



Upcoming Events

RSVP on our [website](#); follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#)!

Language class: Italian for adults but through children's books! Ageless fun! (Members only*)

July/August 2022 5-8pm
Online

Learn Italian through children's books! We are all children when we learn a language. Every week prior to class, you will review textbook sections from 'Prego' as well as a passage from a children's book. In class, we undertake book exercises and use the children's book passage to converse while applying grammar.

"Sgroppino" pool party (Members only*)

20 August 2022 3.30-7.30pm
Private Residence (Ala Moana)

Chef Rosa Mariotti of Molto Ono will teach us how to prepare sgroppino, a delicious beverage with prosecco and lemon sorbet. We'll also take full advantage of our host's lovely pool, so don't forget to bring your bathing suit along!



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Friend in the Spotlight

Mark Ethridge



MARK ETHRIDGE AND HIS WIFE, MOON

For the past seven years, the Friends of Italy Society of Hawaii members have been treated to a host of fascinating articles about Italian-Hawaiian relations over the past centuries.

This is thanks to the extraordinary craftsmanship and dedication of writer Mark Ethridge. For each edition, he reads, researches, writes and edits a detailed and engaging piece that delves into the captivating and somewhat surprising history that lies between the two islands.

Read on to find out more about Mark and his story...

Mark Ethridge

What sparked your interest in the Italy-Hawaii connections that you treat us to in each *Gazzettino* edition?

I was a French/Political Science major undergraduate, studied in France, and had a great interest in travel and other cultures. I had studied Italian before I came to Hawaii. At first, I couldn't imagine there were any historical connections with places so far from one another. But I was wrong!

What have you found to be the most fascinating story you have uncovered of these Italian-Hawaiian relations?

The most surprising story was that there were roughly 5,000 Italian prisoners of war on Oahu during World War II.

The most fascinating perhaps are the stories of all the Italians or Italian-influenced individuals surrounding Hawaiian King David Kalakaua during the last days of his reign (Celso Cesare Moreno, Robert Wilcox, Gina Sobrero, Sam Nowlein and his daughter, Robert Boyd, and even John Dominis, whose father was from Trieste). Although not my original intention, through all these stories I have acquired a greater understanding of Kalakaua as a monarch who, while trying to preserve native Hawaiian culture, eagerly embraced science and technology, and was striving to bring his kingdom into the modern world. At the same time, he was desperately fighting to protect his country's independence and sovereignty."

What similarities have you observed between the Italian and Hawaiian cultures?

- There are several fundamental similarities between Italian and Hawaiian cultures:
- Both are warm, welcoming, and outgoing with a long tradition of hospitality
 - Both are family oriented (large, extended family with close friends) and have a special sense of place
 - Both know how to slow down and enjoy life's simple but precious pleasures.

Take us through the typical process for researching and writing your articles!

There is no typical process!

When I first started, past articles of the *Gazzettino* had mentioned in passing certain events such as the Italian prisoners of war here during World War II that I researched in a lot more depth. In a few cases, readers came to me with suggestions. Sometimes I just happened to run across something when I least expected it, or one story would lead to another, which was the case with King Kalakaua's Hawaiian Youths Abroad Program.

Mark Ethridge

Tell us about your ancestral roots

I have no Italian ancestry that I know of. On my mother's side (maiden name Knuth) there is a German connection. My father was English by way of the South (Georgia).

Where are you from in the US?

I was born in Kansas City, Missouri and lived there until I was 12. After that I lived in northern New Jersey near New York City in a small town that was half Dutch Reformed and half Italian.

The most memorable trip was in 2011 when I, my wife and my daughter met my Italian friend (who I had met online in 2005) and his family in Valtellina. They were so incredibly nice and generous. All of us were profoundly moved by the experience and that friendship continues to this day.

What is your main occupation?

When I was a kid, I wanted to be a meteorologist, or paleontologist (dinosaurs!)
I recently retired as a Senior Environmental Scientist. I worked for 20 years as contract staff for the environmental office of the Missile Defense Agency. I worked remotely most of that time in Washington, D.C.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time, apart from writing wonderful articles for Il Gazzettino ?

My number one interest is singing, especially choral singing. I am a member of the Oahu Choral Society that sings with our Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. We just recently performed Mozart's Requiem. I also sing in the Windward Choral Society in Kailua.

