

THE FISOJNI MUSEUM

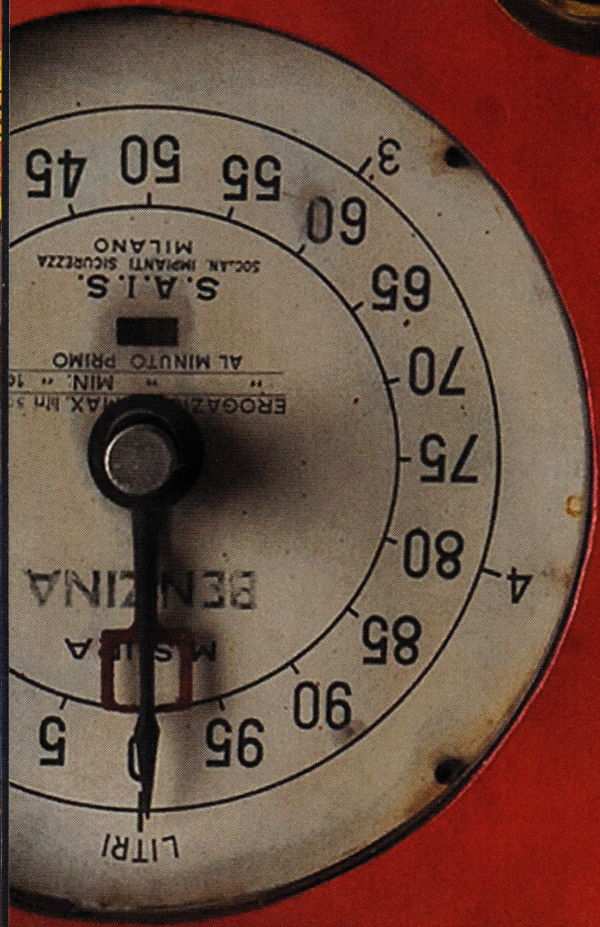
BY: MARCO MOCCHETTI

The Fisogni Museum, in Tradate, Italy, is famous for its collection of fuel pumps and petroliana; the museum was certified by Guinness World Record in 2000 as the largest one in the world. First things first, the Museum was founded by Guido Fisogni, an Italian entrepreneur, in 1966. Mr. Fisogni had a society, SIRM, which built service stations. Instead of wasting the old and rusty gas pumps, he started to collect them, one of each model, and carefully restore them. "The first one," he explains, "was a 1931 pump, abandoned near Milan, in Paderno Dugnano. I found it in a sand pit, and I decided to restore it".

Since then, he's collected almost 180 fuel pumps and more than 5000 gadgets, signs, tools, spending time and money (more than \$2.5 million, as he once told the Wall Street Journal) for his passion. At first, his wife wasn't very happy about her husband's "wreckage," but Mr. Guido never gave up. "They aren't junk, they are jewels" he explained to her. "So, I'll wear a bolt!" she replied; but today, Mrs. Fisogni says, "I got addicted to this collection."

