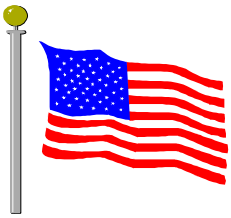
ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

Visit our web page: **www.i angen.org**

Volume 15, No. 7 **April, 2009**

President's Message



"You have a very nice handwriting." "Thank you. The nuns drummed it into us." We've all encountered this exchange. And we have all experienced the problem of poor handwriting, or one that is so flowery it is almost illegible. Then the transcription errors follow. We ourselves must endeavor not to repeat these errors of the past. Are your o's and a's and e's distinct? Do your m's and n's and u's and w's all look the same? Do you put a little "stem" on your u's so as not to confuse them with v's, but not so long as to make y's out of them?

Similar errors occur not only in handwriting but in type, particularly the computer fonts which likewise do not distinguish between characters. With some fonts, a small "L," a capital "I" and the number "1" are identical. Is it the letter "O" or the number zero? Such styles I call loathsome and they can not help our cause. So just take a little time to review such things and make whatever changes may be necessary.

The same applies to citations and notations. I've been guilty of making a quick note from time to time, then later couldn't read my own scribble. *Moonstruck*'s Cosmo Casterini said that copper pipe "costs money; it costs money because it saves money," – in the long run. Good documentation takes time and effort, but it saves time and effort (and money!) – in the long run. Let us continue during our quests to dispel the myths and correct the errors. That is part of our legacies that we'll pass on.

Finally, as we end this season of *quadragesima*, let me wish you all…

Buona Pasqua!

-Nick Rossi

Inside this issue:

Computer Corner	**Page 2**
Conversations with Grandma	**Page 3**
IGG Cookbook	**Page 4**
Profiles from the Four Corners	**Page 5**
Link to Ancestors Overseas	**Page 7**
Doors in Your Brick Walls	**Page 8**
April Genealogical Events	**Page 9**
The police census	**Page 10**

Computer Corner

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

New CAP 2009 (Italian Postal Codes) Change the ZIP codes in 14 cities. The old CAP remains valid for another 6 months. Go to <http://www.nonsolocap.it/>

Short factual information about each region in Italy: <http://www.travelvantage.com/fset3.htm?ita_regions.html>

Regions of Italy. There are 20 regions. The regions of Italy have different customs and food. Go to<http://goitaly.about.com/od/regionsofitaly/Italian_Regions_Regions_of_Italy.htm>

More on the Regions of Italy. Get a map including a printable map...Financial planning. Stay on top with smart financial tips. Browse All About com. Go to <http://goeurope.about.com/od/italyregions/Italy_Regions_and_Islands.htm>

Family History Expos-Use a research log to keep track of records you have already searched….Newsletter Sign-up. Get free research tips and expo updates emailed to you <http://www.fhexpos.com/store/free_docs.php#research>

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.

ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL GROUP

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

President	Nicholas A. Rossi
Vice President Programming	Marie Pastore
Vice President Public Relations	Anthony DiBartolo
Vice President Publicity	Angela LaGiglia
Vice President Special Projects	John Martino
Recording Secretary	Joseph Battagliese
Corresponding Secretary	Barbara Florio
Treasurer	Ann Holland
Directors:	
Immediate Past Co-Presidents	Dr. Marilyn Verna
	Mike Genovese
Chairperson Newsletter	Tony Sasso
Chairperson Auditing	Bud Pape
Committees:	
Facilities	Armand Tarantelli
FGS Delegate	Bill Gimello
Genealogical Database	Mike Genovese
Historian	Louise Perrotta
Hospitality	Dolores Frank
	Ann Holland
	Louise Perotta
Library	Philip Figario
	Peter Lattanzi
Meeting Reception	Barbara Florio
Membership	Mike Genovese
Publication Sales	Linda Carco
Newsletter Production	Joseph Battagliese
Social	Barbara Florio
Webmaster	Angela Kunz
Web Respondent	Ed Hess

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

Conversations with Grandma……

Carol Simone Galgano

Back when I had first joined the IGG, I found myself reading the computer column in our newsletter. An interesting suggestion gave the web address of a British site with information about dress and costume. It was mostly information from the Victorian time period. Many of us have old photos showing clothes from the past, and this might be helpful in identifying styles of the time. But one curious item especially caught my eye. It was a figural drawing of a strange looking carriage. The caption identified it as a bathing carriage and offered the explanation that it had been used by proper Victorians to bathe in the sea. The wheels were larger than normal, and attached to the carriage were two very long poles. The properly attired Victorians boarded the carriage on land and then the "hands" on the shore grabbed the poles and pushed them out into the sea until the correct depth was reached. When the Victorians were sufficiently soaked with sea water, they were pulled back in. I laughed to myself over those ridiculously fussy Brits and the lengths they would go to be proper. But I realized there was something very familiar here, and then I remembered; it came from a conversation with Grandma long ago.