Another interest is hiking which I do with the Osher Lifelong Living institute (OLLI) at UH Manoa. I also run about 3 miles every day just for fun and read books in French and Italian.

How did you end up in Hawaii?

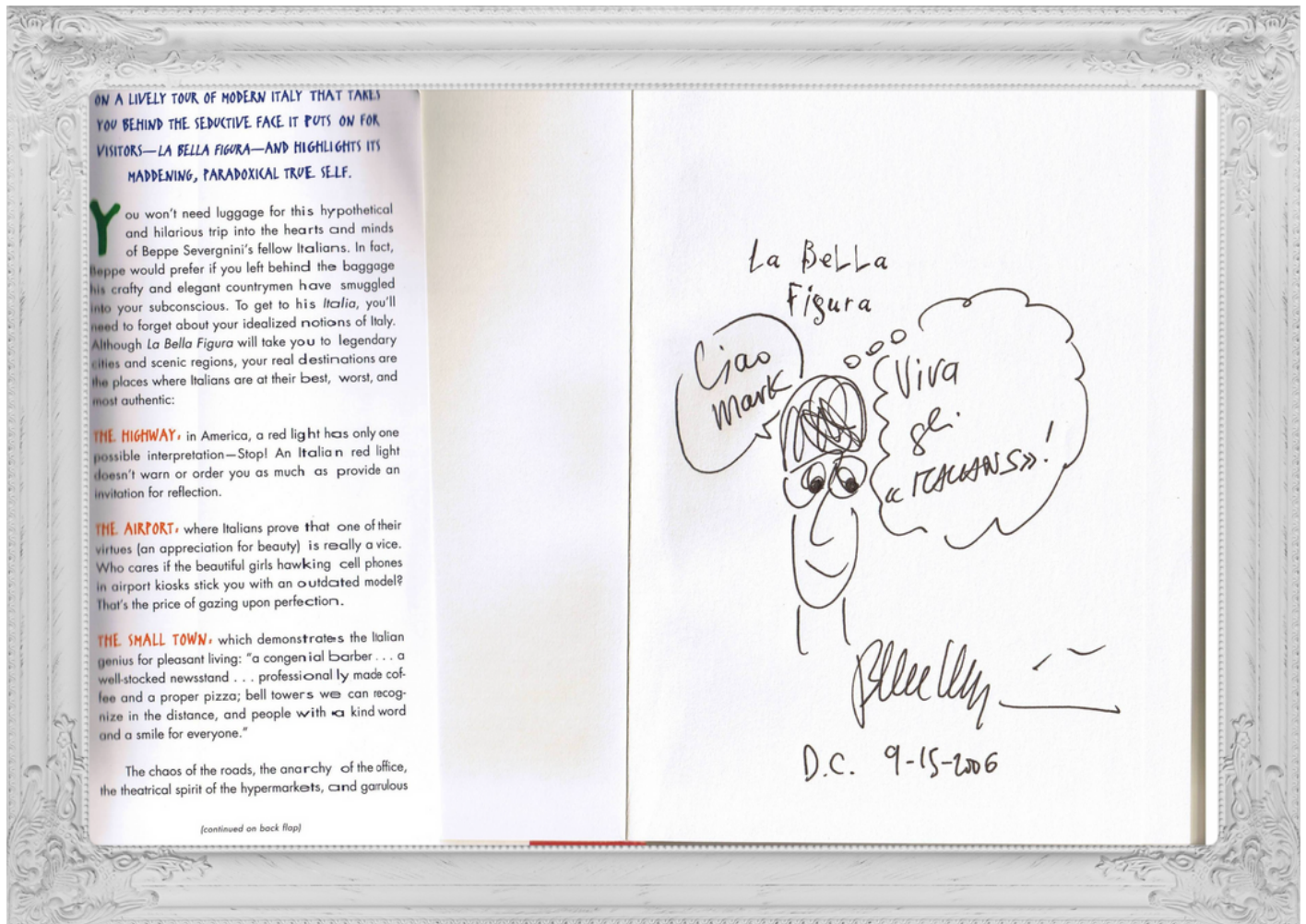
I came here because my wife had rheumatoid arthritis back in the Washington, D.C. area which miraculously disappeared every time we came to Hawaii. We came here nine years ago, and my wife's arthritis completely disappeared and hasn't reappeared since. My wife also has some relatives here.

Mark Ethridge

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself!

