of Hawaiians, had petitioned President Theodore Roosevelt to appoint Wilcox as Governor. He might have received the appointment had he lived.”

In addition to his deep love of his Hawaiian homeland, Wilcox had a unique and deep connection with Italy and that aspect of his life is the focus of this article.

The Italian connection begins in 1879, when Robert Wilcox was selected by King Kalakaua as one of three Hawaiian youth (although Wilcox was already 25) to participate in a new European study abroad program. Wilcox’s selection may have been influenced by an Italian-born adventurer, Celso Cesare Moreno, who had gained the favor of Kalakaua and had been appointed as

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Foreign Minister until being forced by public pressure to remove him (Moreno's story is mentioned in the December 2016 *Gazzettino*). Wilcox insisted that the King had the right to appoint whomever he chose, and he put up signs around town proclaiming "Way up Moreno!", defending Moreno as a champion of the native Hawaiian people. Therefore Wilcox's selection may have to some extent been "payback" for his support of Moreno and Kalakaua. The king continued to favor Moreno and appointed him as guardian and escort for the three young Hawaiians during their schooling abroad.

Wilcox was enrolled in the Royal Academy of Civil and Military Engineers in Turin, Italy. In Turin, Wilcox was first exposed to European history and literature. He learned of the Italian patriots Count Camillo Benso di Cavour and Guiseppe Garibaldi and would later try to apply their stories to Hawaii. He also studied *The Prince* of Machiavelli and thought its lessons applicable to the Hawaiian political system, in particular, the need for a strong political leader in times of political turmoil. Wilcox was so excited with Machiavelli that he sent a copy of *The Prince* to King Kalakaua. The King however, replied less than enthusiastically, stating that while he knew the work he found "half of the instructions antiquated and inconsequential in these times of Higher Learning."



Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli

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Before commencing his studies in the spring of 1881, Moreno introduced Wilcox and the other students to Giuseppe Garibaldi. He gave them the following advice:

The most important thing I wish to tell you is this: Each of you hold fast in your heart from this hour on. Know and love your fellow man. Love your King and your country, and acquire wisdom to return to governmental work of your wise King.

Wilcox graduated from the Turin Military Academy, and then enrolled in the Royal Training School of Artillery and Engineering (Scuola d'Applicazione d'Artiglieria e Genio). The school was located in a large, imposing stone structure that during the Renaissance was Turin's Armory. It still functions today as a military school now called Scuola d'Applicazione d'Arma. Wilcox excelled in his studies, ranking in the top half of his class, all the more remarkable for a Hawaiian expatriate with no previous European academic experience. Wilcox was very happy in this Italian aristocratic environment, and he was excessively proud on the day he earned the right to wear the elaborate uniform of an Italian army officer. Although his uniform was very expensive, Wilcox rationalized its purchase when he wrote to his guardian that he would probably make use of the uniform at home in Hawai'i. Wilcox did in fact wear the uniform during two revolutions, and the uniform entered into the legends of Hawai'i's revolutionary era. A biography of Wilcox by Thomas Nakanaela, his biographer, includes a Hawaiian chant, noting the admiring popular response to the sight of Wilcox so splendidly clad. "Behold Wilcox," goes the chant, "in the glittering apparel of Italy, he resembles a yellow-striped bird!" Thus Wilcox became "Italianized" as his Honolulu critics would complain.

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During his stay in Italy, Wilcox became enamored of and eventually married Gina Sobrero, a woman of Italian noble descent. Wilcox called her his “little lehua blossom,” and promised her she would be a “queen” in Hawaii. On June 15, 1887, they were married. At the wedding, the Italian press commented on Wilcox and the two other Hawaiian students expressing a hearty liking for “these pleasant and amiable gentlemen, whose manners are polished and whose conversation is highly intelligent.” They were pleased that Wilcox “should have chosen one of the most beautiful flowers of the garden of Italy to transplant to those far away regions, where reigns an eternal spring.” His marriage to Italian nobility also enhanced his own claim to a royal heritage as his mother also came from a royal Hawaiian family and was even referred to by some as “Prince Wilcox — half Hawaiian royalty, half Italian.”

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Unfortunately, their marriage was not to last – Gina gradually became disenchanted when the reality that confronted her in Hawaii did not match the wonderful picture that her husband had painted. “My God! A country where there is no telegraph – and where it takes a letter a month to arrive? ... these island anthills in the Pacific.” (Cuzzi and Pigliasco 2016). Also, her husband’s revolutionary ambitions were probably not conducive to a stable family life.

