ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

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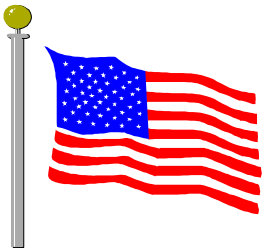
Volume 14, No. 7 **March, 2008**



Presidents' Message

Cari Amici,

We thank Dr. Mario Macaluso for his informative lecture on the intricacies of reading Latin documents.

This March we celebrate St. Patrick on the 17th, and March 19th marks the Feast of St. Joseph, the patron saint of the family. In addition Easter falls on March 23. This month is an important religious and cultural celebration time. In Italy, name days are celebrated rather than birthdays. As Italians, our conversations always includes food, so we commence the month by making Irish soda bread and Irish coffee. Then we continue with the traditions that our ancestors brought to the "new land" a century ago and are maintained to this day, the stop at the pasticceria for the special dessert of zeppole and sfingi to follow a meal of pasta con sardo. Breadcrumbs are for the carpenter's sawdust, and the fish symbolizes Jesus. This then brings us to Easter week the holiest in our religious calendar, a time of renewal and celebration. With that comes the pizza rustica and the pizza de grano.

Please share your special recipe with us for our IGG cookbook.

Whatever you do on these days we wish Un Buon Onomastico a tutti Giuseppe e Pasquale.

We look forward to seeing you at the Genealogy Seminar on March 15th at Stony Brook University. Both of us will be presenting along with representatives from the German, Irish and Hispanic genealogy groups.

Buona Pasqua,
Marilyn Verna and **Michael Genovese**

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Computer Corner

More websites from **Tony Sasso, Anthony DiMarino, Barbara Florio** and **Joanne Heffernan.**

Check out Naturalization Records. Go to <Naturalization Records> or <http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/naturalization/#find> or <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/naturalizationrecords.html>

This site gives the current time in Rome, the Italian National Anthem with words and music and more; the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club at <http://www.sfiac.org/index.htm> Another site for the Italian national anthem with words in Italian and script in English is: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjP49lac5KY&feature=related>

For Italian newspapers online, go to <Press Display> This web site has Italian newspapers in original format, including *Il Giornale* and *La Stampa*.

Try these Italian heritage videos on You Tube. Go to Italian Immigration Documents at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aREzSyNxsY&NR=1> or Contributions to America at, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U08Bv7UQT1w&feature=related> or Italian Americans, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vb_3q3H8pQg&feature=related>

For US newspaper obituaries listed by newspaper for each state go to <http://www.obituaries.com/Obits.asp>

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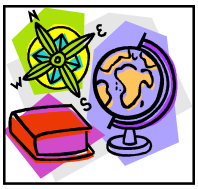
Newsletter is published 10 times a year.
Meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of each month, Sept. to June at 10:30 AM

Profiles from the Four Corners

Michael S. Genovese



Our profile for this month is focused on **Christine Rose**, who hails from San Jose, California. Christine, a member of IGG since 1999, has an array of genealogical credentials. Christine is a Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogical Lecturer, and Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists. She has national recognition as a lecturer and author. She earned the title "Fellow" from the ASG, an honor bestowed by peers based on the quantity and quality of publications. She has compiled numerous genealogies and articles as well as noteworthy books (I count at least 14). She also is the co-author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Genealogy*. Her onsite research in more than 500 courthouses and repositories throughout the U.S. uniquely qualifies her. Christine has been on the faculty of Samford University Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research for a number of years. She also has expertise in military research, and federal land records.

Our IGG book sale table has two of her widely recognized books in stock, *Courthouse Research for Family Historians* prepares you for visiting courthouses in person, or for distant research using published books, microfilm, or the internet. Its companion book, *Courthouse Indexes Illustrated,* which nicely illustrates, the indexes and gives step-by-step instructions on how to use them.

(*Here is Christine's own story.)*

"I got involved in genealogy many years ago when my husband's grandfather brought some papers on his family for us to read, and I began to write the information down to preserve it for our children. I picked up a book at the library, Gilbert Doane's slim volume on researching, and was "bit by the bug." After many years of researching I became certified and started taking clients. I specialize in onsite research for clients, and also lecture, and have authored several books.

