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GARDENA **3** MAGAZINE



GUGLIELMO MARCONI AND HIS GREAT PASSION FOR VAL GARDENA

Giulia Insam

Great Italian physicist and inventor, Guglielmo Marconi, was such an admirer of our beautiful Val Gardena that he used to spend his Summer and Winter vacations there. He preferred the Summer, which he considered an ideal time and so he spent there long periods of rest, according to the habit of those times, in order to enjoy the freshness and clean air of the mountains to the full. Unfortunately, there is not much documentation of his stays in Val Gardena (just 4 or 5), but we know that he was here many times and always a guest at Hotel Adler at Ortisei. People of those times say he was friendly and kind and that he loved to take long walks together with his wife Cristina Bezzi-Scali and daughter Elettra. He was open and available to conversations with the

people and had a warm and respectful relationship with the inhabitants of the Valley. One would commonly see him walking on the streets or having a cup of hot chocolate in a café in the company of his family. The square in front of the Municipality of Ortisei was dedicated to him, in honour of his many visits to the town. He was born in Bologna on April 25th, 1874, from a rich landowner from a small village in the Appennino Tosco-Emiliano, while his mother was from the South of Ireland, and that is why Marconi spoke Italian with a slight English accent. During his childhood, Guglielmo had many health problems and so the family frequently moved from Italy to England back and forth in order to find a better climate for their child.



Guglielmo Marconi with his wife Maria Cristina in Wintertime, in front of Hotel Adler in Ortisei, leaving on a horse-drawn sledge.

Electrology: an innate passion

His passion for electrology (an area of physics which studies electricity and the behaviour of electrons) had been evident since his first years of study, when he showed an exceptional predisposition towards highly specialized scientific matters. Marconi's studies focused on practical technological applications, their possible industrial use and their relative commercial value. His first technical project was at the age of eighteen. The experiment he made at the early age of twenty led him to become the father of radiocommunication. He, in fact, had succeeded in making a bell ring by pushing a telegraph button located in the balcony, on the opposite side of the room. Such wireless telegraphy experiments marked the beginning of a long and difficult path which Marconi decided to take for the industrial development of inventions.

The way to the patent

Marconi, foreseeing that his experiments would need a large amount of capital, decided to go to the Ministry of Postal and Telegraph Communications to make a request. He presented his invention of the wireless telegraph, and asked for a financing. His letter never received a feedback and was disposed of by the Ministry with "Alla Longara", which meant "to the mental hospital" located in Via della Lungara in Rome. Marconi decided to leave Italy for England. In 1896 he presented his request to the Patent Office in London, where the patent was registered that same year.

Success

Through the years, Marconi obtained more and more results from his experiments. Through time he got to the conviction that the waves could cross the ocean following the Earth's curvature, and on the month of December of 1901, the first transoceanic radio signal was transmitted.

In 1907, the first regular public radiotelegraphic service through the Atlantic Ocean was inaugurated, giving the possibility to ships to send wireless SOS.

When in 1912, before sinking, the Titanic could send an SOS and Marconi, who was in the United States at that time, rushed to the port to welcome the 705 survivors. At an interview he declared that it was worth it to have lived to have given these people the possibility to be saved.

Awards and honours

In 1909, he was awarded the Nobel prize for Physics in Stockholm. In 1914, he was named life senator of the Kingdom of Italy. In 1929, Vittorio Emanuele III conferred him the hereditary title of Marquis. He was conferred 16 degrees "honoris causa", 25 high rak honours and 12 honorary citizenship. The July 18th, 1936 Royl Charter promoted Marconi as a Counter Admiral in the Reserve for outstanding services.

His death

Rome, 1937. Guglielmo Marconi took his wife to the train station, she would go to celebrate their daughter Elettra's seventh birthday in Viareggio. After going back home he had a heart attack and died. That same day, the radio stations of the whole world interrupted their broadcastings for two minutes as a sign of mourning.



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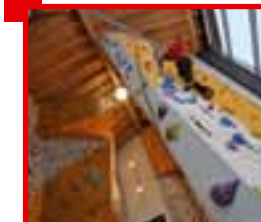
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THE STORY OF ONE OF OUR LOYAL GUESTS ...

Selva means a lifetime to me.

Cesare Pradella



I will always remember that morning of January 1949, when, at the age of twelve I got on the unforgettable and not existing anymore Val Gardena train at the Chiusa train station in direction of Selva.

