

SUMMARY OF SCA PLANNING MEETING “BRAINSTORM” SESSION

The objectives of this session was to discuss future direction and challenges facing the SCA and the community in general, particularly taking into consideration the outcomes of the Australian delegation’s submission presented to the “Sardi nel Mondo” Conference held in Cagliari in April ‘08, including the outcomes of the “Sessione Tematica – Giovani e Nuova Emigrazione”, the outcomes of the “Giovani Italiani Australia” Conference held at the Gold Coast in September ‘08 and the “Giovani Italiani nel Mondo” Conference held in Rome in December ‘08.

- *This Session, which included brief presentations by guest speakers, was designed to discuss common solutions to the challenges facing the young and not so young in our community in a “brainstorm” format and the documentation of conclusions reached for possible follow up action by relevant “stakeholders”:*

1. Topics for discussion during “brainstorm”;

Whilst there was a high level of informality and opportunity to discuss previously unidentified needs (see “Other” at item 4.6), the topics listed for discussion (see items 4.1 to 4.5) were those identified and presented by the Australian delegation to the “Giovani Italiani nel Mondo” Conference held in Rome in December ‘08:

2. The following three discussion groups, with a group spokesperson and group nickname, were formed to conduct the “brainstorm”;

- **“The GIA, CIA & FBI’s”** : Jennifer Curcio (Group Leader & member of SCA’s “Next Generation”), Giuseppe Nolis (SCA), Olga Useli (SCA), Saverio Minutolo (local guest) and Maria Luisa Scala (guest from the Sardinian Association in Sydney);
- **“The “Post Fevolas”** – Laura Piu (Group Leader & member of the SCA’s “Next Generation”), Angelo Leda (SCA), Giovanna Ruiu (SCA), Aurora Chighine (SCA) and Pietro Schirru (Consulatore & Coordinatore Circoli Sardi in Australia);
- **“The Radiophonics”** – Andrea Pinna (Group Leader, guest & member of “Giovani” from the Sardinian Association in Sydney), Elaine Ledda (SCA), Salvatore Useli (SCA), Tonina Nolis (SCA) and Ricardo Schirru (local guest)

3. The three discussion groups conducted the “brainstorm” individually in three separate areas of the Conference facility and their spokespersons presented their results jointly to all participants for general discussion and additional suggestions;

4. A combined summary of the outcomes of “brainstorm” and general discussion follow;

4.1 Lingua e cultura / Language and culture

- The introduction of public primary and secondary public bi-lingual schools (Italian/English) recognised by Government where upon completion of their studies students are accredited and recognized both in Australia and Italy. It was noted that a similar private school exists in Sydney and the creation of one is being discussed in Melbourne, and such initiatives would be of benefit to those currently in Australia and those who come to Australia for short/long term on employment contracts;
- The important consideration that language/culture/identity are one and the same or at least of equal importance;

- The need to develop a promotional strategy aimed at our youth which promotes the importance of retaining language/culture/identity and details of the existing organisations (e.g. COASIT, Dante Alighieri, IIC etc.) which offer Italian courses in the community based and mainstream media, particularly acknowledging that Italian is still the second most spoken language at home after English particularly in the early years of childhood;
- Obtaining the formal support of Teacher Associations, Unions etc. towards this initiative, which could also be of benefit to teachers with the opportunity of strengthening and enlarging existing exchange programs;
- Whilst it can often be difficult, Conferences, meetings etc. should be run in Italian or if there are non Italian speaking people in the room such forums should be run in a bi-lingual format.

4.2 Informazione e comunicazione / Information and communication

- Regular workshops be conducted by Government authorities and Consuls aimed at keeping the community in general up-to-date on current diplomatic procedural issues and the progress of initiatives;
- Implement at community level, in consultation with Councils, learning centres for the elderly and Aged Care Centres, programs and workshops to teach the elderly basic (e.g. word, email, internet, skype etc.) computer IT skills;
- Encourage the “Giovani Italiani Australia” (GIA) national forum, which has recently been formed and our own Jennifer Curcio is it’s Communications Officer, to further develop their website to not only provide information on social events but also services related information to the young and not so young. This organisation could also develop community programs and workshops which could provide the previously mentioned computer IT skills, cooking classes, basic legal and financial procedural advice etc.

