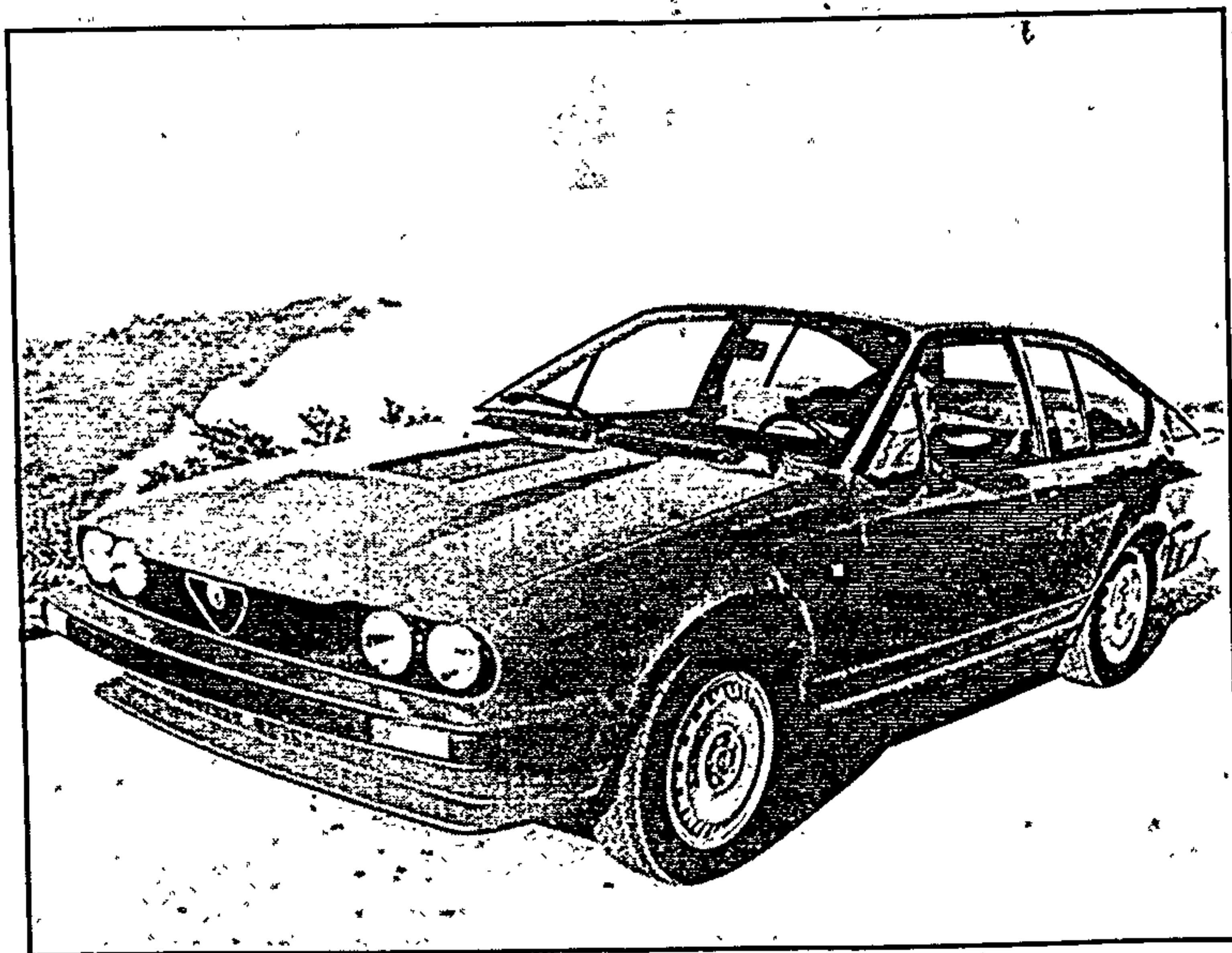


# BACKHILL

Rivista della comunità italiana **EC1**



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- details on page 15

February 1981

Issue N°43

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**BACKHILL**  
EC1

# DUE PAROLE...



Con questa prima edizione di BACKHILL dell'anno 1981 siamo ancora in tempo per darci gli auguri di Buon Principio. E gli auguri che ci scambiamo in questi giorni sono veramente sinceri: lo sentiamo nel nostro cuore: sentiamo realmente un sentimento di affetto verso quella persona a cui diciamo "tanti auguri". In quel momento vorremmo che quella persona trovasse tanto bene in tutti i giorni del nuovo anno: fosse sempre felice: non avesse mai difficoltà. Auguriamo cioè a quella persona le stesse cose che vorremmo per noi: pace, gioia e felicità.

Questo sentimento che abbiamo per noi stessi e per gli altri è tanto bello ed è veramente cristiano. Proprio perchè durante questo periodo natalizio noi sentiamo Dio, noi viviamo la Nascita di Gesù Bambino: noi proviamo nel nostro cuore tanta fiducia in Dio. È questo sentimento che diventa la nostra preghiera più bella: perchè noi pensiamo a Dio e riconosciamo che siamo nelle mani di Dio. Ecco io auguro a me stesso e a tutti voi che entri nella nostra vita questo pensiero "Siamo nelle mani di Dio", nel senso che Dio ci guida nella nostra vita, nelle nostre famiglie, in tutti i momenti della giornata. Spesso ci guida per una strada brutta, dolorosa, dove si cammina molto male, ma la nostra mano è nella sua mano: la sua mano ci dà forza e coraggio, speranza: queste non sono le solite parole che diciamo per riempire il foglio.