It was a beautiful sunny day and the valley and the forests were covered by a layer of fresh snow. It was a fascinating fairytale landscape.

I spent most of the time of the trip on the external foot-board of my wagon, it took three hours from Chiusa to Selva.

The famous Val Gardena train on its way back had the engine turned backwards because the Plan arrival train station didn't have the system to change train directions. And so that was my trip: crossing forests, tunnels, passing under narrow bridges, close to overhanging rocks, with the engine steaming and struggling to reach the difference in altitude between the 400 meters of Chiusa and the 1500 meters of Selva, riding slowly on narrow hairpin turns, almost grazing houses and trees, some-

times even crossing the valley road; the train crossed small towns and villages, bordered churches, cabins and isolated "masi", all of which would then become familiar to me, and through Laion, Castelrotto, Ortisei and Santa Cristina I finally arrived in Selva. Some kilometers before the arrival, after riding on a narrow hairpin turn, I suddenly had a magical and surreal vision: in front of me was the imposing rocky mountain of Sassolungo and on the other side the massif of the Sella Group, both white with snow.

The Selva train station was a small wood house with nothing but two wood benches. I got off the train, looked around and saw a unique view. Downstream was the austere Hotel Oswald before its transformation, which already then was the most "in" hotel of Selva, then the small church with the churchyard, the house of the Municipality and other few residential houses, some of which had already been transformed into small hotels. From that day on I spent all my Winter and Summer va-



cations in Selva. It was in Selva that I came to know of the airplane crash tragedy of Superga, where the Grande Torino soccer team players lost their lives; and on July of that same year I watched the Giro d'Italia cyclists descending from Passo Sella and heading to Bolzano. That was the famous Cortina-Bolzano stage. Fausto Coppi was ahead of all and won both the stage and the Giro. That was another unforgettable moment.

I met the Mussner family, they were our hosts and spoke Ladin. The head of the family, Giovanni Battista, was a sort of "patriarch" and had the unforgettable pipe always between his teeth and the Dolomiten newspaper in his hands; his wife Maria was an excellent cook and his son Battista was a mountain guide and a ski instructor. On Sundays, all used to dress for the occasion to go to Mass, men wore the typical long blue apron and some of them also wore the traditional alpine hat with the feather. The house was heated by a marble stove made up by a wood burner located in the corridor, and on top of it was a wood structure which one could lay on.

The following weeks I became familiar with the surroundings and started to go sledding and skiing. The trail for me and my local friends was the arrival of the Ciampinoi downhill trail, the top of which was reached by the adults by horse-drawn sledges and later by cableway, and the Freina ski run, behind Villa Alberta.

During the Summer I discovered Vallunga, then Monte Pana, Alpe di Siusi, Plan de Gralba and walked up in the woods towards Passo Gardena and Passo Sella. And I met the local boys and girls of approximately my age, who in the next decades would become part of the history of Selva: Otto Gluck and his sister Rita, brothers Luis, Erich, Adolf and Arnold Demetz, who managed Hotel Alpino and subsequently the Pudra and some clothing shops, the Giorgi family, which had origins from Mantua and which opened Hotel Laurin and later on Susy Giorgi

opened the Aaritz and the family's son became a member of the Italian National ski team. I also met Carletto Senoner, 1966 Olympic champion in Portillo (I was in Selva that Summer and participated at the celebrations when he got back on the month of August), Felix De Nicolò and Gerard Mussner (the owner of the chalet on the road to Passo Gardena, where famous crucefins and a great strudel are served), who also would be champions of the Italian National team; Vincenzo Demetz of Hotel Stella and Joseph Vinatzer, the manager of the Corona. And I also met fabulous Countess Apollonia of Rome, who had a house at Plan, not distant from Hotel Alpino, and Maria, the Mussners' neighbour.

Since then I returned to Selva almost every year, except for the times in which terrorists threw grenades at the Brenner railway line. The following Summer, in 1950, I was at Villa al Sole, where I watched the news on the war of Corea, which had just started; the Villa was owned by Giorgio Senoner, who later became a movie director in Rome.

In the evenings I would hang out at music clubs, like the Stube of the Stella, the Scoiattolo, the Stube dell'Alpino and the Stube of Plan de Gralba, and further in time, the Medel. At night we stopped by the baker, close to the Corona, to have warm bread, after a party in the striking halls of Hotel Oswald, a Mitteleuropean retro-style hotel, with abundance of drapery and carpets, wood floors creaking under our feet and even a maitre, directly managed by the hotel owner, austere nobleman Oswald Pitscheider.

