

# ER

EMILIA  
ROMAGNA

N.2  
2007

## ALLA CONQUISTA DELLA CINDIA

THE CONQUEST OF CHINDIA

Le aziende  
emiliano-romagnole  
investono nei mercati dell'Asia

Companies  
in Emilia-Romagna  
invest in Asian  
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**CULTURA CULTURE**  
L'Ermitage sbarca a Ferrara  
The Hermitage comes to Ferrara

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L'Emilia secondo Björn Larsson  
Emilia according to Björn Larsson



# Sommario

## N. 2

# ER

EMILIA ROMAGNA

Regione Emilia-Romagna

Trimestrale d'informazione  
a cura dell'Agenzia Informazione  
e Ufficio Stampa della Giunta regionale  
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## ALMOND-EYED MARKETS

by Stefano Vezzani

From Vm Motori to Arcotronics, from Vortex Hydra to Ducati Energia, the Brevini Group of Reggio Emilia and Bologna's Officine Maccaferri, Emilia-Romagna's companies leave on a long march to conquer Asian markets. Osservatorio Asia notes that Emilia-Romagna ranks third in Italian regions for its commerce and production in China and India, behind the Lombardy and Veneto regions. The added value offered by these emerging economies is mainly in advanced mechanics, high technology, chemistry, agro-industrial know-how and textiles.

If interest in China, although growing in overall value, has stabilized compared to the boom at the start of the year 2000, India is that country that Emilia-Romagna is betting on this year and it is considered a "priority" country for 2007 by the Ministry of International Commerce. The last time the relationship with the Asian sub-continent was consolidated was through the Italian entrepreneurial mission carried out in February, organized by Confindustria, ICE and ABI, following Prime Minister Romano Prodi. The aim: to investigate a little-explored market that is quickly expanding and to support agreements with companies and institutions. "Our region- says Sergio Sassi, president of the Internationalisation Commission of Confindustria Emilia-Romagna - is second in Italian exports to Asian countries (Liguria is the first, Ed.). Economic analysts predict that India's GDP will be greater than that of Italy within 5 years, while in 2040 it should overtake that of the United States". 40 companies and institutions of Emilia-Romagna took part in the visit, including Officine Maccaferri, the Bolognese world leader group in the geotechnical and soil erosion field that invested 6 million Euros in opening a new plant in Pune and buying Sargon Geosynthetics of New Delhi. "We expect - announces Officine Maccaferri's Managing Director Luigi Penzo - our business on the territory to increase between 10 and 15 million Euro in the next three years". It is a business that meets India's need for quality infrastructures and is certainly one of

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the ties that contributes to halting (for a short time) the local economic boom. On a parallel level, Maccaferri will finish building the new Pune plant (of 15 thousand square metres) by the end of 2007, which will be added to those of Mumbai and Delhi. This expansion will determine an employee increase in the Indian establishments that will go from the current total of 20 to 100 people.

While Cosepuri, the Bolognese consortium of enterprises active in people transport and tourism, will start a company in India this year through a partnership with local companies, February's mission was an occasion to subscribe to the Parma Cluster India project (20 participating companies), involved in the promotion of Italian machinery and the training of Indian staff on European hygiene standards in order to make Asian foodstuffs suitable for exportation to all international markets. The main point of the initiative was to give the ten companies from Parma (amongst which Protec, Zacmi, Melegari, Tropical Food Machinery), divided into five product groups, the opportunity to meet Indian entrepreneurs in 50 establishments. The Chinese market is relatively more mature (183 companies from Emilia-Romagna are present) and is targeted by Bonfiglioli of Bologna who has

opened a new affiliated company of 3 thousand square metres in Shanghai, 40 km from the city centre: the aim is to replicate the success obtained in India where, since 1999, the company has consistently increased its income by slowly taking important market shares, year after year, of mechanical reducers and electric motors.

This market offers extraordinary potential and is estimated at around 3.8 billion dollars within the large mechanics industry that is worth around 231 billion dollars with an annual growth of around 24 percent. VM Motori of Cento in the Ferrara area also seems set to plan more solid investments in China in the forthcoming years. Until now it has concentrated mainly on transferring licenses for the production of diesel motors.

Other successful cases from Emilia-Romagna can also be seen: cranes produced by Fantuzzi of Reggio Emilia (one of its plants has 2,000 employees) are dotted around various Chinese ports while Emilceramiche of Fiorano, which produces flooring materials, boasts a turnover of one million Euro with a sales network stretching from Shanghai to Peking. Brevini of Reggio Emilia also has good prospects. It has been present in China since 1994 in the field of construction and

earth-moving machinery as well as clean energy production: it intends to develop a partnership with a Chinese company and aims to have a factory 150 km from Shanghai up and running by September, able to produce 40 thousand industrial reducers.

