

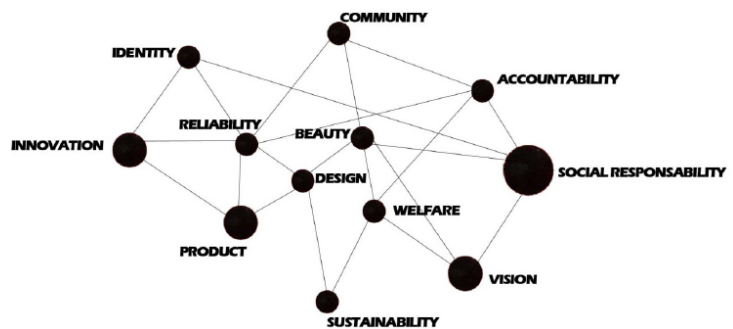


## *One day visit in Ivrea*

**ESI XXXI**

**Fondazione Adriano Olivetti and Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti**

## **#OLIVETTI**



June 19.2014, from 3 to 6 pm.

Villetta Casana, Via Miniere 31, Ivrea, TO  
[www.arcoliv.org](http://www.arcoliv.org)  
[www.fondazioneadrianolivetti.it](http://www.fondazioneadrianolivetti.it)

In 2013 the Olivetti Historical Archives' Association and the Adriano Olivetti Foundation launched, with the support of the Compagnia di San Paolo, the program "Progetti Integrati Olivetti" Among the activities the 2014 fall meetings and presentations aimed at a wider knowledge of the Olivetti cultural heritage.

***ESI XXXI***  
***Visit and meeting program in Ivrea***

June 19.2014  
from 3 to 5 p.m.

On the 19th of June we are pleased to welcome the students of the Euro Summer Institute, with the following program:

**h. 03.00 p.m.**

Brief historical introduction.

With the contribution of: Matteo Olivetti, architect, member of Board of Directors of the Center of Studies of the Adriano Olivetti Foundation.

Visit of the exhibit in Villetta Casana "Cento anni di Olivetti, il progetto industriale" by the Olivetti Historical Archives' Association.

**h. 03.30 - 04.30**

Showing of video documentaries about Adriano Olivetti and the Olivetti Corporation in Ivrea. Including: excerpts of "Città dell'Uomo" (The City of Man), a film by Andrea De Sica produced by La Storia Siamo Noi / Rai 150, in collaboration with the Adriano Olivetti Foundation, 60', 2012.

*"The City of Man". The young director Andrea De Sica covers the life of Adriano Olivetti, through unpublished testimonies, documents and archives from the Rai and of the Adriano Olivetti Foundation: a courageous industrialist, a free thinking intellectual, a publisher, a political figure, a town planner, an innovator in the field of social sciences. An incredible life, starting with the creation of a factory and evolving in a project for a comprehensive renewal of society.*

**h. 04.30 - 05.00**

Contribution of engineer Gianfranco Casaglia on "Olivetti and IT".

**h. 05.00**

Visit of the Church of San Bernardino, with a series of frescos by Giovanni Martino Spanzotti (XV century) and some of the Olivetti buildings in Jervis Street, guided by the Association "Spille d'Oro" Olivetti.

**To introduce your visit we are enclosing some materials regarding our archives, the history of Olivetti and the city of Ivrea.**

## **ADRIANO OLIVETTI**

Adriano Olivetti was born in Ivrea on 11 April 1901. His engineer father, [Camillo](#), an eclectic and original thinker, founded "Italy's first typewriter factory" in 1908. During his formative years, Adriano developed a keen interest in social and political debate, moving in liberal reformist circles and writing for the reviews "L'azione riformista" and "Tempi nuovi". Piero Gobetti and Carlo Rosselli were important influences. After graduating in Engineering at the Politecnico di Torino, in 1924 Adriano began an apprenticeship as a factory worker in the family business.

• Adriano Olivetti (1901-1960) was one of the most influential and remarkable figures of the 20th century: an outstanding entrepreneur, intellectual and politician, social science innovator and precursor of town planning.

