

## Potenza Picena “Belvedere delle Marche” (Viewpoint of the Marche) “il Pincio” (historical notes)

One of the most charming spots of Potenza Picena, especially in summer, is without doubt “il Pincio” (the Viewpoint), as is commonly named today, the “Belvedere Donatori di Sangue”.

This spacious Wide Open Square is situated in the area of the Franciscan Friar Conventual's convent, where there was once a cloister and vegetable garden closed in by a high wall. It was in 1867, after the demolition of existing buildings, that this large area was obtained bounded, in 1873, by a hedge of evergreens. Thanks to an idea brought forward by prof. Umberto Boccabianca in 1900, before the enforcement of a National law, a local “feast of the trees” was introduced (the first limetrees planted are those along Viale Trieste) thus in 1901 a promenade was promoted along the “il Pincio” by planting fifty limetrees. Not until 1932 were two big flowerbeds created bounded by a low wall in the middle of which were planted two “Deodara” Cedars (the biggest tree is over 100 years old with it's trunk measuring 3,50 metres in circumference, while the other tree was substituted after being struck by lightning).

What gave the whole area a suitable conclusion was the setting of a fountain in the middle of the square, designed by prof Giuseppe Ascitti and executed by apprentices of the School of Art “Ambrogio della Robbia”, Roberto Valentini and Giuseppe Clementoni (Peppino de Milena).

Owing to it's destruction by a coach belonging to the “SAP” company this original fountain was to be later substituted by another more modern one built by apprentices of the School of Art “Ferdinando (Fiore) Scatagliani. During the beginning of the Nineteensixties three terraces were built in suspension above the S.Francesco boulevard thus enlarging the “il Pincio” area forming a “balcony” allowing a fantastic view stretching from the “Sibillini” Mountains to the Adriatic Sea where, in the midst, the cities of Recanati and Loreto look so close, like Mount Conero, that they seem to be just an arms length away. After the building of the three terraces, following an idea suggested by “Bruno Grandinetti”, a telescope was mounted in the centre one allowing an extraordinary view to be admired of the entire “Potenza” valley.

It was in 1912, after the establishment of “SAP” (Società Automobilistica Potentina) (Automobile Society of Potenza), that a garage was built alongside the church of “S. Francesco” to shelter the coaches. This was later demolished while near the flight of steps in via “Castelfidardo” a Gymnasium, on the part of “ONB” (Opera Nazionale Balilla), following a project by the Surveyor Raoul Moschini, was built in 1929 to be inaugurated on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 1929. As far as the name of this extraordinary “Belvedere” (Viewpoint) is

concerned, popularly named by everybody as “il Pincio”, one thing must be made clear, its not true that this area was always named so from the beginning.

As shown from the first documents dated eighteen hundred this area was called “Mercato” (Market) or “Piazzale S. Francesco” (St. Francis Square), then in 1901, after the planting of the limetrees, it was also called promenade. By chance only in a document dated 25<sup>th</sup> Oct.1885 was the name “il Pincio” used when works of upkeep were in progress tending to the hedges of evergreens to be found in this area. Most likely this denomination was inspired by “Colle di Roma” holder of this name. In 1898, exactly on the 29<sup>th</sup> June, in occasion of the first Centenary of the birth of the great poet “Giacomo Leopardi”, this Square was to him entitled in view of the fact that it faces directly the city of Recanati, his birthplace. On 5<sup>th</sup> Dec.1966 representatives of “Società di Mutuo Soccorso Potentina di Buenos Aires”, of which President “Faustino Fontinovo” and Secretary “Mario Percossi”, both of whom had promoted the construction of the “Piramide de Mayo” (De Mayo Pyramid), inaugurated on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1967, officially asked the so called area “Giardino dei Tigli” (Limetrees Garden) to be entitled to “Repubblica Argentina”. This request was not granted. On the 13<sup>th</sup> Oct.1996 the “Belvedere” was definitely entitled to the “Donatori di Sangue dell’Avis” (Avis Blood Donors) for their worthy activity in favour of the community. No matter how we can call it; “il Pincio” or “Belvedere Donatori di Sangue”, or as it was known in the past “Mercato” or “Piazzale San Francesco”, or “Piazzale” or “Largo Leopardi”, or “Passeggiata”, “Giardini Pubblici” or “Giardino dei Tigli”, this area will always be considered as the soul, ideal both for enjoyment and for contemplating nature, capable of inspiring poets and learned men, names such as “Norberto Mancini”, “Severino Donati” and “Giovanni Pastocchi”, all saw the passing of many generations of “Santesi” (people of Potenza Picena), who will be forever grateful to those who accomplished this “il Pincio” in such a marvellous setting.

This achievement is dedicated to a dear friend who left us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2010. “Gian Mario Lazzarini”, a noble but always ready and willing to help us during our historical research to better enhance the rich traditions of Potenza Picena. We shall miss his presence, intelligence and humanity.