## SOFIA'S CHOICE

by Giorgio Savona

More energy needed for economic relations between Italy and Bulgaria following the "Country of Roses" entry to the European Union and more commitment to various aspects such as professional training and the support of Bulgaria's public administration system in relations with Brussels. These were the commitments made during the meeting that took place in January at the Italian Embassy in Sofia in the presence of Prime Minister Romano Prodi, Vice President of Emilia-Romagna Flavio Delbono, a delegation of the Bulgarian Government and representatives from over 70 Italian firms operating in Bulgaria, 15 of which are from Emilia-Romagna.

The main industries of import-export trade are textiles, fashion and clothing, footwear and accessories, the mechanical industry and precision components, agro-industrial and farming equipment, and automotive and information technology. "In Bulgaria - comments Delbono - there are great opportunities to strengthen current collaborations and begin new ones, also considering the prospect of significant structural funding being sent to this country. I believe there are important areas where collaboration is possible in professional training and in the support of Bulgaria's public administration in its technical relations with European Union structures, to seize each new opportunity made available at European level".

According to Unioncamere information, Emilia-Romagna is third in Italy (after Veneto and Lombardy) for exports to Bulgaria, whilst for imports it is in second place. The region has collaborated for some time with Sofia's Governorship and promotes the presence of companies and encourages production and economic collaboration agreements, direct investments and sales promotion.

From this viewpoint, agreements between Bulgarian institutions and the re-

gion – or between local development agencies and corresponding agencies in Emilia-Romagna, such as Ervet and Aster – and also projects co-financed by European funding were promoted, like the Twinning programme and inter-regional programmes. This situation has allowed for fruitful and effective inter-institutional relationships to be formed, as well as increasing knowledge of collaboration and economic and commercial exchange opportunities.

The direct promotion of small and medium-sized businesses in particular, has been based on specific co-financed projects presented to export consortiums or even temporary unions between businesses, through relevant competitions from 2004 to the present day.

Alongside projects carried out directly by business consortiums, other specific promotional projects were carried out in collaboration with, and supported economically by, the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE) – as provided for by national agreements - aimed at strengthening the presence of regional productions and institutions on these markets as a whole. These actions have been effectively supported, since 2002, by a service offering consultancy and accompaniment to businesses financed by the region, in accordance with ICE. This service is in operation at the Italian Embassy in Bulgaria, in Sofia. It has helped businesses to explore the Bulgarian market and has also helped institutions in establishing relationships and agreements with their Bulgarian counterparts. Up to today, the service has organized and accompanied 40-60 businesses each year in economic missions to Bulgaria, helping them with their initial evaluation of commercial and production opportunities.

In 2005 and 2006 alone, these missions led 44 businesses to invest in this country, in joint ventures and setting-up businesses that observe Bulgarian law but are entirely controlled by Italians, and to over 70 trade and production collaboration agreements between businesses from Emilia-Romagna and Bulgaria. 🍷

## THE LANDS OF BACCHUS

by Thomas Foschini

The Vitis Lambrusca is Emilia’s most famous grape and it has even been written about in texts as early as those of Pliny the Old and Virgil. Seeds were discovered that date the “ancestor” of viticulture in Emilia-Romagna, the Lambrusco vintage, to around 1000-2000 BC. The “nectar of Bacchus” is an ancient his-

tory in Emilia-Romagna, a history that has produced vintage wines and made the region second in Italy for export quotas, behind the Veneto region, with over 3 million hectolitres (almost 50% of the total production). On its own, the region exports a fifth of the national total. An area of 60,000 hectares of land has been cultivated for vineyards and these produce around 6 million hectolitres per year. These are stable figures that have been joined, over time, by an ever increasing will to qualify and promote wine “made in Emilia-Romagna”, which has a strong heritage of agricultural traditions and wine know-how that currently has few rivals internationally.

When the Bacchus grape speaks the language of Emilia-Romagna, the journey just has to begin in the hills of Piacenza. These grapes produced the famous reds, Barbera and Bonarda Doc – the first is also available as a sparkling wine, the second as a champagne – delicate wines that are ideal for accompanying first courses, fish and white meats. Piacenza has an old wine-making tradition that is autonomous both in regards to the region and Emilia itself. The Bacchus grape usually prefers hillsides as it is here, where water doesn’t stagnate in the earth, where the sun turns the grapes gold without burning them and snow covers the countryside without the ice hardening the soil, that many vines produce their best results. It is often these kinds of environments that boast of Registered Designation of Origin products in Emilia-Romagna, disciplinary in hand. We therefore have a subtle boundary that leads very gently from the hills of Piacenza down towards Parma, which is a point of reference for the European agro-industrial sector: Barbera and Bonarda are also produced here but the disciplinary provides only for small quantities, maximum 15%, of Lambrusco grapes. The remarkable “reserve” version is aged at least 24 months. We come now to the whites produced in the hills of Scandiano and Canossa: straw-coloured, dry or sweet wine can be produced from the Sauvignon variety called Spergola, with various additions, from Pinot and Malvasia to Trebbiano di Romagna. The red Cabernet Sauvignon, obtained by the grape of the same name (at least 85%), is also of the same Registered Designation of Origin. Reggio Emilia, alongside Modena and west Bologna, is also Lambrusco territory, that great icon of Emilia. It is produced on the surrounding hills – we need only think of the full-bodied Lambrusco Grasparossa Castelvetro – but also on the vast lowland that stretches from Reggio Emilia to Bologna (particularly in Reggio Emilia and Sorbara varieties, that takes the name of the small prin-