Ivrea

The following year, accompanied by Domenico Burzio, he toured the USA, visiting dozens of factories. On his return, he drew up a wide-ranging programme of innovative projects to modernise operations at Olivetti: a decentralised staff organisation, function-based management, rationalisation of assembly work, development of the Italian and overseas sales network, etc.

He subsequently launched work on a project for the first portable typewriter, which was launched in 1932 as the MP1. The new organisation led to a significant improvement in productivity and sales. In 1931 Adriano travelled to the USSR with a delegation of Italian industrialists. The same year, he set up an Advertising Department in Olivetti, which immediately began working with major artists and designers; the following year, he formed the Organisation Office. At the end of 1932, Adriano Olivetti was appointed General Manager; in 1938 he became company Chairman, taking over from his father Camillo. He continued his analyses and experiments in working methods, and published essays dealing with technology, economics and industrial sociology in "Tecnica e Organizzazione", a journal he himself had founded.

Adriano Olivetti's polyhedric personality led him to broaden his activities from industry and business to a wider sphere including urban planning, architecture, culture, and social and political reform. In Ivrea, he launched projects for the construction of new production facilities, offices, employee housing, canteens, nurseries, developing a complex system of social services. In 1937, for example, he commissioned the construction of a residential housing estate for company employees, designed by architects Figini and Pollini. For Adriano Olivetti, territorial organisation and architecture had an enormous importance at the social and economic levels. In 1938 he joined the "Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica" and in 1948 became a member of the institute's Steering Council. In 1949 he personally financed the revival of the review "Urbanistica". As head of the Institute supported by a team of young architects (including [Ludovico Quaroni](#)), from 1950 Adriano was able to develop his views on the political primacy of Urban Planning.

Reflecting the great importance Adriano Olivetti placed on the company's relationship with the territory, in 1937 he took part in the preparatory work for a planning scheme for the Aosta Valley, and in 1951 he worked with the Ivrea city authorities on the launch of a new urban plan. In 1956 Olivetti was made an honorary member of the American Institute of Planners and deputy chairman of the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning; in 1959 he was appointed chairman of Italy's "Istituto UNRRA-Casas", an institute for post-war reconstruction.

The many awards received by Adriano Olivetti included, in 1955, the Compasso d'Oro for achievements in industrial aesthetics and, in 1956, the Gran Premio di architettura for "the architectural merit, original industrial design, social and human objectives incorporated in every Olivetti achievement". After the Second World War, Adriano Olivetti intensified his activities as a publisher, writer and intellectual. Together with a group of young scholars, he had already formed a new publishing house, NEI (Nuove Edizioni Ivrea), which became [Edizioni di Comunità](#) in 1946. The house published major works in a number of cultural fields, including political thought, sociology, philosophy, organisation of labour, introducing many radical thinkers and distinguished foreign writers to the Italian public.

During his exile in Switzerland (1944-1945), Olivetti completed work on his book "L'ordine politico delle comunità" (the political order of communities), which was published at the end of 1945 by NEI. The volume illustrates the fundamental concepts of the Movimento Comunità, the movement founded by Adriano Olivetti in 1947, and his proposals to stimulate the creation of new political, social and economic ties between central and local governments. The ["Comunità" magazine](#), founded in 1946, became the key cultural reference of the Movimento Comunità. At the end of 1959, Edizioni di Comunità published a collection of essays by Adriano Olivetti entitled "Città dell'Uomo" (the human city). In order to translate his community ideas into reality, in 1955 Adriano Olivetti founded the IRUR institute for the urban and rural renewal of the Canavese, the area around Ivrea, as a tool to combat local unemployment by promoting new industrial and agricultural ventures. The following year, the Movimento Comunità ran for the local elections and Adriano Olivetti was elected mayor of Ivrea. This success led Movimento to present candidates for the national elections in 1958, but only Adriano Olivetti won a seat. Urban planner, publisher, writer, intellectual; first and foremost, however, Adriano Olivetti was an industrialist and entrepreneur who regarded the enterprise as the key driver of economic and social growth. Under his guidance, the Olivetti company worked to achieve technological excellence, innovation and international leadership, and at the same time strengthened its focus on industrial design and improved living standards for its employees. In 1948, the Ivrea plants formed a Works Council (Consiglio di Gestione), for many years the only such body in Italy, with general consultative powers on funding for social services and welfare. In 1956, ahead of national employment contracts, the Olivetti company reduced the working week from 48 to 45 hours, on an unchanged wage basis. Employee housing estates were built, as well as new premises for the social services department, the library and the canteen. Many leading architects worked on these projects: Figini, Pollini, Zanuso, Vittoria, Gardella, Fiocchi, Cosenza, etc.