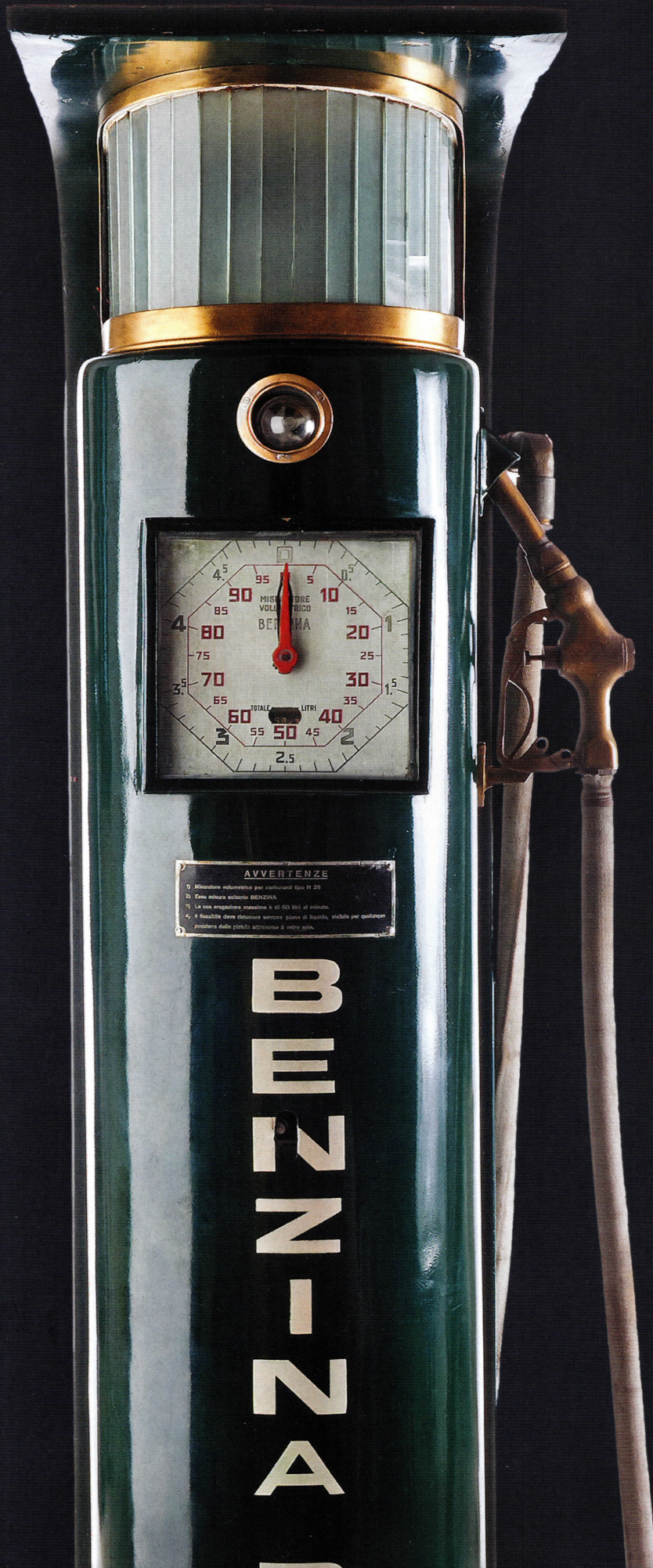


Guido Fisogni, founder of the
Fisogni Museum in 1966.





A conference table housing some vintage oil company toys. Guido jokes that it distracts the trade unionists. "During meetings, they admire the toys and forget to quarrel."



Thought to be designed by the famous Italian architect, Marcello Piacentini, Dictator Mussolini's private gas pump resides in the Fisogni Museum.

Every holiday abroad became an opportunity to enlarge the exhibition: a Pirelli gadget from Greece, photos and pieces from Australia, a Phillips 66 "cowboy" found in Pennsylvania, and images from Albania or Japan are only examples of this borderless passion.



In one room there is also an old conference table which contains a window that protects some vintage toys (obviously made by oil companies); "It was made to distract trade unionists." Guido jokingly explains. "During meetings, they admire the toys and forget to quarrel."

There are also some historically significant pieces housed within the museum: an 1892 Swiss pump, the oldest object in the Museum, a "Wayne" fuel pump that resembles the Empire State Building, and even Mussolini's private gas pump. "I found this one in Trieste, but it was collected in Palazzo Venezia (the dictator's residence in Rome). We think it was designed by Marcello Piacentini, a famous Italian architect."



The Museum is now displayed in the Castiglioni mansion, the aristocratic house of Mrs. Fisogni's family in Tradate, near Milan. "I sometimes speak with my fuel pumps," confesses Mr. Guido to a journalist. "There is part of my personal history in them. Every object reminds me of a moment I lived—a street I followed."

A visit to the Museum gives everyone an opportunity to discover the interesting and often unknown world of service stations.

Today, the Museum is a vital reality. After closure in 2000, it re-opened in 2015 in its new and fascinating location. The museum is now hosting

conferences and events, as well. "Our dream," says Nicolò Fisogni, Mr. Guido's son, "is a traveling exhibition around Europe and the USA. Everything is ready. We only lack sponsors, but this has never stopped us before. I'm sure we'll also realize this ambitious project." ♦



Guido's son, Nicolò, says their dream is to start a traveling exhibition around Europe and the USA. Their only small obstacle at this point is a lack of sponsors.