Ormai ci siamo accorti nella nostra vita di ogni giorno che tante cose non vanno come vogliamo noi e tante cose sono dolorose per noi: fratelli cari, raccomandiamoci a Dio in quei momenti e chiediamogli di non perdere la fede: brontoliamo pure con Lui, ma parliamogli: Dio prima o poi ci farà sentire nel nostro cuore una sua risposta che ci darà la serenità, anche se non ci toglierà il dolore. Fratelli cari, molti di noi hanno già fatto questa esperienza di Dio nella propria vita: hanno offerto il loro cuore a Dio e Dio ha accettato l'offerta: Dio gli ha dato tanto amore e tanta serenità. Coraggio, offriamo anche noi il nostro cuore a Dio per sentire la gioia di Dio nella nostra vita.

Don Roberto Russo  
Chiesa Italiana di S. Pietro,  
4, Backhill,  
London E.C.1.

# CRONACA

## LE ATTIVITÀ DELLA NOSTRA COMUNITÀ

### The Bolla Award

La Cerimonia della presentazione del 'Bolla Award' 1981, ha avuto luogo a Londra quest'anno, dopo essersi trasferito a Venezia nel 1979. Il 'Bolla Award', viene assegnato ogni anno alla persona di nazionalità britannica, che ha lavorato il più possibile per salvare Venezia, in quell'anno particolare. Questa volta è stato presentato alla Signora Nathalie Brooke, che dal 1971 ha assunto le funzioni di segretaria del fondo Venezia in Pericolo, (Venice in Peril Fund). Assegnando la premiazione alla Signora Brooke, l'Ingegnere Bruno Bolla ha detto "La Signora Brooke, ha dato per la sua parte, un contributo enorme, ai contributi britannici a favore di Venezia. Penso che tocchi a noi, congratularla per tutti i suoi lavori compiuti, e da parte mio, voglio ringraziarla di vero cuore. E' proprio questo tipo di coordinamento internazionale che dà a tutti noi così tanta speranza".

L'ing. ha presentato alla Signora Brooke, dei bellissimi bicchieri veneziani.

La presentazione si è svolta al Café Royal, nella presenza del Sindaco di Venezia, che fu ospite, l'anno scorso, al Palazzo Ca' Farsetti, il palazzo municipale di Venezia. Erano presenti alla cerimonia l'Ambasciatore d'Italia Signor Cagiati con la sua consorte Donna Sigrid Cagiati, e Lady Thorneycroft e Lord Norwich, ambedue già vincitori del premio. L'ing. Bolla è stato presentato dal Signor Brian Stark, Dirigente Responsabile della ditta Hedges & Butler, che sono gli agenti Inglesi della ditta vinicola Bolla.

### St Peter's v La Squadra

On Saturday 10th January, La Squadra, from Glasgow, came to London to play against St. Peter's football team in the National Cup. In that game St. Peter's won 8 - 2 and when the two teams met on the following day in the Negrone Cup, the home side again won, this time 4 - 2. The lads from Glasgow were a good sporting bunch and both sides enjoyed a congenial lunch after the match, during which St. Peter's team, was invited to go to Glasgow to play. These two results mean that St. Peter's are in the Semi-finals of both competitions.

A special thank-you to Donato and Michele Meola for lending Irpinia's kit and footballs to St. Peter's Team.

Photo: La Squadra of Glasgow.



