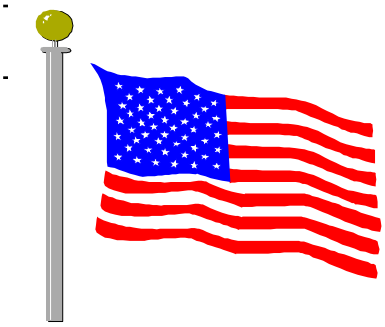
ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

Volume 13 No. 6 Visit our web page: **www.italiangen.org** **March, 2007**



Presidents' Message

Cari Amici,

We thank **Don Eckerle** for his informative lecture on the Passenger List resources available at the National Archives in NYC.

In March we celebrate two saint days, March 17 for St. Patrick and March 19 for St. Joseph, the patron saint of the family. For Italians, St. Joseph's day is an important religious and cultural celebration because, in Italy name days are celebrated rather than birthdays. St. Joseph's Day also falls within the Lenten season – a time of renewal. So how does this fit into genealogy? Think of the traditions that your ancestors brought to the "new land" a century ago and are maintained to this day. They may be of a religious nature or a culinary one. Revitalize and share these tidbits with the youth in your family.

We, the members of IGG, are compiling recipes for an Italian cookbook from the various regions. Share with us your special St. Joseph dish. Some meals are symbolic like pasta con sardo. Breadcrumbs are for the carpenter's sawdust and the fish symbolizes Jesus. Perhaps you have a recipe for a great dessert like zeppole or sfingi. Please send it to us.

However you celebrate March 19, we wish Un Buon Onomastico a tutti Giuseppe.

Sempre Avanti,

Michael Genovese and Marilyn Verna
Co-Presidents

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Computer Corner

Enjoy old Brooklyn photos, try: http://wwwbrooklynpix.com/

Surname Searches, try www.gens.labo.net and enter your surname in the cognomi field. This will bring up a map of the name distribution.

Anthony DiMarino submits this web site with interesting educational links. Anthony likes the music. Try http://www.aiha-albany.org/

Francesca Di Meglio is a freelance Italian American writer from Fort Lee, New Jersey. She covers soccer, especially in Italy and writes for Business Week online and the woman's magazines Try her website www.FrancescaDiMeglio.com

Bill Gimello reports that IGG members who wish to attend our Westchester Chapter meetings should contact **June Hessler** at 914-632-4498 or junpatellen@hotmail.com

New Members for the Month of February: **Patricia Graves**, Virginia Beach, VA, **Richard Rella**, Indianapolis, IN, **Josephine Beck**, St. James, NY, **Ken & Shanna Cardita**, Gilbert, AZ, **Deborah Boyson**, Exter, PA, **Theresa Antonucci Cuddy**, Levittown, PA, **Carl Onesti**, Luxemburg, WI, **Anthony Caserta**, Northport, NY, **Toni Fleig**, Syosset, NY, **Martha Monteleone Duke**, Macon, GA, **Anthony Lauriano**, Valley Cottage, NY

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ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

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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

St. Joseph's Feast Day and our ancestors

Michael S. Genovese

When I was born, my mother dedicated me and my life to St. Joseph. She did this because this was a tradition that was passed down through many generations, that the first born male child when baptized is dedicated to St. Joseph, the patron of the family. Sixty-five years later, I can say that my life has and always will be under his protection and guidance. March 19th is the feast of this special saint.

We cannot let the month of March go by without making special mention of the feast of St. Joseph. Somewhere and somehow, our Italian ancestors were linked to a devotion to St. Joseph as the patron saint of the family and a protector. He also looks after orphans, unwed mothers, the needy and homeless and all the disposed who are the underside of family. He is the universal father. To celebrate his feast, our ancestors and their neighbors within Italian villages erected a homemade sanctuary or altar and baked a ritual meal called "cena di San Giuseppe." They did all this to thank the saint for helping a family member recover from an illness, escape an accident, or for protecting a family member from some calamity or misfortune. I am sure that most of us can remember an older relative with a story about St. Joseph.

Almost every Italian town prepares an array of different foods in honor of this saint. There are a variety of ornamental breads, the traditional 13 course meals usually with peppery dishes and very sweet dessert called frittelle are fried at stands and bakeries. Of course, there are also zeppole, sfingi di San Giuseppe and tortelli. Then there are the fish dishes like baccala, sardines fried like sole, calamari and fried croquettes of fresh cod. We can't leave out the pasta dishes as well as the stuffed artichokes, stuffed sweet peppers and frittata of every early spring vegetable available, such as wild asparagus, cauliflower, artichokes, fennel, favas, and peas.

