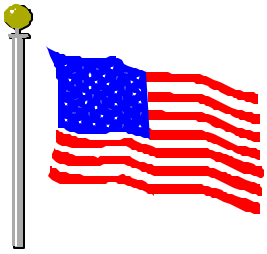
ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

Visit our web page: **www.ita ngen.org**

Volume 12, No. 4 **December, 2005**



President's Message

Angela LaGiglia

As the holidays draw near, I wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas (or a Happy Chanukah) and a healthy and prosperous New Year. I thank all of you for your various contributions to IGG and hope you will continue your support in 2006. For those who have not yet purchased Christmas Luncheon tickets, call **Barbara Florio** (516-798-1023). The luncheon (which takes the place of our regular December meeting) is scheduled for 12 noon on December 10th at Filomena's Restaurant in Franklin Square. Tickets are $35.

Volunteers are still needed for the Manhattan Brides' Index. **John Martino** has informed us that our projects may soon come to a halt because of lack of finances. He is urging anyone who has benefited from our databases to consider sending a monetary contribution. The high-speed scanner we are using must be replaced, and the Municipal Archives does not have the funds to do so. Contact John (JohnM16881@aol.com) to find out how to contribute.

IGG's own **June DeLalio** will lead an interactive discussion, "What Do You Know About Italian Records?" at our January 14, 2006 meeting. June is a professional genealogist who specializes in locating and interpreting Italian documents. Come prepared to share your questions, experiences and knowledge. I look forward to seeing many of you at our next meeting. If you wish to contact me with suggestions (or offers to help) call me at 631-587-5377, or e-mail me at: alagi10105@AOL.com

Happy Holidays!

Inside this issue:

Computer Desk of...	**Page 2**
Guest Speaker Dr Angela Danzi	**Page 3**
Census Occupational Codes	**Page 3**
LDS Microfilm on Internet	**Page 4**
WWI Draft Registration Cards	**Page 5**
Journey to Dual Citizenship	**Page 6**
Profiles From the Four Corners	**Page 8**
Fiorello LaGuardia	**Page 10**

From the Computer Desk of…

J.R.Heffernan

http://www.roangelo.net/vocabula.html > This beneficial site should not be overlooked if you are researching Italian documents and don't understand the language. This is an Italian-American genealogical dictionary that contains numerous terms and legalese found in Italian documents and provides the English meanings of them.

http://www.surnamenavigator.org/ > By trying different spellings of your name, you might have success in the quick-find file card style website that instantly presents surname searches through Ellis Island, the LDS databases, Google, Rootsweb, cemetery inscriptions and others.

http://www.italyworldclub.com/index.html > Explore this website for multi-connections to regions, provinces and comuni. The official websites of comuni are provided as well as information on the etymology of surnames, forums and more.

http://familysearch.org > Take a moment to look at the Mormon website and click on the "Search" tab. From there, click on "Research Help". Click on the alphabetic "I" and scroll to Italy. There are research aids including a sample letter, writing guide, an Italian genealogy word list, a Latin genealogy word list and numerous details regarding Italian vital records.

http://www.fondazione-agnelli.it/Italy/BancaDatiGb.html > The Giovanni Agnelli Foundation offers three databases on this website for persons seeking their Italian ancestors who sailed to New York (1880-1891), Buenes Aires, Argentina (1882-1920) and Vitoria, Brazil (1858-1899). Registration required.

http:/www.com/dice.html > A variety of online translation dictionaries covering several languages. A partial list includes Italian to English, Italian to Sicilian, and Italian to other languages.

http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm > A quick reference to accessing vital records from each state including what is available, fees, where to write, which form to use, etc.

ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

P. O. Box 626
Bethpage, New York 11714-0626

President	Angela LaGiglia
Editor	Tony Sasso
Vice President Programming	Bud Pape
Vice President Public Relations	Anthony DiBartolo
Recording Secretary	Joanne R. Heffernan
Corresponding Secretary	Dr. Marilyn Verna
Treasurer	Glenn Appel
Committees:	
Facilities	Armand Tarantelli
FGS Delegate	Bill Gimello
Genealogical Database	Mike Genovese
Historian	Louise Perrotta
Hospitality	Dolores Frank
	Louise Perotta
	Ann Holland
Library	Philip Figario
	Peter Lattanzi
Meeting Reception	Barbara Florio
Membership	Mike Genovese
Publication Sales	Linda Carco
	Vince Koenig
Publicity	Joe Ferrara
	Bill Gimello
Newsletter Production	Joseph Battagliese
Social	Barbara Florio
Scholarship	Mike Genovese
	Angela LaGiglia
	Dr. Marilyn Verna
Special Projects	John Martino

