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A new era in funeral industry training



Fantastico!

by David Hyde, organiser of the National Funeral Exhibition



Put together a warm Italian spring weekend, 200 exhibitors and 17,000 trade visitors from 54 nations and what have you got? Definitely the best mainland European show I have ever attended. TanExpo is one of the world's top funeral exhibitions, and the 2012 show was bursting with exciting, busy stands which showed that the European recession is having very little impact on the funeral trade.

The National Funeral Exhibition (NFE) promotion stand continued the Circus theme for our 2013 show and featured our very own clown, Kimberley Hyde. At first, our Italian friends were a little bemused but soon got into the spirit of the Big Top by having their photograph taken wearing big red noses. By the end of the show we'd filled a wall with pictures of visitors from all over the world.



Alongside us were Rod and Darren Crouch from Passages UK, great company to have as neighbours over the three days. Rod could teach us all a thing or two about optimism. He never stopped smiling from the moment the show opened. He commented: "We had a very good exhibition, meeting new clients and some old friends. The exhibition is in a delightful city and we were well looked after by the organisers."

Across in another hall was Batesville UK, exhibiting at TanExpo for the first time. Geoff Bowles, general manager, said: "TanExpo is a busy, exciting show and we were delighted with the response to our products. We





had many enquiries from potential distributors and we will definitely consider returning in 2014."

One of the busiest stands was Mornings Print-A-Plate Italy srl. Whenever I went over to visit it was surrounded by prospective buyers. As ever, Danny Morning was in the thick of it, working his Irish magic.

Nino Leanza and his staff deserve many compliments for what they achieved. This was my fourth TanExpo and 2012 was the busiest and the most positive I've seen. TanExpo and the NFE share a lot of ideas and have worked closely over the last few years to establish a strong international exhibition calendar. NAFD Chief Executive Officer Alan Slater and I spent a very useful hour with Nino and the TanExpo team talking about future events and looking at closer collaboration to examine market trends across Europe.

NAFD President Andrew Pargetter and his wife Anne were part of the UK contingent and walked every aisle of the show. They picked out some great new products, which may soon be finding their way into the UK, including a beautiful Italian coffin with removable wooden

hearts that friends and relations can take away as a memento.

Friday evening saw an international exhibitor reception and dinner, which left other organisers, including myself, in total awe. It took place in a castle in Bologna with exceptional Italian cuisine and an incredibly relaxed and genial atmosphere. You have to hand it to the Italians, they know exactly how to do things in style.

One thing that caught the eye of many a gentleman visitor to the show had little to do with funerals. A beautiful semi-naked model was being body painted and then photographed, all in the very best possible taste, of course. I was only able to fire off a couple of shots for the Funeral Director Monthly before rushing off to see yet another potential exhibitor. It's a tough job, but I guess someone has to do it!

The next National Funeral Exhibition takes place on 7 - 9 June 2013 at Stoneleigh Park, near Coventry.

For more information visit our website www.nationalfuneralexhibition.co.uk or telephone +44 (0)1926 815597.