In 2005, I wrote an article about how I enjoyed Italy, its culture and people and sent it to Beppe Severgnini who published and responded to it in his blog "Italians" in *Il Corriere della Sera* (Milan's main newspaper). He published my email and a lot of Italians contacted me.

One is an Italian from Valtellina who later became my best friend. I was able to meet and talk to Beppe in 2006 in Washington, D.C. Below is a little cartoon he drew for me. He told me to keep writing and never drink cappuccino after 12 pm. I wrote a short story in the style of Mark Twain and he published that also in his column in 2014. This was my 15 minutes of fame!



**THE CARTOON DEDICATED TO MARK, ILLUSTRATED BY FAMED ITALIAN JOURNALIST
BEPPE SEVERGNINI**

Mark Ethridge



MARK'S FAVORITE ITALIAN THINGS



Italian music

Film Music: Nino Rota and Ennio Morricone. Operas: Puccini's *La Bohème* and Gianni Schicchi.
The Italian language operas of Mozart. Composers-Antonio Vivaldi and Ottorino Respighi

Italian food

I like pretty much everything, but like Garfield the Cat, I enjoy lasagna. Perhaps because of my Asian wife, I've taken a liking to risotto.

Italian historical figure

Leonardo Da Vinci

Italian city or province

Campania, especially *Sorrento*, *Pompeii*, *Capri*, and *la Costa Amalfitana* because of the Roman ruins (*Pompeii*, *Herculaneum*, *Castelmar di Stabia*, and Tiberius' palace *Villa Jovis*) and the beautiful scenery.

Lake Como – near where my friend lives – because of the scenery and the spiritual connection with the setting of the great Italian masterpiece *I Promessi Sposi* of Manzoni.

Italian ice cream flavor

Chocolate and Pistachio

Favorite Italian phrase

Chi va piano, va sano e anche lontano.

This phrase can have different nuances of meaning, depending on the context. It can mean if you have an easy-going and relaxed approach to life, you'll live healthier and longer. I have always wanted to put this on a t-shirt when running marathons. It can be roughly translated as:
"who goes steady and sure goes healthy and far" or even "steady and sure wins (or survives) the race."



LAKE COMO



L'estate in Italia



Sparkling turquoise waters...sweet, refreshing gelato...

Sun-kissed tans... millions of tourists...

Find out how *gli italiani* spend their summers!



☺ Summer is THE most popular season for tourists. In 2019 alone, nearly 100 million graced the shores of *il bel paese* (and no, I didn't accidentally add a zero!). Interestingly, the country that has the highest number of visitors to Italy is France.

Italians consume almost 9lb of gelato EACH a year, with the majority of this eaten during the summer months. And they still manage to stay so slim!

It is not unusual to find a plethora of restaurants, cafes, trattorias and osterias closed during the summer - especially the month of August. Are they nuts?! Summer is the most popular, lucrative time of the year! Well, it's also one of the hottest times of year AND the only month that families can arrange a family *vacanza*.

So where DO Italians typically go for their summer breaks? Well, they tend to stay in their own country - I mean, why on earth would they want to leave?

The classic vacation spots are Sardinia, the *Riviera Romagnola*, Sicily, the Amalfi coast, Liguria and Tuscany.

We cannot have a *Gazzettino* article without mentioning something about food! Here are some typical summer dishes: *Prosciutto e Melone*, *Insalata Caprese*, *Insalata del Riso*, *Ciambotta* and *Granita*.

La Ricetta della Stagione



LINGUINE ALLE VONGOLE

This is a traditional Neapolitan summer dish, made with clams and linguine. This recipe is quick and easy to prepare, even for an amateur chef!

350g linguine (you can also use spaghetti)

800g fresh clams

3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

2 garlic cloves

Fresh parsley, minced

Pepper

TIP: The liquid released by the clams is very savory so do not add salt to the sauce. In fact, you can use very little salt in the pasta cooking water.

Rinse the clams several times and soak them for a few hours in lukewarm and slightly salted water.

Heat the olive oil in a large pan and gently sauté the peeled and crushed garlic cloves. When the garlic has lightly browned, add the drained clams into the pan, raise the heat, cover and leave undisturbed for a few minutes, until they are all open.

Remove the clams with a slotted spoon and shell them. Make sure you discard the ones that have failed to open and leave a dozen with the shell for decorative purposes.