Annual Membership: Individual $22 per year; Family $27 per year; Outside U. S. Membership $27 per year

Newsletter is published 10 times a year. Meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of each month, Sept. to June at 10:30 AM

1. The Editor/Publisher assume that all correspondence and articles sent to the Italian Genealogical Group Newsletter are intended for publication, unless the writer specifically says otherwise.
2. In publishing news items, articles, etc. the Editor and the Italian Genealogical Group assume no responsibility or liability for facts, recommendations, or opinions of contributors.
3. Unless indicated otherwise, by the Editor and Publisher, original articles and material may be quoted or reprinted by genealogical or Italian interest publications, providing that they acknowledge and furnish the date of the issue.
4. However, no commercial use may be made of the contents of the Italian Genealogical Newsletter, its database, or membership lists, "handouts," etc.

Ellis Island and Beyond

Carol Galgano

Bud Pape presented our guest speaker. Dr Angela Danzi, Professor and Chairperson, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, at Farmingdale State University of New York. Dr Danzi has published numerous articles and is the recipient of awards for excellence in education. She is currently the Secretary to the Executive Council, American Italian Historical Association.

Dr Danzi prepared us for the film *Island of Hope, Island of Tears*, narrated by Gene Hackman. She asked us to listen to discover why our ancestors left Italy and why they came to America. She noted that today immigrants are still struggling with same negatives as our ancestors. They are both wanted and not wanted at the same time.

A discussion followed the showing of this emotionally powerful film which memorializes the American immigrant experience. It was noted by the audience that hearing the voices of the immigrants was very compelling. Reality was sought in the Ellis Island Memorial. Dr Danzi stated that immigration during the Ellis Island period consisted largely of Southern and Eastern Europeans. They were very different from the existing US population. They were feared because they were Catholics, Jews and possible radicals. Catholics were thought to be more loyal to the pope than to their new homeland. Jews were non-Christians coming to a Christian nation. Radicals were thought of as union organizers or anarchists. Immigrants feared that they might be sent back to their homelands due to illness was depicted in the film. Actually, Dr Danzi told us, very few were sent back because they were screened by the Steamship Companies before they ever left Europe. Steerage was a big money maker for the companies. If they sent over those who would be rejected by the US, they would have to transport them back at their own expense. Dr Danzi asked the audience to share some of their Ellis Island stories with the group. Many questions were asked as this film prompted much interest.

Quick Tip
Census Occupational Codes

Mary Grindol

I was looking at a relative's enumeration in the 1930 census. It was difficult to decipher part of the occupation. I thought it said "laborer" at "Consumers Bank." That seemed a little odd, and I wondered if it was "laborer Consumers Power."

When I asked the opinion of my husband, who is not usually interested in genealogy, he pointed out the four-digit code number next to the occupation. I had always ignored the occupation codes in the census because I had no "key" to know what they meant. He said, "Look for someone else with the same code and you'll be able to figure it out!" I discovered some other people who clearly worked at "Consumers Power Co" had the same last two digits "62" but one was a machinist and one was a bookkeeper, and the first two digits differed. Finally, about six pages later, I found another laborer for Consumers Power Co. with the same 7862 code. Returning to my relative, I could see that it DID say "Power Co." I learned two things from this: first, I learned something about the codes and second, that another person's fresh look at something can help a lot!

Editor's Note: Steve Morse has created a site for deciphering these codes at http://stevemorse.org/census/ocodes.htm.

According to the site, 78 is the code for the occupational level "laborers" and 62 is the industry code for an "electric light or power plant." He also has a form to decipher "Language and Nativity Codes" and "Indian Codes" which can be accessed through http://stevemorse.org/census/codes.html.

Copyright 2005, MyFamily.com.

LDS to Put Microfilm on Internet

Carrie A. Moore, Desert Morning News

Ever wonder what's inside those secured vaults, owned by the LDS Church, positioned high inside the granite walls of Little Cottonwood Canyon?