In the industrial design field, too, Adriano Olivetti called some of the country's top talents, including Marcello Nizzoli and - later - Ettore Sottsass. Between the end of the 1940s and the end of the 1950s, the company launched a number of products that would become cult objects in terms of design, technological content and functionality: these included the Lexikon 80 typewriter (1948), the Lettera 22 portable typewriter (1950), the Divisumma 24 calculator (1956). In 1959, an international jury of designers named the Lettera 22 as the best of the one hundred top products of the previous 100 years.

Graphics and advertising were also a prime concern and the company became a worldwide reference model for its work in the industrial design field. As the Olivetti product range broadened, production capacity was expanded to meet growing demand on the Italian and international marketplaces. In Italy, the company opened factories in Pozzuoli and Agliè (1955), S. Bernardo di Ivrea (1956), Ivrea (the "new ICO") and Caluso (1957). In Brazil, a new facility opened in São Paulo in 1959. The outstanding success of the company's office products on the international marketplace did not distract Adriano Olivetti's attention from developments in the new field of electronics. As early as 1952, the Olivetti company opened an electronic computer research laboratory, in New Canaan, USA. In 1955, it formed the electronic research laboratory in Pisa; in 1957, together with

Telettra, Olivetti founded the Società Generale Semiconduttori (SGS) company and in 1959 launched the Elea 9003, Italy's first electronic computer, developed and manufactured at the Borgolombardo laboratory. In 1957 Adriano Olivetti's entrepreneurial achievements won further recognition when the National Management Association of New York awarded him a prize for "ground-breaking activity in the field of international company management".

In 1959 Adriano Olivetti signed an agreement for the acquisition of Underwood, a US organisation with almost 11,000 employees, which had been the inspiration for his father Camillo when he formed the Olivetti company in 1908.

Adriano Olivetti died suddenly on 27 February 1960, during a train journey from Milan to Lausanne. He left a business enterprise with operations on all the major international markets and 36,000 employees, of whom more than half overseas.

See: [www.fondazioneadrianolivetti.it](http://www.fondazioneadrianolivetti.it)

# T

he architect, alone or as the recognised guide to a group of collaborators and interpreters, is naturally involved in the forms and new ways forward indicated by the cultural thinking and development of his time, along a not always visible trail. Out of the unconscious ocean in which those forms and ways lie dormant there emerge like illuminated islands the wonders created by the masters, the geniuses that

were the first to reveal them. These forms are subjected to a profound evolution, just as their historical circumstances also change, as we know all too well. Thus today they embody an inner meaning that is not yet clear, for a crisis is still unfolding.

In our period of transition, it must therefore be admitted that a crisis of values in architecture exists. But the many uncertainties and the disorientation from which they suffer stem from ideological uncertainties and disorientation in the ideological sphere.

So we must turn deliberately to the radiant, determinant instance, the one that will sooner or later triumph over the uncertainties, the obstacles and the immaturity: the need, the necessity, for a rootedness, so as also to rediscover in the land, in landscape, in traditions and in architectural forms, the fondness of people for their community: the total and natural feeling of a place. This widely and deeply felt need has unfortunately induced erroneous and ineffective manifestations.

In fact, the conviction in fact that we must respect feelings, the desire to participate in the anxieties, hopes and fears of a population, must be respected has more than once led the new architectural language astray. Instead of pushing up rigorous new stems in old roots to renew, purify and exalt the new needs of the soul, that language has sunk to a formal and often demagogic homages to folklore.