For my caring attachment to Val Gardena I received a distinction of affectionate and habitual customer from the Tourist Information Office of Selva.

That makes already sixty years of visiting a place, a valley and its people, all of which are and will be in my heart and in my mind forever.



Do you have some special memories of your holiday in Val Gardena? Send us an e-mail: info@snovevents.it

Leo Senoner

JOSEF MORODER LUSENBERG (1846 - 1939) THE GREAT PAINTER FROM VAL GARDENA



The name of Josef Moroder Lusenberg, whose original Ladin name is Sepl da Jumbierch, has longly been mentioned only within the inner circles of artists, art historians, gallery owners and art collectors. Today, he has finally gained his deserved place as the most important painter of Val Gardena of all times.

Josef was born in 1846 at the maso Scurcià above Ortisei, as the fourth of nine children, and his life was initially very similar to that of many other sculptors of the Valley. He would live at the maso Lusenberg with his beloved wife Annamaria Sanoner and their four children, and, as many Val Gardena inhabitants,

he would earn a living with his sculptor's workshop. During the 1873 Vienna Universal Exposition, he saw Franz Defregger's paintings, and was so deeply struck by them that he decided to become a painter himself. In 1876, after his first wife's death and a second marriage, he started to attend the Academy of Fine Arts of Munich and soon became a disciple and friend of Defregger, under whose influence he primarily dedicated himself to portraits and genre paintings. Hay-making, ploughing, wood workmanship, and then hunters, wood carvers, women at the lace, the blind harpist, the fortune teller, farewell to the bride.... all

this was Val Gardena common people's life and was for Moroder Lusenberg an endless source of subjects for his art. But these themes were not merely pictorial, in fact, they were studied with the attentive eye of the folklorist, aware that most of this world was destined to disappear. The impression that these paintings often give, on the wake of Defregger, is that of an artificial and idealized world: one can perceive the typical nostalgia for those times for a simple and still intact world, far from the progress of the cities. The painter is however a faithful chronicler of his time through his care for details.

Thanks to different initiatives, like for example the seven-chapter exhibition about Lusenberg's life and works, the publication of an illustrated catalogue and of a monographic book, patronized within the last few years by the Museum of Val Gardena in collaboration with Ladin Cultural Institute "Micurà de Rü" and other provincial cultural associations, the name of Sepl Moroder da Jumbierch - Josef Moroder Lusenberg will at last be justly thought of as one of those which, like him, have written, actually drawn and painted, important chapters of Val Gardena's history.

OUR TRADITIONS

WEDDINGS IN
VAL GARDENA

Michele Susanna

Giulia Insam

In Val Gardena, a wedding has always been considered a real event, at such a point that numerous traditional cultural events and celebrations are organized around it.

The awakening of the soon-to-be-married

The morning of the wedding date, at around five, the soon-to-be-married are awakened in their respective houses by their friends, who sing and make noise with musical instruments under their windows. The noise continues until they are invited in to have breakfast.

So, dear guests, if on a Saturday morning you are awakened by noises and clamours, no panic, it is certainly a group of young people who are preparing to lead their respective friends to the most important event of their life.

According to tradition, the future bride says the rosary before going to church and after having sopped her finger in her home stoop and having made the sign of the cross.

The wedding mass is still today celebrated in the bride's town of birth.

In old times, the future bride gave the future groom a shirt, with a doll sewn among its creases. The future groom gave the future bride a pair of shoes, a book of prayers and a rosary.

La sief (the hedge)

After the wedding, according to tradition, the procession is blocked by a "barrier" of friends.

These friends' barriers are called sieves, which literally mean "hedges".

In some cases, mocking friends even set parody shows, which enact scenes of the married couple's lives or of their previous love stories in order to enhance their flaws. All is accompanied by music and choral songs. At the end of the show, the mēinanevicia, that is the bride's witness and attendant (in old times it was the bride's brother or neighbor, while today it can be her godfather or her father), has to pay for a money toll in order to be able to go further. Along the path different amounts of money may be paid for.

What's the meaning of this acting? According to tradition, people didn't want to lose the bride, and the more barriers were set the more the bride was contented.