There are traditions and superstitions connected with the feast day as well. The blessing of the foods at the homemade altars is a must for good health and good luck. Family members gather in large numbers for a St. Joseph's meal and no one is allowed to leave the meal without taking a bit of bread, an orange and a single fava bean, because tradition says that with one such bean, you can never be broke. Hope you all enjoy a Happy St. Joseph Day with at least one of these special

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Notices

Condolences are sent to the wife and family of **Vincent Attanasio** (Rockaway, NJ) who passed away in early February. Vincent was a member of IGG since 1998.

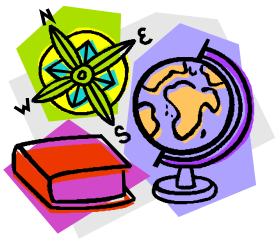
Ordering Books? Sending orders to our P.O. Box delays the ordering process. Checks should be made payable to IGG and mailed to: IGG, c/o Linda Carco, 8 Peachtree Lane, Hicksville, N.Y. 11801

Change of address or E-mail? We really want to make sure that your newsletter get delivered to your correct address. Also it's important to that we have your correct e-mail address for access to our *members only* section of our web site. Please notify IGG, c/o Mike Genovese, 50 Daisy Avenue, Floral Park, NY 11001 or e-mail mikegino@aol.com

Thank you John Martino and his "army of volunteers." This note from **Cathy Cancro** of Norman, Oklahoma was accompanied by a donation. "Thank you for your incredible web site. Also, I want to give a very big 'thank you' to all the volunteers who make it possible. My family is in the process of having headstones made for my grandparents and great grandparents. There has been a great deal of confusion over the name spellings and birth dates. Your web site gave me the certificate numbers I needed and within two weeks I had received them all. My 90 year old father has become very enthused over the project and actually being able to see a copy of the original documents has meant a great deal to him. Thank you again."

Profiles from the Four Corners

Michael S. Genovese



This month's profile is on Earl C. Julo, Jr., currently residing in Lees Summit, Missouri. Earl and his wife, LaWanda have 7 children, 20 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. At age 73, he is semi-retired, but works for a company he started with 33 years ago. He mainly works from his home as benefits administrator with full responsibilities of trustee, caring for the company's 401(k) plan(s). Earl started with the company as the data processing manager and eventually became the vice-President and treasurer of this same company. Several members of his family now work within the company including his eldest son who assumed Earl's titles as vice president and treasurer as well as director of the company. Earl is a former Marine, having served as a Sergeant with the First Marine Air Wing in Korea for a little over a year back in the 1950s.

Earl is the oldest of 8 siblings. His father died in 1970 but his mother is still living, just turning 94, and residing in Lees Summit as well. Earl is especially proud of his grandchildren. Among those grandchildren are one high school "Homecoming Queen," one who played varsity baseball, four boys and three girls on the varsity golf teams of 3 different schools, a chess champion, a grandchild who stars in her school's musical, and a seven year old granddaughter, who has since age 4, displayed an uncanny memory and has the ability to absorb and retain facts, and is able to name all the Presidents, the President's Cabinet members, almost every foreign leader, has memorized Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech, knows the Constitution, etc. She appeared several times on Oprah and the Tonight Show, as well as six other national programs and has appeared in a Washington ceremony on Martin Luther King Day. Earl says, "Each and every one of our grandchildren has his or her own special traits, too numerous to mention."

I mention all this because Earl is so proud of his grandfather for instilling within his father and all of his family the wonderful sense of FAMILY. Earl states, "We're great believers in life being centered on family, a tradition passed down from generation to generation. We're very fortunate as a family, and that's one of the reasons for our pursuit of more knowledge of my grandfather, who from every indication came to America alone, without anything (even the language), at a young age and was probably scared to death."

Earl became a member of IGG seeking assistance and guidance in his search for his ancestral roots. His grandmother was born in Hume, Missouri, miles down the highway from Kansas City. She was of American Indian descent, named Thorpe, with the family recalling her being related to Jim Thorpe, but they've yet to make a documented connection. As far as his grandfather is concerned, I'll let him tell the family story. What follows is Earl's quest.