Filter the cooking liquid into a pan, add the shelled clams and season with plenty of black pepper.

Cook the linguine, drain them al dente, pour them into the pan and stir, keeping the stove on low heat, cooking for a couple of minutes so that they absorb the sauce and finish cooking.

Serve very hot, sprinkled with plenty of chopped parsley.

Poem of the Season



NELLE AZZURRE SERE D'ESTATE

Nelle azzurre sere d'estate, me ne andrò per i sentieri,
graffiato dagli steli, sfiorando l'erba nuova:
trasognato, ne sentirò la frescura sotto i piedi,
e lascerò che il vento mi bagni la testa nuda.

Non parlerò, non penserò a niente:
Ma l'amore infinito mi salirà nell'anima,
E andrò lontano, molto lontano, come uno zingaro.

ON THE BLUE SUMMER EVENING

"On the blue summer evenings, I will go
along the paths,
And walk over the short grass, as I am
pricked by the wheat:
Daydreaming I will feel the coolness on my
feet.
I will let the wind bathe my bare head. I
will not speak,
I will have no thoughts: But infinite love
will mount in my soul;
And I will go far, far off, like a gypsy,
through the countryside - as happy as if I
were with a woman

Arthur Rimbaud

Feature Story

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

BY MARK ETHRIDGE



ITALIAN BARONESS, GINA SOBRERO

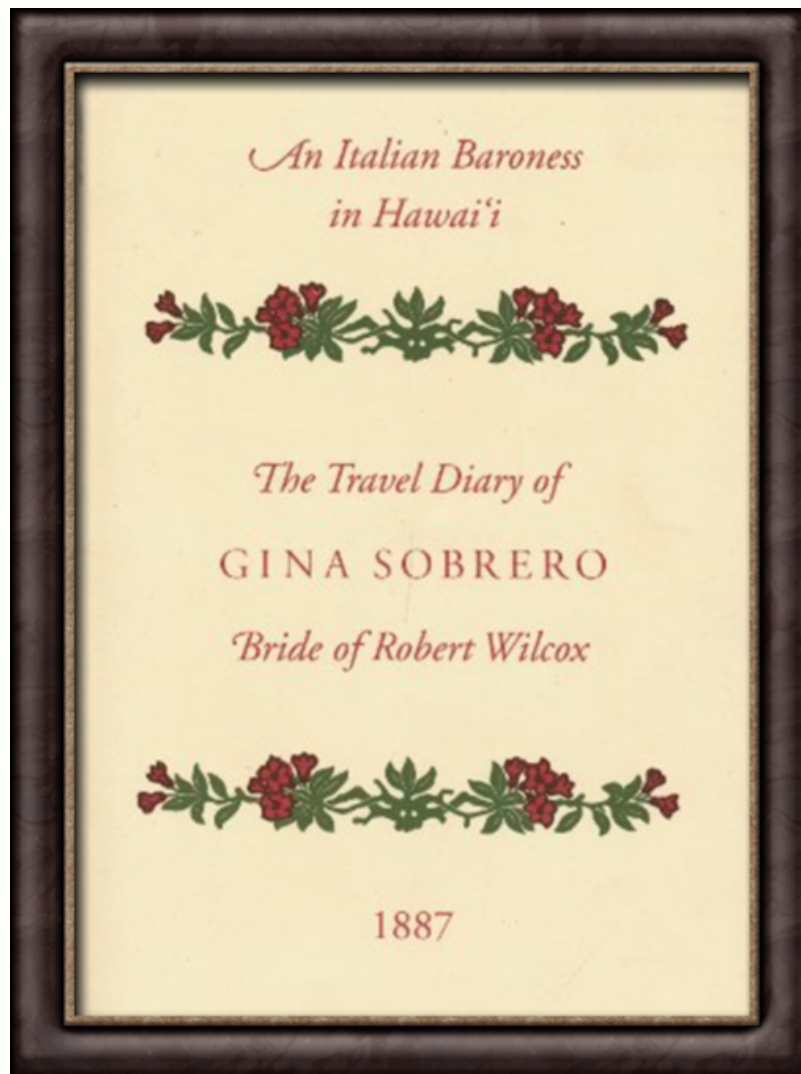
In 1908, Gina Sobrero, under the nom de plume “Mantea,” published an account of her marriage, honeymoon, long voyage to Hawaii and her brief stay in Honolulu from October 1887 to February 1888. This travel diary provides a rare, firsthand account of the abrupt transition from her quiet, privileged, and protected life in Turin to the tumultuous events occurring late in Hawaiian King David Kalakaua’s reign in which her husband, Robert William Wilcox played a leading role (Robert Wilcox’s story is featured in the August 2017 Gazzettino).

