



# IL GAZZETTINO

## Upcoming Events

Check our [website](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) for updated information on events as we adapt to comply with guidelines for group gatherings.

Italian Game Night Sunday 20 Sep 7-8pm Zoom

Adult Language Class (ONLINE)

Tuesdays, 8 Sep - 27 Oct, 4:30pm, 6:00pm, 7:30pm

Tuesdays, 3 Nov - 22 Dec, 5:30-7pm

Children's Language Class

Saturdays, 24 Oct - 14 Nov, 9:30am

TBD

Annual meeting (ONLINE)

Wednesday, 23 Sep 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Lectures:

Living on the Moon and Mars (ONLINE)

Veronica Bindi, University of Hawaii, Physics and Astronomy

Thursday, 29 Oct 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Italian opera, UNESCO heritage (ONLINE)

Carlo Andrea Malanima, Teatro Carlo Felice Orchestra

Thursday, 19 Nov 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Save the Date: 30 Year Anniversary Venetian

Extravaganza 19 June 2021 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

La Pietra

RSVP: [friendsofitalyhawaii.org/events](https://friendsofitalyhawaii.org/events)



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## In the Spotlight



Our friend **Maya Hoover** is a mezzo-soprano who has sung all over the world. Described as an artist of “passion and depth on stage,” she also serves as Professor of Music and Voice Area Chair at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. She began to study Italian during her undergraduate years. She went on to study in Firenze and complete a minor in Italian language and literature, and has continued her studies of the language ever since. She loves to speak the language, and she has been very fortunate to have a job that takes her to Italy to perform and teach. In a recent appearance on *Music Matters with Jason Tramm* in the episode “On Artistry and Higher Education,” Maya spoke eloquently on the issue facing all teachers as fall approaches. “Our conversation for the fall is not ‘how do we teach [our students]?’ We know how to teach them. We can teach them in any format. ‘How do we keep them engaged? How do we keep them excited? How do we keep them connected?’ That’s our challenge.” Maya is Vice President of the Friends of Italy of Hawaii.



**Da Shop: Books + Curiosities** is Honolulu's favorite local community bookstore and events space. Currently, Da Shop offers curbside pickup and direct to home shipping. Da Shop is located in Kaimuki at 3565 Harding Avenue, Honolulu. Street parking or municipal lot across the street.

Da Shop is located under Bess Press, Hawaii's leading independent publisher for over forty years. Bess Press has published many of Hawaii's favorite titles from *Hush Little Keiki* to *Pidgin* to *da Max* to *Plants in Hawaiian Medicine*.

Check out both online at [dashophnl.com](http://dashophnl.com) and [besspress.com](http://besspress.com)



## Connessioni



**Contributed by Esmeralda Carini**

I think it is a funny story how my parents got to Hawaii. They met in Boston and lived there for several years. Then they came to Hawaii for a vacation—2 weeks in Waikiki as my mom likes to remind us. They were both from hot weather climates and fell in love with Hawaii, so they went back to Boston, sold everything, and moved to Hawaii.

My mother is from Colombia. My father is from a small fishing town right outside of Palermo called Porticello. He grew up fishing with my grandfather and always loved the ocean. I think Hawaii felt like home to him as it does for me.



## Feature Story

# THE ITALIAN SOLDIER WHO (INADVERTENTLY) SAVED ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S LIFE

by Mark Ethridge



***“When you go to war as a boy, you have a great illusion of immortality. Other people get killed, not you...Then, when you are badly wounded the first time, you lose that illusion, and you know it can happen to you.” Ernest Hemingway, Men at War***

This is the story of the search to find the identity of the Italian soldier who was killed by an Austrian mortar shell the night of July 8, 1918. By a twist of fate, he unintentionally shielded a young Ernest Hemingway from the worst of the blast, and very likely saved the American's life.

During the evening of July 8, 1918, an 18-year old Ernest Hemingway stops near the small town of Fossalta, Italy to deliver cigarettes, chocolate and postcards to Italian troops entrenched about twenty yards from the west bank of the Piave River. Hemingway travels by bicycle rather than by motor vehicle, providing a rolling canteen service among several Italian positions on the west bank of the Piave. During his travels, he observes snipers in action and artillery blasts.