I am a native Californian, born in Los Gatos, Santa Clara County. I still live in that county, though since our marriage our home has been in San Jose. Additionally, we have a condo in Fairfax County, Virginia so that I can spend considerable time in the East for client research and researching for lectures and books.

Christine and Seymour Rose with her relatives in Marina di Casal Velino

I have a love of courthouse research, and it is one of my specialties. I have researched in more than 500 different courthouses throughout the nation and the thrill never diminishes. As I walk up those courthouse steps, I think of them recording families' births, deaths, their land purchases, and much more. When I lay my hands on an original document my ancestors signed or on which they made their mark, it gives me a sense of connecting to them. They take on a real identity, not just a name on a chart.

My immediate family consists of my husband, Seymour Rose, who is a descendant on his mother's side of a number of early New England and New York families including Seymour, Stones, Webster, Adams, Wells, Ward, Tripp, and many others. On his father's Rose side he descends from an early Virginia family. There is no Italian in his family: his lines are Scottish and English, with a bit of French on a deHarville line. We have four grown children, Deborah, Brian, Kevin and Rebecca, and nine grandchildren, all living in San Jose, California.

I am a member of IGG because of my Italian ancestry which includes Cicerelli (Ciciarelli), Tomasco, Battagliese, Spinelli, Spagnuolo and others. We have made two trips to Italy, and

visited my relatives in Casal Velino (and Marina di Casal Velino), province of Salerno, in the region of Campania. My relatives speak no English, but though my Italian is limited, we manage quite nicely to communicate when I can get them to slow down. They are a wonderful, open-hearted family who embrace us with warmth and emotion when we get together."

(I asked Christine to give some tips for researchers. She continues with some important advice.)

Christine Rose at a dinner prepared by her relatives in Marina di Casal Velino
Christine is on the right side of the table

"For new researchers, start from within the family, and look for anything that might give information: old letters, Bibles, insurance policies, news clippings, photos, passports - anything that might have clues on the family. Interview the relatives. Write letters and make phone calls. Glean everything possible from within the family. Then it is time to expand. If working in the United States, examine courthouse records, cemetery records, military records, church records, fraternity organizations, guild/union records - anything at all that might name the family. If working in other countries, learn some basic words so that documents can be interpreted, and find a good interpreter for those documents you can't decipher. Check the websites of organizations specializing in European research. Read the guidebooks. I think the single most important tip would be to periodically re-examine all that has been collected on the family. Something in a record or letter that made no sense or was insignificant six months ago may suddenly take on new meaning. In many cases we already have the answer to a problem or puzzle - we just didn't recognize it the first time around!"

Thank you Christine Rose for taking the time to share your family story, photographs and advice with us. Anyone interested in obtaining Christine's books may contact IGG. I encourage you to visit her website at www.christine4rose.com

(You may send articles by mail or electronically in WORD format. 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)

Sicilian Crossings

Sicilian Crossings, Sicilian Emigration to America and the Derived Communities, a traveling photographic exhibition is coming to Stony Brook University April 4th through April 12, 2008. The exhibit depicts the life Sicilians left behind along with their feelings about those family members remaining in their nation of birth. It chronicles the journey across the Atlantic Ocean along with their passage through Ellis Island. The exhibit will also shed light on Sicilians' adjustment to a new world and their communities within the United States. Regional Sicilian Crossings will also educate audiences about the emerging efforts of the community to create mutual aid and benefit societies that would enable many to realize what has been known as "the American Dream".

Using photos and narratives on 124 panels, the exhibit will tell the story of one of the largest groups of immigrants to come through Ellis Island between 1892 and 1924. This exhibit explores the economic and political reasons for the emigration of Sicilians from different geographic regions in the late 1880s through the first half of the 20th century. It depicts the life they left behind, their journey across the Atlantic, their adjustment to a new world, and their establishment of ethnic communities in the United States.