ACQUAZONA



## Associazione Parmigiani

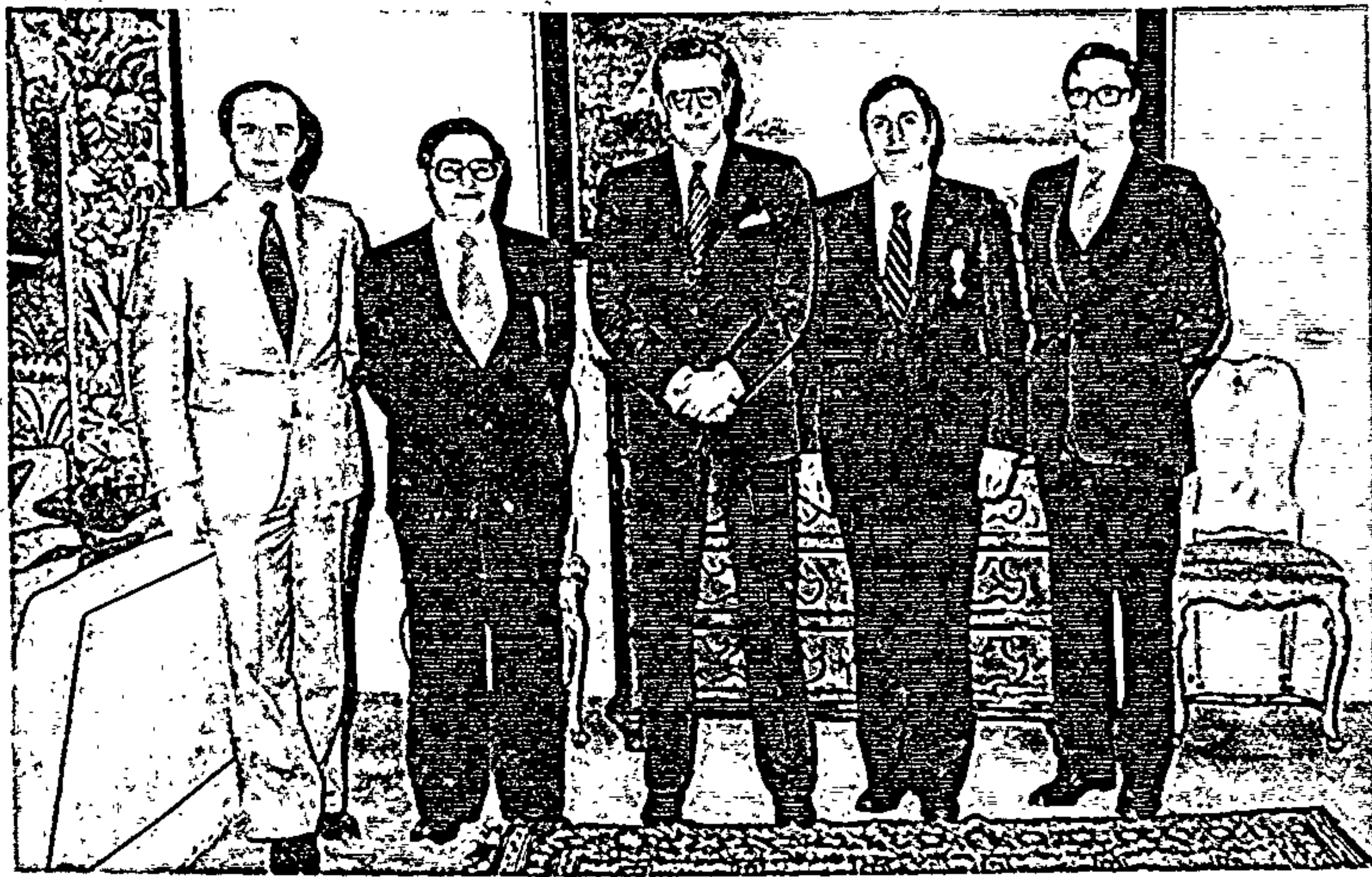
Festa di Santa Lucia

13.12.80.