## Feature Story, cont.

The night is hot and moonless and is periodically illuminated by the burst of mortar shells. Nonetheless, it is a relatively peaceful night during a long and bloody war.

Then, suddenly and without warning, an Austrian Minenwerfer mortar roars through the sky and the shell slams into their position, instantly killing an Italian soldier just feet away from Hemingway. Several others are wounded and Hemingway is knocked unconscious. He recovers and carries a wounded soldier to safety. Two hundred twenty-seven shards of metal pierced his flesh, and Hemingway ends up spending the remaining four months of the war in the American Red Cross hospital in Milan. These events are immortalized, albeit in a fictionalized form, in his novel *A Farewell to Arms*, published in 1929. However, the identity of the Italian soldier who shielded Hemingway from death remains a mystery.



Hemingway had volunteered to work for the American Red Cross only a few months earlier. He had wanted to join one of the American military forces but was rejected because of poor eyesight. Working as a junior reporter for the *Kansas City Star* in late 1917 and early 1918, he interviewed another young man, Theodore Brumback, about his harrowing, action-filled experiences as an ambulance driver in war-torn northern France. His story and an appeal from the American Red Cross for volunteers in February 1918 convinced Hemingway to join the ambulance service in Italy.

Hemingway arrived in Milan with Brumback in early June 1918 full of youthful enthusiasm. In Milan, the young Hemingway had his first encounter with death – he was directed to recover bodies and body fragments resulting from a horrific explosion in a munitions factory.



## Feature Story, cont.

Hemingway and Brumback were sent to different parts of the 400-mile long battle front, stretching from the Alps to the Adriatic Sea. The Red Cross sent Hemingway to Schio, a village south of the Dolomites about 10 miles from the front lines. The young American quickly became bored. However, things heated up when the Austrians and Germans launched a massive attack along the Piave River, and Hemingway jumped at a request for volunteers to participate in a rolling canteen service near the front lines between the towns of Fornaci and Fossalta. Hemingway was ecstatic and wrote his mother, “I have glimpsed the making of large gobs of history during the Great Battle of the Piave and have been all along the Front from the mountains to the sea.” The Austro-German forces failed in their attempt to dislodge the Italians, but a war of attrition continued into July when Hemingway was wounded by the Austrian mortar shell.

By the end of 1918, Hemingway received an Italian medal of valor for having served in his supporting role with honor. He also earned an Italian war cross in late October, apparently in recognition for serving during the Italian campaign on the Austrian front.

Along the Piave River there now stands a memorial near the spot of the explosion and Hemingway’s wounding. “On this levee,” the inscription reads in Italian, “Ernest Hemingway, American Red Cross volunteer, was wounded the night of July 8, 1918.” In 2014, the Ernest Hemingway Society brought a group of its members to the spot during its biennial international conference in Venice. However, there is no mention on the memorial of the Italian soldier who died that night, although Hemingway does create a fictionalized account of a similar attack in his novel with a soldier named Passini.



A historical marker at the spot where Hemingway was wounded on July 8, 1918 near Fossalta, Italy.

## Feature Story, cont.

The search for the Italian soldier's identity was led by James McGrath Morris after he published his 2017 book, "The Ambulance Drivers: Hemingway, Dos Passos, and a Friendship Made and Lost in War," which described Hemingway's World War I experience. At the end of the book, he included a postscript listing the names of 18 Italian soldiers, culled from Italian military records, who died in battle the night of the mortar attack. In the postscript, as well as a subsequent online article, he issued a challenge to Italian scholars to complete the research and identify which of the 18 men saved Hemingway's life that July night in 1918.