Back in 1965, I had left my teaching job to be a stay-at-home mom. We had sold the second car so walking with a stroller was my means of running errands. My grandparents' house was on the way to town so I made frequent stops there to visit. Grandpa was usually dozing in his chair, and my aunt, who cared for her parents, was off busy somewhere else. It gave Grandma and me lots of one-on-one time.

This was a blessing for me as she had a severe stroke toward the end of 1966, and conversation with her was lost. Later, when I spoke of the many things she shared with me during that time to other members of the family, I was greeted with blank stares. They obviously had never heard any of this before. My Dad's explanation was that Grandma wanted her children to be Americans and not to look back to the past. Leaving her family behind and never being able to see them again was so painful that she did not want it to have been in vain. She had paid the price for her children to be Americans, and she was not going to allow any back sliding! By the time I came along, it was safe. I was the third generation here. I also think she may have had a sense that she was nearing the end of her life and, in reaching out to her granddaughter, she felt free, finally, to pass on her story.

I had grown up in Lindenhurst, a short walk from many beaches. Now living in Bethpage in the center of Long Island, I felt somewhat deprived of the sight of water. The beach was on my mind, I guess, so I asked Grandma if she had lived near the water back in Castellana. "Well, no, not that close," she said, "but they did make trips to the sea somewhat frequently." A warm smile came over her face as she recalled. Her father had gotten the family a beach shack so they had a place to bathe in the sea. I immediately thought of a cabana, but I was to learn that impression was quite incorrect. "No," she said "not like Rockaway. No this was a house on the water." "There was a ramp which came from the beach to the entrance of the shack," she continued. Next, she described the ramp as being on poles high enough so you could walk over the water to get to the door of the shack. It seems it had no floor. There was a ladder at the door. You entered by climbing down the ladder into the water and there, inside the shack, you did your swimming.

My mind was trying hard to stretch itself around that, but it was a struggle. They would have been swimming inside a dark enclosed building. I did have the sense to notice, by the look on her face, that this had brought fond memories back to Grandma. I needed to tread carefully here. I did not really know how to respond to this so I thought I would shift the direction of the conversation a bit. "What kind of bathing suit did you wear in those days?" I asked. "We did not wear bathing suits like you do," she said. Well, since they did their swimming in the shack maybe there was no need for bathing suits, I was thinking. But I was wrong again. Grandma continued, "We wore bathing dresses!" She described it as a special dress made for swimming that had a big full skirt and a top with long sleeves just like a regular dress. "What was it made of?" I asked. She thought for a moment. "Wool," she said. "You swam in a wool dress?" I asked. Yes was the answer and she smiled

with pride at the thought. Perhaps she was remembering cutting a fine fashionable figure back in her teens. There were also specially made stockings that went with it as well, and, of course, a pair of bathing shoes to match! She went on to describe the bathing hat that went with the outfit. "It wasn't a bathing cap like you wear now," she said. (She was referring to the petal or flower caps we wore back in the sixties) No, it was a hat which covered your hair and had a large brim that went all the way around the entire head.

I was still struggling to take this all in. My idea of swimming had nothing in common with my grandmother's experiences. I did not want to sound critical, but I could not hold it in anymore. "But didn't you ever just swim on the beach like we do?" I asked. "No," she said, "that would have brought disgrace on my family." Her father had provided his family with the proper way to bathe at the sea, and to do anything else would have dishonored him. "But didn't anybody ever just jump in and enjoy themselves?" "Yeah," she said, "the peasants." They would take their clothes right off and jump in naked." "I think, Grandma, I would have rather been a peasant," I told her. She gave me a look which indicated that I had failed to grasp the big picture.