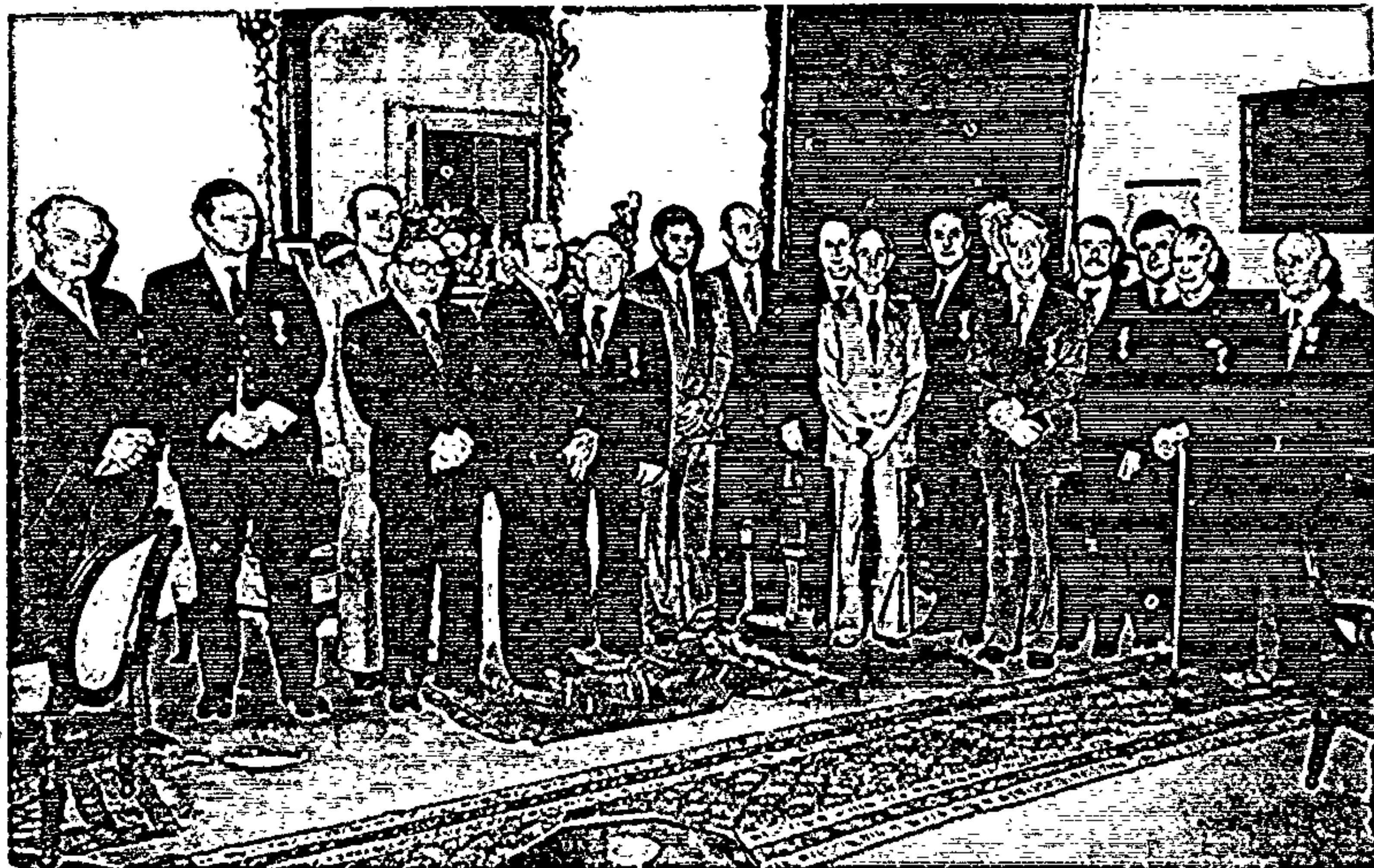
# Onorificenze

ACQUAZZANO



Decorazioni Ambasciata,  $\triangle$   
18.12.80. alla sinistra  
dell' Ambasciatore: Sig.  
Adolfo Cardone (Banco di  
Roma), a destra dell'Am-  
basciatore: Sig. David  
Marone.

Decorazioni Ambasciata 24.11.80, da sinistra nella  
fotografia: Prof. S.G.Putt; Mr J.S.Allitt; Prof.  
M.Talbot; Consigliere Mattei; Sig. P.Scacco; Mr H.  
Brown; Sig.A.Garofalo; Consigliere Biondo; Dr H.F.C.  
Avery; Sig.S.Ortenzi; Sig.R.Nardone; Mr C. Whit-  
field; Prof.R.J.Eden; Mr J.Daniels; Mr A.M.Wengraf.  
Mr K.Foster; Sig. B.Sezena.  $\nabla$



## L'Unione Brattesi

Domenica 14 dicembre si è svolta, presso la sede del Mazzini-Garibaldi Club, la riunione generale dell'Unione Brattesi alla quale hanno partecipato numerosi paesani.

L'ordine del giorno era di dare un voto di confidenza al comitato attuale dell'Unione Brattesi, che ha presentato un reso conto delle attività, incassi e spese sostenute negli ultimi anni, nonché di eleggere nuovi membri del comitato per fare sentire di più il parere di tutti i Brattesi e rinforzare il legame al paese natale. E' stato poi deciso che la prima festa per riunire tutti i Brattesi sarà quella del Patrono Protettore di Bratto, San Giorgio, in data e sede da stabilire. Preghiamo comunque tutti i paesani di Bratto di mettersi in contatto con i membri del comitato per prenotarsi in anticipo a questa nostra festa.

## The Lucchesi nel Mondo Association

Il 29 novembre scorso ha avuto luogo il pranzo e danza annuale del Circolo Lucchesi nel Mondo di Londra. All'Europa Hotel si sono incontrati oltre 250 lucchesi ed amici.

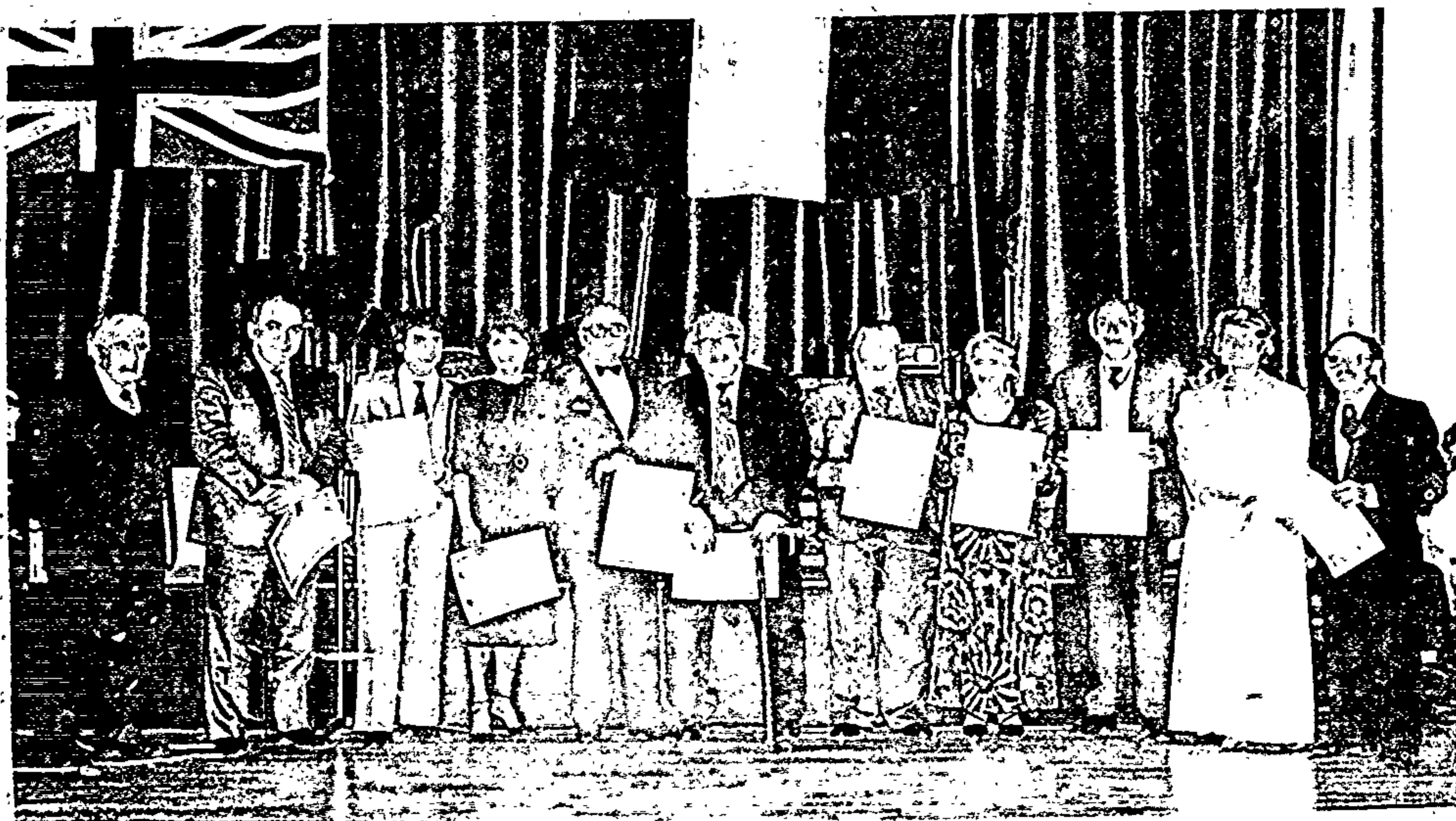
Il Presidente Esecutivo, Dino Fruzza, ha annunciato prima della cena di osservare un momento di silenzio per i terremotati, ed è stato commovente osservare le espressioni dei volti veramente vicini nello spirito ai nostri compatrioti così colpiti da un'immane disastro.