A local Italian historian, Marino Perissinotto, who lives along the Piave, saw his article and developed a strategy to shrink the number of candidates. First, he identified the locations of the army units of each soldier who died that night, narrowing the list to three men who were in the immediate area of the mortar attack. Two of the dead were serving with the 152 Reggimento Fanteria, Brigata Sassari, which was stationed some distance away from the Piave. The third man was in the 69 Reggimento Fanteria, Brigata Ancona, in front-line service along the Piave at Fossalta on the Venetian plain where the worst of the fighting occurred. That left only one soldier in the vicinity of where Hemingway was wounded. Perissinotto found further corroboration – a military report from an officer at a Red Cross aid station behind the front, operated by the tiny Republic of San Marino. The officer noted that the first aid post had treated the first American wounded on the battlefield and that alongside him a soldier from the 69th infantry regiment had died. And that man who unknowingly gave his life for literature was Fedele Temperini of Montalcino, a medieval city in Tuscany. He was the son of Pellegrino Temperini and Zelinda Marconi, born in Montalcino on 8 February 1892, and he left for the war from the Siena military district. So, the mystery had finally been solved, and was announced by Morris in a January 19, 2019 article in *The Washington Post*.



Montalcino (also known for its excellent wines, especially the Brunello di Montalcino)

## Feature Story, cont.

The discovery of the identity of the Italian soldier spurred the Montalcino municipal administration to delve into his life story. They were able to trace his descendants and on July 12, 2019, they dedicated a memorial to Temperini and the other 330 Montalcino citizens who fell during the Great War, honoring them with a commemorative stone placed under the Loggiati del Sansovino in the old town. The ceremony was held at the castle in Poggio alle Mura, the birthplace of “Hemingway’s savior.”

Temperini was one of many young Italian men conscripted and crammed into trenches along the banks of the Piave in July 1918. Holding back Austrian forces over the course of the war came at a great price. The Italians suffered more than 650,000 casualties.

“Every man’s life ends the same way,” Hemingway once told his friend Aaron Hotchner, “and it is only the details of how he lived and how he died that distinguishes one man from another.”



Memorial ceremony for Fedele Temperini in Montalcino.



Commemorative inscription on stone

The information in this story was extracted mainly from the following sources:

1) “The young Mr. Hemingway in Italy, a legacy of war, love and writing,” by Steve Paul at the National World War I Museum and Memorial website <https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/wwi/young-hemingway>

2) “Hemingway’s World War I savior is anonymous no more,” James McGrath Morris. *The Washington Post*, Jan. 18, 2019

3) “The man who saved Hemingway was from Montalcino,” *Montalcino News*, Monday, August 5, 2019.



## Aloha from the Editor

My name is Lisa Maraventano and I am the new editor of *Il Gazzettino*. I am also relatively new to the Friends of Italy Society of Hawaii and Hawaii itself. As my first project, I thought getting to know our membership, partners and how we are connected would benefit not just me, but all of us! With that in mind, I have added some new sections to *Il Gazzettino*:

Friend in the Spotlight

Partner in the Spotlight

Connessioni

Please submit any content you would like considered for these sections to [lisamaraventano@gmail.com](mailto:lisamaraventano@gmail.com).

I am originally from California. I lived in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas for twenty years and New York for one year before moving to Hawaii in 2017. I have a BA in Economics from UCSC, four daughters, and I write novels.

In 1986, I bought an Alfa Romeo I owned until 2007 when I sold it to follow The Police around on their reunion tour. Back in the 80's, Alfa Romeo's slogan was "Driven to Be Different." I took those words to heart and have tried to enjoy life to the fullest. Chiara asked me to edit *Il Gazzettino* at the end of February. I have had many months to think about what I would say in this letter. I had several varying topics come to mind, but landed on "Dolce Vita." To prepare, I finally watched the masterpiece *La Dolce Vita*. Ironically, I watched it over the course of a week—which was perfect as it follows the life of the main character day by day. I thought about the film and the phrase, the meaning of each and both together, comparing the times gone by to now.

I've been intentional about savoring the sweetness of life the past few months. Sunshine, flowers, time with loved ones, birds, music, walks, water—the details of every day bring beauty and therefore meaning to the day.

Finding beauty in the everyday is its own art.

Lucky we live Hawaii, even as we face a surge in cases, more arbitrary lockdowns and uncertainty about the future. I'm getting worn down by permanent transience. I want to hold onto something again, something solid like a schedule.

Living in Hawaii, the colors of each dawn give enough hope we can make it until sunset.

So as I contemplate time and the sweetness of life within eternity, I try to grasp what is important. In the hours of each day, I search diligently for beauty, joy, faith, love and belief in tomorrow.

Alla prossima volta, amici miei.