At the time of this conversation, I was in my twenties and wearing a mini skirt, the very same mini that had brought Aunt Mary, my godmother, to tears. "How could I appear in public dressed like that?" she asked. "I was a wife and mother." But Grandma did not bat an eye. She knew it was the current style and had no more significance than that. Her sense of perspective on life was much better than mine. I had more trouble understanding the time of her youth, the 1890's, than she did of the styles of my time. She was a very special person. But at least I remembered what she had told me two minds reaching back to her early memories and now preserved in my sixty-something mind! That is a reach back of about 120 years!

Having done some research in Castellana, I can now begin to be a little more understanding of her time. Large numbers of babies being born of unknown parents brought about great tragedy for the people of Castellana. Most babies born illegitimately died. Only one in ten, it is estimated survived. No wonder families protected their young women with lots of propriety! Maybe all of this proper Victorianism was an attempt to convince themselves that they were above such base behavior. As far as peasants in Apulia, many were starved. I have read accounts of bands of beggar children desperately chasing after tourists as being a standard experience there over many years. The freedom to jump in the sea without your clothes came with a big price.

I have somewhere in my disorganized files a picture of Grandma and others taken at Rockaway around 1912. The bathing dress she is wearing in the picture looks very similar to the one she described from her youth in Italy. The difference, of course, is that she did her bathing in America out in the open with everyone else. Grandma was on her way to being an American.

Order Your IGG Cookbook

A new supply of IGG Cookbooks are here, and they are chock full of authentic recipes, from our members from their various regions of Italy The price is $9, with a $3 additional charge for mailing. There are a limited number of copies available. Order now to be sure to receive as many copies as you want.

Fill out this order form (please print) and mail it with your check payable to IGG to: **Angela LaGiglia, 11 Quincy Place, West Islip, NY 11795**

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State _____Zip _____

Phone #_____

E-mail_____

I wish _____ copies of the IGG Cookbook.

I am enclosing a check in the amount of _____

Check one: ____Please ship. _____Pick up at IGG mtg.

Profiles from the Four Corners

Michael S. Genovese

Part I

*This month's profile is focused on **Timothy and Rita Lyons**, members of IGG since 2006, who reside in Columbus, Ohio. Tim has graciously accepted to share with us their research for Rita's Italian roots.*

Giuseppe Sansone and Gaetana Badalamenti

My wife, Rita Nicolosi Lyons, and I started dating when she was 15 and I was 16. I was always impressed by her huge family in our hometown of Marion, Ohio. All four of her grandparents had come to the US from Sicily in the early 1900's as young men and women. Rita's maternal grandparents, Giuseppe Sansone and Gaetana Badalamenti, lived with her, and I was fortunate enough to know them for the years before they both died in 1968. Rita also had large pockets of relatives in Cleveland, Youngstown and Akron. Her home was always filled with relatives visiting from out of town or celebrating the special occasions. There was a lot of laughter and storytelling and food and wine!

In spite of all the family talk, the family knowledge was sketchy. Rita's maternal grandparents, the Sansones and Badalamentis, were from Carini, Palermo Province. Rita's paternal grandparents, Michele Nicolosi and Petrina LaVenia, both came from Monreale, Palermo Province. Giuseppe Sansone and his sister, Rosa Anselmo, were the only two Sansone siblings we were aware of at that time that had come to the US. They initially settled in Cleveland. No one seemed to know how many Badalamentis there were and how many had come to the US. Gaetana did settle in Cleveland with her husband Giuseppe. There were nine Nicolosi siblings, eight of whom had come to the US. Seven of those eight settled in Marion, Ohio with the eighth settling in Cleveland. We found out about the ninth sibling later.

In 1990, Rita's brother and his wife, Michael and Phyllis Nicolosi, had signed up for a tour of Italy at the same time I was scheduled to be in Milan on business. We made plans to meet in Palermo with hopes of learning more about the Nicolosi-Sansone-LaVenia-Badalamenti ancestry. All of this is a backdrop to the beginnings of my genealogy research. I had no definite information, and no documents. By 1990, anyone who had ties to the hometowns in Sicily had passed away. We had no names or contacts, only the names of the two towns, Monreale and Carini, which are about an hour's drive from Palermo. We rented a car, hired a translator and set off on our grand adventure.