La serata, organizzata impeccabilmente dal Comitato, ma principalmente dal Tesoriere, Renzo Fabbri, è stata un successo mai prima ottenuto sia per il numero dei presenti che per il cibo e la musica.

Dopo il brindisi alla Regina d'Inghilterra e al Presidente della Repubblica Italiana, ha avuto inizio la danza. Il Presidente Dino Fruzza, nel lanciare l'appello per una offerta a favore dei terremotati ha avuto parole commosse per il Presidente, Sandro Pertini, e la risposta è stata molto positiva, infatti sono state raccolte 652 sterline a cui verranno aggiunte le altre che i lucchesi non presenti doneranno.

La serata è finita alle 2, al suono dell'inno nazionale che più che mai ha fatto sentire tutti vicini alla nostra cara ma sfortunata terra.

Nella fotografia sotto, il Comitato del Circolo "Lucchesi nel Mondo".





## "YESTERDAY"

CROZACA

On Wednesday 14th January a production of "Yesterday" was staged at Islington Town Hall in aid of the earthquake victims of southern Southern Italy. Written by Mrs Olive Besagni, the plot spanned 15 years, telling the story of three families, English, Italian and Irish in cosmopolitan Clerkenwell, interspersed with many popular songs of the relevant period.

The actors and actresses (members and friends of St. Peter's amateur group, with a guest appearance by Alison Macgregor) gave an amusing and credible performance, of which a very popular piece was Jimmy Kibble's interpretation of Johnny Ray and it was obvious that everyone had made a determined and conscientious effort at their part. The indefatigable Mrs. Besagni not only wrote but also directed the play and was aided in her task by a hard working and enthusiastic production team.

Congratulations to an admirable Olive Besagni for not only having the idea of a light review, but also for having the courage to put on a performance of it. Congratulations also to her well chosen cast and backstage personnel for a splendid and enjoyable production which managed to raise a remarkable 1000 Pounds for the fund.

Photo below: Olive Besagni and Mario Renzullo



# THE HILL



This month we look back at 'the Hill' with the help of Mr. Pino Maestri, who spent his childhood and youth in the area. We will be publishing more of Mr. Maestri's memories in future issues, but this month he tells us of his childhood and schooldays.

## Family and early childhood.

My parents came to London just before the turn of the Century. They were married at St. Peter's, and they settled at 21 Eyre Street Hill, right in the heart of "il quartiere italiano" where my family was raised. My family comprises of Romeo, Giulietta, myself, Elena, and Mario. My elder sister died very young from diphtheria, and my earliest recollection is sitting at the kerbside crying as I watched the horse-drawn hearse, carrying my sister's body, go slowly past my house.

My mother and father ran a sort of lodging house. When the immigrants came from Italy they would be told 'Go to Rosina's' and they would stay with us for a couple of months until they found a place to settle. At meal times we had two tables: one for the family and one for the lodgers. We also ran a sort of Speakeasy like they used to have in America. By this I mean you could come into our place (it wasn't the only one in our area), and order a glass of wine and sometimes there would be dancing or perhaps people would play "mora" and there was a large table for playing briscola. For the dances a famous accordion player would come and play and the people come along to sing and dance. Of course we were unlicensed and once, when the Police came one evening wanting to know what was going on, my father told them that it was a celebration for a christening!

