

## Emma Castelnuovo



We decided to recall Emma on the occasion of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, 12 December 2013. She was one of the closest friends of Professor Zofia Krygowska, founder of this journal. She is remembered by many belonging to the older generation of Polish mathematics educators, particularly those who participated in the CIEAEM Meeting in Szczyrk (PL), in 1990. Not only for her exciting presentation *L'enseignement des mathématiques: ce qui est invariant dans un monde qui change* but also because Emma was struck there by an acute appendicitis and underwent surgery in the hospital in Bystra (she highly praised nursing care there).

Emma's adventure as a teacher-researcher in the education of mathematics began in 1946 with the paper *Il metodo intuitivo per insegnare la Geometria nel Primo Ciclo della Scuola Secondaria*, where you can find her early ideas, better developed in the revolutionary textbook *Geometria Intuitiva* (1949). She used to come to CIEAEM meetings since 1954. In 1957, the theme of 11th meeting was *Teaching materials* and a rich exhibition of materials was an important part of the meeting. On that occasion Emma presented a method to teach conic sections at junior high school by means of DIY materials: students of the Italian school in Madrid were involved in learning this new subject with an innovative method. Following this conference, in 1958, CIEAEM promoted the publication of a book that collected articles from leading experts in mathematics education: *Le matériel pour l'enseignement des mathématiques*. In this book you can find Emma Castelnuovo's paper: *L'objet et l'action dans l'enseignement de la géométrie intuitive*. This book, as well as her *Didattica della matematica*, was translated into many languages.

Until her retirement in 1979 she worked as a teacher in a junior high school in Rome. Famous were the exhibitions, organized in Rome every three years, where her students "explained maths to visitors". The main idea of her's was to construct and spread *mathematics in the real world*, nowadays more and more popular the world over.

If you meet Emma Castelnuovo, you'll forget she was born in 1913: she still preserves an acute awareness of changing fashions and an active interest in the teaching of mathematics.

Editors

We used an Internet post by Daniela Valenti.