Her stay in Hawaii and her longing for return to Italy pushed her to write a diary titled the “Expatriate” and published under the pseudonym of Mantea. Her story is discussed in detail in one of the chapters of the 2016 book titled *Storie straordinarie dei italiani nel Pacifico* by Marco Cuzzi and Guido Carlo Pigliasco.

As mentioned previously Wilcox would proudly wear his Italian uniform into battle on several occasions. It was certainly his most prized possession. During the 1889 insurrection he mobilized about 300 armed followers clad in red shirts following the tradition of the Garibaldi “red shirts.” During the 1895 unsuccessful counter-revolution, he lost the Italian cape to his uniform in a hasty retreat from Diamond Head to the Palolo Valley where it was seized by his pursuers as a war trophy.

A century later, on September 11, 1993, about 350 people gathered in downtown Honolulu for a ceremony and the unveiling of a statue honoring Robert Wilcox. The ceremony was steeped in Hawaiian cultural tradition. Tributes were made to Wilcox through na mele ku’auhau (chants), na mele hula (dances), and the blowing of the sacred pu (conch shell).

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Various speakers honored Wilcox with speeches. City Council Chairperson Gary Gill, who originally proposed the idea for the statue, declared:

". . . today for me is a triumph. For after a hundred years, a great figure in Hawaiian history is finally receiving the recognition that he's due. Robert Wilcox was a patriot. Robert Wilcox stood for truth, independence, nationhood, and sovereignty in a day when American imperialism was conquering the Pacific."

Mayor Frank F. Fasi (coincidentally an Italian-American) proclaimed September 11, 1993 as Robert Wilcox Day. After his speech, Fasi unveiled the Wilcox statue. When revealed, one could see a bronze-like figure of Wilcox in his uniform of an Italian cavalry officer standing boldly, or defiantly, while holding his sword. Fasi then made a ho'okupu (offering) to the statue.

On the left panel of the statue is written the following inscription:

Hawaiian Freedom Fighter Returns from Italy

In 1880 King Kalakaua selected Wilcox among others to study abroad. He was admitted to the Royal Military Academy at Turin Italy, where he was graduated as an Officer of Artillery. Promoted to Sub-Lieutenant of Artillery he was completing his studies when recalled by the Hawaiian Government in 1887. Inspired by the Italian patriot, Guiseppe Garibaldi, Lieutenant Wilcox is depicted here in his Garibaldi uniform which he frequently and proudly wore. He was regarded by many of his countrymen as a national hero due to his commitment to defend the independence of the Hawaiian monarchy

Much of this article was paraphrased from the Translator's Introduction by Nancy J. Morris to the *Biography of the Hon. Robert William Wilcox* by Thomas K. Nakanaela, Honolulu 1993

Announcements

Michelangelo: Love and Death

Home / Events / Doris Duke Theatre / Films / [Michelangelo: Love and Death](#)



SAVE THE DATE

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Film:

Michelangelo: Love and Death

Showtimes:

Sunday Aug 20 07:00 PM

Tuesday Aug 22 01:00 PM

Tuesday Aug 22 07:30 PM

Wednesday Aug 23 01:00 PM

Wednesday Aug 23 07:30 PM

Friday Aug 25 01:00 PM

Location:

Doris Duke Theatre

Announcements

Price:

Museum members: \$10.00

General Admission: \$12.00

About the Film:

Directed by David Bickerstaff. United Kingdom. 2017. 88 mins.

Exhibition on Screen is back with a look at Michelangelo. His work may seem so familiar to us, but what do we really know about this renaissance genius?

A virtuoso craftsman, Michelangelo's artistry is evident in everything he touched. Beautiful and diverse works such as the towering statue of David, the deeply moving Pietà in the Papal Basilica of St. Peter and his tour-de-force, the Sistine Chapel ceiling, still leave us breathless today. Spanning his 89 years, *Michelangelo: Love and Death* takes a cinematic journey from the print and drawing rooms of Europe, through the great chapels and museums of Florence, Rome and the Vatican to explore the tempestuous life of Michelangelo. We go in search of a greater understanding of this charismatic figure, his relationship with his contemporaries and his valuable artistic legacy. Through expert commentary and Michelangelo's own words, this film takes a fresh look at an enigmatic man whose life is celebrated in every mark and stroke he made. A giant artistic force and universally loved, discover why Michelangelo is without a doubt one of the greatest artists of the Renaissance—and perhaps of all time.