cipal town of the same production area of Modena), up to the Salamino of Santa Croce, which must contain at least 90 percent of the vine it takes its name from, typical of lowland Modena, close to Mantova. Red or rosé, dry or sweet, Lambrusco is ideal for those products that have made Emilian cooking famous the world over: from mature cheese, cold meats and salami to meat-filled hand-made pasta. It is a Lambrusco-land that crosses the river Reno to the RDO varieties of the hills of Bologna where they drink the red wines Barbera and Barbera Reserve, the latter is aged for at least 3 years. Now for the sparkling white and Cabernet Sauvignon, proposed as a meditation wine in the “Reserve” variety, with particular reference to the “elite” wine bottled in small family-run wineries.

From the hills of Imola onwards – which give their name to RDO whites and, once again, to the Barbera – we enter the Romagna of wines, that historical region that adopted the grape bunch as its symbol, alongside the Passator Cortese and the Caveja Campanena. Wine-making in Romagna has a complex history that has its diamond point in the Albana Passito with a Guaranteed Registered Designation of Origin– the only GRDO of the area – priceless for desserts; so, to continue with the theme of sweet wines, the Cagnina di Romagna is particularly agreeable when accompanied by roasted chestnuts.

If there was ever a wine synonymous with Romagna – although from a vine that is also widespread elsewhere – it has to be the Sangiovese, that, in some precise locations in the hills of Romagna that slope gently towards the sea, is called Sangiovese Superiore. It is produced in various areas, from the hills of Faenza – that lend their name to various RDO whites and reds too – to the Rubicon, where the most famous label comes from. There really are many RDO wines that are bottled between the Sillaro and Marecchia valleys: Trebbiano Doc – the blend that gives us the Bosco Eliceo is particularly attractive, available also as a red with a base of Fortana and Merlot grapes– Pagadebit, which comes from the Bombino Bianco grape. Wine experts assure us that this is the best wine to accompany another symbol of Romagna: piadina with squaquerone cheese and rocket. 🍷

## THE HERMITAGE COMES TO FERRARA

by Giorgio Soave

The scientific and cultural “Ermitage Italia” centre comes to Ferrara. It is the fourth venue in the world, after Ams-

terdam, Las Vegas and London, of the famous Russian museum of St Petersburg that conserves one of the richest international collections of artworks.

The official signing of the memorandum of intent took place in March, in Bari, during the Italian and Russian summit attended by Presidents Romano Prodi and Vladimir Putin. The document was initialised by Michail Piotrovskij, Executive Director of the Hermitage Museum, Vasco Errani, president of the Emilia-Romagna region, Pier Giorgio Dall’Acqua president of the district of Ferrara and by Gaetano Sateriale, Mayor of Ferrara.

"The collaboration with the renowned Russian museum is an honour for our region – comments president Errani – and gives us the opportunity to build an international, cultural and scientific centre, able to relate to the main museum institutions of the world".

The centre of studies and the guest rooms, also at the disposal of foreign researchers, will be located at Palazzo Giglioli, where renovations are due to be finish in July. The representative headquarters will be located in the Estense Castle. It will cost around 350 to 400 thousand Euros a year to run, paid for by the town council, provincial administration, the Fondazione Carife and the Cassa di Risparmio di Ferrara.

The centre’s opening celebration is due to take place in October and two exhibitions are already being planned in Ferrara. The first, planned for March 2008, will be on sixteenth-century Ferrarese paintings belonging to the Hermitage. “Our first exhibition will be on the great works of sixteenth-century Ferrarese artists: the Hermitage wanted to pay us this tribute and we’re very happy about it”, says Mayor of Ferrara Gaetano Sateriale. “This event is even more extraordinary as in autumn 2007 ‘Palazzo dei Diamanti’ (Diamond Palace) will host an exhibition on Ferrarese art at the end of the fifteenth-century”. The second important exhibition will be centred on the art of Islam and will take place in 2010.

A Cultural Foundation will be formed thanks to this agreement involving local bodies and the region, "Ermitage Italia", which will manage the centre with the aid of a science committee and a sponsor committee, open to contributions from regional societies, banks and foundations.