A Cold Trail…but a place to start with a Happy Heart

As a new member of the Italian Genealogical Group, I'd like to thank the group for the increasing the incentive for me to pursue my heritage. Although I'm not able to make any meetings in New York, I'm already reaping some benefits of membership. My story, I'm sure, is not unique. I, along with members of my family, grew old without taking advantage of talking to my grandfather when I had the chance. Even my father didn't know much, and we didn't utilize the benefit of what he did know before he passed away at age 61. Now, I'm left to try to determine the *hows and whys, even the whens.* It isn't easy, and although there are some small pieces of the puzzle assembled, there's a great deal to do. The IGG is already a big help: the newsletter a great source of information.

My brother-in-law, Kenneth Keele, traced his own heritage and managed to go a long way back in time, and he put together a very thorough documentation of his family to pass on to his son and eventually his grandchildren. Then he started on his wife's side (my sister, Gayle). He was able

to gain some of the information using the same techniques and resources that he used with his family, but he reached roadblocks too. I got involved in the quest with him, and it turned out that when my dad's sister, Gladys died in 1985, my wife and I had stored some of her papers and belongings in our basement. We looked through what we had, and by the grace of God, we found the naturalization papers for my grandfather as well as his marriage license to my grandmother, Wilsie.

I already had a certified copy of his death certificate as well as a picture (about 1920) of him with my grandmother and my father (probably 11 years old). The 1910, 1920 and 1930 censuses have yielded small bits of information, but not a whole lot. We also have found an actual copy of his draft registration. With these bits of information, we were able to document that my grandfather was Michele Tony Julo. Here in America he was known as Mike Julo. He was born on September 29, 1884. He arrived in America around 1902, and we believe he was from Naples (his papers show him coming from Naples, but perhaps that is just where he shipped from). We have yet to find documentation of his arrival on passenger lists and ship manifests. We cannot find his name on any passenger list anywhere. We are not sure where he landed in the USA and how he ended up in Missouri. According to my mother, he did not come in at Ellis Island. She thinks it was Baltimore. Now, of course there's also the possibility or probability that Julo is not his true surname and that it is a shortened version of something, but again we haven't found anything close that would be of help He became a citizen on March 13, 1906 as recorded by the Kansas City Division of the Missouri Circuit Court and registered for the draft when he appeared in person at the Wyandotte County draft board in Kansas in September of 1918 (a mystery to us: his draft registration show he was an alien in this country and a citizen of Italy and yet we have his naturalization papers dating 1906. How could this be?) He died on February 24, 1949. He is buried in Forest Hills Cemetery in Kansas City, Missouri.

I have written to the General Reference Branch of the National Archives, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the Library of Congress, etc. I have purchased *Italian Genealogical Records* to assist in this search as well. I am now reading *Finding Italian Roots* with the intent of requesting any records on my grandfather from Naples, Campania. My son received a trip to Italy this summer as a Christmas gift from his in-laws, and though I do not have an itinerary for that trip, there could be some possibility he may be able to designate some amount of time to this search. I am working through Crohn's disease and find it difficult to travel, but at some point in the future we're hopeful that we may be able to make a trip for the purpose of seeing Italy and doing research.

In addition to the above, when I began my quest last summer, I found several families in the U.S. with the last name of *Julo*, and I wrote a letter to each and every one I could find, hoping that there may be a connection of some sort and there may be information on my grandfather and family. I had always presumed that if there was a *Julo* anywhere, he must be related to some degree, but I see now that names are changed, shortened, etc., and we never know what we may find until we explore.

So far, IGG has been my most instructive ally, and I am very grateful. I am learning a lot through articles printed in your newsletter, and I have to say that the annual dues are so minimal when compared to what I'm seeing as an "education". I love Carol Galgano's recipe for "Chicken with Wine" and suggest that others that have authentic recipes contribute the recipe to be printed in the newsletter as a regular feature.

Last but not least, I welcome any specific advice, suggestions and resources. Please don't hesitate to contact me. I'd be happy to hear from you by email, earlc@goldenstar.com , or by phone, at (816)525-6493 and by mail, Earl C. Julo, Jr. at 2217 NW Summerfield, Lees Summit, MO 64081.

(Thanks Earl for sharing your story. Your enthusiasm and passion to search for a connection to your grandfather indeed reveals "a happy heart". We wish you well in finding the right name and town.)