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is working toward allowing anyone with Internet access to learn more than they've ever known before about the information contained on 2 million-plus rolls of microfilm housed there. Currently, the church is compiling searchable indexes to that information and will eventually make it available for free through an automated database on the Internet.

The church excavated the vaults containing those records on property it purchased in the 1960s, providing a safe repository during the height of the Cold War for birth, marriage, death and census information it considers essential for the salvation of mankind after death. Now church leaders seek to make the information more readily available to the world.

"The goal is to create (Internet-accessible) indexes to all the films we have in the vault. That's a long-term process and that's a lot of films," according to Paul Nauta, manager of public affairs for church's FamilySearch.org Web site. "We've not announced when people will begin to start seeing" the indexes.

Those attending the annual Federation of Genealogical Societies' conference this week at the Salt Palace will get a "sneak preview" of the church's plans. As the project progresses over time, indexes to records from 110 nations previously stored on microfilm will become accessible to virtually anyone, anywhere, through the Internet via the touch of a few keystrokes.

"We're showing people how we'll be creating indexes from those films. Sometime in the future we'll ask people to help us create the indexes and make them publicly available, and little by little we'll start to index the films from the vault like we did with the 1880 (U.S.) Census.

"The challenge now is it takes a lot of people and a lot of time" to create such an index. "Currently, you have to look at images on paper or burn them on a CD and distribute those to index the data. We're moving the whole process to the Internet and this is a prototype of what that might look like. . . . That's what the biggest buzz is at the conference."

Conference attendees are using a lab at the Salt Palace equipped with a number of computers to demonstrate the new automated database. The microfilm information includes birth, marriage, death and census records.

New advances in indexing software utilities and applications mean the LDS Church "now has the ability to produce lots of indexes faster," than it did with previous databases it has digitized, including the 1880 U.S. Census. Making that database available online was a 12-year project, using tens of thousands of volunteers.

In the future, the new technology "will provide automated indexing" for an ever-increasing number of microfilms "so people can readily search it from their homes."

As the number of family history researchers continues to grow — one study showed 40 percent of Americans have done research on their family history and another said 90 percent have expressed interest — demand for online indexes that simplify searching for ancestors has soared, he said.

How much time will it take to digitize all the films in the vault?

"Let's put it this way, it will depend on how much volunteer help we get," Nauta said. "I think we can digitize the films to be indexed to stay up with demand, but much will depend on how many volunteers we can generate worldwide to index their records of interest. If, in a couple of years, we could get a million indexers worldwide, we could put a big dent" in the massive undertaking.

The indexing demonstration and other planned improvements to the popular FamilySearch.org Web site are drawing standing-room-only crowds at the convention. The changes "will make great strides to simplify and increase the success of the family history experience," he said.

Just when the first indexed information from the microfilms will become available online has not yet been announced. "We don't want to be swamped with people before we're ready to handle

it," Nauta said.

The new developments won't make more than 5,000 small family history centers housed in LDS chapels worldwide obsolete. Previously, those looking for information contained on the microfilms stored in the church's Granite Mountain Records Vault had to request that copies of information on the films be sent to their local center. At some point in the future, that likely won't be necessary any longer, he said, but "that will continue to be a role for a long time.

"Family history centers will continue to be a mainstay" for accessing information on the microfilms for some time to come.

As more of those records become digitized and indexes become available, the role of the local centers, he said, "will probably change. Some people have no Internet access, and they'll use them for that. The role of the family history centers will evolve over time to help people get started" with their research because "many people don't know how to do that. They will become more fundamental to help people get and stay organized, and to answer questions they have doing their research."

Many of those in town to attend the conference are also making use of the church's renowned Family History Library, less than a block from the Salt Palace. Hours have been extended to accommodate guests, with the library open from 8 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. through Saturday.

"It's an exciting time for family history," Nauta said. "Those just developing this kind of research as a hobby will never have any appreciation for how far this industry has evolved, even in the past 10 years." *E-mail: carrie@desnews.com*

The Complete World War I Draft Registration Card Collection

Ancestry.com subscribers will soon be able to search millions of military records never before available on the web. In addition to the complete World War I Draft Registration Card Collection, you'll soon get access to new World War II Enlistment Records, World War II Prisoner of War records and many more.