4.3 Mondo del lavoro e lavoro nel mondo / The world of work and work in the world

- The creation of an informative bilateral website which would provide details on Visa regulations, procedures that a prospective tourist, immigrant or person wishing to study English in Australia needs to understand and follow. The site would include local and overseas contact points of relevant Government authorities, affordable accommodation, education courses (University & Tafe) available, sectors and locations where employment opportunities exist, apprenticeships, artisans, internships at a Tertiary and University or Graduate level. This would also act as an interactive networking tool uniting those all over the world with common interest of Italian/Australian language/culture/identity ;
- Encourage relevant Government authorities to conduct community based workshops both here and in Italy, particularly on Immigration, Education Aged Care etc. matters;
- The establishment of exchange programs based on the Australia’s successful “work experience” model used in Secondary Schools and existing “Scholarships” provided by the Toscana and Puglia Regions, which could also include aspects devoted to the previously mentioned importance of language/culture/identity;
- The creation of a database of professionals living in and outside of Italy;
- The introduction of work exchanges and apprentices between Italy and its communities abroad, particularly in unique skill areas such as “artigianato”;
- The bilateral review of existing general immigration and Visa regulations, with possible increased opportunities for non skilled migrants and extension of the Italian working holiday visa to 2 years rather than the existing 12 months.

4.4 Rappresentanza e partecipazione / Representation and participation;

- Making Italian citizenship more widely available to people of Italian heritage, particularly where citizenship has been lost through circumstances which are no longer relevant, as well as endeavouring to remove some of the inconsistencies which currently exist;
- Encourage the Italian community as a whole to achieve a better representation at all levels of Government both locally and overseas

4.5 Identità Italiana e multiculturalismo / Italian identity and Multiculturalism;

- The strengthening of the Italian communities outside Italy, including Clubs, Associations and such existing authorities as COASIT etc., so that they can remain relevant by providing services to assist young Italians wherever they go;
- Recognising that multiculturalism continues to be a huge success in Australia ensure that the Italian culture remains at the forefront and language/culture/identity promoted at all times within and outside the Italian community;
- Ensure that “individual” Regional language/culture/identity is also not lost within the mainstream community;

4.6 Altro / Other

- Community based organisations need not be afraid and in fact let the young take on responsibilities and do things their way;
- There needs to be a commitment and willingness by the young to take on responsibilities by taking the “torch” from the ageing generation so that the young of the future will ensure that these values are passed on through day to day life and the forever developing new age information/communication mediums
- With the influx on new migrants and refugees, look for opportunities to jointly celebrate each others cultures, generally mix and provide advice on common areas of interest;

5. Confirmation and documentation of outcomes for possible follow up action by relevant “stakeholders”

- It was agreed that once the minutes of the Planning Day were completed, these outcomes would be formally forwarded to Pietro Schirru (Consultore and Coordinatore Circoli Sardi in Australia) for consideration when the next Consulta meets in Sardinia and other local mainstream authorities such as COMITES, COASIT GIA etc. to make them aware and where possible consider in their deliberations these proposed initiatives which impact on Sardinians and non Sardinians.
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**DISCUSSION PAPER SUBMITTED BY CRISTINA MARRAS FOR SCA
PLANNING MEETING “BRAINSTORM”**

Cari amici della Sardinian Cultural Association,

Scusate la mia assenza che – vi assicuro – e' solo fisica perche' sono li' con voi col cuore e con la mente.

Questo breve messaggio e' per ringraziarvi per l'ottimo 'materiale' fornito dalla Sardinian Cultural Association – materiale che mi permette di utilizzare il Messaggero Sardo per far conoscere nel mondo le vostre attivita'. E se le vostre attivita' non fossero cosi' interessanti e variegate, sono certa che il riscontro da parte del Messaggero non sarebbe cosi' positivo e magari, anziche' pubblicare tutto cio' che spedisco, pubblicherebbero solo 1 articolo ogni 3.

Vorrei poi augurarvi grandi successi in questa giornata di pianificazione alla quale non posso partecipare – per forza di causa maggiore collegati piu' che altro all'essere una “working mother” che nel fine settimana deve accontentare il figlio che vuole fare le sue cose da bambino di 6 anni.

Vorrei infine lanciare una manciata di semi nel fertilissimo terreno di questa riunione, ricordandovi la mia totale disponibilita' quando si tratta di promuovere le attivita' del circolo – soprattutto quelle che si contraddistinguono per l'approccio innovativo, facendo tesoro della tradizione del passato ma proiettandola nel presente. E i semi che vorrei lanciare metaforicamente oggi sono quelli per la creazione di una serie di “Sardinian Master Chef” nelle quali le nostre espertissime donne (*perche' non mi risulta che ci siano uomini tra i cuochi, ma se ce ne fossero, benvenuti anche loro*) presentano workshops “hands-on” per insegnare a preparare piatti tipici della Sardegna, e metterei senz'altro in lista malloreddus, aranzadas e pardulas. Immaginate che bello vedere le nuove generazioni avvicinarsi a quest'arte antica! E vedere gente di tutte le razze impastare i malloreddus!

Un progetto del genere potrebbe anche dar vita ad un libro di ricette “raccontate” con le storie delle nostre famiglie. Insomma, i semi da piantare sono tanti, e molti di questi – sono certa – si trasformeranno in querce da sughero belle e forti, come siamo noi sarde.

Evviva la cucina sarda! Evviva la Sardinian Cultural Association!

Forza Paris!

Cristina Marras, Melbourne 25 ottobre 2009