The science committee will be led by Hermitage Director Michail Piotrovskij and will have two directors, one Russian (yet to be appointed) and one Italian, History of Art Professor Francesca Cappelletti of the Literature Faculty of the University of Ferrara. 🍷

## THE STONES OF BOLOGNA

by Anna Maria Martina

Clay, sandstone, selenite, limestone, marble. The history of Bologna and its monuments can be rebuilt through its stones. An unusual but fascinating way to rediscover a city and its past is proposed in a map-guide called “Le pietre di Bologna: litologia di una città” (Stones of Bologna: lithology of a city) by the Geological Service of the Emilia-Romagna region in collaboration with the town council and University of Bologna.

As well as a 1:3500 scale map, the guide (provided free of charge to schools upon request and on sale at the regional Geology service) is richly illustrated with the main monuments of Bologna. It details four routes for churches, roads, porticoes and palazzos that are meaningful not only for their architectural and artistic characteristics but also for the materials in which they were built. Stonework can tell many stories indeed, firstly, the geological history of a territory through processes and phenomena that took place through the eras. It can also tell the story of old commercial routes, cultural exchanges, artistic tastes throughout history, and the development of extraction processes. It reminds us that, today, the surface patinas of stones and types of decay give information on the environmental conditions of the urban environment and its change over time.

Particularly, the stones provide information on the quality of the air in the city and its deterioration, which began in the years of the economic boom.

"The map solidly demonstrates how the hiatus between scientific and humanistic culture has no reason to exist and should indeed be overcome", explains Mariolui-gi Bruschini, regional councillor for the defence of land, coast and civil protection, “and of how, on the contrary, scientific research itself can help us gain a better knowledge and love of art history”. The routes suggested unwind through the administrative and military quarters that, in the 14th Century, subdivided Bologna into four parts (hence the term “quarter”): Porta Siera, Porta Ravegnana, Porta Piera and San Procolo. 🍷

## CLOUDS ON THE PAMPAS

by Claudio Bacilieri

We couldn’t celebrate the anniversary of Carosello without mentioning Paul Campani, master of comic strips

and animation. Before lending his graphic art to the famous black and white television sketches born fifty years ago during Italy’s economic boom, Campani took part in the heroic season of Italian comic strips in Argentina: a strange phenomenon of intellectual immigration that saw our authors cross the ocean armed with colours, Indian ink, pencils and a taste for adventure.

But let’s start at the beginning. Paolo Campani, pen name Paul, was born in Modena in 1923. He made his debut as a comic strip artist at only sixteen years of age in “Albi dell’Intrepido”. His graphic style was already mature, thanks partly to the authors of American comics, mainly Milton Caniff. He worked intensely with Universo editors until November1941. He studied as an accountant, got his diploma and began drawing again after the war. In 1946 he created Misterix, his most famous character, scripted by Max Massimino Garnier. Misterix is an all-Italian superhero but also has a strong American element that perhaps reflected the ideals of that time. From comic strip to comic strip, the character grew both in narrative imagination, after a series of episodes that were a little confusing, and graphic style, when Campani began to experiment freely. He mixed various styles, such as Caniff’s ‘splash’ effect to styles like Flash Gordon; he even used a photographic spin. Published in the magazine La Più Bella Avventura, Misterix lasted 98 weeks before being dropped by the editor in 1948.

Fortune had it that Editorial Abril was up and running across the ocean in Buenos Aires, a publishing house founded in 1941 by Cesare Civita, an Italian Jew who immigrated there following racial laws. Civita, who was in charge of the comic strip department of Mondadori in Italy, needed material for the numerous magazines he had created. The material bought from North America wasn’t enough for him so he looked to Italy where, in recent years, the Venetian group Asso di Picche had been very successful.

The magazine was named after the masked avenger drawn by Hugo Pratt. Through his Italian agent, Matilde Finzi, Civita bought Asso di Picche’s productions in bulk and also fell in love with the other avenging hero, Misterix, just as Campani, disheartened by the feeble Italian comic strip market was considering turning his attention to the new cartoon industry with Secondo Bignardi, another Modenese talent.

Editorial Abril asked Campani to restart the series full-time and so Misterix came

to Argentina, debuting in January 1948 in issue no. 33 of Salgari. Given its success, in September that very year Editorial Abril launched a new magazine entitled Misterix. Two other ‘Made in Italy’ characters appeared alongside Paul Campani’s favourite hero. In October 1949 Civita brought out a new magazine, the first issue of Rayo Rojo, where Gianluigi Bonelli’s Tex (translated as Colt el justiciero) and Alberto Ongaro and Hugo Pratt’s Legion Extranjer appeared alongside other characters.

In 1950 Civita requested that the Italian comic strip talents, who could barely make a living from their art in Italy, move to Argentina. The Venetians of Asso di Picche arrived first: Pratt, Ongaro, Mario Faustinielli and Ivo Pavone. The call of the pampas didn’t seduce Paul Campani, however, who preferred to continue drawing Misterix in Italy.