Lecture Schedule for Sicilian Crossings At Stony Brook University

Monday, April 7
Marcello Saija, University of Messina: History of Sicilian Immigration to the Americas"

Tuesday, April 8
Mario B. Mignone, Stony Brook University: "Italian Immigration and National Identity"

Wednesday, April 9
Sal Rotella, Chancellor, Riverside Community College, Emeritus: "Christians, Muslims, and Jewish Roots in Sicily

Thursday, April 10
Gaetano Cipolla, St. John's University: "What Sicilians have Given to the World"

Friday, April; 11
Peter Carravetta, Stony Brook University: "Migration as Principle of Historical Interpretation"

For more information call Donna Severino at the Center for Italian Studies, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY, 11794-3358, Tel: 631-632-7444

Saint Joseph's Table as it will be set-up in Raddusa, Sicily on March 19th

Italian Civil Records

Processetti (sometimes called *allegati*) are those documents a couple was required to provide in order to get married. This usually included birth extracts for the bride and groom, consent of their parents, or (if the parents were dead) death extracts for the parents and grandparents. Sometimes copies of the marriage banns (*pubblicazioni* or *notificazioni*) and the promise to marry would be included.

Tidbits

Welcome to New Members: Daniel Fossa from Mount Morris, NY whose family surname has its origin in Gambellara in the province of Vincenza, Veneto; **Henry Cali Stroobants** from Bronxville, NY and the Cali surname with ancestors from Gubbio in Perugia, Umbria; **Barbara Zaccardi** from Harpers Ferry, WV who is researching the Zaccardi surname with ties in Roma; **Michael Luongo** who resides in Massapequa, NY with family ties in Paduli in Campania; **Joseph Cacopardo** who has joined us from Fallbrook, CA and has ancestors from Taormina in Sicily; **Gene and Georgene Bozzo** from Mattituck, NY who are researching the surnames of Bozzo and Marsano from the towns of Calvari and Cicagna in Genova, Liguria; **Lori Handschin** from Kirkland, WA with surnames of Stefani and Sassatelli from Sassatella, Modena in Emilia-Romagna; **Shari Gee** from Bristow, OK- who is researching ancestors in Bohemia; **Rosa Avollo** who resides in Santa Barbara, CA – one family surname is Cortese with origins in Sciacca, Agrigento in Sicily; **Bob Grobe** from Camden, ME who is researching the family name of Maritato from Procida, Salerno, Campania; **Peter Lombardi** who resides in Syosset, NY ; **Kathryn Kennedy** from Saratoga, CA; and Gail Richmond from Amston, Ct who is researching the surname of Bruscino, Napoli, Campania,

Donations to IGG Database Project: We thank our members and non-members alike who have really appreciated all the databases posted on our website and the work of **John Martino's** army of volunteers. To cite each and every person in this space is impossible. We will, however, cite from a letter by **Rosanna Gahran** from Lake Forest, California. She writes, " Please accept the enclosed check as a donation to your organization in appreciation of the wonderful work your group has done with transcribing and hosting various databases of NYC genealogy records. The NYC brides and grooms indexes are fantastic and have proved to be an invaluable source for finding my female ancestors who became lost to family history once they married and adopt new surnames. Your vital records collection by borough is equally fantastic and has helped me locate ancestors deceased between census years. Having access to a website such as yours is a tremendous asset to researchers, even an amateur such as me."

IGG Summer Workshop requested by Emily Gear, curator/director of the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum in Staten Island has been scheduled at the museum for July 12th. Mike Genovese and Marilyn Verna will present.

Happy Feast Day to those current members whose name honors St. Joseph, March 19th: **Joseph Sciame** from New Hyde Park, NY; **Joseph Battagliese** from Deer Park, NY; **Joseph Ditta, Jr.** from Brooklyn; **Joseph Mercante** from New York, NY; **Joseph D'Agostino** from Commack, NY; **Josephine Beck** from St. James, NY; **Joseph Bischone** from Metairie, LA; **Joseph Manusia** from Fullerton, CA; and **Joseph Cacopardo** from Fallbrook, CA.

Westchester Chapter Workshop: Please join the Westchester Chapter for "Genealogical Research Using Stephen Morse's One-Step Website" with **Phil Figario**. Saturday, March 29th, at 10am in the Activity Room of the Larchmont Public Library. The Program is co-sponsored by the Larchmont Public Library and the Italian Genealogical Group. The One-Step search tool was created by Stephen Morse as an alternative way of accessing information found on genealogical websites such as Ellis Island, Castle Garden and the census sites. Phil will explain what this search tool is and demonstrate how to use it. In case of inclement weather listen to WFAS 1230 AM Please contact **June Hesler** at jhesler@wlsmail.org or call the Larchmont Public Library at 914.834.2281

A special offer: Leland Meitzler, the Managing Editor of *Everton's Genealogical Helper Magazine* has invited our society members to subscribe to this great genealogical helper magazine at a reduced price of $19.95 instead of $29.00. The magazine is issued 6 times a year. The January/February issue is chock full of interested tips and articles. In order to receive this savings of $9.05, members must order through our IGG. Anyone interested can submit name, address, city and zip code and enclose a check made out to Everton Publishers for $19.95. Offer expires March 30, 2008.

