

2015 : first participation in foreign exhibitions

In 2015 ASITAF participated in 6 exhibitions. For the first time we took part in exhibitions organized abroad, in Austria and France.

The year began with the the launch of **IXV** (Intermediate eXperimental Vehicle), the first European spacecraft capable of re-entering the Earth which, launched on board VEGA-4 on 11 February 2015 from the European spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, completed its mission with a perfect return and an impeccable splashdown in the Indian Ocean, where it was recovered by the Nos Aries vessel.



We witnessed the historic event live at the **Altec Mission Control Center** in Turin, where. For the occasion, the IXV model, which had passed the "Drop Test" from the Salto di Quirra firing range (in Sardinia) in June 2013, was on show.



A large audience of guests attended the celebrations at ALTEC - In the centre: Piero Messidoro, CTO of Thales Alenia Space-Italy, introduces the event. - Left: speech by Roberto Vittori.

The event offered tthe opportunity to meet several astronauts who took part in the celebrations in Turin



Roberto Vittori, Franco Malerba and Valter Villadei



In April ASITAF was invited by the Italian Federation to participate with an Astrophilately exhibit at the event "**MANY WAYS TO COLLECT**" organized during **MilanoFil 2015** to officially show didactical examples of how to collect in the different classes, according to the correct rules and guidelines.

Encouraged by the success of the booklet "*Lo spazio in Rosa*" whose limited edition sold out quickly, it was decided to edit the more demanding publication **DONNE NELLO SPAZIO** (WOMEN IN SPACE) which was issued – with the sponsorship of Thales Alenia Space and AS.IT.AF. – in May 2015, just in time for the return of Cristoforetti, who is featured on the cover of the book. The book tells – often including interviews and quotations from statements – the fascinating stories of the 60 women who managed to overcome the barriers of one of the most exclusive men-only clubs in this world, the space program, thus becoming involved in one of the most engaging adventures of all times.



In May we collaborated in the preparation of the special pictorial postmark for the presentation of the book "**Tutto in un istante**", written by the astronaut **Maurizio Cheli**, in collaboration with his wife **Marianne Mercier**, also an astronaut.

the pictorial postmark for the book presentation.



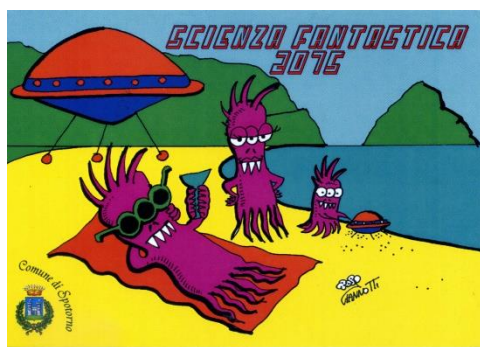
*Celebration for the presentation of the book with the authors, the astronauts **Maurizio Cheli** and **Marianne Mercier**.*

From July 26th to August 1st we participated in the "**Scienza Fantastica 2015**" week, which took place in Spotorno (Savona): an event which included various conferences, an exhibition of science fiction comics, a national literary competition for short science fiction stories, a space-themed philatelic exhibition, and space-models exhibitions.

ASITAF presented the 9 **WOMEN IN SPACE** panels. Guest of honor of the event was the astronaut **Umberto Guidoni**.



Astronaut Umberto Guidoni and the writer Andrea Valente visit the exhibition and issue autographs, especially to children.



The official card of SCIENZA FANTASTICA 2015 by the artist Roberto Giannotti

Cavallaro, chairman of ASITAF, was appointed president of the Jury of the "Fantastic Science" literary prize. An evening was dedicated to the presentation of the book **WOMEN IN SPACE**.



During the three days of conferences: astronaut Umberto Guidoni on the left. Right: Umberto Cavallaro and Antonio Lo Campo (ASITAF/La Stampa) during the book presentation

In August ASITAF went to **Gmunden, Austria**, bringing **8 exhibits** (Barberis, Bartos, Bussolino, Cavallaro, Della Maddalena, Pantanella, Rega, Zatti Monateri) which represented more than half of the 15 astrophilately exhibits on show at the event [the others coming from Belgium (4), Germany (1), Austria (1), and the Netherlands (1)].

