

# *Celebrating Historical Italian Women*

## *Artemisia Gentileschi, Italian Baroque Artist*

“My illustrious lordship, I'll show you what a woman can do.”

-Artemisia  
Gentileschi  
1593 - 1656



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## *Rosa Segale, aka Sister Blandina*

1850-1941

Sister Blandina, an Italian immigrant, became a missionary in the American southwest. She wrote a book entitled "At the End of the Santa Fe Trail."



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## *Saint Francis Cabrini, aka Mother Cabrini*

1850-1917

Pope Leo XIII sent Mother Cabrini to the U.S. to help Italian immigrants. She founded many schools and hospitals across the United States. She was the 1<sup>st</sup> American saint.



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## *Luisa Tetrazzini*

1871-1940

Luisa was an internationally acclaimed coloratura soprano opera singer, who worked with Caruso & Oscar Hammerstein.



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## *Dr. Maria Montessori*

1870 – 1952

Dr. Montessori was a medical doctor and an educational innovator. She devised a set of principles for childhood education. Many Montessori pre-school and elementary schools follow her system of educational principles.



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## *Grazia de Ledda*

1871 – 1936

Grazia was from Sardinia; she won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926 for Literature.



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## *Alfonsina Morini Strada*

1891 – 1959

Alfonsina was an acclaimed cyclist, beginning at age 13, with 36 career victories. She was the 1<sup>st</sup> woman to race in the Giro d'Italia, 1924.



# *Celebrating Historical Italian Women*

## *Dr. Rita Montalcini-Levy*

1909 - 2012

Dr. Montalcini-Levy was a native Italian who won the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize in Medicine/Physiology, shared with S. Cohen. Her Nobel prize was for the discovery of NGF (nerve growth factor) in chick embryos. She was a Developmental Biologist, who taught & researched in both Italy & the U.S.





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*Dr. Guiliana Cavaglieri Tesori*

1921 - 2002

Dr. Tesori was from Venice; she was an organic chemist in the U.S. by 1939. She was a professor and inventor of flame retardant fiber, and she secured 125 U.S. patents.



# *Celebrating Historical Italian Women*

## *Dr. Margherita Hack*

1922 – 2013

Dr. Hack was an astrophysicist and liberal activist. She was the 1<sup>st</sup> woman to administer Trieste Astronomical Observatory between 1964-1987.



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## *Orianna Fallaci*

1931 – 2004

Orianna was  
a famed  
journalist,  
interviewer,  
and author.



# *Celebrating Historical Italian Women*

## *Fabiola Gianotti*



Born in 1960, Fabiola is a particle physicist, Director General of CERN, project leader of the ATLAS project for observation of HIGGS BOSON at the Hadro Collider near Geneva.



# *Celebrating Historical Italian Women*

## *Samantha Cristoforetti*

Born in 1977, Samantha is an Italian, European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut who held the record for a woman with the most time in space, and she is the 1<sup>st</sup> Italian woman in space.



# Celebrating OSDIA Women

## Joanne Strollo (PA)

Joanne was the **first woman President of OSDIA** (1993 – 1995) in the Order's 88-year history. In her 2-year term, she **changed the national bylaws from being gender-specific, the Grand Lodge of Colorado** was organized and installed, and we **added Alzheimer's Association** to our list of charity organizations. She won the *Vincent Sellaro Award* in 2019.



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Sons of Italy Foundation makes major national contributions.

### OSIA NEWS

October 1993 • Volume 48, Number 6

## Joanne Strollo Elected National President

*OSIA Choses a Woman to Lead for First Time in Organization's 88-Year History*

Joanne L. Strollo, of Chesham, Pa., was elected as the 24th national president of the Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA) during the 43rd Biennial National Convention, at The Breakers, in Palm Beach, Fla. Unanimously elected by the 200 delegates in attendance on Aug. 28, she is the first woman in OSIA's 88-year history to be named to its highest office.

In her acceptance speech, Strollo encouraged OSIA leaders and members to prepare for the challenges of the next century and to be open to new ways of thinking.

"We may have to refocus our thoughts on the image of the 21st Century, if we are to be adequately prepared for those changes that the year 2000 most assuredly will bring us," Strollo told nearly 400 delegates, members, dignitaries, and guests attending the election and installation ceremonies.

"If nothing else, certainly we must consider that the interests of OSIA's next generation of members may differ — in style or substance — from those of past years or decades. Our success or failure in identifying and meeting those needs may well decide our future," she said.

A manager with John Hancock Financial Services in King of Prussia, Pa., Strollo has served as OSIA's national first vice president during the past two years, and she was chairwoman of the organization's National Education Committee, which oversees the prestigious National Leadership Grant Competition, as well as national mentor and internship programs.

The committee has selected internationally prominent honorees during the past five years and has awarded scholarships in their names. These outstanding Italian Americans include retired St. John's University Head Basketball Coach Lou Carnesecca; the late U.S. Rep. Silvio O. Conte; U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia; Anthony S. Pauci, M.D., director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases; and the 1993 honoree, entertainer and philanthropist Annette Funicello.

As national president, Strollo will direct the activities of OSIA's National Office in Washington, D.C., and set the national agenda for 850 chapters, comprised of one-half million family members nationwide. In addition, she will serve as chairwoman of OSIA's two affiliated organizations — the Sons of Italy Foundation and the Commission for Social Justice, the organization's anti-defamation arm.

"Joanne will be an outstanding national president for the Order Sons of Italy in America, and she will be a strong advocate for Italian Americans throughout the country," said Frank J. Montemuro Jr., a Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice and a past national president of OSIA, in his formal nomination speech to the convention.

"We could not have made a better choice at this time. Women have been exerting greater influence in the upper levels of our societal institutions during the past decade, and it is only natural for OSIA to be the beneficiary of the strong."