We will take a short detour here to remember what the Italian artists’ immigration to Argentina meant for comic strip history. Their bohemian lifestyle in Acassuso’s villa just outside Buenos Aires – young 24 year-olds who, as Ongaro recalls, lived on “comic-strips, art, love and debates on art and literature” - led them to produce extraordinary works that would go on to significantly influence the local environment. The first Argentinean to come to light was Héctor Oesterheld, a genius of writing, writer of the Bull Rockett stories illustrated by Campani (1952-56) and Sargento Kirk by Pratt (1953-59). Both were published in Misterix. Oesterheld later became a desaparecido in the years of military dictatorship, after his four daughters were killed.

Getting back to Campani, Misterix’s adventures took on a new stability when Ongaro was called upon to script the drawings arriving from Italy. He worked on them until 1959. Campani scripted them until 1955, and then alternated with Eugenio Juan Zoppi. The Misterix series ended in April 1965. Campani’s second most important paper hero was the aforementioned Bull Rockett, a modern adventurer modelled on the actor Burt Lancaster, who was then drawn by Francisco Solano López from 1955-1959, who then wrote L’Eternauta with Oesterheld, the first extraordinary story that was completely Argentinean. Other characters by the Modenese comic strip artist are Ted Patton, published in Rayo Rojo from 1950 to 1953; Lord Commando, scripted by Oesterheld, which came out in 1952 in the weekly magazine Cinemisterio; and Gey Cario-ca, a prototype of a sexy and audacious lady involved in police work, originating

in 1948 in collaboration with Max Massimino Garnier and published in Argentina with the name of Tita Dinamita from 1950 to 1953, also in Cinemisterio. Campani’s latest strips highlighted a more dynamic, modern and fast style, almost as if he urgently wanted to leave the Argentinean comic-strip world, which had made him famous despite the fact he had never been there. In Misterix issue n. 575 of November 1959, Campani’s comic-strip era came to an end and was replaced by his interest in cartoons. From then on, Campani made art exclusively for animation cinema.

In 1954 Campani founded his own production company called Paul Film, with Max Massimino Garnier. It was only with the advent of Carosello in 1957, however, that the Italian animation industry started to take hold. Here, Paul Film could play its hand. Campani drew and directed and Garnier wrote the texts and storylines. Secondo Bignardi dealt with the animation side and Angelo Benevelli was in charge of photography. Paul Film, the best overall, led to the creation of some great works of animation that were perfect for television’s Carosello, which was clever in itself: a minute and a half of pure entertainment with 30 seconds of advertising. The children of those days – who would go to bed straight after Carosello – will dearly remember Toto and Tata, the two urchins that were on air from 1961 to 1965; the misfortunes of Angelino, from 1958 to 1965; Svanitella, the beautiful and vamp-like journalist; Stellino, the wood-sprite; Fido Bau; Il Merendero; and L’Omino Coi Baffi (the man with the moustache), who appeared in 1958 in the famous Moka Express advert, Bialetti’s coffee machine that “makes a better espresso than the bar”. L’Omino Coi Baffi is perhaps the best expression of Campani and Garnier’s art, unmistakable for how his mouth formed every letter pronounced (voice by Raffaele Pisu). Having invented short television language, where convincing messages were delivered by complete stories condensed into two minutes, Carosello provided twenty years of opportunity for great authors to experiment. The sketches ended when the consumer world became more aggressive and began to look further than innocent cartoon advertising. Paul Film, however, fell apart much earlier: at the peak of its success, as often happens. Although still young at the time, Paul Campani stood aside and no longer wished to attempt any other editorial ventures following the crisis of his world. He died in 1991 at the age of 68. The seed never dies however. Just as one



of the best comics school in the world was founded in Argentina thanks to the creative ferment of the Italian authors (as well as Oesterheld and Solano López, think of Alberto Breccia, Arturo Del Castillo, Juan Zanotto, Copi, Quino, who created Mafalda in 1964, Horacio Altuna and Carlos Trillo with their sketches on Clarín beginning in 1975), we can also speak of a Modenese comic-strip trend that saw Campani as its founder. Secondo Bignardi came out of Paul Film; then Guido De Maria and lastly Bonvi arrived, author of the famous Sturmtruppen, a strip that represented the anti-militaristic vein that was already present in poor Oesterheld's mind. It is therefore appropriate that Modena dedicates an exhibition to Campani on the anniversary of Carosello. It is to be held at the Foro Boario from September 1st to October 23rd 2007 and will exhibit drawings, photographs, animation machinery and animated advertisements.

### SAVE THE ANIMALS

by *Monica Lugli*

Save the Cornella White. The appeal for the survival of the old ovine breed historically found in the districts of Reggio Emilia and Modena has been launched by GAL - Gruppo Azione Locale (Local Action Group), Antico Frignano and Appennino Reggiano, who have issued an announcement for the purchase of these rare white-fleeced sheep. The milk of these sheep is ideal for making 'pecorino' cheese and their fleece also provides high quality wool. A team of experts and enthusiasts have been working for months to prevent the extinction of one of the last few native breeds of Emilia-Romagna. Promoters tell us that the GAL project aims to uncover the historical origins of the Cornella, study and identify its genotype and phenotype, to ascertain that they have before them sheep nuclei that are resistant to Scrapie, a disease belonging to the BSE family. It also aims to identify breeders and help them to seek contributions foreseen in the region's new rural development project for breeders of native breeds. In order to protect the biodiversity of the Cornella White, Reggio Emilia will set up a registry and nominate breed experts. Research on sheep breeding will continue in order to characterize the DNA of this animal and create nuclei of Cornella White that are immune to Scrapie.