**La cœura mula (the goat without the horns)**

A riveting custom. During the celebrations a goat is sold to the married couple's elder bachelors or celibate brothers. These are obliged to buy it. But the negotiations are not easy because the seller tries to gain as much as possible out of it and the buyer tries to mark down the goat in any way possible. Today, a real goat is sold as a sign of mockery. Once, the animal was in wood or cloth.

The "abducted" bride

After the long and rich wedding lunch, the newlyweds start off the dances, and in Ladin valleys all the young bachelors traditionally dance with the bride. During the celebrations the groom's friends nimbly "abduct" the bride and take her around to the town's taverns.

At this point, the groom sets off in symbolic pursuit because he has to take the bride back to their guests and go on with the celebrations.

According to custom, the bride's godfather follows the abductors to the taverns and pays for their drinks.

Once the married couple are back together, they return to their guests to continue with the celebration, which at this point leads to dinner and then to country dances throughout the entire night.

From this moment on, not only wedding guests participate to the celebration but all the people who want to congratulate the newly wed couple and wish them the best. This custom is known as: gratuné.

**The married couple retires to its love nest**

The first wedding night is not an easy experience. Their joker friends are up to their tricks again...

In some cases, the couple's house is turned upside down or the passage to the main entrance is blocked so that the couple has some difficulties in getting into the house. The means used by their friends to create obstacles to the entrance are often linked to the couple's jobs: masonry-work for masons, wood logs for carpenters, etc....

In the worst cases, the couple's bed is turned upside down or even taken away.



VILLA DOLOMITI IL CASTELLETTO



Ludovica Pineider

In the upper part of Selva, on the road which leads to the Dantercepies cableway, one can see on the right an elegant three-storey building with a turret, which was originally called "Villa Prinoth" upon the name of its constructor, later on "Il Castelletto" (from the German word Schloss) and today it is called "Villa Dolomiti". It indeed looks like a small castle and, as any other castle, it has its own story.

It was built in 1899 as a hunting house by Eduard Prinoth, a passionate hunter, nicknamed Vedl Brida, upon a project of Austrian A. Ritter von Inffeld. At the beginning, it belonged to one of the last descendants of the counts of Wolkenstein; in 1936, it was bought by Mr. Franz Perathoner de Col and, after his death in 1946, it passed on to his son. The latter's daughter, named Hildegard, inherited it and today, Ms. Hildegard's daughter, Lea, lives here. Lea is married to Pe-

ter Runggaldier, a great skier and a former member of the Italian National ski team.

Il Castelletto, that is Villa Dolomiti, has a "Liberty"-style structure tending to historicism: a multistructured body with covered staircase, balconies and a turret. The interiors are very interesting: on the ground floor is an external covered staircase and two rooms with fresco ceilings. On the first floor one can admire a loggia with painted walls, a "stube" with a beautiful panelled ceiling and a "Liberty"-style stove with seats. On the second floor, bedrooms have impressive decorative friezes under the ceiling and on the attic there is a loggia with a small projecting balcony. The remarkable staircase banister is all carved in wood.

This and eleven more buildings in Selva are of great artistic value and are under the protection of the Fine Arts Department.



VAL GARDENA'S OLD FLAVOURS FOR REFINED PALATES!

JUFA

CORN AND WHEAT FLOUR MOSA (OR "MUS", A THICK SOUP)

Starting this year, Gardena Magazine will reserve a pleasing and tasty surprise for all its readers: its traditional recipes.

One of the oldest country dishes is definitely "jufa". This dish used to be prepared in a large copper pan, on the fire, and was eaten directly from the pan by all the members of the family.

Ingredients:

2 cups of white flour
1 cup of yellow flour
500 ml. of milk
250 ml. of water
a pinch of salt
100 gr. of butter
1 egg

Preparation:

- make the milk and the water boil on a low heat in an iron pan
- slowly pour the white and yellow flour in the milk until it becomes thick, strongly stirring with a whip
- make it cook for approximately 10 minutes until it forms a thin crust
- take the pan off the heat
- dress the mosa with melted butter
- to spread egg all over

Bon Appétit!

NEWS & PEOPLE

Belsy Demetz: an international folk music star



Folk singer Belsy Demetz was born in India and was adopted at the age of one by a family from Selva di Val Gardena.

Since a very young age she had shown a passion for singing. At the age of seven she participated at the Zecchino d'Oro International Festival of Children's Songs and in 2002 she recorded her first record.