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

Ship Passenger Arrival Records

Don Eckerle

Note: At our February meeting ***Don Eckerle*** *presented a Power Point lecture on the history of Ship Passenger Arrival Records, using knowledge gained through Don's research and personal experiences at NARA. Since so many audience members requested copies of the presentation, we are printing a detailed facsimile of Don's lecture for all our members.*

Early Records

Prior to 1820, the immigrants to North America had few requirements to register their arrival. Most were citizens of countries that had original colonies in North America; England, France, Dutch and Spain, and they were not required to document their arrival. Most sailing ships were cargo ships; however, there are some records listing the new arrivals including, *1623 Division of Land* at Plymouth Colony, *Saints and Strangers* by George F. Willison, *Being the Lives of the Pilgrim Fathers* (which has a listing of Colonial Americans) a 1632 list of Virginia immigrants, and a list of members of the Jamestown Colony of 1607. There is also a list of 38,000 German adult males arriving in Pennsylvania from 1727 to 1808 and some baggage lists for ships sailing to Philadelphia from 1820 to 1909.

During the Revolutionary War immigration slowed down and during the French Revolution blocked ports restricted ships to America. In 1815, with the defeat of Napoleon, emigration from Europe increased up to 20,000 per year. Conditions aboard the ships were horrible. Passengers were treated with little regard to health and safety. After many deaths, the US government took over jurisdiction of immigration into the United States. Few Italians immigrated in this period, most came later during the turn of the 20th century.

Federal Passenger Lists 1820-1959

In 1819, Congress passed a law regulating the number of passengers based on total tonnage. There were many loopholes and many problems; steam ships came in and only small spaces were allocated to the steerage immigrants. The captain was required to prepare and submit a list of passengers to the Collector of Customs, beginning 1/1/1820. Later the lists were prepared at the port of embarkation. On January 7, 1820 the Brig Hippomenes, a Dutch ship, was the first to arrive in New York under the new rules, and the Passenger List was given #1, for the year 1820. Passenger lists are consecutively numbered in the order of ship arrival at the port each year.

In 1882, Congress passed the first federal law regulating immigration and provided for more detailed passenger lists. The Secretary of the Treasury (1891) had general supervision, and the Office of Superintendent of Immigration was established (1895) with the responsibility for administering the alien contract-labor laws. In 1906, the name of the office was changed to the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. In 1933, its functions were transferred to the Department of Labor, and in 1940, the INS was moved to the Department of Justice. In 2003, the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration was transferred to the new Homeland Security Department.

Information Included on the Passenger Lists

- Name of the passenger
- Country, and later province, or exact town of origin
- Date of Arrival in the US
- Family members or others who immigrated on the same ship
- Destination
- Occupation, age, sex and marriage status
- Ship's name, its master, its port of embarkation and its port of arrival
- Race, Anarchist, Personal Description and whether the person had $35.00 (later $50.00)
- If joining relatives, the name of the relative

The information contained on the passenger list varies according to the year of entry. Early

passenger lists show little information.

NY City Immigrant Processing Centers

In the beginning, the passengers left the ship at the landing wharf. There was no central processing center. The immigrant aliens generally traveled steerage class and were barged to Ellis Island.

Date	Processing Center
08/01/1855-04/18/1890	Castle Garden
04/19/1890-12/31/1891	Barge Office
01/01/1892-06/14/1897	Ellis Island
06/14-15/1897	Ellis Island fire (gap)
06/15/1898-12/16/1900	Barge Office
12/17/1900-late 1924	Ellis Island

Requirements for Conducting a Search

You need to know the Port of arrival and the year of immigration.

Finding aids: Morton Allan Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrival, personal bibles, naturalization documents, obituaries, census data, assumptions, location of children's births, local newspapers, port of departure, name changes, and relatives.

Where to Find the Records

The Famine Immigrants, Ira A. Glazier and Michael H. Tepper, Lists of Irish Immigrants Arriving at the Port of New York, 1846-1851; January 1846-June 1847

Germans to America, Ira A. Glazier and P. William Filby, Lists of Passengers Arriving at US Ports 1850-1897

Italians to America, Ira A. Glazier, Lists of Passengers Arriving at US Ports, 1880-1899

Migration from the Russian Empire, Ira A. Glazier, Lists of Pasengers Arriving at the Port of New York

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA):

Passenger Arrivals at the Port of New York, 1820-1832, Elizabeth P. Bentley

Records of the US Customs Service, 1820--ca. 1891, Record Group 36 New York, New York

