

Volterra and New Moon: Volterra Events Committee

During May 2007, the writer Stephenie Meyer was in Volterra to present her book “New Moon”, the second volume of the Twilight Saga.

For the first time, we became aware of the size of this phenomenon because so many of the younger generation from all over Italy filled to capacity the charming Persio Flacco Theatre in order to meet “Auntie Stephenie”, as they call her. From then on, we kept abreast of the events in a rather aloof manner until we realized, thanks also to the local tourist board, that many of the youth who were visiting Volterra asked for the fountain in Piazza dei Priori. This recurring request was due to the fact that in New Moon, the book, Volterra is represented as the birthplace of the Volturi and that in Piazza dei Priori, over which the clock tower looks, the author located a fountain that in the real piazza does not exist.

From then onwards, this flow of young readers ever increased, so much so that the town was obliged to organize itself to welcome these visitors and especially to promote the existing link between the book and Volterra without damaging the town’s identity.

We were glad to welcome all of these young visitors, but we feared that our imposing town might be turned into a sort of Vampire amusement park.

Due to this, in April 2009, on the request of the tourist board a town committee was established, including not only the tourist board but also the Town Hall administration and the Foundation of the Cassa di Risparmio di Volterra.

Volterra Events Committee became its name.

Amongst the aims included in the constitutional act, are:

- promoting the initiatives linked to groups of interest born from the literary and cinematic phenomenon of New Moon, and collaborating with the events organized by the aforementioned groups;
- safeguarding the image of the town, planning and controlling information on Volterra that conveys to the general public the town’s historical, architectural, archaeological and artistic reality.
- maintaining formal relations with Summit Entertainment, Toscana Film Commission and all of those who are involved in the shooting of the film, and collaborating with the movie crew during an eventual shooting in Volterra.
- maintaining formal relations with the author Stephenie Meyer and the publishing house of the Saga.
- planning, organizing and administering sponsored events to take place in Volterra.

The Committee, as its first initiative, organized the meeting on April 19th 2009 which saw more than one thousand youths from all around Italy in Volterra. They were pleasantly surprised by the town’s welcoming.

From our side, we came to understand that our fears were unjustified. We saw neither mantles nor vampire masks but only young men and women, quiet and well-behaved, who were there to meet, exchange points of view and celebrate their myths.

From then on, despite the disillusion due to the choice of the movie director Chris Weitz to set the film in Montepulciano, a choice that neither found the agreement of the Saga fans, we have continued to work in order to create a welcoming atmosphere with trails, guided visits etc.

Now, we are awaiting for the arrival of the film because, although the set is in Montepulciano, we hope that Volterra which is an important and original part of the book will be visible as

well. We also hope to be able to carry on the promotional program, via the New Moon fans, of the town, its history, culture and traditions.

Paolo Paterni
President of the Volterra Events Committee
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