Here's what you can do with the new World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918:

* Find your family's war heroes by name. Access 10 million new names out of a total of 24 million World War I Draft Cards.
* Search for information on all men who registered, even those who didn't serve active duty. All males born between 1872-1900 were required to register for the draft. That's 25% of the entire US. population in 1917 and 1918.
* Discover personal details including an ancestor's address, date and place of birth, marital status, occupation, physical description and more.
* Share what you discover with your family and preserve your family heroes' stories over time.

Regional Emblems of Italy

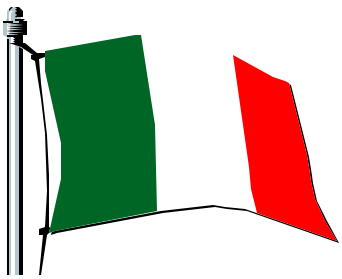
William S. Gimello

In September, I attended the Port Washington, NY Feast. I noticed a vendor selling multi-colored regional emblems of the twenty regions of Italy. I bought emblems of Basilicata and Abruzzi, which represent the regions of my grandparents origin.

If you would like a multi-colored 81/2”x11” emblem of the region(s) of your ancestors, please send $4.00 per regional emblem, plus $1.25 for postage and handling to William S. Gimello, Italian Genealogical Group, PO Box 626, Bethpage, NY, 11714-0626 by January 15, 2006. Please make the check payable to Italian Genealogical Group.

My Journey to Dual Citizenship (Part I)

Mimi Torchia Boothby



As a youth, I read that the Italian government welcomed Americans of Italian heritage that could speak Italian. I didn't worry too much about it. I was taking Italian, but had no pressing plans to move to Italy. Gradually through the years, I have found myself leaning further and further towards Italian citizenship, but with two children and a full time job, I didn't have much time for it.

Enter the internet… fast easy access to information on how to get dual citizenship for Americans with Italian heritage. I sent away for information, after reading confusing accounts of what you needed and how to do it. I read this stuff over and over and over again, even up to the very end, trying to figure out whether or not I even qualified.

After my father's home was ransacked by family members the day after my stepmother died, there was very little left of any value. Of any value to anyone except me, that is. I was given, out of everything that had been in that house, two things. My own daily Missal from my youth, and a little black steel box. Inside of it were absolute treasures for me but of no use to anyone else. I have no idea why they weren't tossed as trash.

Inside the box: my grandfather's birth certificate, two certificates of matrimony for my grandparents (one for the church and one for the city of Newark) and three certificates of Naturalization, my grandfather's, my grandmother's and my great grandfather's.

Meanwhile, in 1998, I went to the County Deeds Department in Newark, and got copies of my grandfather's Declaration of Intent. Since I had his naturalization certificate with all the dates and numbers on it, it was easy to get these papers. I still had no idea how important this stuff was; I was just doing it for genealogy, family history, hoping to glean a few facts from papers that my grandfather filled out nearly 100 years before. Sometime in 1999 I contacted the consulate's office and got their official directions. It explained who could get their citizenship recognized, and which documents were needed to prove your line of descent from an Italian family.

Wow, I had almost everything. I needed: Birth certificate for my father and mother, birth certificate for my grandfather, my birth certificate, a marriage certificate for my grandparents and for my parents and my own marriage certificate, which had a little name problem... So I sent away for the ones I didn't have. Got them. That vitalchek website was very convenient for this, you can get certificates ordered from most states instantly, and they come quickly.

Then the Apostille. An apostille is a specific authenticating certificate that is required by certain countries, including Italia. Each state has a different price. The only thing that is the same, is that you have to send your newly acquired certificates AWAY in the mail to the Secretary of State of whichever state that the birth or marriage certificate was issued in.

For me, that was, one in Idaho, and 4 or 5 in New Jersey. New Jersey charges $25.00 for EACH ONE. When I was calling around trying to find out how to get an apostille, I was told that they would only accept certificates with the current county assessor's seal on them or less than 2 years old! Oh no. My grandparent's certificate was over 80 years old! So then I had to write and get all those certificates anew.

Did I need an apostille for the certificate of naturalization? Some said yes, some said no. So I investigated that. I finally sent that precious document to some office in Washington DC with a check, certified overnight air; terrified of losing it in a federal vault somewhere. It came back, quickly in fact. I was told it had to go somewhere else.