Index to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY 1820-1846. M261. 103 microfilm rolls

Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY 1820-1897, M237. 675 microfilm rolls

Registers of Vessels Arriving at the Port of New York from Foreign Ports, 1789-1919. M1066 27 microfilm rolls

The original passenger lists were archived at NARA after its creation in 1935. After the original passenger lists were microfilmed by NARA in the 1940s, most were destroyed. In 1997 the records that remained were turned over to Ira A. Glazier at the Balch Institute at Temple University in Philadelphia. From these lists Ira was able to develop the above …*to America* volumes listed above. Upon completion of his work, the original passenger lists were returned to the New York City NARA branch. **Don Eckerle, John Celardo** and **John Martino** lead the effort to organize, catalogue and preserve the records. Don and his volunteers, many of them IGG members, took several years to complete the project.

References

Morton Allan Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals for the Years 1890-1930 at New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore, Allen Morton

*They Came in Ships***,** John Phillip Colletta,

Ships of Our Ancestors, Michael J. Anuta

American Passenger Arrival Records, Michael Tepper

Italians to America, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1880-1893 Passenger & Immigration Lists, CD/ROM

Germans to America, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1850-1888 Passenger & Immigration Lists, CD/ROM

Websites

www.cyndislist.com/
www.ellisisland.org/
http://stevemorse.org
www.ancestry.com/
www.falilysearch.org/
www.google.com/ = 1,430,000 hits for Passenger Lists

The Blaze of '73, Part I

Dan Allsup

Decades ago, a raging fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis wiped out the military histories of nearly 18 million Americans.

At 12:16 a.m. on July 12, 1973, an alarm sounded at a suburban St. Louis firehouse. The National Personnel Records Center, home to 38 million sensitive US military records, was burning.

The first fire trucks arrived on the scene within minutes, but the blaze on the top floor of the six-story government building was already raging out of control. Forty-two fire districts eventually responded and fought the fire for nearly four days before containing it. No lives were lost.

What remained of the 200,000-square-foot facility was a sodden, smoldering swamp of burnt and waterlogged papers. An estimated 16 million to 18 million personnel files – military life histories of those who'd served, including enlistment and discharge papers, training forms and performance reports – were lost forever.

As Walter Stender and Evans Walker pointed out in their definitive 1974 article in The American Archivist, this wasn't the first time that fire ravaged important U.S. historical records. A fire at the War Department in 1800 destroyed irreplaceable historical records of the nation's first decade. In 1836, a blaze at the U.S. Patent Office destroyed models and blueprints of inventions that formed the technological backbone of the nation. Invaluable art and other relics were lost in an 1851 fire in the U.S. Capitol. In 1890, the entire Decennial Census was lost in a fire at the Census Bureau.

Last May, when a laptop computer containing personal information about more than 26.5 million veterans and their families was stolen from a VA employee's home, officials feared that the Social Security numbers of millions would fall into the hands of identity thieves. The computer was later recovered, and authorities believed the sensitive information had not been accessed. But the event raised national concern over the security of government-controlled personal records and the potential for disaster if they should be destroyed or mishandled.

Placing Blame. Arguably, no tragedy in the history of U.S. records management devastated more people than the St. Louis National Personnel Records Center fire of 1973. Conspiracy theories abound concerning the fire's origin. Some believe it was a terrorist attack by an anti-government organization (coincidentally, the fire took place the same week the military draft ended). Others believe the federal government itself started the fire to destroy unwanted and sensitive files, or to erase certain World War II records. Although millions of dollars have been spent reconstructing the damaged records, some go so far as to say the government intentionally set the blaze to reduce budget costs by destroying an entire floor of a federal building.

Few take such accusations seriously, but more than three decades later, the exact cause of the NPRC fire is still a mystery. FBI investigators looked for evidence of arson, but they never determined the fire's time or point of origin. They did find cigarette butts in trash cans on the sixth floor, but agents were not convinced that cigarette embers started the conflagration. A 1975 investigation indicated that the NPRC's top floor had insufficient ventilation and that air pressure in the overcrowded space may have caused the dry records to catch fire. Although no one claims to understand exactly how the fire started, there is little argument today that it could have been prevented.

In 1951, the Department of Defense asked a St. Louis firm to design a building that would become the National Personnel Records Center on a 70-acre site near the city. Teams from the firm visited several records centers around the country to study their operations. One visit was to a U.S. Navy-operated facility at Garden City, N.Y., and another to a records center in Alexandria, Va., operated by DOD.