Searching Your Heritage

William Battagliese

I have nieces and nephews in New Jersey, Penn., Maryland and North Carolina who have telephoned, e-mailed, and wrote to me. Thanking me for the "A"s and "A+"s they got on their family history or Ancestry projects they do in school.

Getting started at an early age, asking question about your ancestors is the way to go. With all the information available on the computer today, it makes your search much faster, although foot work is still necessary.

I found that when you don't know the name of the town your ancestors came from, talking to your seniors (the older the better) is not only very helpful, but enjoyable. Listening to their stories of the past help you to imagine what it was like then. At 81, I can remember some of what they say, and I believe every word. Most important, remember the dates, and names of people they grew up with, because you will find those names in your family tree as third or forth cousins, or maiden names of your grandmothers, or great-great grandmother etc.

It took me many years to find the name of the *comune* of my ancestors in Italy. When I did find the name, I also found that six other families in the small town in New Jersey where I was born, also came from the same *comune*. These are people my parents called co-ma or co-pa, but were not related. I never gave it a thought to talk to them about where they came from, and there are a couple still living today.

So don't pass up the opportunity to talk to these people. They could be a big help in your search. If they knew your family well, they can probably tell you stories that you will not find in any records. As the poem goes…..

I climbed my family tree and found it was not worth the climb.

So I scampered down, convinced it was a waste of time.

Some branches of my tree, I found, were rotten to the core,

and all the tree was full of sap and hung with nuts galore.

I used to brag of my kinfolks, before I made the climb,

but truth compels me not to tell of those not worth a dime,

I've learned what family trees are like, I've seen them grown round,

They're like a tater vine because the best are underground

Go for it anyway, you'll be glad you did!

Seminars for Out-of-State Members

William S. Gimello

March 29, Virginia Beach, Virginia: Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak will be featured speaker for Virginia Beach Genealogical Society's 2008 Annual Conference. For more information or to register go to the society's Web site <www.rootsweb.com/~vavbgs/> or send an e-mail to joanored@aol.com.

April 26, Santa Rosa, California: Rhonda R. McClure will be the featured speaker for the Sonoma County Genealogical Society's conference. For more information, contact Lois Nimmo, program chairman at lois-nim@scbglobal.net or telephone her at 707-537-1684. To register, contact Audrey Phillips, 96 Eastside Circle, Petaluma, CA 94954-3609.

September 3-6, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The 2008 FGS Conference "Footprints of Family History." <www.fgs.org/2008confrence/index.php> Hosted by FGS and a number of local genealogical and historical societies in the Philadelphia area, this conference will have something to offer for every level of genealogist.

Federation of Genealogical Societies, Winter 2007 Volume 19, Number 4, P. 41

The Myth of Ellis Island Name Changes

Richard W. Eastman

I was involved with a series of e-mail exchanges recently with a reader of this newsletter. He claimed that his ancestor had her name changed at Ellis Island. I pointed out that such a change was unlikely, despite all the claims we hear of such name changes. The ensuing e-mail exchange got me thinking that perhaps others have the same misconceptions that "the family name was changed at Ellis Island." I decided to amplify a bit on the subject in this newsletter.

Immigrants' surnames were changed thousands of times, but professional researchers have found that name changes were rare at Ellis Island (or at Castle Island, which was the New York port of entry prior to Ellis Island's opening). The myth of name changes usually revolves around the concept that the immigrant was unable to communicate properly with the English-speaking officials at Ellis Island. However, this ignores the fact that Ellis Island employed hundreds of translators who could speak, read, and write the immigrants' native tongues. It also ignores all the documentation that an immigrant needed to have in order to be admitted into the U.S.