Since then, she had won a lot of awards. Her first one was the Grand Prix of folk music (Volksmusik) of 2003, an international event watched by millions of viewers from different countries, especially Austria, Germany and Switzerland, where she won the third prize. The year after she won the second prize at that same event.

In 2006, she won the Grand Prix together with Rudi Giovannini. And she won again this year, with German singer Florian Festl. The two are workmates and also a couple in their private life, and this has definitely contributed to their popularity. Their success is such that the two artists are constantly making tours and concerts, besides making auditions in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, France and Belgium.

Their first CD as a couple was called "I Hab Di Gern" (I love you) and their second CD will include Christmas songs and will be out this Christmas.

A Statue in Memory of Emilio Comici

Seventy years after the tragic death of climber Emilio Comici, which took place on October 19th, 1940, in Vallunga, a bronze statue was unveiled in his memory last October 10th at the Baita Ciampac in Selva di Val Gardena, upon the initiative of Sezione di Trieste (section of Trieste) of the C.A.I. (Club Alpino Italiano; Italian alpine club) "XXX Ottobre". The statue was modelled at the feet of the rocky mountain upon a wood statue made by Val Gardena sculptor Tita Demetz at the end of the 1980's, which gradually deteriorated because of atmospheric events. Top representatives of the C.A.I., academics of the C.A.A.I. (Club Alpino Accademico Italiano; Italian academic alpine club), a delegation of the A.N.A. (Associazione Nazionale Alpini; national alpinist association), the Gruppo Montagna of the A.N.C. (Associazione Nazionale Carabinieri; the national association of carabinieri), representatives of the Arma C.C. (the corps of carabinieri), the mountain guides and the authorities of Val Gardena were present at the ceremony. (GDV)



Old Chinese Science Applied to Modern Hotels - The Way to Enhance your Guests Wellbeing

More and more shops, restaurants and hotels in Val Gardena use the power of Feng Shui to improve their success.

Feng Shui has its roots in China. Since more than 3500 years this science studies the influence of nature and environment on the human being. Depending on where the human being lives, he needs to adapt. People, who live and work in a narrow valley enclosed by mountains, develop different attitudes and behavioral patterns than people who live in a southern seaport.

Literally translated "Feng Shui" means "wind and water" and refers to the mountains, valleys and waterfalls which are governed by the reciprocal effects of the natural forces. Feng Shui is an art of living that seeks the



harmonic balance of the five elements. Who lives according to Feng Shui, will live an enjoyable, successful and healthy life in harmony.

We work according to cardinal points, time-factors and Bagua. Bagua refers to nine different areas which are linked to crucial points in our life, for example there is an area which enhances richness and financial wellbeing.

Should one of these areas not be provided, life becomes imbalanced. Our aim is to create balance in your life through Feng Shui.

Info: wieser.barbara@rolmail.net - mobile: 333 630 60 31



Los Locos are back in Val Gardena

It is one of the most appreciated latin-american musical bands in the world, and has been defined as a social phenomenon for more than 15 years!

The famous band is back in Val Gardena, after the exhilarating success of the „Snow Countdown“ show of 1997, organized by „Snow Events“, which was held at Passo Sella at the presence of more than 5000 people.

Their next performance will be next Tuesday, 28th of December from 5.00pm at Piazza della Chiesa in Selva di Val Gardena, and the entrance will be free.

In 1995, they received 2 platinum records with their Greatest Hits album, which included evergreen songs like

EL MENEAITO, EL TIBURON and LA MACARENA, and with their 1997 album.

But definitely La MACARENA has been their greatest hit single, which has made LOS LOCOS one of the most known and requested music bands live and on TV.

In 2002, with a ten-year record production they decided to start touring to bring their music all over the world: from Brazil, Venezuela, Santo Domingo, Cuba, Mexico to Tunisia, Turkey and such unusual countries for latin-american music as Myanmar (former Birmania). They also were frequently invited to different TV shows.

Prepare for hot latin-american dances... We expect you come in many!!!



MUSEUM DE GHERDĚINA HOME TO NATURE AND CULTURE

Leo Senoner

The Museum of Val Gardena has been committing itself with much effort to the preservation and valorisation of the local cultural heritage for 50 years. It was opened on August 1960 at Cēsa di Ladins in the centre of Ortisei and is one of the principal museums of the Ladin valleys and of the entire Alto Adige for the history and quality of its finds. It is divided in different sections and covers an extraordinarily long chronological span, which goes from the formation of the Dolomite Mountains up to the artistic material regarding Val Gardena mountain climber and movie-maker of international fame, Luis Trenker (1892-1990).