I decided to visit the Naturalization Department right here in Seattle and ask someone in person. THAT was an experience. I had to stand outside in a line for an hour. It was 45 degrees out and sunny (fortunately). The people around me were a veritable rainbow. All different faces, languages, dress. My turn finally came, and I explained my problem.

I needed documentation, I needed an apostille. Was this the correct document? I handed the leather bound certificate to the guy, and he cradled it in his hands. Oh, he said, "This is ours. I've never seen one this old! "This is wonderful." He asked how I got it, etc, etc. He assured me it was the right document, and that it was all I needed and sent me on my way.

Time passed. I called Dr Luciani in San Francisco, because I thought I was ready to submit all my documents to her and she said, "By the way, we want birth certificates for your mother, your grandmother, and your husband too. but they don't need apostilles!" How nice! And neither does that naturalization certificate of your grandfather's and by the way, everything needs to be translated by an OFFICIAL translator." (That only cost $52.00; the translator charged by the word.)

I went to Italy in September, 2001. One of the last things I did was get my grandfather's NEW birth certificate in the Comune office. Cost nothing. Very pleasant. I wished I had more time there. Finally I flew to San Francisco. I sat before Dr Luciani. She looked at the papers, writing down dates, names, numbers. She got to the certificate of naturalization, which had more than 1 typo on it, including my grandfather's name, and the date of naturalization. She crossed her arms, took a deep breath, and said, "I'm afraid we have a problem.....". what's that?

"This name and date; they're not right. They could be anyone." So I pulled out the Declaration of Intent that I had obtained just for fun in Newark. Filled out by my grandfather, the name spelled right, the right dates. "Ah," cried Dr. Luciani, "this is very good! It's a good thing you have this."
That was in October 2001. She called me the following January to tell me I needed my grandfather's birth certificate. "WHAT! I cried, you have that already!" I could hear papers shuffling. "Oh, here it is"

Next thing, in February, she let me know that all my stuff was going to the consulate in New Jersey because most of my documents originated there, and they needed to do some checking. So more anxiety! Now I am dealing with TWO consulates!! Imagine the possible amount of damage that could occur with two of them!

I waited until June and finally called New Jersey. Paper shuffling. "Ah, yes, we have your application. No we haven't done anything with it, but we will soon!"

Then finally, in July, came a fat envelope for my son Tom, who had applied with me. Where was mine? Almost 3 weeks later, mine showed up. They had had the address wrong!

In this packet were several forms. I had to fill out 3 separate applications. One for my town in Italy (Sersale, the town where my grandfather was born, where my birth certificate will be kept, one for a passport, and one to be an Italian citizen abroad. I thought I would be getting something else official, besides the passport, but I was told that the Identity card that all Italians have is only issued to Italians living in Italy.
E-mail Mimi_T@sersale.org

Don't Forget….

…our Christmas Luncheon is December 10, 12 Noon. Call Barbara Florio (516-798-1023) for tickets.

…we need volunteers for our special projects. E-mail (JohnM16881@AOL.com) to volunteer.

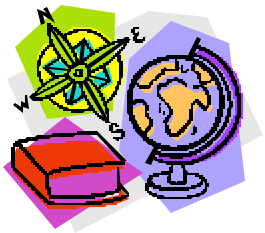
…take advantage of our Holiday Gift Membership Drive. Purchase a one-year gift membership ($22) and receive two free months for both yourself and the gift recipient. E-mail Mike Genovese (mikegino@AOL.com) to take advantage of this offer which expires December 31.

…sign up for your e-mail newsletter. Help save us postage, and save a tree. (Call Angela LaGiglia).

…advertise your business in our newsletter for only $75 for ten issues. (Call Angela LaGiglia).