While in Emilia looks after its sheep, Romagna takes care of storks. For over 50 years, Faenza has had a colony of white European storks (ciconia ciconia) that survived thanks to the citizens who fed and raised them. A foundation has now been set up to improve their living conditions. "Since the fifties in Faenza – explain Paolo Cattani and Giuliano Zama, president and vice president of "Amici delle cicogne" (Friends of the stork) – baby storks have been taken from nests and raised, following the Swiss model of professor Max Bloesh. Human intervention is necessary in order to guarantee the survival of our colony".

### THE MOTOR COMPASS

by *Marino Baresani*

The "Motor Valley" information office has opened at the Ferrari Gallery in Maranello, in the Modena area, following an agreement stipulated between the region and the municipality within an inter-regional tourist development project called "Terra dei Motori" (Land of Motorcars). A periodic newsletter also provides information on all events of a motor touring nature due to take place in the territory. To sign-up, simply log on to the website of the town of Maranello (www.comune.maranello.mo.it) and access the page dedicated to the newsletter subscription and select the "Motor Valley" subscription. You can also consult the updated website (www.terramotori.it) to see motor-tourist initiatives and news in Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, Sicily and Tuscany. The office, which received IAT (Informazione e Accoglienza Turistica) recognition from the provincial administration of Modena, also provides information on Maranello and the surrounding area and on planned events. It also aids tourists in finding hotels and restaurants.

From the Ferrari Gallery to the circuit of Fiorano, not forgetting the Galleria Del Vento, the monuments of Enzo Ferrari and the Prancing Horse insignia, Maranello, is not only world famous for the Ferrari factory (where the cars have been built since 1943) but is also synonymous with the typical cuisine of Emilia with its speciality products and hospitality. Restaurants in the area offer great traditional cuisine and you can also visit commercial farms that produce Modenese food and wine specialties such as: balsamic vinegar, Parmigiano

Reggiano, cold meats and salami, Lambrusco and Nocino (walnut liqueur). In May, at the tourist office and at the URP, you can also take a guided tour of contemporary art sculptures belonging to the Severi Collection, displayed in the gardens of the Villa Rangoni Machiavelli in Pozza.

### THE FORNI SAGA

by *Claudio Bacillieri*

March 1922. Alessandro Forni was born in the countryside surrounding Bologna, in Le Budrie, a hamlet of San Giovanni in Persiceto, a few months before the advent of Fascism. His life and those of his family members intertwined with the vicissitudes of lowland Emilia, Italy and Argentina of the last century, giving body to a rich tapestry on immigration. Alessandro's childhood took place in the rectory's courtyard and in the church square, where he met and played with the other children. Between playing tricks on the postman in a stable and taking trips to Vignola to steal cherries, his early school years were soon over. It was the rural and innocent Italy of the 1920's where a child's dream was to ring the church bells, just as his father has done. The bells were the tie that linked Sandro to San Giovanni in Persiceto, so much so that in far-away Argentina, he sometimes awoke his family with their sound, having recorded it in Italy. His family was poor: they were seven brothers in all; one died in the war in 1941, the same year in which his mother died. Sandro was also enrolled in the army. The armistice of September 8th 1943 found him in Pordenone, in the Friuli area. From there, travelling secretly under the cover of night, he followed the road for home. He got there to find that the Germans had occupied the town. However, it was the German Commander himself, with whom his bell-tolling father had established a relationship of mutual respect, who allowed him to re-embrace his family. The same Commander apparently saved the young men of the town from being rounded up by warning the families of this danger. Life began again when the war ends. Forni found work as a builder and set-up a theatre company and choir in his free time, with his parish friends. A friend with a truck ferried the actors and singer to nearby towns for shows. Sandro, meanwhile a staunch democratic, embraced the political ideals of De Gasperi. 1948, however, was a tense year for