What we mean by rootedness is an integration with the birth of the new Community, for which the spiritual and the material world are reconciled to a unity, and for which purpose the architect is summoned and destined to give it its new and unmistakable face. The concept of a concrete, rooted Community corresponds to two other deeply vital necessities:

1) To create a new, stable, fertile and elevated democratic authority of culture, with the capacity to build the new city, which will thrive only on homogeneous, organic and unitary choices. This vigilant and passionate authority, the *new client* who is neither private nor State, is lacking in modern society; and herein lies the root of all evils. Once the new authority is established, the problem is reduced to a dialogue between that authority and the architect or architects whom it will have chosen; and so the present discussions about architecture will become happier and less sterile.

2) It takes generations to forge a genuine Community. How many centuries did it take to build Venice, and how many years did it take to bestow order upon the Piazza dei Miracoli in Pisa? What is required therefore is a continuity, an unflagging, constant work of research and refinement. The face of the new city cannot be entrusted to the whims of a man, but only to a system (a civilisation of decentereddecentred culture).

Architecture today is faced with the fascinating and arduous task of foreseeing whether individual forms can, by their consistencycoherence and nature, find their proper place within the broader panorama in whichof the place where they are destined to become materialmaterialise. And since like a rock flower knows by itself how to grow among immense silences and perennial snows. Likewise, the architect knows that his work is indivisibly and indissolubly linked to the environment. In his creative interpretation he becomes, like it or not, a town planner. Town planning

and architecture are one and the same thing, where the former includes the latter. No one can escape this condition. The relation between the architect and "his" community will become his law, his moral conscience, marking his creative participation in the birth of the new community, illuminated by the spiritual flame of those who will have nurtured it on their human substance.

We all believe in the unlimited power of spiritual forces, and that the only solution to the present political and social crisis of the western world is to enable those spiritual forces to develop their creative genius. Talking of spiritual forces, I try to be clear in my own mind and to sum up with a simple formula the four essential forces of the spirit: Truth, Justice, Beauty and, above all, Love.

I mention Truth first. Truth in a human society means free culture, and the independence of scientific research and knowledge. Science, indissolubly linked to and associated with the spirit of Truth, was the first dispenser of all goodness, because it has always created material progress. By creating modern technology, science has set a new course for man's life and work. Nobody would sacrifice the new civilisation, in these days of reinforced concrete, of engines, antibiotics, radio and television. Nobody would turn back even fifty years - let alone centuries.

There was no electric light, infectious diseases cut down young lives, surgery and anaesthetics were primitive, in factories work was much more punishing than it is today. In short, the human condition was infinitely harder than it is today. The world moreover is heading towards more radiant and happier times, but on one condition: that the immense material forces available to man today be directed towards spiritual purposes and goals.

The spirit of Truth has thus worked in silence for centuries, so that a brighter humanity might one day be possible. A society that does not believe in spiritual values does not believe in its own future; it will never be able to approach travel toward a common goal but will drown the national community in a limited, wretched and corrupt life.

estern civilisation today, in its prolonged and deep travail, is faced

with its definitive decision. For the extraordinary material forces which modern science and technology have made available to man cannot be handed down to our children, for their liberation, unless a substantially new order is established and subjected to real spiritual forces which remain eternal in time and immutable in space.

If the material forces avoid spiritual impulses, and if the economy, technology and machines prevail over man in their inexorable mechanical logic, the economy, technology and machines will serve only to generate tools of destruction and disorder.

We dream of a free community, where man's abode conflicts neither with nature nor with beauty, where everyone can go happily about their work and missions.

The nascent world will be founded upon spiritual values, and help will come neither from the West nor from the East. Through the darkness that still hangs over it, the world is moving towards a new spiritualityspirituality, a new order. This new spirituality can never spring from a uniform flattening of life and the world. Instead, by starting from a motivated and conscious refusal of centralised power, the multiplicity and individuality of man will at last be projected into the future.

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Excerpt from the book: Adriano Olivetti "Il mondo che nasce", Edizioni di Comunità, 2013.