The Museum includes geological, paleontological and archaeological finds, paintings, sculptures and flora and fauna objects of inestimable value. Among these innumerable pieces, some are worth to mention: the

big ichthyosaurus of Monte Seceda, the 1620 San Giacomo Lent canvas and the very rare sanguine drawings of the maso Bierjun, made in 1490. The Museum also offers a rich and complete heritage of the Valley's history and culture, like the paintings of Ladin master Josef Moroder Lusenberg (1846-1939) and a plentiful collection of wood toys and sacred and secular sculptures from Val Gardena, examples of the art of carving from the XVII century to these days. This beautiful collection shows the tradition and evolution of wood sculpture in Val Gardena through four centuries. One can also view the old Christmas gifts for children from many different regions, like adjustable dolls, rocking-horses, puppets and others. These toys, collected by Giovanni Senoner Vastlé, are one of the most spectacular collections of the Museum; they were created between

1700 and 1940 by the skillful hands of families gathered in the traditional "stube"'s of their homes (the old farmhouse living-rooms) and later a flourishing market developed and they were exported all over Europe. Sacred sculptures from Val Gardena include original pieces of Baroque sculptors Trebinger and Vinazer made for the ancient Church of St. James and other pieces by different artists of the half of XX century. Within the rich and varied collection of secular sculptures are the works of humorous and creative artisans and artists from XVIII to XX century.



A special mention goes to Nativity scenes, which, at the beginning of XVIII century were composed of just a few pieces, and then became richer and richer through time.

The Museum has always been supported by local and international researchers interested in the Dolomites and Ladin culture, promoting research activities, publishing in specialized magazines and organizing crowd-pulling thematic exhibitions.

At present, the Museum supports scientific projects aiming at the study and documentation of old Val Gardena "masi" and XIX-century sacred art; it also backs the long-term monitoring of local ornithologists who study the behavior of migratory birds during their annual displacements from North to South. The Museum is also strongly engaged in the didactic area, in collaborating with schools and local tourism, with the objective of transmitting the values and importance of Val Gardena's traditional and two-thousand-year old language and culture.

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HISTORY OF DOLOMITI SUPERSKI



Giulia Insam

The DOLOMITI SUPERSKI is the largest skiing district in the world. It covers Alto Adige, Trentino and the Belluno regions with 1200 kms of trails and 450 lifts of every kind. Here is the story of this huge project.

In 1974, Consorzio DOLOMITI SUPERSKI (tourism association) was born out of the pure wish of three businessmen from six Dolomite valleys in three different regions. They had it clear that only by joining together they would be able to develop a new strategy which would guarantee a long-term success. This was a common awareness in those years: such union would bring progress to

all the areas of winter tourism economy and especially to the winter sports and hospitality areas. Such intuition put individual interests aside and succeeded in developing DOLOMITI SUPERSKI, which would become the largest and most efficient organization in the world.

The project wasn't easy: it had to deal with three different regions' diverse political, administrative, cultural, ethnical visions and different tourism organizations. Two provinces tried to obstruct the project, because it meant interrupting the voluntary isolation established by some specially conservative and strict political sectors.

The patience, obstinacy and tenacity of Dr. Gianni Marzola, of the following Presidents, of General Director Dr. Franz Perathoner and of all associates and collaborators succeeded in making this project a reality. Today, the district includes 12 skiing areas. The first areas included in the DOLOMITI SUPERSKI project were Val Gardena/Alpe di Siusi, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Plan de Corones, Alta Badia, Val di Fassa/Carezza and Arabba/Marmolada. Alta Pusteria, Val di Fiemme/Obereggen, S. Martino di Castrozza/Passo Rolle, Valle Isarco, Trepall and Civetta followed. Within the DOLOMITI SUPERSKI skiing areas are numerous tours; here we mention two:

Sellaronda (also known as "giro dei quattro Passi", the "four passes" tour), the most important and known ski tour in the world, practicable both ways. It includes the Dolomite Passes: Sella, Pordoi, Campolongo and Gardena. Giro della Grande Guerra (the Great War tour) allows skiers to visit the most important and striking places which were part of World War I.

In 2009, the beauty and geological, botanical and landscape diversities of the Dolomites were proclaimed a UNESCO natural World Heritage Site.



