

Near Prato, Italy on 2 April? **Alessandro Santi** announced that the **Block-Heads** will celebrate their 10th anniversary. “Roger, Dave and Dave” (Saps U.K.) and Tiziano and Giancarlo (Blotto It.) plan on attending.

The Intra-Tent Journal - Spring 2016 - Issue 160

Tent News



Finely Formulated Machinations from Europe by Marc De Coninck

At the end of August, Italy was hit by a powerful earthquake. **Tiziano Medici**, whom we all remember from the latest convention, reported: “The tragedy happened in the middle of Italy and all of the five crazy Italian Chumps you’ve seen, during the Convention, live in the North (Venezia, Cremona and Modena).” The same good news is valid for all the other Chumps of **Block Heads Tent** (In Prato) and **Chump at Oxford Tent** (In Bari). Both of them are far from where the tragedy happened.”

From **Alessandro Santi**, Grand Sheik of **Block-Heads #258** (with the help of **Adele Krusz, Busy Bodies Tent MN**): **The Block-Heads** held their 10th anniversary April 2nd, 2016, at Teatro Magnolfi in Prato with their annual screenings plus added attractions! A laughing public (30 for the matinée, 100 in the evening) joined the party. Vice Sheik **Simone Rindi** prepared the films under the direction Alessandro, with a special introduction with title cards and photos relating the most significant moments of the first ten years of the tent. In fact, “Stanlio e Ollio – I dolci del decennio” (Stan & Ollie – Cake of the Decade) celebrated the first 10 years of the Block-Heads Tent and the 50+1 years of the Sons of the Desert Society by showing *The Battle of the Century* (the most complete version until the 2015 rediscovery) and *Sons of the Desert*, both restored and never seen in an Italian cinema in those versions. In the afternoon the brass ensemble of the Concerto Cittadino Edoardo Chiti, a local orchestra founded almost 175 years ago, played famous tunes from animated features (mostly Walt Disney’s), TV series, and commercials, with a special performance of “The Cuckoo Song,” introduced by an amateur rendition by the Grand Sheik as a gag.

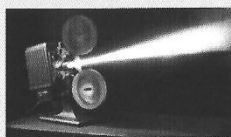
Other guests of honor were friends **Roger Robinson**, **David Dearle** and **David Simpson**, officials of **Saps at Sea** of Southend. They talked about the lives and works of Stan & Babe, whom Dearle, as a child, saw live in his hometown theatre in “A Spot of Trouble!” Then Roger showed and told about various and almost unseen L&H rarities from 1932 to 1953 and led us in our theme song “We are the Sons of the Desert” chorus with the public!

We were pleased about our guests’ presence, along with the Gran Vizier **Alessio**, Sub Vice Sheik **Francesca N.**, other Block-Heads from many parts of Italy and **Giancarlo Manfredini** (Grand Sheik of **Blotto**, Cremona. **Tiziano** (former Grand Sheik of **A Chump at Oxford**) joined us from Modena as he did 10 years ago for our first meeting. Another surprise was the very rare and uncut version of *When Knights Were Cold* (1923), a Stan solo two reeler produced by Broncho Billy Anderson, which **David Wyatt** restored and loaned us for the event.

Admission was free, as usual, but if someone in the public gave us a donation he could participate in the raffle, with very good – or very awful – prizes. Then we had a celebration cake with Stan & Ollie as SOD images and another chocolate one made by the Grand Sheik’s mum. The Sons were so happy they started to sing “Honolulu Baby” and “We are the SOD” with music provided live by Pierluigi’s ukulele! In an adjoining room there was a photo showing about the Boys and the Block-Heads Tent by sons **Simone Cornacchia**, **Mary Boi**, **Andrea Pistolesi** and the Grand Sheik. Then 33 Block-Heads and friends had a Tuscan dinner, hard boiled eggs and nuts included! (*This and more color photos of the celebration are on the ITJ website.*)