In order to be admitted into the United States as an immigrant in the late nineteenth century or later, one had to have paperwork. Each immigrant had to have proof of identity. This would be a piece of paperwork filled out in "the old country" by a clerk who knew the language, and the paperwork would be filled out in the local language, not in English (unless the "old country" was an English-speaking country). The spelling of names on these documents generally conformed to local spellings within the immigrant's place of origin. Even if the person traveling was illiterate and did not know how to spell his or her own name, the clerks filling out the paperwork knew the spelling of that name in the local language or could sound it out properly according to the conventions of the language used. Also, in many countries one had to obtain an exit visa in order to leave. Again, exit visas had to be filled out by local clerks who knew the language, and exit visas were written in the local language.

A ship's passenger list had to be prepared by the captain of the ship or his representatives before the ship left the old country. This list was created from the travelers' documents. These documents were created when the immigrant purchased his or her ticket. It is unlikely that anyone at the local steamship office was unable to communicate with this man. Even when the clerk selling the ticket did not speak the language of the would-be emigrant, someone had to be called in to interpret. Also, required exit visas and other paperwork had to be examined by ticket agents before a ticket would be sold. The name was most likely recorded with a high degree of accuracy at that time.

Next, the ship's captain or designated representative would examine each passenger's paperwork. The ship's officials might not know the immigrant's language, but they had to inspect the exit visa and the proof of identity. They knew that immigrants would not be accepted into Ellis Island without proper documentation and, if the paperwork wasn't there, the passengers would be sent back home at the shipping company's expense! You can believe that the ship's owners went to great lengths to insure the accuracy of the paperwork, including names, places of birth and travel plans. It is believed that many more people were turned away at the point of embarkation than were ever turned away at Ellis Island. In other words, most of those without proper documentation never got on board the ship.

When the ship arrived at Ellis Island, the captain or his representative would disembark first with the passenger list. The Ellis Island officials would then bring in interpreters to handle the interrogations. These interpreters were usually earlier immigrants themselves or the children of immigrants, and they all knew how to speak, read and write the language of the immigrants.

The usual immigrant processing time was one to three days. During this time, each immigrant was questioned about his/her identity, and all the required documentation was examined in detail. Keep in mind that this was not a quick two or three-minute conversation such as we have today at international airports. In the days of steamships, the Ellis Island officials had the luxury of time. They could make leisurely examinations.

The questioning at Ellis Island would be done in the immigrant's native tongue. While the immigrant often was illiterate, the interpreter doing the questioning always could read and write the language involved. Ellis Island employed interpreters for Yiddish, Russian, Lithuanian and all of the European languages. The immigration center in San Francisco did the same for all the Chinese dialects as well as Japanese, Korean, and many more Oriental languages. Other immigration centers in Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Galveston and elsewhere followed similar procedures.

Anyone who did not have proper paperwork (in the native language) showing the correct name and place of birth was sent back. Many thousands were sent back for identification reasons or for medical reasons or because they did not have sponsors in the U.S. Most of the people who came through Ellis Island did so with correct paperwork showing the correct or at least plausible spellings of their real names in their original language.

There were a very few exceptions, however. Occasionally war refugees were admitted without much documentation. This was especially true in 1945 and 1946. A few others succeeded in falsifying documents in order to gain admittance when they could not be admitted under their true identities. Occasionally a child was admitted under the surname of a stepfather when the name of the natural father would have been more appropriate. Nobody can document the number of exceptions, but most professional researchers believe that the number of exceptions was very small.

Once settled into their new homes, however, anything could happen. Millions of immigrants had their names changed voluntarily or by clerks or by schoolteachers who couldn't pronounce or spell children's names. Some immigrants changed their names in order to obtain employment. Many immigrants found it easier to assimilate into American culture if they had American-sounding names, so they gladly went along with whatever their neighbors or schoolteachers called them. However, the records at Ellis Island remained in the original language.

Reprinted from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, copyright 2001, by Richard W. Eastman.

CMU Team's Scanner Unlocks Secrets From The Past

Justin Vellucci
(Tribune-Review)

A 140-year-old block of sandstone in a Scott cemetery might help revolutionize how we protect our identity and health.

For now, though, Carnegie Mellon University professor Yang Cai is using his digital scanning technology to learn more about a woman buried beneath the towering oak tree at Old St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

"This is just kind of a fun project ... but I think it's very meaningful to have something where people feel excited," said Cai, director of Carnegie Mellon CyLab's ambient intelligence lab, as research assistants cloaked in black focused a beam of light and a digital camera on Isabelle Seville's weathered gravestone. "We take this as a combination of science, art, technology and culture."

