

## ITALY WELCOMES PRESIDENT CHRISTINE KIRBY



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On the evening of March 22nd IIW President Christine Kirby was warmly welcomed at Catania airport by NC Italy President Anna Maria, D.211 Chairman Rosalba and some District members.

The following day, during a pleasant walk President Chris was shown the beautiful town of Taormina, on a 200 metre-high cliff overlooking Ionian Sea, with the imposing Etna volcano in the background. She was particularly interested in the spectacular ancient theatre, built by the Greeks in the 3rd century B.C. and later altered by the Romans.



The same evening, preceded by a symphonic music concert, the Gala Dinner took place, attended by nearly 200 people. All members present were delighted when President Chris went from table to table to greet them.



On Sunday morning, March 24th, the most important event, District 211 Forum, occurred. After a presentation by NR Gemma, President Chris addressed the audience speaking about the great difference that IW can make in the world. However, to achieve that, all members must look, learn and listen.

Then all 36 Clubs presented her their services, inspired by Presidential Theme "Empower and Evolve" and Social Project "Caring for Women and Girls". By means of slides and posters, both in Italian and English, each Club gave those present an exciting bird's eye view of the humanitarian and sympathetic initiatives that anywhere characterize IW commitment.

More than 300 members attended the meeting, which had been perfectly organised by D.Chairman Rosalba and D.Secretary Lella, with the collaboration of President Teresa and members of Messina host Club.

After lunch, IIW President Chris, NC President Anna Maria and NR Gemma left enchanting Taormina to visit some Clubs in Central Sicily. The first stop was in Noto, where Club President Grazia and some members were waiting in front of the grand baroque cathedral that looked golden in the afternoon sun.



Later the group reached Ragusa, where President Emanuela and the members of Club Ragusa Centro welcomed President Chris, showed her the Prefecture Palace and illustrated their services during a cordial meeting.



On March 25th , after a visit to ancient Donnafugata castle, President Chris and her companions, throughout a pleasant journey among olive and orange trees, were driven to Caltanissetta, where they had a warm welcome by President Renata and Club members, all interested in hearing from her about IW membership .

The following day the President was very intrigued while visiting the Mineralogical Museum, where the history of local Sulphur and salt mines is told and beautiful crystals are displayed.



Last stop of the eventful journey was Piazza Armerina, right in the centre of Sicily. Club President Franca and some members led President Chris to the Town Hall, where the Mayor gave her a hearty welcome. Then the visitors were led to the Roman "Villa del Casale", which dates back to the first half of IVth century A.D. There, the President had the chance to admire the well-preserved and famous mosaics, in particular the one with some girls wearing bikini, which is surprisingly so ancient.



The same evening a friendly meeting with Italian music, attended by a large number of members concluded the stay of President Christine in Sicily.



Next day, March 27th, President Christine was accompanied to the Catania airport, heading for Greece.

**Gemma Pirondini - National Representative Italy**