## The Adriano Olivetti Foundation

The Adriano Olivetti Foundation was established in 1962, with its main offices in Rome, by Adriano Olivetti's relatives, friends, and collaborators, with the aim of mobilizing and developing the civil, social, and political engagement that distinguished the work of this Piedmont entrepreneur. Among its statutory aim is "the promotion, encouragement, and organization of studies directed at deepening the knowledge of the conditions upon which social progress depend".

In line with this mandate, the Foundation carries out research and sponsors cultural and scientific projects following an interdisciplinary approach in four main areas, Institutions and Society; Economics and Society; Community and Society; and Art, Architecture, and City Planning.

Since its establishment, the Foundation has always seen its complex and enormously valuable cultural heritage as more than just something to be remembered, but rather as a creative instrument, useful for rigorously interpreting contemporary social challenges and the reforming passion of the Olivettian experience, oriented toward the most active and independent research of world culture. Following this philosophy and through the fields of research that characterize its activities, the Adriano Olivetti Foundation sponsors studies; encourages and coordinates projects, conventions and seminars; and organizes exhibitions along with other charitable institutions and public and private entities both in Italy and abroad.

Some of the Adriano Olivetti Foundation's main prerogatives are also the promotion of academic and scientific research, particularly studies of the entrepreneurial, cultural, and political activities of Adriano Olivetti. In its main offices in Rome and Ivrea, opened in 2008, Italian and foreign researchers have at their disposition documentary material from a large archive, in paper and multimedia format, as well as a vast library of over 10,000 volumes, all of which have been declared of relevant historical interest by the Minister of Cultural Resources and Activities.

Since 2012 the Adriano Olivetti Foundation is promoting the Ivrea nomination as Unesco site, in collaboration with the City of Ivrea and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage.

*Ivrea Industrial City of the 20th Century* draws UNESCO's attention to the industrial city model, which was started in the Thirties by Adriano Olivetti. During this period, he elaborated his community project, which strictly linked the complex development of the company to its territory. "The city- clarified by the criteria selected for the nomination- represents an industrial model, promoted by the Olivetti Company, which is based on a social and productive system inspired by the community and atypical of the prevalent industrial models of the 20th century." The theme of the nomination represents a challenge for Ivrea and for Italy, who has yet to place industrial sites of the Nineties on the World Heritage List <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5736/>

See: [www.fondazioneadrianolivetti.it](http://www.fondazioneadrianolivetti.it)

## **The Olivetti Historical Archives' Association and the exhibition in Villetta Casana**

The Olivetti Historical Archives have their seat in Villa Casana, a prestigious residence, which is surrounded by the magnificent Montefiorito Park, just a few steps from the centre of Ivrea.

Opened in 1986, according to Paolo Mancinelli's support, Olivetti's General Secretary, the Historical Archives witness their realization and their development in the years between 1987 and 1994, under the direction of Prof. Giovanni Maggia. During spring 1998, the Association for the Olivetti Historical Archives (AASO) was created: a no profit initiative promoted and supported by different members such as the Olivetti Society (and Telecom Italia nowadays), the Town Council of Ivrea, the Province of Turin, the Olivetti Golden Pins Association and the Adriano Olivetti Foundation. Joined after that, by Torino Wireless and other members.

The Olivetti Historical Archives are the result of a long commitment created to restore, to select, to preserve and to archive a big quantity of documents, which are the proof of a unique industrial and cultural experience (see [http://www.arcoliv.org/patrimonio\\_archivistico.pdf](http://www.arcoliv.org/patrimonio_archivistico.pdf).)

Among several important funds of the Olivetti Society, Olivetti Family's Archive and in particular Camillo and Adriano Olivetti's funds are committed to AASO by Adriano Olivetti Foundation.

The main goal of AASO is to manage and to put in order the big heritage of documents, but also to give importance to this material, both on a national and international level, by promoting exhibitions, studies, publications, conventions, meetings and collecting a big number of relevant initiatives.