FAREWELL TO WALTER NONES'S MOUNTAIN

Giovanni Di Vecchia

His widow Manuela broke the news in his blog last October 3th with a few significant words: "... we will never embrace him again... but we will remember him as a great man...". The tragedy of Nones's death on the Cho-Oyu, at 8000 kilometers high on the Himalaya, has occurred two years after the death of his roped party companion and friend Karl Unterkircher on the Nanga Parbat, after he was swept away by a serac and carried by the snow into a deep crevasse; at that time, neither Nones nor Simon Kehrer were able to recover his body. In these days, fate seemingly led Nones to be swept away. This time, the other two members of the expedition, Giovanni Macaluso and Manuel Nocker, found his body; they too are members of the Centro Addestramento Alpino of the Arma dei Carabinieri located at Vallunga in Selva di Val Gardena. Aside from how the accident occurred, Walter Nones, as Simon Kehrer declared, gave over in front of danger, he was prudent and respectful of the mountains, and such respect derived from years of experience and profes-

sionality. The person writing this article had the opportunity to know and interview him as well as Karl Unterkircher more than once; the interview after their return from the "K2-2004", which commemorated the Italian feat of 1954, is a memorable one. While Karl seemed more introverted and of few words, Walter was more talkative and always smiling; despite the difference in their characters, they became friends, also because of their common passion for the mountains. Today, Italian mountain climbing has lost another important representative of its present history. Nones, who was born in Cavalese (TN: a province of Trento) on November 5th, 1971, soon moved to Selva di Val Gardena to serve at the Centro Addestramento Alpino, and in Selva he got married with Manuela and had two sons, Patrik and Erik. He inherited the passion for the mountains from his father, and his first climbings were at the Lagorai. At the age of 18 he enlisted in the Arma dei Carabinieri and became a mountain climbing instructor and a mountain guide. In spite of Walter's

young age, his climbing activities are quite significant. Here we remember some of his rises: Spigolo Giallo and Via Comici/Dimai at the Tre Cime di Lavaredo, Spigolo del Pilastro and Spigolo alle Tofane di Rozes, Grande Micheluzzi, Torri del Sella, Spigolo Nord of the Sassolungo, Via Comici al Salame of the Sassolungo. He climbed on the snow and on ice as he did on the Monte Bianco, on the Ortles and on the Monte Rosa. His skiing also opened new trails. Among his extraeuropean experiences are: the Island Peak (1995), the West Buttres in Alaska (1999) and the "Falso de los Polacos" on the Aconcagua (2003). How appropriate the title of the book "L'ultimo abbraccio della montagna", which was written by Silke Unterkircher together with Cristina Marrone to her late husband Karl, would be for Walter, whether there will ever be one. Walter Nones is and will be in any case among us forever, in the memory of his beloved family, of his beloved Val Gardena people, as well as of Silke herself, who, in her late husband's blog has written: "Walter, after the 2008 odyssey on the Nanga Parbat, where your great friend and roped party companion Karl has remained for ever, you decided to climb again the highest mountains of the Earth. But those mountains - your world - have reserved the same destiny for you. May you rest in peace and climb all the peaks of Paradise together with Karl".

Info: www.walternones.it



A present from Gardena Valley



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Highlights

2010 / 11

www.valgardena.it



17.12.2010-18.12.2010

FIS Ski World Cup Val Gardena

Men's super G and downhill race



30.11.2010-09.01.2011

Val Gardena

Christmas Market



27.12.2010-30.12.2010

15th Snow sculpture

contest



23.01.2011

10th Val Gardena Ciasp

Snow shoe race



03.04.2011

15th Gardenissima

The longest giant slalom in the world



02.07.2011

Sellaronda Hero

mountainbike-marathon



July/August/
September 2011

ValgardenaMusika

Festival of classical music



03.07.2011 & 18.09.2011

Sella Ronda Bike Day

Pass-roads open to bicycles only



07.08.2011

Val Gardena summer festival

01.09.2011 - 04.09.2011

UNIKA

17th sculptor's fair

in Val Gardena



VAL GARDENA'S POST OFFICES

Giulia Insam



In old times, post houses, old rest and refreshment inns, where wayfarers stopped by to rest with their horses, were located at the place of today's "Posta" hotels. They were equipped with stables full of straw and hay for the horses, which slept with the working tools, and with bedrooms with lace-ornated windows for the men.