The project's components are fairly simple -- a light projector, a tripod-mounted camera and a laptop computer, all powered by an oversized battery. It's the still-developing software, which builds crisp three-dimensional images and maps, that's jaw-dropping.

The Rev. Richard Davies couldn't read the worn indentations in Seville's tombstone. Charcoal or crayon rubbings revealed little. But Cai's technology constructed a 3-D image, complete with Seville's name, and her place and date of birth -- London, 1781.

Davies talks about the technological breakthrough as a kind of blessing for historic preservationists.

"These stones have absorbed the spirit of many prayers," said Davies, 80, of Mt. Lebanon as he paced the cemetery filled with British settlers and Revolutionary War veterans. "It just blew my mind, what scientific things they're looking to do with this technology. Stuff that comes out of (this) is amazing."

Archaeologists and taphophiles -- lovers of tombstones and cemeteries -- seem to agree.

Darlene Applegate knows methods for studying cemeteries can be antiquated. The Western

Kentucky University anthropology professor, who has taught graveyard archaeology since 2002, uses metal rods to search cemetery soil for buried grave markers.

To read weathered inscriptions, Applegate needs a sunny day to bounce light off a hand-held mirror.

"There's some limitations to that," she said. "This digital scanning thing? That would be revolutionary."

Cai's technology might prove even more useful for preservationists in the Rust Belt, where acid rain has attacked marble tombstones' vulnerable faces, said Michael Trinkley, director of the Chicora Foundation, a Columbia, S.C.-based heritage and preservation group focused on cemeteries.

It's tough to say how many tombstones in graveyards, which are abandoned burial grounds, or cemeteries, which are not abandoned, cannot be read through careful rubbings or digital photography.

"There are some that are so eroded, so damaged, that for all intents and purposes, we still categorize them as 'no longer legible,' " Trinkley said.

Cai, who jumped into the historic Scott cemetery after studying 3,000-year-old rock art this summer in Italy, wants to challenge the concept that stones are "no longer legible." But he also has his sights on bigger goals.

Cai thinks the technology, once refined, will produce detailed 3-D scans of a person's body for medical and security purposes. It could help satellites produce high-tech images of Earth's topography or large features such as a tsunami's waves.

But first, he and his crew will produce a digital map of Old St. Luke's, allowing users to navigate through a 3-D rendering instead of presenting them with a book of crude rubbings and ancient wills.

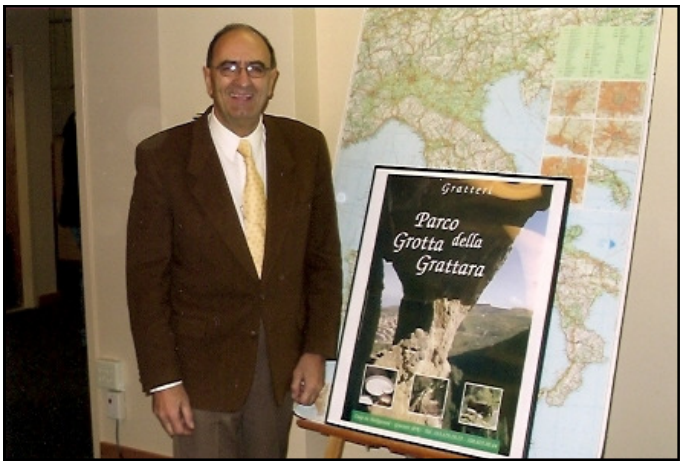
"Technically, it's pretty doable," Cai said. "I'm just surprised people never thought of this."

Justin Vellucci can be reached at jvellucci@tribweb.com or 412-320-7847.

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/cityregion/s_531518.html

Dr. Mario Macaluso Explains Latin Records

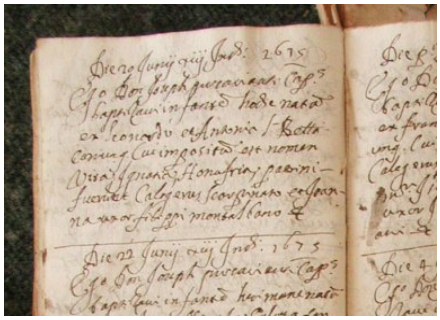
Our February meeting was hosted by Dr. Mario Macaluso who gently pushed us to understand those very forbidding Church records of Italian events from centuries ago . He, in fact, tackled the oldest records first - a 1675 baptism record from Menfi in Sicily. He explained that a big part of the problem was the use of Latin abbreviations. With translation of a few key words, he made it appear not too difficult.