First, we traveled to Carini and parked near the town square. We immediately felt the slower pace

Men in the Square in Carini

and friendliness of this quaint little town. There were older men sitting on benches talking with their hands moving rapidly in all directions with contrasting laughter and angry outbursts. It seemed to be a close knit community: dusty streets lined with storefronts, the owners out front talking to each other. A flower vendor, a church, an art display and an outdoor café decorated the streets. At the end of the street was a railing which bordered a breath-

taking view of the landscape of the towns below. We began asking questions. A man at the bank sent us to a nearby home where he thought Sansones lived. The elderly lady at the house, who Rita

The Nicolosi Family
Sitting: Rose Giallombardo Nicolosi, Giuseppa Nicolosi, Giuseppe Nicolosi
Standing; Pietro Nicolosi, Vincenzo Nicolosi, John Giallombardo, Mr. Giallombardo and Francesco Nicolosi

thought resembled the Badalamenti side, was not a Sansone or a Badalamenti, but she offered (and we accepted) wine and olives. She sent us on to another home. Same story, not a relative, followed by wine (no olives this time). Everyone was so friendly and more than willing to spend time with us.

Eventually, someone suggested we visit the Town Hall. Our translator explained to the one person inside who we were and what we were looking for. Mr. Monterosa thought for a minute, went to a cabinet and pulled out a 4-inch high stack of documents tied by a red ribbon and showed the documents to us. He graciously agreed to make copies of 10 or so of the documents. At the time I didn't realize what a treasure I had just received.

Since it was getting late, we decided to visit the local church where Rita's grandparents had almost certainly been married. It was a beautiful small church. Although Gaetana's and Giuseppe's names were not documented, Rita said she could feel their presence inside the church. Of course, we had to buy a framed hand-painted artwork of the famous crucifix behind the altar titled "SS. Crocifisso Carini Sec. XVI." With happy hearts and lighter wallets, we returned to out hotel in Palermo.

The next day we set off for Monreale, which was larger and more tourist oriented than Carini. We asked a lot of questions, but didn't accomplish much. We visited the local church where Rita's pa-

Sicilian Cart in Monreale

ternal grandparents, Michele Nicolosi and Petrina LaVenia, most likely had been married. As we left, we were offered a ride in a "genuine Sicilian cart," which we politely refused. We then returned to Palermo.

Almost 20 years later, I am certain my wife had relatives in both places. We weren't successful in locating anyone because we had no key information and no experience in how to go about it. Now would be the time to return to Sicily armed with the hundreds of names and dates I have amassed since then.*(To be continued next month)*

(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)

Looking for Your Link to Ancestors Overseas

June C. DeLalio, CG

Our March meeting was highlighted by a lecture by **June DeLalio**, founder and first president of the Italian Genealogical Group. The topic was how to begin researching ancestors who emigrated from various countries overseas that are not English speaking. While most of us are familiar with doing Italian research, we can all remember how difficult it seemed at the beginning. Some people come close to quitting the search shortly after starting. Well, the same would be true for any other unfamiliar country you might be thinking about tackling in your family history search.

June DeLalio

June used Hungary and Argentina as well as Italy to present a pathway to get you started in researching your relatives. Using as an example, a couple who came to the United States from Hungary in the early 1900's, settled in New York City for a while and later lived the rest of their lives in California, she demonstrated the information you need to find in order to continue to your research overseas.

In United States records, the four most important items to discover are the true name of your ancestor such as *Guadiaglio* instead of the Americanized *Guadalio*. The second and most important item needed is the town, or at least the province, in which your ancestors were born. Next would be an accurate date or at least an approximate year of birth. Lastly, the names of the parents would be very helpful. The first three are essential to start looking at records overseas. These items can be found in many records, but the most common places would be in Naturalization records, Passenger Manifests, Census records and vital records. If these don't work, there are probably a hundred other places to look. Use a good genealogy book from any library for help.

There are things you should know about the country in which you are going to research. These items are language, history (both national and local) and geography (location,) government, i.e. where are the vital records you need. Much of this information can be found on the internet. Eventually you will need to use the Family History's microfilms for overseas countries. Always check the Family History web site before you begin your research in a new country so you will know what is available. It's a lot easier to use microfilm than to write to various countries and/or little towns that don't have the staff to answer your questions.

The Family History Library online, www.familysearch.org not only has the lists of films available but also allows you to download brochures on Word Lists for over a dozen foreign languages, Research Guides and Letter Writing manuals make your research beginning almost painless.