The two facilities offered opposing fire-safety plans. The Navy center was fully equipped with sprinklers for fire safety, and officials there strongly urged the St. Louis architects to include them in their facility. Senior DOD officials disagreed. More concerned about water damage than fire, they advised against installing a sprinkler system.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed the St. Louis facility in 1956, at a cost of $12.5 million – more than $86 million in today's dollars. DOD won the fire-safety argument. The building not only lacked a sprinkler system, but most of its more than 1 million square feet were designed like an open warehouse, with huge areas uninterrupted by firewalls or compartments. By 1973, wiser officials had prevailed and plans were in the works to install a sprinkler system. By then, it was too late.

More records may have been damaged by water than by the fire itself. Firefighters pumped millions of gallons of water into the building, and every one of the center's six floors had several inches of standing water on the floor. Carton after cardboard carton full of paper records melded into a mushy mess. DOD's fear of water damage was realized in a manner no one could have predicted.

The same year the NPRC building was completed, the National Archives and Records Service – NPRC's parent organization – decided that future facilities under its control would be equipped with sprinklers, smoke-detection systems and adequate firewalls. It was a decision made 17 years before the 1973 fire, but still too late to protect the sensitive records stored at the NPRC.

The American Legion Magazine **February, 2007.**

Part II will be continued next month.

March Guest Speaker

We will be welcoming **Brian G. Andersson**, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Records and Information Services, to our March meeting. Brian is an old friend of Italian Genealogical Group since he was a professional genealogist before working for the Department of Records. A New Yorker, he still is drawn to tracing his family's history when he can find the time.

Brian will discuss not only the birth, marriage and death records of the Archives that we all depend upon but also other records such as New York City photo's, Blackwell's Island records, City Clerk's records, state censuses, etc. We look forward to hearing his view of what the future will look like at the Municipal Archives and how it is meeting the challenges that all public repositories are facing today.

Researching Italian Records For Beginners

Wiliam S. Gimello

Part 6 -- Occupations

I have listed below the occupations that most frequently occur in Italian records:

aratore, bifolco	plowman
barbiere	barber
beccamorti	grave digger
bracciale	laborer
calzolaio	shoemaker
cappellaio	hat maker
casaro	dairy farmer
chimico	chemist
cocchiere	coachman
consigliere	counselor
contadino, a	farmer, peasant
cordaio	rope maker
doganiere, doganieri	customs officer
dottore	doctor
fornaio	baker
levatrice	midwife
mandriano	herdsman
mulinaro	miller
macellaio	butcher
nobile	nobleman
notaio	notary
arolgiaio	watchmaker
parroco	priest
pecoraio	shepherd
portalettere	mailman
sindaco	mayor
tagliapietre	stonecutter
tedesco	German
terrazzano	peasant
tessitore	weaver
trattore	restaurant keeper
ufficiale	official (of)
unifficiale del comune	village official
vasaio	potter
venditore	vendor

For a more complete list of occupations, you can purchase the Genealogical Word List - **Italian** at any Family History Center, go to http://mageruca.freeservers.com/itengocc.html or type Italian occupations into your search engine.

Ancestral Marriage Records

Cav. Anthony Lascio

There are a variety of record sources pertaining to Italian marriages. Let's examine them one by one. First, the civil marriages in Italy a century or two ago consisted of the future bride and groom entering into a solemn promise to wed. This was done before a civil authority in the local town, usually in the hometown of the bride. Remember, however, the soon to be joined couple were generally from the same comune. Four witnesses accompanied the couple, most often, siblings, close relatives or best friends of each of the parties. This record contains valuable data important to the Italian genealogists. The specifics are: the date the couple appeared at the town hall; name, age, birthplace, occupation, and current residence of the groom; groom's father's name, age, occupation, and current residence; and the groom's mother's maiden name, age, and current residence. The same data is requested and recorded for the bride and her parents. Finally, the witnesses also provide their names, ages, occupation, and residences. This record is called "Record of the Solemn Promise to Celebrate Matrimony" or "Atto della Solemna Promessa di Celebrare il Matrimonio".

Since the preceding is not the official record of marriage, just the solemn intention, it is the Catholic Church which possesses the actual marriage record for over ninety-five percent of Italian marriages for this is where the actual ceremony was performed.