Tent News



Finely Formulated Machinations by Marc De Coninck

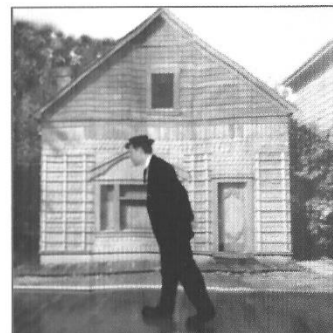
HAPPY BIRTHDAY STAN, OLLIE, & BUSTER!

by Alessandro Santi

assisted by his English coach **Adele Krusz** from *Busy Bodies #60*, *Grand Sheik of Block-Heads #258*, Italy - *Sons of the Desert Society*, Member of *The Buster Keaton Society* from 2001

Block-Heads #258 held their annual public showings in the Teatro Magnolfi in their home town, Prato. This year we had two days of programs instead of the usual one. On Saturday, March 11, 2017, we had the screening of *Buon compleanno Stanlio e Ollio 1927-2017* (*Happy Birthday Stan & Ollie 1927-2017*), with an introduction compiled by the Grand Sheik and Vice Sheik about the lives of Stan & Ollie with appropriate titles, photos, clips, and music from *La comica finale*, a tribute to the Boys by Faletti-Branduardi, 1998. Also shown were the restored versions (all premieres for an Italian theatre) of *Do Detectives Think?* (the first film with The Boys in bowlers), *Leave 'Em Laughing* (their first commercial success), *Big Business*, and *The Music Box*, two of their masterpieces, with live readings of the English titles. There was a modest crowd at the matinée, but in the afternoon there was the usual full house. After the showings we had a little raffle and we celebrated the movie anniversary of Stan, Babe, and Keaton with a decorated cake and beverages. Then about 30 Block-Heads and five friends enjoyed dinner while chatting and planning future Tent "business." During the day we had a photo exhibit thanks to our Son **Simone Cornacchia**, who has collected hundreds of L&H pictures; the selection for this year was about the films we screened plus many candid and backstage shots of The Boys.

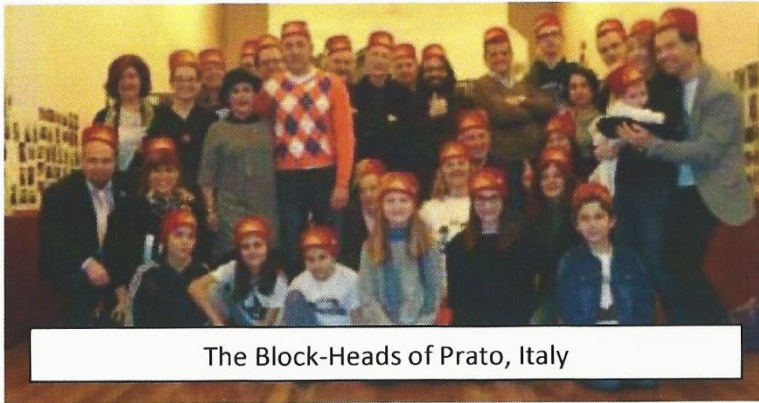
The following day, we had another two screenings, at 10.30 and 16.30, but this time we continued to laugh with another comic genius. In collaboration with The Buster Keaton Society (USA), the program *Buon compleanno Buster Keaton* (*Happy Birthday Buster Keaton 1917-2017*) started with another filmed introduction by the GS and the VS about the life and art of Buster, followed by the restored *Cops*, *Sherlock Jr.* and *The Railrodder*. After both screenings, we had a raffle. In the nearby room, the comedy sketch *Buster Keaton 100 anni nel ciclone* (*Buster Keaton 100 years in the cyclone*) was a well-received pantomime in which the Grand Sheik, dressed like Buster (right), staged a five minute selection of ups, downs and pratfalls from the life of the great comedian.



The total public for the four showings were about 180 laughing and cheering people; many of them talked with us Sons after the showings. All went well, except for the absence of the announced pianist Vincent Byrne, who contacted us months ago to come to play during the showings but was forced to remain in England "at the last minute." Luckily we had the silent screenings with the scores that became the official versions, like the ones played on the Wurlitzer organ.