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National President Joanne L. Strollo

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### Executive Session To Be Held In Baltimore This December

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### Delegates Meet at 43rd Biennial National Convention



*Celebrating OSDIA Women*

*Vera Ferrara Girolami (CA)*



Vera was the **National President** of the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America from 2017 to 2019, and she was **the second female President in the Order's history**. She was a nurse, then began a career in banking.



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

*Nancy DiFiore Quinn (NY)*



President Nancy is the **current National President** of the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America and the **third female President in the Order's history.**





# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

## *Janet Capello (CA)*

The post office at 2635 Napa St. in Vallejo, CA, was named for Janet Capello. She was known for her kindness, unifying nature, and lifetime of service.

<https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2018/08/03/vallejos-main-post-office-officially-named-for-janet-capello/>



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

## *Fran Franchina (OH)*



Fran has been a member of the John Pirelli Lodge #1633 for **57 years** but attended lodge events as a child with her parents. Fran was **John Pirelli's first and only female President from 2001-2002**. She served on countless lodge committees/activities involving public relations, education, heritage, and culture, and she served at the state and national levels.

Fran developed a Grand Lodge newsletter for Ohio and continues today (at age 81) to provide cultural information at lodge meetings. Fran is also acting as an Advisor to the Young Members group.



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

## *Grace Settecase Campisi - Maroccia (FL)*

In 1965, Grace was elected to the highest position in the state – **Grand Venerable (President) of the Grand Lodge of FL – 1st woman in OSDIA history** to be elected to this position, which she held for 2 terms. In 1969, she was elected a National Trustee of OSDIA. Her passion extended to all the Italian immigrants who came to Tampa to find work. For her achievements and all she did to promote her heritage, **she was awarded** in 1999 by the Supreme Lodge, the **Dr. Vincenzo Sellaro Award**, the highest honor of the Order, named after the founder of the Order Sons of Italy in America.



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

*Vincenza DiLiberti (FL)*

**Founder and President of the Daughters of Italy Lodge #2825** in Clearwater, FL. She received the prestigious Italian-American Women of Excellence Award from the Italian Club Ladies Auxiliary, Inc.



# Celebrating OSDIA Women

## Eldora Perfilio (074)

Eldora joined OSDIA for a second time in 1997 as a member of the John Pirelli 1633 (Dayton) Lodge. She held positions at the **Grand Lodge of Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Trustee** (presently serving her 5th year as Trustee). She held position of **National Trustee** for 2 years and served on National Cultural and Heritage Committee. She served as a **National Delegate** 5 terms. She has taught **cooking classes** at the Dayton Lodge and was the founding member to start these classes. She Co-Chaired (with her husband Tony, currently the Grand Lodge of Ohio President) the Cultural and Heritage Festival Booth at Dayton for many years, up through 2018. She won the **Tom Folino Award** from the Grand Lodge of Ohio.



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

*Dr. Linda Fischbach (OH)*

Linda joined the John Pirelli Lodge (Dayton, Ohio) in 1995. She is serving her 3<sup>rd</sup> year as **Recording Secretary** for the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Additionally, for the John Pirelli lodge, she served as the following for multiple terms: **Chairwoman of Membership Committee, Mistress of Ceremonies, created and Chaired the Deli Booth** at the Italian Fall Festa, created and continues to manage the New Member Orientation program, and continues to help **manage semi-annual New Member Initiation events.**



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

*Holly Sproat (074)*

Holly joined the Ben V. Marconi Lodge #505 (Canton, Ohio) in 1995. She served as **Vice President** and is now **President** for a second term.



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

## *Sue Lattavo (OH)*

Sue joined Ben V. Marconi Lodge #505 in Canton, Ohio in 1989. She is presently an Akron Lodge #685 member. At the Marconi Lodge, she served as: **VP** (2 years), **Treasurer** (2 years), co-chaired (with her husband Terry) the Festival Booth for 6 years, and chaired various committees. She served as the Grand Lodge of Ohio **Convention Co-Chair** (again with Terry) from 2003 – 2009. She has served as the **Office Manager** of the Grand Lodge from since 2012. Additionally and at the National level, she served on **National Membership Committee** (2 yrs), **National Technology Committee** (2 yrs) and served as a **National Delegate** 5 terms. She is currently serving a 2nd term as member of the National Sports Award Committee and serving a 5th year **as Co-Chair of the National Autism Committee** (with Terry). Deservingly so, she won the **Purple Aster Award** from the Grand Lodge of Ohio.





# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

## *Marie Montemuro DeJulia (PA)*

Marie was the **first female President of the Grand Lodge of PA**, from 1993-1995. She presided during the years when PA Grand Lodge was the largest & most populous within OSDIA. She & her sister Lorraine Montemuro Fitzgerald **co-founded the 'Justice Frank J. Montemuro Jr. Lodge # 2193** in 1978. Marie went on to become a **National Trustee** for PA, & was honored by many organizations.



# *Celebrating OSDIA Women*

## *Catena Marie Spiritosanto (PA)*

Catena was the **second female State Lodge President** elected in Pennsylvania's 100+ year history of OSDIA. She involved and publicized OSDIA within the state's community of Italian American organizations. She served as a **National CSJ Resource**, at the national level; she **oversaw the board of the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum**. She **authored** a pamphlet on 75 Notable Italian Women in History as well a current bookmark on 'Italian Women's History-Modern Period (1850 to present)'. Twelve of the historical women featured in this International Women's Day Project was on based on this CSJ bookmark. Catena was awarded **Distinguished Italian-American of the Year** in 2003 by the Columbus 500 Foundation, and was an **organizer & chair of the Bucks County 'Bell' Italia festivals** in the 1990s.