Dr. Mario Macaluso of Polizzi Generosa, Palermo

He did caution everyone who plans to go to Italy that to announce to the town that you want to find the record of your grandfather's birth or baptism, especially in a city like Palermo is foolhardy. You'll find yourself going from office to office in most large cities where they have many vital record offices. After weeks of searching to get the documents you want, you will probably discover that you can't read them. He suggested first finding a contact in the town where you are headed. That would be a person who will know the bureaucracy and where to go for the records. He will tell you what records to get, and after retrieving the documents will tell you what they say. All of this is very good advice for researching in cities and even in smaller places.

Very few people today can read those Latin records. A question to the audience found less than 10% could read Latin. Therefore, the desire of the many attendees at this lecture was to learn how to at least read the main sections of a church document.



June 20, 1675 baptism document

Die 20 Junij xiij Indi: 1675

Ego Don Joseph provicariante Cap's baptizavi infante hodie nata ex Leonardo et Antonia S-Betta coniungo Cui imposita est nomen Vita Ignacia Honofria patrini fuerent Calogeris Scorpriano ex Joanna uxor filia in Montalbano.

This day 20 June in 1675

I, Don [Dominus = Sir/Mr.] Joseph, Assistant Priest chaplain have baptized a child today born from Leonardo and Antonia Betta, his wife, to whom was given the name Vita Ignacia Onofria, godparents were Calogero Scorpriano and Joanna his wife, daughter in Montalbano [her maiden surname].

After this document Dr. Macaluso worked with us on a word for word translation of a 1823 marriage which was much easier to read and but which included some different words. Some phrases from that record of interest to genealogical researchers are as follows:

denunbis promissis tribus diebus = Having announced the three continuous preceding days as required

inter Missarum sollemnia = in the solemnity of Mass

n. V.M. E. = in the Church of the Virgin Maria

quorum prima fuit die 27 Aprilis = of which days the first was the 27th of April

tertia die 19 ejusdem mensis = the third was the 19th of the same month

We discussed the word "natural" in listing the parents names. Dr. Macaluso agreed with one of the audience who stated that this meant an illegitimate birth. However, in the very old documents it was usually written as "naturale e legitime" meaning the child was the natural and legitimate child of married parents. The lecture concluded with the following marriage document:

Ego Sac. Dm. Hieronymus Fundaro Capp' Sacram' h V.M.E. interrogavi predictos sponsos eorum que mutual consensu habito per verba di presenti matrimonio conjunxi presentibus testibus mi ho notis vi delicat Dm. Francesco Plaja et Bernardo Fontana, esque in Celebratione Missa iusta ritum S.V.E. Benedixi

I, Priest Don [= Don, Mr., Sir] Giralomo Fundaro, chaplain priest at the Blessed Virgin Maria Church, questioned the couple to marry and having received their mutual consent verbally agreed to the present marriage. Witnesses being present known to me, that is to say, Dom. Franciscus Plaia and Bernardo Fontana, I joined them in the celebration of mass according to the rite of the Holy Venerable Church.

Everyone in the audience was pleased to at least demystify some of these records. For those researching Sicily it was a big help and for others who don't have microfilm church records to read at present, it gives them a chance to see what they will view if they go to their ancestors' church.

IGG Databases

In order to continue the Database Project, the Special Projects Group, is need of additional funding, on a regular basis. If you have benefited in the past from these online databases and would like to make a contribution to help keep the project going, complete this mail-in form and send it along with your check to:

Italian Genealogical Group
P.O. Box 626
Bethpage, NY 11714-0626

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Donation (check one) $10 $25 $50 $100 Other

Future Meeting Dates for the Italian Genealogical Group

April 12, May 10, and June 14, 2008

All meetings start at 10:30 AM
Genealogy Federation of Long Island Seminar will be held on
March 15, 2008. There will be no regular IGG Meeting.

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.