After looking at some of the Hungarian records for the subject couple, June ended by encouraging us to go ahead and start the research we've been putting off for years because we didn't know where to begin. It just takes persistence and lots of digging with your computer to get going … just like it did when you first began your Italian genealogical searching.

The Doors in Your Brick Walls

Juliana Smith

Alexander Graham Bell once said, "When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us." When we run into those brick walls we often stumble upon in family history, sometimes we're so busy staring at that one closed door that we overlook a bunch of open doors. Let's take a look.

Unmarried Siblings

Married siblings with children represent the potential to connect with cousins, but sometimes the focus on our direct ancestor and siblings causes us to overlook that spinster aunt or bachelor uncle. The fact is, we should be researching every sibling thoroughly because while the records of one child may not include the information you need, those of a sibling may include much more detail–details that can help us past that brick wall.

Died Young

Sometimes there were siblings that we don't even know about. High infant and child mortality rates were a fact of life for our ancestors. The siblings of our ancestors who were born and died between censuses may hold the key to that closed door. Look for them in family cemetery plots and in vital records indexes. For mothers who were alive in 1900 and 1910, the U.S. federal census asked for the number of children born, and the 1910 census also asks how many were still alive that year. Mortality schedules will also list the children who died within a census year. Once you identify a child who died young, look for birth, and death records, as well as any church or other records that may have been created during their short lives.

Half Siblings

Half siblings still share one parent with your ancestors and their records could contain information on that parent that your direct ancestor's record does not.

Cousins

Cousins will share the same grandparents as your ancestor and you may even find a grandparent living with them for a time. The family Bible or other important heirlooms may have passed down through that line and that information may be waiting for you in the hands of a distant cousin.

Current Generations

Even if you think you know all you need to about current generations, researching them thoroughly builds a strong foundation for your research. Contemporary records have more detail and could have clues to ancestral origins that older records do not. Don't skip over Grandma Betty's records simply because she told you all you need to know. You never know what she forgot to mention — or decided to hold back.

Step Families and In-Laws

Families from the old country often settled near others from their old neighborhood. These families often intermarried, so if you're having trouble crossing the pond with your family, do a little digging into the origins of stepmothers and the in-laws of your ancestor and his or her siblings. You may find connections that reach back into the old country. The same thing applies to witnesses, sponsors, and business associates. Often you'll find that not only do they share the same hometown, they also share an ancestor or two.

With so many records now indexed and available online, it's easier to open up these often overlooked doors than it was in the past. Have you had an unexpected door open in your research? Share your success story with us in the comments section below.

Juliana Smith has been an editor of Ancestry newsletters for ten years and is author of "The Ancestry Family Historian's Address Book." She has written for "Ancestry" magazine and wrote the Computers and Technology chapter in "The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy," rev. 3rd edition. Juliana can be reached by e- mail at Juliana@Ancestry.com, but she regrets that her schedule does not allow her to assist with personal research.

Local Genealogical Events for April

Vice President Public Relations **Anthony DiBartolo** will bring his *Mezzo Siciliano Mezzo Napoletano* family history presentation and discuss his travels to Italy at three locations in April:

On Saturday, April 4th, at 2:00 PM he will be at the Franklin Square Public Library at 19 Lincoln Rd., Franklin Square, NY, 516-488-3444.

On Saturday, April 25th, also at 2:00 PM, Tony will be at the Dongan Hills Library at 1617 Richmond Road, Staten Island, NY. Call Gail Pantone at 718-351-1444.

On Thursday, April 30th, at 6:30 PM, Tony will make his presentation at the new Italian-American Museum at 155 Mulberry St., NY, NY.

Beginning on Wednesday, April 29th, and for the next two Wednesdays, May 6th and May 13th, **Tony Lauriano** will be at the Valley Cottage Library with a presentation on orphaned infants. His lectures are entitled "Secondary Records," "Case Studies of Actual Difficult Cases," and "Writing the Family Story." The Valley Cottage Library is located at 110 Route 303.