Profiles from the Four Corners

Michael S. Genovese



We would like to welcome our new members who come from a variety of "these four corners." Our most recent subscribers include **Anna Lyons**, a resident of Manhasset, New York. Anna is researching her family surnames, *Marino, Mangiaracina, DiGiovanna and Abruzzo* from the commune of Santa Margherita Belice, Agrigento, Sicily as well as *Cerami and Lodico* from Petralia Soprana, Palermo, Sicily and *DiBella* from Polizzi Generosa, Palermo, Sicily; **Gladys Schurrman** who hails from Lakewood, New Jersey with surnames of *Grasso and Cordiano;* **Janice Haigh,** with residency in Columbia, Connecticut (gift membership from Pamela Shooks); **Ed Pizzardini**, who resides in Lee, Massachusetts and is researching surnames *of Mecchi and Pepi* with family roots in the province of Belluno, Venuto and Lucca, Tuscany respectively; **John Corda** from the Bronx, New York has roots in Angri, Salerno, Campania and family surnames of *Di-Costanza and Negro* with roots in Salerno as well; **S. Waters** is from Manchester, Kentucky with family surnames of *Surace* (Reggio Calabria) and *Lore* (Catania, Sicily); **Anita Thorn** resides in Greenfield, Massachusetts and is researching the surname of *Bucciano* from Torrecuso, Benevento, Campania; **Louis Scavo** from Flushing, New York has family roots in Calabria; **Margaret Brunner** resides in Toms River, New Jersey with roots in Cammarato, Sicily and **Diana Ricigliano** from Hamilton, New Jersey researching *Ricigliano* from San Fele, Potenza, Basilicata as well as the surnames of *Palma and Sisti.*

Matteo P. Lanza from Lake Isabella, California requests that members provide him any information on the surname of Lanza. Send information to mikegino@aol.com

Tidbits: IGG member, **Regina Cuomo** submitted two bits of interesting information passed on to her from fellow researchers. Let's call the first, Pre-Sicily trip suggestions. A friend of hers just came back from a visit to her family's native town in Sicily. Before she went, she really prepared well for her visit. She hired a guide in Sicily to take her to all of her family native towns, and she told him beforehand everything that she wanted to see. She also wrote letters to people in her towns of research that had her surname. In the letters, she asked that if they were not related but knew someone who was or someone who could help, could they please forward her letter to them. She included in the letters all of her contact information, such as her home information, where she would be staying in Sicily and what dates, the phone numbers where she would be in Sicily and the name and phone number of her tour guide. More importantly, she included a printout of her family tree. When she got to Sicily and met the guide she hired, she told him she had mailed the letters. He was well aware of this because the priest from Salaparuta, one of her native family towns, had already called him. He arranged to have lunch with this priest. This priest spent time introducing her to people to whom she had sent letters. She met all sorts of people who might be related to her, and they gave her pictures of their families and stories as well. This happened in two separate towns. The guide also escorted her to the vital records office. The moral of the story for researchers is to write and prepare before you visit your family's town of origin. P.S. She mailed two big tubs of peanut butter to the guide in Sicily because she discovered that he never tasted peanut butter!

Another bit of helpful information passed on to our readers is that there is a web site for the town of San Marco Argentano, in Cosenza, Calabria. If you have family from this town, visit http://www.comune.sanmarcoargentano.cs.it/ If you visit this site and browse to that page, in the left hand tool bar, click on Arte e Storia and you will see a sub-index drop down, click Archivio and you will come to a page that lists all the births and marriages for the town "indexed and available online". For example, click a set of years in the top section, and you will see the names of all the children born in those years. In the middle section, the marriages are listed. It lists groom, bride and the date of marriage and record number. An added feature, at the

bottom of the page it reads "San Marco no 190 seculo" click to the left of these words and it will take you to another website http://freeweb.supereva.com/pachi.freeweb/index.htm?p If you click on "cognomi, you will see letters of the alphabet. Pick one and click on it. Then pick a name. Records of the town are built into family trees and posted online.

Our special profile this month is IGG member **Donna DiGiacomo** who resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Donna has assisted in a rather extensive research project documenting Italian-Americans in the northwest part of Philadelphia, specifically in Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill. The main project is documented in issues of the Germantown Crier, a publication of the Germantown Historical Society. The project was instituted by the Historical Society in 1999 and Donna assisted under the direction of Dr. Joan Saverino, an educator at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania working on a website project on immigration and ethnicity in Pennsylvania.

Donna sent IGG the end results of this project. The results are the equivalent of a doctoral dissertations which greatly details life in northwest Philadelphia for Italian-Americans in the late 1890s and early 1900s. It discusses immigration experiences, as well as immigration patterns, and the reasons the immigrants chose to settle in Germantown. The northwest Philadelphia Italians may not have been as numerous as those in south Philadelphia, but they were just as spirited and vibrant. (We will edit the results and dedicate a special article in next month's newsletter on this very subject.)

