

This Issue: Rosemary LaFata Interview

LICS Bollettino Periodico

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Lancaster Italian Cultural Society*

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LANCASTER
ITALIAN
CULTURAL
SOCIETY



L'Osservatore Lancastriano

April 27, 2022

Gentili amici,

How pleasant it is to see people's faces and smiles again! The last two years have been challenging, but we are all looking forward to brighter, healthier, and fun days. Please attend all the upcoming meetings and activities offered by our LICS and do not forget to invite new members. We need to see each other's faces, shake our hands, and hug each other again, as you know Italians like embraces and greetings, so let us practice our friendly affection and hospitality.

The Board is planning lots of events for all to enjoy. The following are tentative dates, mark your calendars and come forward with your helping hands to contribute to the success of all.

May 29th At the Oaks with Jim Lombardo

September 11th Old World Festival at F&M

September 18th Summer Picnic (tentative date)

October 8th Spaghetti Dinner at St. Anthony's Church

November Matinee Movie at the Oaks
(date and time to be announced)

December 7th Christmas Party (details to follow)

Please continue to attend our very popular "Ladies Lunches" (What fun!)

Look for all the details regarding our activities through the Bollettino, the Newsletter and our Website.

Be good, be well and arrivederci on May 29th at the Oaks.

Nella Seward



Above: Jeannie Hubbs and Nella Seward

When I was elected to be the new LICS president, the first thing I did, I asked Jeannie Hubbs to be my Vice President. She said to me: "Nella, I will do it just for you". My heart leapt for joy.

Jeannie and I had partnered several times in the past. We had similar visions and similar enthusiasm. We worked well together. In our conversations, often over a meal at my house or hers, she would introduce an Italian word such as "aspetta", telling me to wait because she had something to tell me. I can still hear her voice when we planned the Carnevale Ball, and especially the 5th anniversary of The Lancaster Italian Cultural Society which was an incredible success and called by Helen Ebersole "Magic!" Jeannie organized the entertainment. So many of us gladly made fools of ourselves creating our version of "The Italian Idols" by impersonating the 3 judges, Connie Francis, the 3 tenors, Keely Smith, Louie Prima and the group of nuns from the movie "Sister Act". Jeannie was an incredible, talented woman, full of fun ideas and energy; she was a leader. There are so many memories of Jeannie in my heart! Her voice still resounds in my ear saying "aspetta". So, my dear Jeannie, you will be much missed, and I will wait, and my word of promise to you is "Arrivederci." - Nella

Our deepest sympathies to Bruce Hubbs and family on the passing of his wife, Jeannie; and to Dee Viscardi, Jeannie's sister.

Sponsor Interview *Mary Cae Williams*

We would like to thank Rosemary LaFata for her continuing support of our newsletter. Her sponsorship helps us to continue bringing the LICS Newsletter and Bollettino to our members.

Rosemary grew up in a small town, Bristol, PA, where all her mother's sisters and brothers also lived. Her early life was filled with cousins and more cousins always visiting back and forth among their houses. Rosemary's mother grew up in a large family, eight children who grew to adulthood. There were four girls and four boys in the family.

Rosemary's maternal grandfather came to the United States in 1906. In the hilltop village of Rosara, where he was born near Ascoli Piceno, his mother had purchased a lot on which he could build a home. She also gave him money to get the project started. While he was laying the foundation for his home, his sister constantly complained to their mother. She wanted to know why the brother got this land and money and she didn't. Rosemary's grandfather simply got "fed up" with the arguments and decided to go to America.

He was a tradesman, working as a stonefacer, mason, bricklayer and the like. For several years, he was going back and forth between Italy and America. Finally, he married Rosemary's grandmother at the age of 30, who was from that same village.

Rosemary's paternal grandfather, grandmother, and an aunt came to America at about the same time as her maternal grandparents. All of Rosemary's aunts and uncles on her mother's side and both her parents were born in the United States. Her mother, however, was almost born in Italy or on the boat coming back to America from a visit to Italy.

The family settled in Bristol, PA and all lived there until some of Rosemary's parents' generation began to move to other places. At one point, Rosemary's youngest uncle, Louis Camillo, whose father was named Camillo Louis, purchased the other half of his duplex. In the attic, he discovered a trunk of his father's possessions. It seems that Camillo Louis roomed in that house during his early days in America before marrying

Rosa (Rosina). Rosemary's grandparents owned a duplex with a garage. In later years when her parents married, the family lived in one half of the duplex, her aunt in the other half, and her grandparents turned the garage into a bungalow for themselves. The extended family was large and visited in and out of one another's houses on a regular basis. Rosemary's father was a widower with a two-year-old daughter when he married her mother, a widow with a seven-year-old daughter, and then Rosemary was born into the family.

When Rosemary's brother was a few months old, they moved into the house that their father built across the street. With the help of their grandfather and uncles, it took two years to complete.

Rosemary has fond memories of the many delicious treats that were served at family gatherings. Her Aunt Filomena made Stuffed Olives that were impossible to resist. These tempting tidbits might show up at any holiday, but were especially served at Easter. Here is a link to a similar recipe and video from Mary Ann Esposito, although Rosemary's aunt used veal instead of beef in her recipe.

<https://www.ciaoitalia.com/recipes/ascolane-olives-marche-style>

Rosemary expressed a touch of regret that her own children did not grow up surrounded by all this family and its traditions.

Rosemary shared a story about a visit that one of her cousins made back to the ancestral village in recent years. He was looking for family without much success until he met a man on the street and struck up a conversation. He mentioned the family name, Girolami, her grandmother's maiden name, and it turned out that this man was a distant cousin. Rosemary's cousin told the story about the abandoned foundations meant for their grandfather's house. Their grandfather came over to America in 1906 and that property, with its foundations, is still there, waiting for...whom? We wonder what happens to that property. Who owns it? A mystery lies here waiting to be solved.