Judged, with FEPA recognition, by the FIP president Igor Rodin (Russia) and by the FIP Board Member Julius Cacka (Czech Republic), our collections have globally obtained one Large Vermeil medal, two Vermeil, one Large Silver, three Silver and one Silver Bronze medal.

It was a tough test – which we "sportingly" accepted as a learning opportunity – which made us experience firsthand how astrophilately is a "difficult" class.

Guests of honor at the event were **Russian cosmonauts Roman Romanenko and Oleg Artemyev**.



Left: Hannibal Rega in front of his collection with cosmonauts Roman Romanenko and Oleg Artemyev. On the right Cavallaro receives the diploma with the score attributed to his exhibit.(photo Rodin)¹

In September **6 astrophilately exhibits** (Barberis, Bussolino, Della Maddalena, Pantanella, Zatti Monateri, Mauri) took part in the national astrophilately competition **BergamoFil 2015**.



The "Filandone" of Martinengo where the event took place. Right: Pietro Pantanella receives diploma and medal.

¹ http://astrophilatelista.com/index/gmunden_2015/0-1088

In October 2015 we were invited to exhibit **WOMEN IN SPACE** at the **Polytechnic of Turin**, in the frame of the Conference on the new Industry of Civil Space Flight.



ASITAF was invited to participate, from November 26 to 30, in the **Philespace 2015** event, organized by our French colleagues in the aerospace citadel of **St. Médard en Jalles (Bordeaux)**, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of the **Diamant** rocket, which was launched from Hammaguir, Algeria on November 26, 1965 carrying into space the first French **Astérix-1** satellite.



Three Italian exhibits (by Cavallaro, Della Maddalena and Rega) were hosted in the “**Cours d’Honneur**”

In addition to the astrophilately exhibition, it was possible to visit an interesting exhibition of historical documents and models, together with a flight simulator and an astronomy laboratory aimed at children. It was a pleasant occasion to meet new French colleagues, meet old friends again, and make plans for the future.



Left: Michel Pedrero, Umberto Cavallaro, Jürgen Esders and Jean-Louis Lafon plan future collaborations.

Right: meeting with Gen. Pierre Béty, who in the early 1960s was one of the designers of Diamant²

² See http://astrophilatelist.com/index/philespace_2015/0-1103

A few days before Christmas we accompanied **ExoMars** which departed from the Sandro Pertini **airport in Caselle**, Turin with destination **Baikonur**, the Russian launch base in Kazakhstan. To transport the European probe with all its equipment and apparatus, three flights of a capable Russian Antonov AN-124-100 cargo plane were required. The flights rotated in succession in just five days, with an exhausting work rate involving thirty people.



Left: the Antonov "kneeling" in loading position, on the Turin-Caselle runway

Center: GTO container during loading operation.

Right: Six containers of equipment are loaded through the tailgate



To celebrate the event we have prepared a special pictorial postmark designed by Marco Morando (Fagioli SpA)

Right: Commemorative cover with Annibale Rega and Umberto Cavallaro posing in front of the Antonov where the GTO has just been loaded.



The exhibit “Mars, Planet of the Future. ExoMars begins its long journey” by Lodovico Sacchi was shown by invitation at the Central Post Office in Torino.

On 19 December 2015 we concluded this year full of activities by welcoming **Paolo Nespoli** who has become an **ASITAF Honorary Member**, alongside Chris Calle and Walter Cunningham. The simple ceremony was held at the end of a dinner with friends in **Verano Brianza**, his birthplace. The idea was born long before Paolo was assigned to his last mission which in July 2017 would have brought him to the ISS for the third time, as a member of Expedition 52/53. Then this prestigious assignment arrived and it became more difficult to meet with him, and this ceremony was postponed several times.



Left: Paolo Nespoli welcomed by ASITAF Members. From left: Massimiliano Chiolo (Vice-Mayor of Verano Brianza), Franco Mauri, Luciana and Umberto Cavallaro, Pietro Della Maddalena, Paolo Nespoli, Renato Casati (Mayor of Verano Brianza)