Thanks to Sons in attendance from many Italian towns: VS Simone Rindi, GV Alessio, SVS Francesca, Alice, Simone C., Carlo from Verona, Vincenzo and family – in particular new Block-Head Anna – from Livorno, Fabrizio and Luisa from Firenze, Stefano and Federico and family from Firenze, Rodolfo, Gabriella, Roberto, Maria Bruna, Lorenzo, Chiara, Lavinia, Beatrice, Cinzia, Rebecca, Marco, Manuela, Francesca, Anna, Andrea, Giovanni and Michelantonio from Pistoia (*group photo page 15*).

The Intra-Tent Journal - Summer 2017 - Issue 165



The Block-Heads of Prato, Italy

The Intra-Tent Journal
Summer 2017 - Issue 165

*Fran-
cesca, Alessandro and
Alice Santi.*



The Intra-Tent Journal
Summer 2017 - Issue 165

Finely Formulated Machinations by Marc De Coninck

Just in: GS **Alessandro Santi**, **Block-Heads #258** of Prato, Italy, reported that on March 3rd 2018 the tent held the annual Laurel & Hardy screenings in the Teatro Magnolfi 80 years after the tent's namesake debuted. (More details on this in the next issue.)

The Intra-Tent Journal - spring 2018 - issue 168

the Block-Heads of Prato, Italy at the Teatro Magnolfi in March;



The Intra-Tent Journal
spring 2018 - issue 168



those Italians know how to have a good time. I am already looking forward to their first European convention in 2021. (photo from Giancarlo's Facebook page left)

Grand Sheik **Alessandro Santi** of **Block-Heads #258** in Prato, Italy shared **LAUREL & HARDY BLOCK-HEADS 80 YEARS AFTER - 1938-2018** after the event last spring. "March 3rd 2018, Saturday, our Tent held the annual Laurel & Hardy screenings in the local Teatro Magnolfi, a community theatre of 100 seats. This year we celebrated

the film *Block-Heads*, after all we were christened after that tremendous movie! We had two shows, at 10.30 am and 16.30 pm, with a total of 140 people in attendance and full house in the afternoon. The film program started with the first part of *Soldier Man* (1926) with Harry Langdon; next the Boys in *Unaccustomed As We Are* (1929) and *Block-Heads* (1938). Langdon's short was followed by old-fashioned title cards explaining the genesis of the long-feature from the previous shorts. The cards were written by Alessandro who hosted the shows. The Vice Sheik Simone Rindi prepared the movies whose versions were Italian premieres. The public was enthusiastic about Stan & Babe movies and accompanied with laughs at the showings. In the nearby room our Simone C. and Mary prepared an always new photograph showing about the Boys' movies, tours and private life that was well received like the previous years. Many persons come year after year but we had also newcomers. We welcomed almost all our members, who reunited for the occasion, coming from our town but also from distant regions of Italy. Before the second screenings we received the visit of the city cultural councilor who congratulated us and bought a Block-Heads t-shirt. After the shows we had lunch and dinner together at the same house where the theatre was; in the evening we were 45 people, almost completely Block-Heads members and we spent many hours chatting and planning future ventures.

Thanks to all for the friendship!" (Meet the Italian Block-Heads: the four Officials Alessandro, Simone R. (with family), Grand Vizier Alessio (with Anna), Sub Vice Vizier Francesca; Vincenzo, Anna e Giada from Livorno; Carlo from Verona; from Florence: Stefano e Federico, Anna (and Luciano), Fabrizio (with Luisa and Federico), Simone S. (with son Pietro); Michelantonio (with daughter Letizia) from Pistoia; Pierluigi (and family) from Pisa; from Prato: Simone C. and Mary, Andrea, Chiara, Lorenzo, Lavinia, Beatrice, Rodolfo, Gabriella, Roberto, Maria Brunetta, Marco, Manuela, Francesca (and friends), our new members Gisberto, Niccolò and Marco and last but not least little Alice, who was calm and curious all through the pictures screening, despite she was only 15 months old!)