Gina Sobrero was born in 1863 in a noble family. Her father, the Baron Lorenzo Sobrero, was a colonel in the Piemontese army. The mother, Vittoria Colonna di Stigliano, was a Neapolitan noblewoman. Ascanio Sobrero, a relative, was a chemist who discovered nitroglycerine. Giovanni Giolitti, five times the prime minister of Italy from 1892 to 1921, entered the family by marriage to Rosa Sobrero.

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

The book which is titled “L’Expatriata: Da Torino a Honolulu,” (the expatriate: from Turin to Honolulu) is titled “An Italian Baroness in Hawaii” in the English translation which was published by Edgar C. Knowlton of the Hawaiian Historical Society in 1991.

The book is divided into three parts: the first, discusses Gina’s courtship, marriage, and honeymoon; the second describes the first part of her voyage from Turin to San Francisco; the last recounts her time spent in Honolulu. This article focuses on Gina’s stay in Honolulu and her observations on Hawaii’s monarchy, the people, food and culture, and her husband’s political intrigues.



GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

Her husband, Robert Kalana-hiapo William Wilcox, was the son of William Slocum Wilcox, a sea captain from Rhode Island and Kalua Makole-o-kalani Hiapo, a Hawaiian woman of noble origin belonging to royal family of Maui. Wilcox, along with other Hawaiian youth, was chosen by King Kalakaua to participate in a study abroad program which we have discussed in other Gazzettino articles. Robert Wilcox studied in the Scuola d'Applicazione d'Artiglieria e Genio in Turin. It was there that he frequented the upper social circles of Turin society where he met Gina Sobrero, who was charmed by the handsome young man in military uniform. Robert and Gina were soon married in an impressive ceremony in June of 1887 in Turin, Italy.

The local Honolulu newspaper, the Daily Bulletin of Honolulu reported on the day's events with an ironic twist: *"Louisa [sic] Sobrero, daughter of the Baron Lorenzo Sobrero, a Colonel of the Italian military, was married in Turin on the 15th inst., to Robert Wilcox of the Sandwich Islands, a pupil of the Italian military academy. Young Wilcox's mother was a native Hawaiian. Isn't it about time this boy graduated?"* (Footnote #1 to part II of the 2007 edition).

E. Andrade Jr., the American author of "Unconquerable Rebel: Robert W. Wilcox and Hawaiian Politics, 1890-1903," maintains that Wilcox intended to make Italy his home. This was not to happen, however, as Wilcox was called back to Hawaii on August 29 after King Kalakaua was forced to sign the Bayonet Constitution on July 6, 1887, which deprived the monarchy of much of its power and transferred it to native white Hawaiian (plantation owners and descendants of missionary families) and American elites.



ROBERT WILCOX

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

In her travel diary, Gina accepts the news rather stoically, but still is not excited about leaving the only home she had known and settling in a strange new land. Nonetheless the thought of a voyage does not evoke much enthusiasm and she envies those who live in Paris while she instead is going to the Sandwich Islands. "Oh the ugly name which for now arouses only the image of ham, liver hash, and buttered bread," she laments.

In September, the couple began the long journey to Hawaii. Traveling through Paris, London, Dublin and then crossing the Atlantic to continue the journey through New York, Chicago, Omaha, and San Francisco before sailing to Hawaii. In San Francisco, Gina sends home a final telegram home, realizing that she will be isolated once she arrives in Honolulu. Gina writes: "Here is the idea that sent me into bitter sadness: being separated from everyone without even the comfort of a recent letter, or of a laconic telegram with the thoughts of the last hour."

Gina and her husband arrive in Honolulu on October 8, 1887. She observes with pleasure "the noble grace with which Honolulu extends over the all-green island," and notes that Diamond Head reminds her of the profile of Vesuvius in the Bay of Naples. Gina and Robert initially find lodging with Lucy and Sam Nowlein. Mr. Nowlein's daughter attended the Wilcox wedding and was one of the last students sent abroad by Kalakaua to study.