The wine we sold was home made, and it's a fact that the wine made in Clerkenwell was unbelievably good; I clearly remember being the little boy who could suck at the tube to fill the bottles, and I would get drunk with those occasional mouthfuls! The grapes would be delivered in great horse-drawn carts from Covent Garden, from which my family (as did nearly all the families) would have so-many boxes. Regularly each year we would make some wine and I can vividly remember having to squeeze past the two barrels at the bottom of the stairs, and you could hear them fermenting away. Even in those days I was a good wine drinker. I can remember once when I went down into the cellar and picked up a bottle and drank from it and where I had spilled it, my little vest had turned blue - I was only 10 or 11 years of age. Mrs. Calliando (who was English but spoke Italian well) rushed over to help saying "Cos'è successo?" when she had heard my mother wailing: "My boy; he's poisoned himself". It turned out that I had drunk methylated spirits, and it seems, fortunately, that I had spilled more than I had drunk!

The lodgers we had came from all parts of Italy, there were Romagnoli, Neapolitani, Toscani to name but a few, and I can remember sitting listening to them talking about Canada and Australia and other places where they had been, and talking about sending money home to Italy. They would go to Italy every few years, but most had little intention of returning there permanently. I enjoyed listening to their conversations; there were waiters and asphalt layers, plaster statuemakers and parquet floor layers (a widespread profession in those days). When the weather was warm and dry we had the habit of sitting outside in the evenings where we would be entertained by people playing various instruments. When relatives or friends of my mother came to London they would talk of Lugagnano (my mother's home town; my father came from Cremona) so much so that I could almost picture the 'diga' and the streets and the families of that town.

## Schooldays

The quartiere italiano, in which incidentally many Irish families lived, like the Sullivans, the Connors, Seymours, Traceys, had as its centre the Italian Church in Clerkenwell Road. The area was fairly clearly marked out, in our minds at least: Bloomsbury and Theobalds Road was our limit as regards the West End, King's Cross Road towards the North, round towards the Angel Islington, and Upper Street was our limit as regards the East End. Beyond this area we had to look after ourselves. Inside the area, especially in the streets immediately surrounding the Church, there lived what I can best describe as the 'open door families' where everyone knew everyone and as children we would play out late in the streets and our parents knew where we were and that we were safe.

We played ordinary children's games like release and honour, but we all loved to play football in Backhill. We couldn't afford a rubber ball so we had to use a solid rag ball and we would play for hours, running up and down the cobbled roadways of Backhill.

By the end there would be 15 or 20 a side. We would also play cricket in Warner Street.

Ted Casparo had a sweet shop, a sort of tuck shop where we would buy our sweets before school. Talking of sweet things, there were many ice cream makers in the area, and I would often wake up in the morning to hear them singing as they made their ice cream. We children loved ice cream and there was a desolate back yard in Summer Street, where the ice cream vendors would leave their barrows - that was our joy! When they had gone we would go down and take the ice cream, being careful not to be spotted. Old man Giuliotti would come running after us: 'Vigliacco!'

One of our favourite haunts was the Globe Cinema, in Skinner Street, commonly known as the "Flea Pit" or "Bog 'Ole" (to the Italians it was "la pi-pi"! ) which in addition to being a cinema was also the place where they started a sort of talent show where children would go up on stage to entertain the others with singing and dancing. If they were bad there would be boos and hisses and even tomatoes. Of course we would forever be bunking in and being thrown out then getting in again and leaving the latch up for the boys to get in! On the way back from the Globe, we would pass Manzini's where you could get fish and chips for 3/8d - and on the subject of food, on the way back from the school's woodworks and metalworking facilities in Drury Lane we could get a pennorth of Sour Cakes from Casabella's cake shop in Bloomsbury.

Another of our haunts was Cura's pet shop in Coal Bath Square, where as children, we would be engrossed by the lizards, and frogs and snakes in their glass cases. When we had nothing better to do we would go and annoy Ciappa. Another one we would nag was Sam Perella, the ice man, who would stand on the corner of Summer Street and if you upset him he would chase after you with his ice-pick. My good friend Jimmy Falco was chased by him from the corner of Summer Street, up Back Hill to the top of Eyre Street Hill - if he had caught him he would have pinned him to the wall! We were mischievous, but not destructive; we would often go "knocking", I remember once as we knocked on Fenella's door, the old man came out and chased me up Saffron Hill, and a clever boy looked round to see where he was and as I turned round I ran straight into a lamppost outside the school! I say that I remember it because I still have the scar on my forehead.

Pino Maestri

(Next Month: at school and my youth)



# NEWS FROM ITALY



## YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

In order to calculate how much E.E.C. subsidy was due to them, the farmers of Sardinia were asked for details of the acres of land which they were using to grow cereal. When the acres were totalled it was greater than the total size of Sardinia.

Models returned to take off their clothes to pose for students at Milans Brera Art School after a one day "dress - in " in protest against insufficient heating. The School Authorities brought in old gas heaters to warm classrooms.

The Swiss Chemicals Company, Hoffmann La Roche, said it would pay £47 million in compensation for an explosion at one of its factories in Seveso in 1976.

Ten years after Italy introduced its controversial divorce law the number of divorces sought and granted had been steadily declining. Statistics show that Italy's divorce rate is one of the worlds lowest. Only 3.31 percent of italian marriages end in divorce. In France, another predominantly Roman Catholic country, the figure is estimated to be seven times as high.

Naples police banned the traditional Christmas and New Year fire works celebrations because vibrations caused by the explosions might bring down walls damaged by the recent earthquake.

The first case of leprosy in Italy in almost a century has been diagnosed at Ascoli Piceno, central Italy. The victim returned to Italy after living in Argentina.

