

INSTITUTE OF
ITALIAN STUDIES
LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Annual Report
2016

The First Decade, 2006 – 2016

Anniversaries invite reflection, renewal, and celebration. When the Institute of Italian Studies was established in 2006 it set out “to promote the appreciation, research, and study of the Italian language, Italian-Canadian culture and history in Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario. In the space of ten years, it has consistently focused on this goal through its research and publications programme, its links with Lakehead University, its Speaker Series, its sponsorship of cultural events and initiatives that have distinct Italian connections, and above all, through its fundraising initiatives – the annual “Golfing for the Goal” (in memory of Frank Pontisso) and the annual “Culinary Wine Tasting & Dinner”. In 2016, the tenth anniversary of the Institute of Italian Studies - Lakehead University, our directors and loyal supporters celebrate the continued existence of this non-profit cultural organization in Thunder Bay and the outstanding success of its programmes.

*Roy Piovesana,
President,
Institute of Italian Studies - Lakehead University
January 5, 2017*

INSTITUTE OF
ITALIAN STUDIES
LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Links with Lakehead University

The association of the Institute of Italian Studies with Lakehead University goes far beyond the inclusion of the university's name in our corporate charter. In 2016, several individuals of the Institute's sixteen member board of directors have official connections to Lakehead University. One member, Angela Maltese, sits on the Lakehead University's Board of Governors; three members – Silvio Di Gregorio, Richard Buset, and Roy Piovesana – are Fellows of the University; Vice President of the Institute, John Bonofiglio, is Co-ordinator of the Multimedia and Educational Technology Support Services at the university; and director Anne Klymenko is Director of Research. Since 2006, the Institute has contributed significantly to the financing of the ATAC building and to scholarship programmes within the university. In 2016, the Institute was one of the sponsors of "The Splendours of Ancient Italy" thirteen day tour for a group of university students organized by Dr. Carney Matheson, Professor of Anthropology. In 2017, the Institute, together with Lakehead University administration, hope to offer a graduate scholarship for students at the masters and / or doctoral levels.

Publications and Research

Since 2005-2006, the Institute has published seven historical monographs relating to the lives and contributions of Italian immigrants in Thunder Bay. Two of the publications in particular – John Potestio's *The Italians of Thunder Bay* (2005) and Roy Piovesana's *Italians of Fort William's East End, 1907-1969* (2011)– continue to be sold in bookstores and boutiques in Thunder Bay. Both authors were recognized by the Lakehead University History Department for distinguished achievement and were recipients of the Department's Alumni Honour Award – Roy Piovesana in 2013 and John Potestio in 2016.

A by-product of the research and publications of the Institute of Italian Studies has been the accumulation of a large body of historical photographs depicting the activities and way of life of Italian immigrants and their families in Thunder Bay. The Institute continues to organize these photographs into a digital illustrated history of Italians in Thunder Bay.

INSTITUTE OF
ITALIAN STUDIES
LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Speaker Series

In 2016 the Institute's Speaker Series continued to draw sizeable audiences. Dr. Carney Matheson, Professor of Anthropology at Lakehead University, delivered a lecture on "Ancient Medicine" to approximately 90 individuals made up of medical students, physicians, university faculty and staff at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine on campus. The vice president, John Bonofiglio, organized the Institute's involvement in this lecture. Some of Professor Matheson's material in this lecture was based on research he did in 2014 at the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano, Italy sponsored, in part, by the Institute of Italian Studies. For the Institute to be associated with Professor Carney Matheson and the Northern School of Medicine at Lakehead University was a singular honour.

Antonio Nicaso, Italian author, university lecturer, and expert on the Calabrian mafia delivered a lecture on "Crime and Corruption in Canada" on May 4 at the Italian Cultural Centre. The superb quality of and audience interest in his presentation was reflected in the hour long period of questions and discussion that followed his presentation. This was Antonio Nicaso's second participation in the Institute's Speaker Series. Arrangements are underway to have him return once again to deliver a lecture at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law in the near future.

Sponsorship of Cultural Events

Requests for financial assistance from various cultural organizations within Thunder Bay come before the Institute each year. To facilitate decision-making at the board level as to which requests merit consideration, a Criteria / Budget policy was established by a committee (Anne Klymenko, Angela Maltese, Joe Virdiramo) and adopted by a board resolution. In 2016 funds were allocated to Consortium Aurora Borealis, Opera Northwest for their production of Mozart's opera "Figaro" in June, and to the Roy Coran Big Band for the recording and production of a CD of the original compositions and arrangements of Roy Coran – musician, composer, and arranger now deceased. As mentioned in last year's annual report, while there are limits to the Institute's financial resources in sponsoring cultural events, they raise the profile of the Institute of Italian Studies in Thunder Bay while at the same time promoting Italian music, drama, and literature.

INSTITUTE OF
ITALIAN STUDIES
LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Governance, Finances, and Communication

The Institute of Italian Studies – Lakehead University is a non-profit organization in the Province of Ontario with a charitable registration number. The constitution, by-laws, policies, and minutes of the corporation are maintained by the Institute’s secretary-treasurer and legal counsel, Richard Buset. The constitution of the Institute provides for seventeen directors one-third of which are appointed or re-appointed each year. In 2016, the following sat as members of the board:

Roy Piovesana (President), John Bonofiglio (Vice President), Richard Buset (Secretary/Treasurer), Franco Crupi, Silvio Di Gregorio, Joe Daniele, Anne Klymenko, Angela Maltese, Lina Nigro, Saverio Nigro, Mark Piovesana, John Potestio, Francesco Pedulla, Joe Quaresima, Rosanne Rambaldini, Joe Virdiramo.

The financial independence of the Institute is maintained by holding two annual fundraising events: “Golfing for the Goal” in June and a “Culinary Wine Tasting & Dinner” in November both held at the Whitewater Golf Club. Under the astute leadership of board member and businessman Silvio Di Gregorio and his committee (Joe Daniele, Severio Nigro, Lina Nigro, Joe Quaresima), these events generate sufficient funds to support the initiatives and sponsorships of the Institute.

Supporters of the Institute of Italian Studies – Lakehead University are kept abreast of activities and events through the website www.IISLU.com and a database of patrons developed since 2013. Both are organized and maintained by board member Joe Quaresima.

It was an honour and privilege for me as President of the Institute of Italian Studies – Lakehead University to preside at its monthly board meetings. I sincerely thank all directors for their dedication and sage counsel given in the best interests of the Institute.

*Roy Piovesana,
President,
Institute of Italian Studies – Lakehead University*