Gina is not overly impressed with Hawaiian food and complains of being hungry for Italian cuisine: "Imagine! They eat raw fish prepared with seaweed and spices that stink; little pieces of pork cooked I know not how, but rather badly, rice boiled in water, no bread and instead poi which is a type of polenta made with taro, a root similar to a potato, that the Chinese grind in large mortars, and that they let ferment in calabashes, sort of a bowl carved from coconuts which some engrave with fine etchings...the Hawaiians eat with their hands, they don't drink wine, they don't know soup, and the very fruit that abounds throughout the island doesn't have a place on the family table. I ask, can a European stomach ever get used to such a diet?"

To Gina it seems that the inhabitants are dedicated to the principle of "dolce far niente," and "take great pleasure in music-making, and play the mandolin, the guitar and the banjo with real talent; they sing chants with a moving sweetness and have such pleasant and clear voices that if one couldn't see them you would think they were choirs of angels."

But then there are the mosquitos! "But try to enjoy these harmonies among the clouds of mosquitos that envelope you, assault you, bite you, suck you, and eat you without pity, without pausing. Bugs! This is another cross that we must bear: roaches as big as your hand, spiders whose extended legs cover half a meter, with hairy bodies, eyes that watch you, millipedes as big and long as you would see in a museum, enormous caterpillars and many others...not only do you find them in fields, meadows, and in the shade of the woods, but they invaded the houses, climb the walls, insert themselves under the mosquito netting, and bother the sleep, take away my peace, and make me a nervous wreck."

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

After 20 days, the King offers Robert a pension and the couple leaves the Nowlien family and takes up residence in a fine boarding house located in the middle of a large garden, with huge trees, including tamarinds, palms, Chinese oranges, pomegranates, limes, cedars, tree ferns, and with climbing rose bushes, vanilla, jasmine, and mimosa. "During the night of the full moon no one sleeps, on the island, one would say that the muse of music enters all the inhabitants and makes the instruments resonate, and places songs on the lips of everyone. The band plays in Queen Emma's Park beneath rows of colossal palms, which sways in the breeze with a rustling noise that is in itself a melody."

Even the Americans, the British, and the European community participate in these festivities in their carriages or in parks and cafes, enjoying "the famous gelati for which the island is renowned, which are prepared with the flavoring of bananas, strawberries, guavas, mangoes, and other delicious fruits..."

After the music, she recounts that the natives go on boat rides, organize dinners up and down Waikiki Beach. She notes that the native Hawaiians are excellent swimmers, and that they bathe in the waters only during moonlit nights, and do not fear the sharks that often come right up to the beach.



"CANOES AT DIAMOND HEAD." PAINTING BY EDWARD BAILEY, 1890

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

She describes how she, as a European noblewoman married to a local, is viewed as something exotic and fascinating to the inhabitants: "In this moment I spent my quarter hour of fame, I am a little like a rare animal, a new object in the museum, a circus curiosity; everyone wants to see me, meet me close up; I receive many visits, my writing desk is filled with invitations to garden-parties, ice cream-parties, balls, lunches, and if I took advantage of all of them, I wouldn't have one day of rest."

One invitation she could not refuse was that of King Kalakaua who invited her and Robert to his palace. She intends to do her best to impress the King favorably, for she feels she is not just representing herself, but all Italians and her native country. Her heart skips a beat when she enters Iolani Palace and sees the palace guards in white uniforms present their arms as they pass. The King greets the couple warmly and she is impressed: "The king showed himself to be extremely courteous, and a perfect man of the world; he spoke to me of Europe, and especially of Italy which he had visited, and which he was enthusiastic, of our history which he knew rather well, and of our sovereign, to which he offered a fervent toast with his overflowing glass of champagne, which profoundly moved me, for it was more than mere politeness, and at this moment the palace band played the first notes of our royal march."



KING DAVID KALAKAUA

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII

During her stay she meets a Dr. De Lungo with whom she develops a platonic relationship. He goes to Kauai to help a colony of people with Hansen's Disease (the colony was on Moloka'i—perhaps an error on Gina's part) and, according to Gina he is nominated by the king to be the court doctor, and for this work with those afflicted with Hansen's Disease, he is awarded the Order of Kamehameha V and has given a residence to carry on his work.

It should be noted that there is no record of the honors awarded to De Longo by Kalakaua as described by Gina, and in fact, no record at all of a Mario De Longo in ship passenger lists or in other island sources, leading some to believe this may have been a fictitious person.