Sales of B.L. cars to Italy were 50% up in 1980, making it the Company's second biggest European market after France. The favourite car was the Mini Clubman followed by the Allegro.

81 people on board a D.C. 9 airliner died because it was hit by a heat - seeking missile being used in target practice. The President of the italian airline Italvia confirmed that a missile hit the jet, which crashed into the Mediterranean in June, killing everyone on board. Informed sources in Rome say the missile was fired from a military plane launched from a french aircraft carrier.

X Snow fell in Sicily for the first time in 19 years.

Reno, a wry - haired terrier was dug out alive from a ruined house in Avellino 48 days after it was destroyed by earthquake.

Price of petrol in Italy has increased by 10% to 850 lire a litre to help raise the funds required for the reconstruction work for the earthquake devastated areas in Southern Italy.

A recent spate of car theft in Italy involved a person on a motor-bike lightly touching a car stopped at a traffic light leaving a scratch. When the driver gets out to inspect the damage the nearby thief jumps into the drivers seat and roars away.

Recently published figures show that the average hourly pay in Britain was £2.47 the lowest amongst industrial countries. The rate in Italy was £3.51; these compare with highest earners, Holland and Sweden at £5.55.

# BACKHILL ha bisogno del vostro aiuto

La vostra rivista non viene prodotta a scopo di fare profitti finanziari, infatti viene prodotto da volontari, che lo fanno nel loro tempo libero. Noi, i volontari, abbiamo bisogno della vostra generosità.

Generosità nel senso che abbiamo bisogno di vari articoli che a noi sono del tutto indispensabili. Per esempio, abbiamo bisogno di sedie d'ufficio, una gigliottina per tagliare carta, lampade da scrivania, e così via. Ma in particolare, abbiamo urgente bisogno di due macchine da scrivere tipo 'IBM SELF CORRECTING GOLF BALL'.

Se siete disposti ad aiutare la vostra rivista, potendo forse offrire uno o più di questi articoli, oppure potendo offrire un aiuto finanziario, tipo 'sponsorship', siete pregati di mettervi in contatto con noi al seguente indirizzo:

BACKHILL  
136 Clerkenwell Road,  
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## BACKHILL needs your help

This non-profit making community magazine is run and produced by volunteers, so we are appealing for your generous help.

We are in need of many items of office furniture and machinery, such as adjustable chairs, paper guillotines, cabinets and so forth; but we would especially like to have 2 IBM Self Correcting Golf Ball typewriters.

If you think you may be able to help us out with these items or perhaps even consider sponsoring BACKHILL, allowing us to buy them, then, please, do write to us here at:

BACKHILL  
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# CITTA' D'ITALIA

## SIENA

(Pop. 65,347)

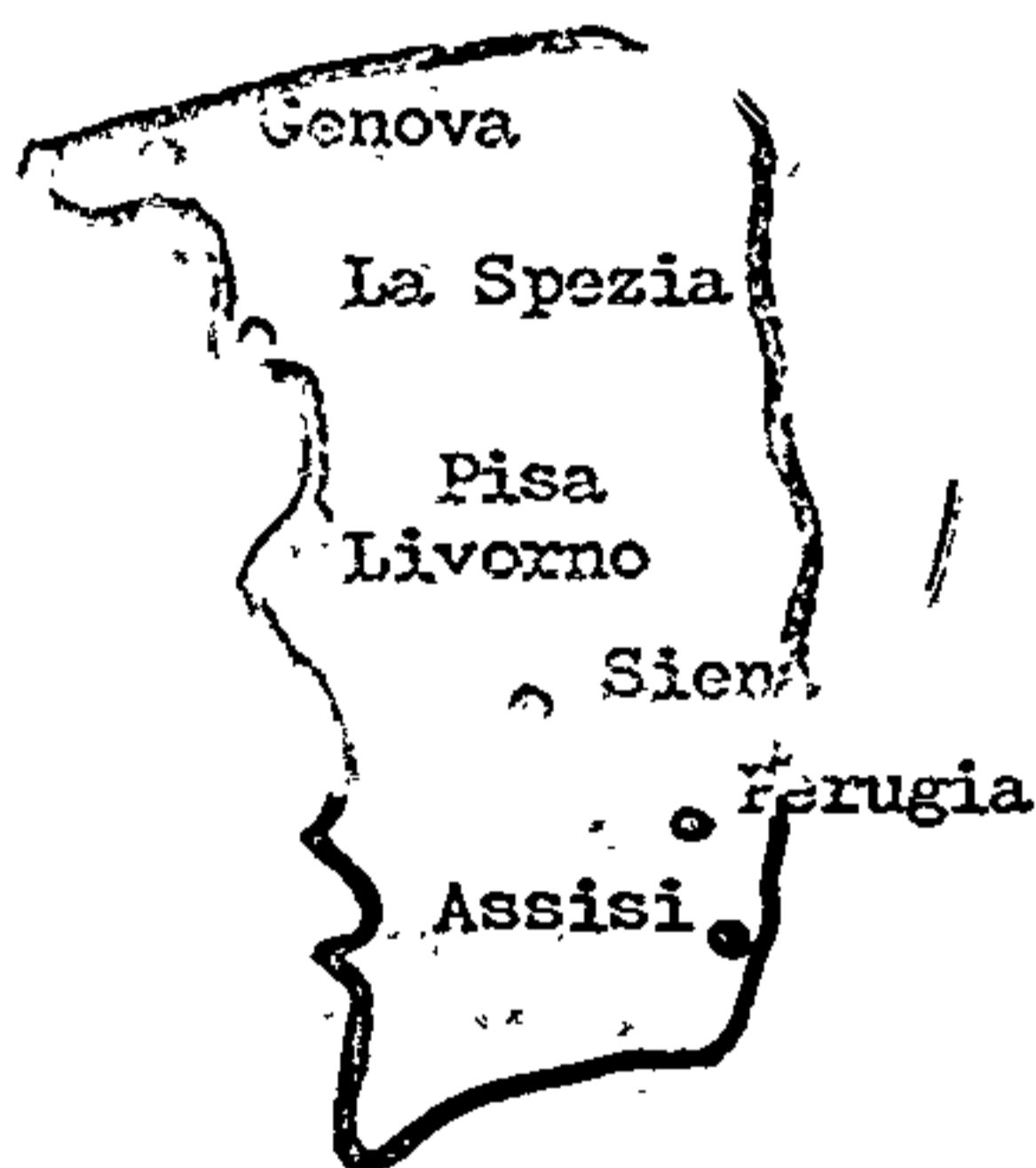
Sienna e' una citta' adorata da tutti, e' un magico, nobile e appassionato centro d'arte che accoglie tutti che la visitano con l'epigramma "Cor Magnis tibi Sienna pandit" - Sienna vi apre il cuore. La citta' vi invita a passeggiare per le sue strette vie gotiche fiancheggiate da palazzi e residenza patriciane. Circondata da bastioni Sienna si estende oltre tre colline convergenti.

