

# 1989 SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

## REPORT OF THE PRESENTATION OF 1989 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

CERIGNOLA, ITALY MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1989,

BY CHRIS DONALDSON (765TH SQUADRON) OF THE  
SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The ceremony was held at 6:30 pm at the Agricultural Institute of Cerignola, not far from the Grand Hotel Della Nazione where my wife, Jean and I, and my crew member Alex Azary and his wife, Jan were staying while in Cerignola for the awards ceremony. About 50 people were in attendance.

Remarks were made by the presidents of the Agricultural Institute and the Technical Institute (where Prof. Umberto Albanese teaches) and by the Papal Representative, ( a young-appearing Monsignor from

Foggia). A longer address was made by the regional educational official from Foggia. All were eloquent and extremely congratulatory of the Association. An interesting thread that ran through all the remarks had to do with the fact that the Association's recognition of students in the Cerignola area gave particular honor to a part of Italy that is thought of by its own residents as being deprived of the wealth and prosperity that characterizes other regions of the country. The value of our scholarships for students from this area, it was observed, is measured by the feeling of hope and pride that they represent for the students themselves as well as for the entire community. There was much comment, too, about the reaching out over many miles and many years by Americans who had feelings of generosity and affection for the Italian people they had met so many years ago.

**Scholarship Winners** Three of the scholarship winners, 1) Umberto Massafra, 2) Tiziana Gentile and, 3) Maria Sgararella were present and were given their checks by Professor Albanese. A fourth scholarship check was presented to Mr.

Matteo Davenia, on behalf of his daughter, Assunta Davenia, who was unable to be excused from her high school in Milan. Matteo Davenia is a former laborer at the 764th Bomb Squadron area during the war years, who now lives in Milan, where he has done well as a wine merchant. He had written to Bud Markel, at the Association address, earlier in the year, after reading about the Association in one of the national newspapers. In a dramatic sequence of events, Mr. Davenia requested that he be permitted to hand over his daughter's check as a gift of his family to the Cerignola community where they had lived

many years earlier, and that it be dedicated for educational purposes. I, of course, indicated approval, whereupon the check was endorsed and given to the Monsignor who announced that it would be applied to Cerignola's school program for orphaned girls.

All of this was unpredicted and spontaneous, but the effect on the audience was demonstrably one of enthusiastic approval

and gratitude for Mr. Davenia's generous act. This added to the genuine warmth and good feelings so evident throughout the entire occasion. I wish it were possible for me to convey in these words the pervasive aura of love, joy and good will so profoundly apparent during the ceremony. The Association's members, had they been there, would have been gratified and fulfilled beyond measure at the effect of their scholarship gifts.

**Plaque Presented** Professor Albanese handed over to me a beautiful silver plaque from the City of Cerignola to be sent on to Bud Markel for display at our Association reunions, as well as letters from the students expressing their gratitude for the awards.

**Future Scholarships** With regard to dates for future scholarship presentations, Professor Albanese suggested that more appropriate times would be in November, or even more preferably, in the spring of each year, beginning with the spring of 1991.