Also on April 25, at 10:00 AM, the Westchester Chapter will host a program entitled *Inside the Municipal Archives.* Mr. Brian Andersson, Commissioner, New York City Department of Records & Information Services will present an overview of the archives. The collection highlights include vital records, census and city directories that are an essential resource. Admission is free, but pre-registration is required. Call the Westchester Italian Cultural Center, 914-771-8700 and ask for programs or email programs@wiccny.org This program is co-sponsored by the Westchester Chapter of the Italian Genealogical Group and the Westchester Italian Cultural Center

Again on Saturday, April 25, at 10:00 AM, the Patchogue-Medford Library at 54 East Main St., Patchogue, NY, 631-654-4700 Vice President Special Projects, **John Martino** will hold a presentation on the *IGG Databases*. And, on the same day, the Port Washington, NY Public Library, at 1 Library Drive, Port Washington, NY, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, will hold a seminar on *Finding Your Roots*.

Contact Mark Vogel at 516-883-1380.

Michael A. Musmanno Chapter (Pittsburgh) News

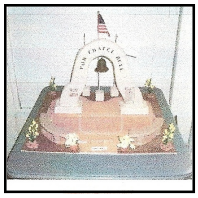
The Pittsburgh membership is increasing. **Marie Capeizzuto** and **Louise Macciarolli** received the IGG volunteer Certificate, and **Kathy Rosella** received the Armand Tarantelli 2008 Volunteer award in recognition of their efforts to maintain an interest in and help with Italian family history research. Chapter activities are extending beyond genealogy to Italian cooking classes.

A news article appeared in the *Unione* newspaper featuring a photo and story of the Chapter members trip to the Milwaukee festival. They plan to attend a *festa* near Washington DC with a side trip to research in the National Archives.

Marilyn Holt reported on a Western PA Genealogy Seminar to be held in April and also donated books to their Italian American Literature library.

Sam Patti lectured on the mass immigration of Italians to the United States including information of family histories of the adjustment period.

The next Pittsburgh Chapter meeting will center around Palm Sunday stories of patron saints and making traditional palm crosses.



Feedback

This is an update of Kathy Coe's letter on the Camp Florence, Arizona Bell Monument that appeared in the February newsletter. Kathy reports, that the Florence Gardens Park, History Committee held a dedication of the memorial site which holds the bell that was in the chapel built by the Italian POW's during WWII. The dedication was at Florence Gardens Park on March 21, 2009. Kathy says, "We are continuing to research the Italians who were here before our park was built. We appreciate getting your newsletter very much."

New York City's census substitute: the police census

Debra Braverman

Case Study

The federal government has taken a census every ten years since 1790, and within recent memory, every ten years the big cities complain that their population has been undercounted. This is not just a twentieth-century phenomenon. Soon after the enumeration of the 1890 federal census, the belief grew in New York City that there had been a serious undercount. Accurate population figures at this time, as now, were important in determining congressional representation.

In 1890, New York City consisted of what is now Manhattan and part of the west Bronx. It was a city of immigrants from Ireland, Italy, and increasingly Eastern Europe, and as such, was experiencing steady population growth. An article in the 29 July 1890 *New York Times* summarized the attitude towards a possible undercount in the first paragraph:

> Although the people of this city have not let the census reports excite them or make them querulous, and are not likely to get into a condition of mind to demand a recount, there is no disputing the fact that the estimated population as given out by the census authorities has been generally disappointing. [1]

Despite the best efforts of the city fathers to reason with the Census Bureau, the federal government refused to acknowledge an undercount. This led to an attitudinal change on the part of New York City officials and a decision was made to conduct a census recount. The enumerators were New York City policemen, hence the title by which this census is known. The police were used as enumerators because it was thought that every patrolman knew his beat, and that people would be less likely to hide from their local police officer.

The census recount was undertaken between the third week of September and the middle of October in 1890. The information gathered by the policemen was address, name, sex, and age, and was arranged in books by police precinct, assembly district (AD), and election district (ED). The total number of books used was 1,008, of which 894 survive.

Not surprisingly, there was a significant difference between the two censuses. It appeared that the federal census missed more than 10 percent of New York City's population.

According to the 15 October 1890 *New York Times*, the population of the city was 1,710,715, compared with the 1,513,501 figure reported by the Census Bureau.[2]

Despite this evidence of an undercount, the Census Bureau refused to order a recount, undoubtedly to head off demands from other metropolitan areas.

Case Study using the police census

The police census has been microfilmed and is available in the New York City Municipal Archives, the Genealogy and Local History Microforms Room at the New York Public Library, and at the Family History Library. It is not indexed. There is, however, a finding aid based on address. There is a copy of the finding aid at each of the three repositories that hold the police census.