Donna is 29 years old and is very much into this research. She tells us that she didn't get involved in the project until halfway through, and then only to primarily do research. Donna grew up in the horrendous 80s when anything ethnic was ridiculed. "I grew up in an Irish and German neighborhood and was discriminated against even then because I didn't have blonde hair and blue eyes. It was years later that the discrimination factor clicked and is the main reason why I value my Italian heritage so dearly – being deprived of it all my life has made me truly appreciate it as an adult."

Donna explains that the project research deals specifically with Italian immigration of Germantown (Chestnut Hill and Mount Airy are a part of German Township). The documentation shows migration patterns of the extremes in Italy. Germantown was mainly settled by immigrants from Luzzi, Coscenza, Calabria and sizeable pockets of settlers from Palomonte, Salerno, Campania and the Arberesh colony of Lungro, Cosenza, Calabria, where Donna DiGiacomo's great, great grandmother was born. Donna states that Chestnut Hill was mainly settled by people from Poffabro, Udine, Friuli-Venezia Giulia. There were small pockets of Luizzidon there, too.

I want to thank Donna and our neighbors "down South" and appreciate the research she has done on behalf of her ancestors and all those Italians who came to live and work in northwest Philadelphia. We will have more on this subject in our next issue.

(You may send articles by mail to Michael S. Genovese, IGG Membership Profiles, 50 Daisy Avenue, Floral Park, New York 11001 or e-mail your story as a Word attachment to mikegino@aol.com)

January Meeting

At our January meeting the topic will be "What Do You Know About Italian records?" **June DeLalio** will lead everyone at the meeting through an interactive session on reading Italian documents. Come prepared to answer questions as well as have your questions answered. We will start with the basic birth, marriage and death records and then discuss some other records that either are not used often or hard to find but are worthwhile knowing about in your research. The more questions you have the better. Our aim is to have everyone learn something new ... including the moderator. June is a Certified Genealogist who was one of the founders of IGG.

Fiorello LaGuardia - A Bit of Nostalgia Part I

Ignatius DiGuardia

This is written aboard an Italian ship cruising to the Caribbean Islands celebrating my 91st birthday, yet I feel as if I were sitting on a high mountain top reviewing times past when I was just 19 and making political speeches for Fiorello LaGuardia when he became mayor of New York City and the following years for his protege, Vito Marcantonio who later became our congressman for many years.

Mayor LaGuardia with the children

I was born and raised in the community that served, east Harlem, known as Little Italy. Both Fiorello and Vito made a tremendous impact upon me so that I became active in politics. In later years when I relocated to Holbrook, Long Island, I became a committeeman, always as a volunteer for the Republican Party.

Although our community was known as "Little Italy," there were many other Europeans who settled there. I do not know the exact borders of the district, but the lines were drawn. From Pleasant Avenue to 3rd Avenue were the Italians, mostly Sicilian and Neapolitans and a sprinkling from the north of Italy. The Irish settled from 3rd Avenue to Lexington, and the Jewish people were from Park Avenue to Central Park, from about 96th Street to about 125th.

At the time we all lived in 5 story walk-ups, 4 apartments on each floor with 2 common toilets. We dreaded the winter weather because the toilet pipes would freeze. Stickball was our game on the streets until the automobile made its appearance. The Yankees with Ruth and Tony Lazarra, and the Giants with Terry and Mel Ott were the rival teams.

Among the Italians, few kids went to high school perhaps for a year or 2; our girls went to work in the garment industry. Fortunately, I worked in an office on Montague Street in Brooklyn. Most of our fathers were in construction, and when they could not work during the winter months, our grocer gave our families credit and entered the amount in the "book" until our fathers went back to work. I could never forget Sundays in east Harlem walking home from church, especially in autumn. I would hear the voice of Caruso on every block (most of our fathers had victrolas) and I would smell the fermenting wine from our cellars. When I reached home, I would break a piece of bread and dip it into the cooking pot of sweet smelling sauce.

It was in that neighborhood where the "Little Flower" and Marc both labored and devoted their lives. Both were referred to as “onorevole” (honorable) by our fathers.