There is also a record called the Atto di Matrimonio which is the actual record of the marriage. This is not always available for a given Italian town but if it isn't, the previously described record will be. Both provide the same data, therefore, only one is sufficient to satisfy your genealogical quest.

A third document is the processetti. This form contains all of the information which was provided by each of the parties to be married. There were many steps the couple had to take before uttering that famous "I do". Marriage in Italy a century or two ago was a strict and methodical process. Although the processetti contains many very valuable layers of genealogical data, it is not easily or commonly found in Italy. But do not be dismayed. The other documents referred to earlier will more than satisfy your research requirements.

Now, on to the marriage records of the Catholic Church. A church marriage in Italy at the time period of our interest constituted two steps; the wedding banns or announcement known in Italian as the Pubblicazioni di Matrimonio and the actual Atto di Matrimonio, meaning literally, marriage record. Both are usually available on LDS microfilm, if your ancestral town's church ledgers have been copied by the Mormons. Each document includes extremely valuable data for the genealogist. In addition to recording the exact time and place it was recorded, the names, ages, occupations, birthplaces, and current residents of both of the parties to be married. The same data for the parents of the couple is recorded. What is also interesting are the signatures of those ancestors of yours, provided they could write. The actual wedding document more or less contains similar data as the wedding ban document.

While there are a number of Italian documents concerning the act of marriage, many offer a duplication of information. Therefore, do not spend a lot of time and expense chasing them all down. Both the civic and/or church actual marriage documents should be sufficient to provide you with all the information you require to fill your pedigree chart.

For those pursuing family history in addition to the pure genealogy data of names, dates and places, marriage records are valuable because they offer information such as occupations, previous marriages and parental data to name a few. This information will help to "know" who these ancestors were.

Other key data which are extracted from marriage documents include: birthplaces of spouses who did not originate in the place where the wedding was conducted; parents who may have been born elsewhere; ages of the couple who were married, just to highlight a few examples.

With the preceding, it is quite simple to extend the blood lines of the couple.

Remember, the civil records of marriage are posted in Italian and the church records are in Latin. Remember also, the civil record can be located at the town hall and the church record at the parish where the wedding ceremony took place.

Once you have obtained or viewed the actual documents concerning the marriage of any ancestral couple, you have taken a giant step toward the process of delving back deeper into your genealogical history. Too bad you weren't around for the banquet which followed the wedding ceremony. You'd really have something to write about!

Note: This important article on Italian Marriage records is from Pointers Chapter Number 1, Pointers in Person in Chicago. The article was copyrighted by Chapter 1 in 2003 and is available on www.rootsweb.com. Anthony Lascio unfortunately passed away in 2004.

IGG Publishes Family Cookbook

Mangia! By our very nature, we Italians are known for our excellent cooking. The meals we serve and the traditions of family celebrations are an important part of our Italian heritage. To immortalize this aspect of our heritage, the Italian Genealogical Group will publish a cookbook of our members' family recipes. We invite all of you to participate in this project and hope to have the cookbook completed for sale before Christmas.

Which recipes do you cherish because they evoke treasured memories of your mother or grandmother preparing a special treat for the family? These are the recipes we would like you to share with us. Do you have a story about a family tradition with this recipe? Is the recipe from a particular region or town of Italy? Please share all of this information with us.

To submit a recipe by e-mail, please type in Microsoft Word format and send it as an attachment, with your name and address to Angela LaGiglia at Alagi10105@AOL.com Please type the words "IGG Cookbook" on the subject line. You may also submit your recipe by mail to Angela at 11 Quincy Place, West Islip, NY 11795.

Don Eckerle, Gloria D'Amico and John Martino at the Queens County Clerk's Office

On December 14, 2006 **Don Eckerle** and **John Martino** presented the Queens Naturalization Database to Gloria D'Amico, Queens County Clerk. The database, which is on a CD Rom, containing an ACCESS application for use on their computers. The database, containing about 60,000 records, had been installed on the German Genealogy Group and the Italian Genealogical Group web site just a few days before.

Missing from the picture are **Bob Boeckle** and the 80 other volunteers that all worked hard to make this project possible.

We are not resting on our laurels. Richmond (Staten Island) is next.

Italian Quotes

"Un uomo che parla due lingue ne vale due."

Author Unknown

A man who speaks two languages is worth two men.

Future Meeting Dates for the Italian Genealogical Group

March 10, April 14, May 12, and June 9, 2007

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.