Along the roads of Bavaria and other regions in the area of the Alps, in the former Hapsburg County of Tyrol, one can frequently see hotels with the name "Hotel Post". They guard fascinating long-time stories originating from the times of old horse postal services. Post houses were also established in Val Gardena under the Hapsburg Empire.

The first post office of Val Gardena was opened in 1856 during the construction of the road which connected Ortisei with Ponte Gardena, where "casa Fëur" is today, in Piazza della Chiesa (the Church square)

of Ortisei. The first post office employee was Matteo Schrott, who worked in a small space for one hour in the morning and half an hour in the evening.

The mail was delivered and picked up at Chiusa by feet two times a week.

The traditional postal service by feet was replaced by a more regular and official system in 1859, with the opening of the postal train station at Ponte Gardena, closer to Val Gardena. This allowed to dispatch messages and letters daily.

Later, the post office of Ortisei was moved to "Weisses Rössl" (Cavallino Bianco), from which then derived the hotel name "Hotel Posta Cavallino Bianco".

The only means of transportation which connected Val Gardena with the rest of the Empire was a horse-drawn wagon, which left from the post house, a neuralgic point of the entire road network of the valley.

In 1906, Josef Rifesser wrote that the post house used

one to two horses for the mail transportation. On Winters it had from 8 to 10 horses, while, during the Summer, it had up to 16-17 horses. This confirms that mail transportation was by horse-drawn wagons.

Horse postal service meant rapid and luxury transportation, horses in fact were changed along the route.

These trips included a system of stops in a network of payment inns displaced along the itineraries, which, in the County of Tyrol, were precisely the "Posta" hotels. Each stop place had then important functions: the change of horses and of couriers, overnight stay and refreshment for the wayfarers.

The postal service was used by native inhabitants, foreign workers and also by tourists visiting during the Summer, and through the years also during the Winter. Horse-drawn carriages on Summertime and sledges on Wintertime were in fact more and more used by tourists to reach the hotels in Val Gardena. Tourism

started to develop and would then become one of the leading sectors of the economy of the region.

Josef Rifesser again stated that in 1905 three postal wagons transited daily from Ortisei to Ponte Gardena in Wintertime, while in Summertime five wagons were used.

In 1939, the Lardschneider family, owner of the hotel Posta of Ortisei, decided to emigrate to the Reich countries. The National Agency for the Tre Venezie was given the task to sell the hotel and to give the revenues to the emigrated family. But this was a difficult task, the hotel should in fact be sold only to local people. Consequently, it became a camp and its inventory was destroyed, ruined and a part of it was stolen.

During World War II, the hotel passed on to the hands of the Italian and then the German military. The post office became the lazaret for the soldiers. Wounded soldiers were healed and operated in its rooms.



It was in those years that the hotel started to be called with its Italian name "Albergo Posta - Cavallino Bianco".

After the end of the war, the hotel Posta became a town meeting place. There meetings, parties and balls were held.

In 2002, the name was changed to "Cavallino Bianco - Family Spa Grand Hotel".

In Val Gardena are other "hotel Posta"'s, one is in S. Cristina on the principal road Dursan, the other is in Selva, in the centre of town. The hotel Posta of S. Cristina opened its post office in 1875, while the Selva post office was opened by the postal inspectorate of Bolzano in 1873. The hotel "La Gërva", a former tannery and subsequently the town school, was chosen as its headquarters. Its first employee was Karl Pitscheider, the owner of the hotel. The name was also changed to "Albergo Posta - La Gërva".

In 1924, a fire burned the entire building. The history of a beautiful period in our history was totally cancelled.

Nothing remained of the horse stable, of the working tools, of the carriage which transported the mail...

The hotel was rebuilt in 1925 with the current name of "Hotel Posta al Cervo", from the Ladin a l cërf (deer), a change of the Ladin original name la gërva (tannery). Then, on the half of the nineteenth century, the railway revolutionized the world of carriage attendants, horses and carriages. The horse postal service disappeared in the first years of the sixties of the XIX century, it went on only on some pass ways, but then, after the construction of the railway tunnels it would also disappear there.

At the end of the XIX century, tourism gave birth to a new network of local mountain coaches, to serve those travellers who were dropped off in the Val Gardena train stations.

In the XX century, automobile made chariots disappear, but Albergo della Posta kept its aura. In those years, in fact, German territories succeeded in keeping and valorising the romanticism of the postal services.



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