She also describes an Italian coachman named Michele who takes her on a ride to the Nu'uana Pali which she finds refreshing and delightful.

"Good man! Out of pure respect I didn't embrace him, and he too was moved; he didn't want to accept our money... and we couldn't refuse visiting his clean and gracious home which he would maybe never have in Italy." This is also an interaction between classes that never would have occurred in Italy—but when you're an expatriate, meeting a compatriot can momentarily erase those class divisions..."

During this time, Gina also visits Saint Louis College which makes a pleasant impression on her "of the order, the cleanliness which reigns supreme, the sense of individual liberty that pervades every room...the students attend this model school where they learn not only science and languages, but the art of drawing and music, and give really amazing recitals."

In December, Gina and William move into the palace of Princess Liliuokalani and Robert Wilcox becomes involved in a plot to remove Kalakaua from power and replace him with Liliuokalani who the conspirators believe will stand up to the white, wealthy landowners who had forced Kalakaua to relinquish much of his power. (There is no proof Liliuokalani participated in this plot, and she condemned it as "foolish and ill-organized.")

The plot is discovered, and Wilcox is charged with treason. Gina pleads with the authorities to spare her husband imprisonment and they agree to let him go into exile in San Francisco. Gina pawns her jewels to raise money for the ticket to San Francisco.

GINA SOBRERO: AN ITALIAN BARONESS IN HAWAII



PRINCESS LILIUOKALANI AT QUEEN VICTORIA'S GOLDEN JUBILEE 1887

Gina concludes her diary: "I want to forget the surges of emotion, the humiliations of these days... the money collected from friends and acquaintances, which should return my liberty; I want to forget how much I have suffered, I want even to forgive in order to return to my country, among the people that I never should have left..."

Wilcox would return the next year to continue his plotting. Henceforth his life would be forever part of the history of Hawaiian resistance. In every resistance effort from 1887 to 1903, when he died, Wilcox played a significant role. He was Hawaii's first representative to the U.S. Congress from 1900 to 1903.

Gina would not follow, but instead went back to Italy where she published her travel diary in 1908 and died in 1912.

Sources: This article is based on the original Italian version of "L'Expatriata," reprinted by Salerno Editrice, Roma, 2007, accompanying footnotes, and an introduction written by Ombretta Frau in 2007.

Event of the Season

30th Anniversary Party
Saturday, April 30, 2022
La Pietra



Finalmente!

After a two-year wait, our beloved society celebrated its 30th (+2) Anniversary! Held on the majestic grounds of La Pietra, over 150 guests were treated to an array of music and dance performances, an incredible buffet of Italian food and wine and a lei-giving ceremony with speeches by special guests and our beloved Board members!

A big *grazie mille* to Bottleheads in Kailua for generously donating the wine, and to Ristorante Taormina for the *cibo delizioso*!



Aloha from the Editor



Aloha Amici!

Buona Estate! I hope you are all thoroughly enjoying your Summer and making the most of our renewed freedoms - freedom to see our loved ones, freedom to travel, freedom to plan our lives once more.

Having said this, there are many changes taking place, both on the domestic and global fronts. There are several social, economic and environmental changes that are touching our lives in some way, shape or form. Whilst we all must navigate the impacts in our own way, it is important to remind ourselves of the blessings that we have in life. Our family, friends, good food, sunshine, living in one of the most spectacular places on earth .. and being part of the Friends of Italy Society of Hawaii *famiglia*, of course!

It was a lot of fun putting together this edition of *Il Gazzettino*! In fact, our regular contributor Mark Ethridge has not one, but TWO articles with his name in lights! This issue, we are treated to an in-depth analysis of the Travel Diary of Gina Sobrero, an Italian baroness and the bride of Robert Wilcox.

I also felt it time to feature Mark as our Friend in the Spotlight, and learn a fact or two about the man behind the captivating Italy-Hawaii historic articles that educate, inform and entertain us each issue.

We also have some fabulous photos to share from our wonderful 32nd Anniversary Gala, held at the ground of La Pietra in April! It was a truly magical evening, full of beautiful performances, delicious Italian food and *vino*, and *tanto energia positiva*! We also officially welcomed our new FOISOH President, Jim McAluney!

I hope you enjoy the Summer edition of *Il Gazzettino*. As always, I welcome your feedback and contributions!

