

When Dr. Adriana Albi-Davies, Executive Director of The Heritage Community Foundation, informed Maria Mauro, President of the Ital-Canadian Seniors Association that 11 historical panels were about to be “retired” and were for sale for \$2000, Mrs. Mauro immediately began to explore ways for the Ital-Canadian Seniors Association to acquire the panels. These panels were a part of an exhibition highlighting the “Coal Miners of Alberta”. With the approval of the Board of Directors, Dott. Arnaldo Minuti, Consul of Italy in Edmonton, was asked if his office could assist with the purchase of the panels. Through the generosity of the Italian Government, the panels were purchased and donated to the Ital-Canadian Seniors Association. In addition, the Heritage Community Foundation donated three panels featuring the history of the Italian Community of Alberta. For a time the panels were displayed in the recreation area of the Drop-In Centre, but this was found to be inconvenient and the panels did not get the attention they deserved.

Thus the idea of creating a museum within the Seniors Centre was born. While Maria and her husband Joe discussed the idea, he suggested building a mezzanine above a portion of the bocce courts. The Board of Directors approved the project in principle and the work began.

Mr. Luigi Zorzetto, a very experienced construction project supervisor, agreed to help with the planning and construction for the “Museum”. Structural engineer, Mr. Frank Cavaliere, B.Sc., P.Eng. (an associate with the firm of Read, Jones, Christofferson, Consulting Engineers) volunteered his services as structural consultant. Volunteers carried out 35% of the work. Individuals who worked for minimal wages carried out the balance of the work. 50% of the construction cost was paid through a grant from The Alberta Lottery Board.

Work began in August 2008 and was completed in October of 2009. As the current president of the Ital-Canadian Seniors Association, I felt that our story should be known. Therefore we have created our own panels.

I wish to thank all current and past Board members for their continued support and encouragement. Without it we could not have successfully completed the many projects and activities we have undertaken.

As the saying goes, United we stand, divided we fall!

Maria Mauro,  
President  
29 October 2009