Since an address is needed to work with the police census, you can use addresses found in vital records and city directories.

I needed to find the family of Ellen Garvey, who died after childbirth on 20 August 1895. The child who was born survived to adulthood. Nothing more was known about the family, and in 1900, the child was living with her maternal family.

Ellen's death certificate is standard for New York City for the time period.[3] Although Ellen Garvey's parents' names were given, her husband's was not. Her address at the time of her death was 529 West 29th Street. How do you move from this 1895 death certificate to an 1890 census entry?

Start off by searching the 1895 *Trow's New York City Directory* for any Garvey living at that address. Of all the Garvey listings in this directory, Henry Garvey, laborer, was the only one found at that address.[4] Then search the 1890 and 1891 city directories. In the 1890 directory, Henry Garvey, laborer, was listed as living at 519 West 28th Street. Henry Garvey was not listed in the 1891 directory, so I checked the edition for 1892. Keep in mind that not only did people move more often than they do now, but there was lag time between when informa-

tion was collected and when the directory was published. In 1892 he was living at 521 West 28th Street, next door to where he was living in 1890. I now had two addresses to check.

The finding aid is arranged by street and then house number. It indicates that both 519 und 521 West 28th Street were enumerated in book 447.[5] Each book has a cover page listing the AD, ED, and police precinct. Unfortunately, pages do not list relationship to head of the household, or even who was the head of the household. After checking the listings for 519 West 28th Street without success, I found the Garvey family living at 521 West 28th Street, which was a tenement housing a number of families.[6]

As with other government records, keep in mind that the police census was not created to help genealogists. Censuses, in general, are taken so that government can get an accurate idea of how many people are in a particular geographical area. The 1890 police census is a perfect example, since the sole reason for its existence was for New York City to show the federal government that the count of the 1890 federal census was inaccurate. It is clear that if the 1890 federal census had survived to the present day, the police census would be little more than a curiosity; however, given that this census no longer survives, the police census can be a crucial piece of documentation for family history.

Bibliography

Dollarhide, William. *Census Substitutes & State Census Records - Eastern States*. Bountiful, Utah: Family Roots Publishing, 2007.

New York State Censuses & Substitutes. Salt Lake City: Heritage Creations, 2005.

Jensen, Howard M., compiler. *Aid to Finding Addresses in the 1890 New York City Police Census*. Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2003.

Lainhart, Ann S. *State Census Records*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1992.

Notes

1. *The New York Times* (29 July 1890): 8.
2. *The New York Times* (15 October 1890): 8.
3. Ellen Garvey, death certificate no. 29661 (1895), New York City Municipal Archives.
4. *Trow's New York City Directory, vol. CVIIl for the Year ending July 1, 1895* (New York: Trow Directory, Printing and Bookbinding Co., 1895),485.
5. Howard M. Jensen, compiler, *Aid to Finding Addresses in the 1890 New York City Police Census*, vol. II (self-published, 2001), 61.
6. Henry Garvey household, 1890 Police Census of New York City, AD 15, ED 5, police precinct 20, book 447, un-paginated; microfilm 71, New York City Municipal Archives.

Debra Braverman *is a professional genealogist specializing in due diligence for probate and intestacy matters, and nineteenth- and twentieth century New York City research. Debra lectures both on the local and national level. She can be reached at <debraverman @hotmail.com>.*

The Italian Genealogical Group June Luncheon

The Italian Genealogical Group will host its annual June Luncheon on Saturday, June 13th, at 12 Noon after the regular IGG General Meeting at the Bethpage Library.

Tickets are $15.00 per person and must be prepaid by June 2nd in time to order the food. Please check your choice of sandwich: Eggplant, Potatoes and Eggs, Chicken Parmesan, Mozzarella-Tomato-Roasted Peppers or Salami-Provolone.

Seating is limited so please prepay early.

Everyone enjoyed last years June luncheon meeting and socializing with other members. We know this year's turnout will be just as successful.

See you all there.

Check may be made payable to IGG and mailed to:

Mrs. Barbara Florio
259 North Beech Street
North Massapequa, N.Y. 11758

Future Meeting Dates for the Italian Genealogical Group

April 14, May 9, and June 13, 2009

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.