Since childhood I have always known the name of LaGuardia. I may not have known the name of our president or governor, but this name was imbedded in my mind. Election time was always exciting in our area because our congressman, Mr. LaGuardia, would speak on my street. He always used a large flatbed truck, perhaps borrowed from one of our produce dealers, and the microphone from which he spoke would often break down. Little did I envision that some day later in my life I would use the same equipment as a campaigner for him. His voice was delightful to hear. It was squeaky, and when he raised his voice, both arms outstretched. He would mimic his opponents. He knew how to amuse his audience. He was an entertainer, yet could be so very serious and dedicated. When I was 17 years of age, the thought came to me that some day I would like to be a speaker for him; prophetically 2 years later I did, both for him and later for Marc. LaGuardia was short and robust, always wore black clothes and, of course, the

fedora. The year I made the resolve to speak for him, he was defeated by Jimmy Lanzetta, and when I campaigned for him he was running for Mayor of New York City. He was elected, and this gave Marc the opportunity to run the next year for the congressional seat. Now LaGuardia was in City Hall and Marc was in the Congress at the same time. It was long hoped for by the neighborhood.

There are many today who do not know that LaGuardia had lost an earlier attempt to become mayor. The loss was because he ran as a Republican, and it was impossible to win an election with only that party sponsorship. However, at this time there was also the Fusion Party, an amalgamation of other political interests such as the unions in the garment industries under the leadership of Dave Dubinsky, Sidney Hillman and Luigi Antonini. This was a powerful force that I am sure had never endorsed a Republican candidate. There was also the influence in this campaign of a large number of Protestant ministers who had never before entered the political arena. Such was the condition in our city at the time. We had had enough with the prior administration, and its citizens were anxious for a change.

The Fusion Party met at the Cooper Union Square where there was great excitement and resolve to take back our city. I too was there, perhaps the youngest person, resolving to do my share at age 19. The following night I went to LaGuardia's headquarters on 116th Street and 1st Avenue to volunteer as a speaker and two nights later I made my first political speech on 112th Street and 1st Avenue. Little did I know that night that my life would be completely changed. I developed my speaking through being active in the Church and developing great knowledge of the Bible. The change in our city was long overdue because of the corruption that had taken place. The reason for this condition was because the source wielding the real power was not the mayor, who was just a puppet. The real power was Tammany Hall which controlled the nominations for the mayor and every nominee on the ticket; it could make or break anyone in politics. Although there was a civil service system, it was inept because Tammany had charge of the patronage system.

At the time, Jimmy Walker was mayor. He eventually escaped to Paris with his actress girlfriend. It was funny how LaGuardia described this event in his squeaky, loud voice, laughingly stretching his arms and slowly saying the mayor and his girlfriend escaped to France and I went to City Hall. The audience loved it; they ate it up. Before the election of LaGuardia, the Seabury Investigation had been going on for a few years with many politicians going to jail or resigning. Later, another investigation took place under Thomas E Dewey, who was later elected District Attorney, then Governor, and later, almost became President. Because of the 3 elections of LaGuardia, the Democratic Party was thoroughly cleaned up, and some good young men were later mayor such as Wagner, son of the senator, Pelliteri and Koch. At the time of the shake-up, the Irish ruled the party, later the Italians. *(To be continued)*

800-834-3022

Action Fire Service Company, Inc.

CREDIT DEPARTMENT

VINCENT SALTARELLI

194 DEPOT ROAD
HUNTINGTON STATION, NY 11746

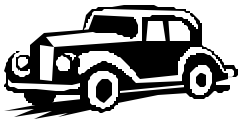
Future Meeting Dates for the Italian Genealogical Group

January 14, February 11, 2006

All meetings start at 10:30 AM

Directions to the Bethpage Library, 50 Powell Ave, Bethpage, NY:

By Train: The Bethpage Library may be reached by taking the Long Island Railroad to the Bethpage Station. You can then walk east one block to Broadway, turn left, go (north) 3 blocks on Broadway; then (at the second traffic light) turn right on Powell Avenue; the Library is about 500 ft on your right.



By Car: Use the Southern State Parkway or the Long Island Expressway. If using the Southern State Parkway take exit 28A and go north on the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway (Route 135). If using the Long Island Expressway take Exit 44S and go south on the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway (Route 135). Exit Route 135 at the Powell Avenue Exit. Proceed in a westerly direction towards the village, about 3 blocks. There is ample parking across the street from the Library. Our meeting will be in the downstairs meeting room.