See: <http://www.arcoliv.org/index.asp>



## **The current exhibition in Villetta Casana**

*“Cento anni di Olivetti, il progetto industriale/One hundred years of Olivetti, the industrial project”*

The exhibit you are going to visit in this location has been projected and settled by AASO in order to make evidence to some distinctive features of the Olivetti's industrial project on the occasion of the centenary of the company in 2008. These distinctive features intimate, all over the world and throughout the XX century, a moral code of values and this kind of ethical background supported an industrial system which was built around the person and conceived for a community of people, first of all. Adriano Olivetti, Camillo's son (Camillo Olivetti was the founder of the company in 1908) established a corporate style and culture that won Olivetti a unique place in Italian and European industrial history. He paid particular attention to technological development, innovation and product quality, and strengthened the company's international operations. His interest in industrial design laid the foundations for a tradition of excellence that still continues. The social issues of the workplace were one of the major concern, together with the relationship between the company and the local community. Entrepreneur, intellectual, publisher and town planner with a keen interest in social problems, Adriano extended his activities well beyond the limits of the industrial world.

His heritage, after his sudden death in 1960, has been adopted and became a shared way of thinking and leading the company, wich was primarily intended as a comprehensive system of social and cultural values.

See: [http://www.arcoliv.org/mostra\\_permanente.asp](http://www.arcoliv.org/mostra_permanente.asp)

## **Olivetti, an Italian company (brief history)**

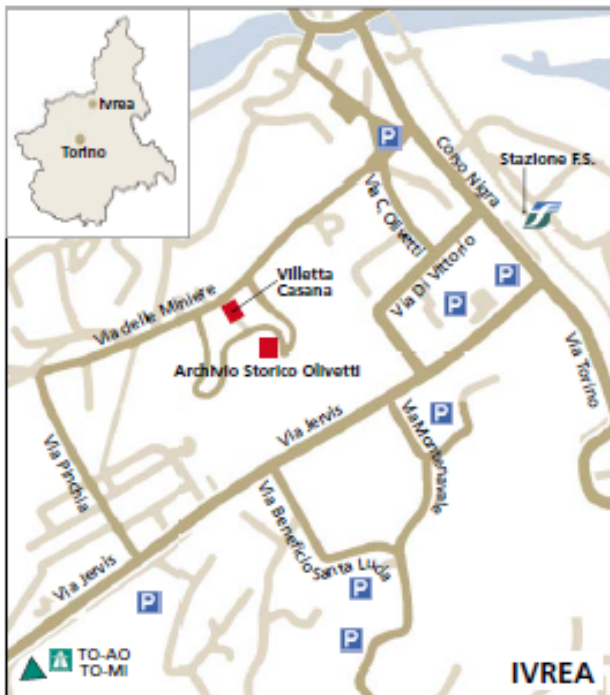
Olivetti has moved successfully from mechanics to electronics, from office products to computers, IT systems and services and telecommunications. Industry observers in Italy and worldwide have always admired Olivetti for its distinctive corporate style: a style based on technological excellence, innovation, quality and design, a strong focus on the market, as well as a keen interest in culture and the arts, attention to social issues and a commitment to continuous improvement in relations with employees and the territory. In other words, Olivetti successfully combines technology and culture, efficiency and social responsibility, innovation and design. Established in 1908 as the "first national factory typewriters", from the beginning Olivetti is distinguished by its focus on technology and innovation, attention to design, international presence, sensitivity towards the social aspects of work. These characters are impressed by the founder Camillo Olivetti and his son Adriano, who transformed the family business into a modern industrial group.

Conquer world leadership positions in mechanical products for the office, already in the 50s Olivetti invests in electronic technology with important results. The premature death of Adriano Olivetti (1960) and the weight of investments slow down the transition to electronic; but in 1978 released the first electronic typewriter in the world and in 1982 the first European professional PC. In the 80s, supported by an extensive network of agreements and alliances, accelerates the development in information technology and systems.

The progressive reduction of the margins of profitability of the business information and new developments in telecommunications, in the 90s push the Olivetti to move the center of gravity towards this sector, first by creating Omnitel (1990) and Infostrada (1995) and then gaining control of Telecom Italy (1999), with which it merges in 2003.

See: <http://www.storiaolivetti.it/default.asp> by AASO

## MAP of the site



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