Italy. This was sadly evident in the lowlands of Emilia especially, where there was a lot of bloodshed. In San Giovanni in Persiceto, in the November mist, three militant communists murdered Catholic trade unionist Giuseppe Fanin. The agrarian battle was raging and Sandro Forni received threats. In the town, the entrepreneur Parmegiani was signing up young men for a two-year project in Argentina. Upon his father's advice, Sandro decided to leave Italy's problems behind him for a while. His friends Mario and Giorgio also joined him on his adventure. On a passenger-carrying oil tanker, on October 15th 1949, the three men from San Giovanni in Persiceto said their goodbyes to their tearful families and friends on the dock of Genoa's port. They waved until Italy disappeared into the autumn mist. The ship boarded passengers at each stop along the Mediterranean. The three friends felt alienated in the midst of all these languages. They gathered at the prow to talk, sing and watch the clear and star-studded sky. They saw the twinkling ports of Rio, Santos, Montevideo, and finally Buenos Aires: a feverish, traffic-filled metropolis with wide, straight streets, so different to Italian cities. Sandro and his friends thought they had been sent to build structures in San Nicolás, in the province of Buenos Aires. When they arrived, however, plans had changed: they were to build schools 1,300 kilometres from the capital in the Misiones area for Parmegiani, who was now in partnership with Bucci, another man from the Bologna area. It took two days to get from Buenos Aires to Misiones by train. It didn't matter that other Italians had warned them before leaving not to go to that far-away place in the midst of poisonous snakes ferocious beasts. Youth is courageous. The landscapes rushed past their eyes like an adventure film. Little by little, the cities gave way to ever-smaller towns until there were only solitary stations in the middle of the pampas. The railway sometimes ran beside the Paraná, a river that looks like a sea, then changed again to cross fields of wheat, unfarmed fields with grazing animals and the odd Guacho house, mud-dwellings with straw roofs. In the region of Entre Rios the pampas gave way to soft hillsides and forests alternated with endless pastures. Further north, the Corrientes region presented itself with marshlands and lagoons, while Misiones had many rivers and streams that unwound around hills topped with dense forests. Posadas was the last stop on the train

journey: here the Italian consul awaited them. The three men from the lowlands travelled the final one hundred kilometres by bus to "corazón del monte misionero", the small town of Oberá. Giovanni Belli, Bucci's nephew, was there to welcome them and he warmly greeted them in the Bolognese dialect. In 1949, Oberá was only 11 years old. Built in the forest, its dirt roads were dusty in the dry season and impracticable when it rained. On the first night, the friends stayed in a hotel where the bathrooms were located on the level below their rooms. All of a sudden, they were awoken by what seemed like an animal's roar. Fear kept them hidden in their rooms, unable to go down to the bathrooms. The next morning they discovered that stray dogs were responsible for the noise, not beasts. They were watchful nonetheless. They began building schools in Sargento Cabral, a village five kilometres away from Oberá. A Swiss taxi-driver accompanied them the first few times. On returning home from work, seeing as it was summer, they would stop to bathe in one of the many forest streams. One afternoon, while Sandro was shaving and Mario was entering the water listening out for the noises of the forest, a series of roars caused them to gather their clothes in a hurry and flee. It was only a large frog, but they only discovered this later. In the evenings they would gather on the veranda of the old school where they had found temporary lodgings. There they talked of the day's happenings, of news arriving from Italy, of future plans. They nearly always ended the evening by singing Italian songs, operatic arias or reciting Latin texts: those that reminded them of when they were altar boys in the church of Le Budrie in San Giovanni in Persiceto. A middle-aged man with a violin emerged from the forest one evening. Speaking in Italian, he offered to accompany their songs on the violin. They later found out that this mysterious character was a slightly crazy Austrian nobleman. He had emigrated for political reasons and lived alone in the forest. The new schoolteacher arrived in Sargento Cabral on an April day in 1950, accompanied by the Swiss taxi-driver. She was 21 years old and fresh out of school. Her name was Maria Adelaida. Her first job was one hundred kilometres from home but she wasn't frightened by her new life in the forest. She quickly becomes friends with the older teacher who put her up in a sort of pile-dwelling belonging to a Russian farmer. As lessons were due to start again, the builders had to vacate the old school

and move to a finished building. Meanwhile, they continued to work on the new school. One evening, the young men from San Giovanni in Persiceto paid a visit to the schoolteachers, arriving on a horse-drawn carriage: Mario and Giorgio drove while Sandro perched on a large branch of floripón, a wild flower similar to the campanulaceous. On beautiful winter days, it was customary in this part of the world to sit in the sun under a citrus tree and eat oranges and tangerines together. Giorgio, who was a baker back home, made sheets of pastry: he prepared the dough and laid the tagliatelle out in the sun to dry. The two Argentinean teachers looked with curiosity at the yellow strips hanging in the open air. Sandro and Mario prepared the ragù sauce. Love and friendships were born. After lunch on Sundays, they wandered into the forest with Mr Guevara, the school headmaster, to admire the flowers and plants and listen to birdsong. Sometimes they would go to the Japanese immigrant's club to drink tea. It sometimes happened that they would come across a puma there, which would follow them home like a dog used to being in human company. To go to the cinema, they had to go to Oberá, where the Italian population was growing day by day. Sandro Forni and Maria Adelaida settled in Oberá, after their wedding in October 1951. Four of Sandro's siblings attended the wedding, the American dream pushing them to leave Italy. Giuditta and Maria brought a knitting machine with them and found more and more customers to satisfy each day. Raffaele and Francesco first found work as builders for Bucci and Belli, and then at the hardware store of the Morchio brothers. Sandro, who still worked for Bucci, left to build houses and roads in the Buenos Aires region, a thousand miles to the South. In 1952 his first daughter was born. The family kept growing (until they had eight children, boys and girls, by 1975). Work was going well and, thanks to the people from San Giovanni in Persiceto, the Italian community had a choir and a basketball team. After the matches, everyone gathered on the Fornis' patio to celebrate and enjoy pasta. The political situation caused events to take a turn for the worst. The second peronist government already showed signs of dictatorship. You had to be a party member if you wanted to be left in peace. The Italians were asked to give up their nationality, something which Sandro and Giorgio refused to do. State