The Intra-Tent Journal
fall 2018 - issue 170

Uncoasted As We Are by Flip Lauer ("Flipbook" of Stan & Ollie groups on back page and note all of the youngsters below)

GS Dave Kirwan, VS Roger Krob, SVV Dan Krusz, GV Liz Palkovich & 68 Busy Bodies, Oasis #60 of Duluth-Superior held their the Xmas program at Moose Lodge #606 on the Wisconsin side, giving special thanks to Liz for bringing ALL of her tasty treats. VS Roger made a donation toward the Moose Children's Christmas party to Governor **Loren Byberg**. Over 70 members enjoyed "New Year Nuttiness" at American Legion Post 71 in West Duluth Jan. 5, 2019 to watch *The Finishing Touch*, *Their Purple Moment*, *Chickens Come Home* & *Wild Poses* (OG w/L&H cameo). Sat. Jan. 19, 2019 was historic. GS Dave contacted the management of independent theater Zinema 2 & partnered to present an advanced screening of *Stan & Ollie*. Selling admission ahead of time, they had no problem filling the theater. Thanks to Dan & **Adele Krusz** for taking care of ticket sales. (back page) Sony even sent free derbies.

Over 100 loved "Anniversary Amusement" at the Moose, Sat., Feb. 9th, to celebrate their 34th anniversary & to see a program that included the Oscar winner *Happy Anniversary*; *Hearts are Thumps* & *Blockheads*, an Oscar nominee from 1938. A nod to film programmer & projectionist **Jeff Missinne** for another fine job. Block-Heads' GS Tracy Tolzmann helped celebrate. The "Little Busy Body" T-shirts worn by **Alice Franci Santi** and **Ava & Liam Krob** (right) are from an anonymous donor who wanted to pay for kids shirts, to spread the L&H love among the younger set. He donated enough that they could sell them for only \$2.50 each! It was "Troops & Scoops" on March 2 with *Pack Up Your Troubles* & *On The Front Page* (written & stars Stan, silent).



Finely Formulated Machinations from Europe by Marc De Coninck

By the time you read this, it will be summertime but when I am writing this in June, the rain is pouring down by the buckets. June is bursting out all over in a very wet and windy way. And let's get on our way with lots of European news from the Sons of the Desert.

Our Italian brothers and sisters keep meeting and having a great time. Grand Sheik **Alessandro Santi** of the **Block-Heads Tent** in Prato reports that their 13th annual meeting on March 9 was a big success. Over 100 people attended the film show with movies of Laurel & Hardy at work ("The Finishing Touch," "From Soup To Nuts," "Berth Marks" and the "Pick A Star" cameo). The fun continued with a dinner, a discussion and a final agreement for their proposal for hosting the 2021 European Convention. I would say: "Bravo for such bravery!"

Monday is usually goodbye day at European conventions and this Monday was no exception. But not before we had our Grand Council and officially passed the pineapple to the hosts (they were the only candidates) of the 2021 European convention: The **Block-Heads Tent** of Prato in Italy (from left Italian Sons Giancarlo Manfredini, Carlo Airaghi, and Antonio Stella - Southend's Roger Robinson is centre and Dutch host Robert Radevan right). The convention will take place from July 9 to July 12, 2021 in Prato, near Florence. More details will follow but it's going to be a darb!



The Intra-Tent Journal - summer 2019 - issue 173

Finely Formulated Machinations from Europe by Marc De Coninck

Our last stop is in Italy. Our Italian friends have only been given the pineapple last June in Holland and there is already news about the next European Convention. The Italian Block-Heads Tent (Teste Dure) in Prato (Tuscany) has completed its plans for the **European Convention of 2021** and immediately adds a registration form. This 14th European Convention will be held from 9 to 12 July 2021. Read all about it on their website <http://www.ifiglideldeserto.it/credit.htm>.

That's it for now. Keep up the good work and keep the news coming. We will be back when winter has come.

The Intra-Tent Journal - fall 2019 - issue 174