

VareseNews

From candy floss to a procession in an official role: Galimberti's first bonfire as Mayor

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It is **Davide Galimberti's** first bonfire as Mayor; he will be one of the most prominent representative of the authorities taking part in the procession that will light the bonfire, also because it will be his first time.

The bonfire on Monday the 16th is not his first. As a good citizen of Varese, the Mayor has rarely missed this ceremony over the years. **"Since I was a child, I think I've hardly ever missed the Festival of Saint Anthony**, either for the bonfire, or at least for one of the other events." And this year too, despite his official commitments, he will be at the Festival, with his whole family, as a citizen of Varese. **"Barring the unforeseen, I'll be going with my children,"** he said.

Which bonfire do you remember most?

"I remember **one bonfire at the time of the great snowfall of 1985**. It happened on those very days (*around 14 January*), I was 9 years old and I remember all of those people in front of the bonfire talking about what had happened."

Is that your first memory of the bonfire?

"No! My very first memory is of the candy floss that my parents used to buy me, which ended up getting stuck to the coats of the people in the crowd: my candy floss ended up becoming full of hairs. I must have been 5 years old ..."

Have you ever thrown messages onto the bonfire?

“Of course, sometimes.” Were they for love, or to pass a university exam? “For the typical reason: more for love than for exams.”

What is it like being here in an official role?

“It’s certainly exciting, because it’s one of the great festivals that are most heartfelt by the citizens of Varese; what is more, even people from Varese who don’t live here anymore, remember this festival with great affection. And these are the days when the town comes together to start the year.”

What if you were to put a message into the bonfire for the town?

“Well, I won’t say anything, otherwise it won’t come true!” he jokes. But then he adds, “And this year, I’m really going to do it.”

di Stefania Radman Translated by Lorella Rudi (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)