### INDIRIZZI UTILI

Ufficio Postale - Piazza Matteotti  
Ufficio Turistico e Ufficio Informazioni - Via di Citta'  
Ospedale - Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala, Piazza del Duomo.  
Questura - Via di Citta'

### INFORMAZIONI TURISTICHE

Sienna vanta un passato artistico e religioso ricco e mentre non si puo qui descrivere ogni gioiello storico della Citta' meritano tutti essere visitati.



IL DUOMO - Si trova nella Piazza del Duomo assieme al Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Il Palazzo Governativo e L'Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala, l'ala destra del quale risale duecento. Il Duomo fu iniziato nel 1065 ma non fu completato fino al quattrocento. La facciata ristrutturata, riccamente ornata e ricoperta di marmo multicolore e' il lavoro di Giovanni Pisano. Il campanile sottile di stile romanico ha un piedistallo di marmo bianco e verde. Il famoso pulpito (1265-1268) fu lavorato da Nicolo' Pisano., Giovanni, Pisano e Ainotto di Cambio. Le Arti Liberali sono raffigurati sulla colonna centrale e la vita di Gesu' dalla visitazione fino al Giudizio Finale sul rostro. La scala fu aggiunta nel 1943.

IL BATTISTERO DI SAN GIOVANNI - Il Battistero si trova sotto e dietro il Duomo e vi forma la cripta. La facciata gotica che risale a 1382 e delicatamente ornata ma non fu mai completata. L'interno e' ornato di affreschi del Quattrocento e la fonte battesimale e il lavoro di Jacopo della Quercia come la statua di legno di San Giovanni che si trova nella nicchia.

IL MUSEO DELL'OPERA DEL DUOMO - aperto 9.00 - 13.00 e 14.30 - 18.00. Entrata 200 Lire. Il Museo e' tutto che rimane di un enorme Duomo la costruzione del quale fu iniziata nel 1339 ma fu interrotta per la pestilenza del 1348. Dell'originale impresa rimangono solo la facciata e i piedistalli delle colonne nella navata. Nel Museo si possono vedere alcuni pezzi di oro ecclesiastico e frammenti di selciato del Duomo. Di piu' al secondo piano si puo vedere la famosa "Maesta'" di Duccio.

### DIVERTIMENTI

Il 2 Luglio e il 16 Agosto vi la luogo nella Piazza del Campo il famoso "Palio delle Contrade". Questa festa risale al 1656. Inizia con le processioni di diciassette contrade, in costumi del quattrocento, che reggono i loro emblemi,

CITTA D'ITALIA. (Contd/,.....)

mentre alfieri brandono stendardi con una destrezza straordinaria. Poi arriva il carroccio seguito dalla Guardia Municipale armata di alabarde e archibugi. La Corsa di Palio e' una corsa pericolosa attorno alla piazza. Il cavallo campione di dieci contrade e' benedetto durante il pomeriggio nella chiesa di ogni contrada che prende parte al corso. Il Palio, un stendardo ornato con le arme della Citta' e' presentato al campione.



## Lea Valley News

The Dance held on the 27th December turned out to be a very enjoyable one and a great number of people attended. This evening really added that final touch to the Christmas Festivities.

The Dance on the 31st of December, mentioned in our previous article, also turned out to be very enjoyable.

There isn't much to report on this week but as the Enfield Football Club has put us on the Map I would like to wish them all the best in the forth-coming Fourth Round of the F.A. Cup.

### ODD BITS

During paratrooper training, one trooper collided with another, whose parachute collapsed as a result. The trooper with the parachute intact grabbed the other fellow in a bear-hug, and they shared the one good parachute. Commended for his quick thinking the trooper admitted that he didn't deserve the praise. "He only had one parachute" he said. "I wasn't going to let go to see if it was mine."