terrorism began following the death of Evita. Peronist hordes set fire to the churches of Buenos Aires, the Nunzio Apostolico Palace and the National Library. Catholics were targeted and the Fornis were blacklisted. Life began again after the fall of Perón and the Forni family celebrated their new home in March 1958. Here they held the meetings of the Circolo Bossetti, the first Italian immigrant association in Oberá. Using the pasta machine Sandro's brothers had brought him from Italy, they made pasta for two hundred people. With the experience gained working for Bucci, Sandro went into partnership with Mario to form MarSan, a construction business that had the honour building the cupola and bell tower of the new church of Oberá. In 1960 Sandro's sister Maria travelled to Italy to visit relatives with Vilelma, his eldest daughter. There was an economic boom in Italy at the time. Although she had a return ticket, Maria decided to remain in San Giovanni in Persiceto and organize the return of her other siblings. In '62 Francesco and Giuditta returned; only Raffaele, who had gotten married in the meantime, stayed in Argentina. Vilelma on the other hand, after going to school in Italy, crossed the ocean again to return to her parents in 1967. In Oberá, Sandro no longer had any siblings and opened his home to the children of friends, to members of the Circolo and to other Italians. Always filled with people, his home with its great patio and garden became a point of reference for the Italian community. By then a member of the Rotary Club, he got involved in planning a rest home for the elderly. Holidays were spent in the countryside, in the home of Maria Adelaida's parents in Santa Maria, on the river Uruguay, near the Brazilian border. On the house of the river, surrounded by their children and many grandchildren, the Fornis spent their happiest days. In 1975 Sandro and Maria Adelaida were finally able to make that longed for trip to Italy. After meeting long-lost family and friends again, Sandro was overcome with emotion when he rang the bells of the church of Le Budrie. Their return, however, was tough: at Buenos Aires airport they discovered that for the price of their ticket to Italy they could now buy five kilos of apples. Argentina had fallen into a political and economic slump. The era of military dictatorship and terrorism had begun. The business, which already had 24 stable employees and had trained many of the young men of Oberá as builders had to start producing construction materi-

als, as work on building sites was scarce. Maurizio, one of Forni's sons and an architecture student, was imprisoned various times under suspicion of being "subversive". All it took was a beard and long hair to be targeted by General Videla's military. Sandro's business was under surveillance for having given work to a boy accused of being a communist guerrilla. All over Argentina, students, priests and farmers disappeared: they were the desaparecidos. In 1978 the Forni family started spending their summer holidays in Capao da Canoa, a quiet beach in Brazil, near Porto Alegre, accompanied by their tribe, which now boasted 9 grandchildren. They planned to hide their children there should they ever be drafted to fight in the Falklands. Luckily, the war ended and, with it, the military regime.The time arrived to make a second trip to Italy. Sandro and Maria Adelaida had 18 grandchildren at the time (now 22 with 4 great-grandchildren). They took their youngest daughter Paola with them and, free from commitments, they stayed in San Giovanni in Persiceto for 10 months, living like two pensioners from the lowlands. They returned to Italy in 1990, after inflation in Argentina eroded the profits of the construction business. Sandro was forced to keep on the factory solely for making construction materials. They planned to buy a pasta-making machine and undertake this activity in Oberá now that they really were pensioners. They decided to delay buying the machinery until March 1992 when they would make a further trip to Italy. At the end of January, however, Sandro died of a heart attack while in Capao da Canoa, beside the sea. His joyfulness and the beautiful voice that rang out in the multi-ethnic and multi-religion choir that he had recently formed with the immigrants of Oberá disappeared. Vilelma later returned to buy the pasta-making machinery with her two daughters. She opened a shop with Maria Adelaida but Argentina began to fall into a crisis. This is present-day history. These are the memories of Maria Adelaida, lovingly recorded by her grandson Nettuno and their extended family, who participates in the Nettuno Association of Misiones. In its name, the footprint of Bologna is found in the earth between the rivers of Paraná and Uruguay, where the "reducciones" of the Jesuits, whose humanitarian organization was cut down by the Spanish, somehow created a social system that would have found a happy home in the territory of Emilia.