Rosemary has been a real estate agent here in America for 37 years. She would certainly know what to do with such a property here, but the rules

are very different in Italy. We talked about the real estate business and it turns out that the fantastic market that our newspapers tell us is happening has its pitfalls, too. People are frantic to purchase property, but there is not enough property for sale to satisfy the demand. In their eagerness, some buyers are tempted to offer more than asking price and forego any contingencies, such as inspections and appraisals to ensure financing. This can bring trouble down the road and agents must be mindful of the disappointment buyers may experience when they find problems that would have shown up in those bypassed inspections. When the market is this hot, one needs to be attentive to the kinds of details that can be overlooked in the rush to buy.

Rosemary has been an active member of the Lancaster Italian Cultural Society for 15 years. She sponsors an advertisement in our Newsletter and Bollettino because that is one more way she can support the success of the Society, and we thank her for her loyal commitment.

Article #2 Top Street Names in Italy (as of Nov. 2018) researched by *Marian Caroselli*



With much thanks to this link, from which I extracted the following information:

<https://ouritalianjourney.com/revealing-10-top-street-names-found-in-italy/>

Since in our last issue, we considered popular street names in the US in general and Lancaster City specifically, it might be fun to learn a bit about the most prevalent street/piazza names in Italy.

Top of the list is Via Roma with 7,870 examples found all over Italy. In most Italian cities and towns these roads do indeed point in the direction of Rome. Much as Columbia Avenue in Lancaster becomes Lancaster Avenue in Columbia, perhaps. You will find even in the small Alpine Village of Courmayeur the road Via Roma points in the direction that Hannibal marched in 218 BC on his

way to Rome.



In Italy, you will also find many examples of Via Garibaldi. Garibaldi is one of the Italian heroes having a street (Via) or Boulevard (Corso) named after them. Garibaldi fought with the Piedmontese against the French, Austrians, Spanish, Sicilians, and Neapolitans to unify Italy. As a result of his efforts, he actually received an offer from Abraham Lincoln to a Civil War Commission.

The many examples of Via Marconi honor an Italian inventor and an electrical engineer who worked on long-range radio transmissions. The US Supreme Court invalidated all of Marconi's patents and gave the patents for the radio to Nikola Tesla who, at the time, was creating a basic design for radio.

You will find that Giuseppe Mazzini has streets or piazze named after him. He was an Italian politician, journalist, and activist for Italy's unification and a spearhead of the Italian revolutionary movement. In addition, he founded the secret movement called Young Italy, which promoted Italy's unification.



Dante Alighieri, a major Italian poet, prose writer, literary theorist, moral philosopher, and political thinker is well represented. He is best known for his great epic poem La Commedia or La Divina Commedia (The Divine Comedy).

Camillo di Cavour, who was a conservative

Piedmontese statesman and the leading figure in the movement to unite Italy, has more than 3,000 streets honoring his memory. Giacomo Matteotti, a socialist politician, is also memorialized in towns and cities all over the peninsula.



Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi, known as the greatest composer of Italian opera, is found on street signs throughout the country. Some of Verdi's famous works include *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, and *La Traviata*.

Cesar Battisti, an Italian patriot, geographer, socialist, politician and journalist, ranks ninth in this list with his name on 2,657 street signs throughout Italy. Not a hero to everyone, in 1916, the Austrian government accused and found him guilty of high treason.

Prime Ministers can be popular choices for Italian streets and piazze. Aldo Moro, who served as the 38th Prime Minister of Italy, from 1963 to 1968 and then from 1974 to 1976, is one of these.

In our next issue, we will look at the famous Via della Conciliazione.

Please send us member news to include in the Bollettino and Newsletter. We miss hearing about you. Email us at: LICSnewsletter@gmail.com.

Italian Love Foods by Rudy DeLaurentis

"Named after Aphrodite, the ancient Greek goddess of love, aphrodisiac foods are substances or ingredients thought to provoke or reinforce sexual desire.

Foods have also been celebrated as aphrodisiacs because they are rare and expensive, or surrounded by an aura of mystery, such as truffles, saffron, and even chocolate." Below is a list of those foods considered by Italians to be the food of love and romance.

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Artichokes | 2. Basil | 3. Almonds |
| 4. Anise | 5. Mint | 6. Asparagus |
| 7. Coffee | 8. Chocolate | 9. Saffron |
| 10. Fennel | 11. Figs | 12. Pine nuts |
| 13. Thyme | 14. Rosemary | 15. Truffles |

I find all of them to be delicious and sexy, except for asparagus. It's delicious, but sexy? Not so much.

My favorite is basil. "The Romans considered basil the herb of love and to this day it remains a symbol of love in parts of Italy, as reflected in its Tuscan name *amorino* (little love). The association with love may stem from its heart-shaped leaves.

The smell of basil is thought to create instant attraction, reason why in Chieti province in Central Italy it is called *bacia-Nicola* (kiss-me-Nicholas). This explains also why it is used as an ingredient in the perfume industry.

A dark tale from Boccaccio's **The Decameron** associates basil with passionate love. Isabetta planted the head of her beloved Lorenzo, who had been assassinated by her brothers, in a herb pot and planted basil over it, watering it continuously with her tears."

Lorenzo's planted head aside, basil enhances almost any dish: pizza, tomato sauce, soups, salads, cheese and even some desserts. Add some aged balsamic and magic can happen. Buon appetito e molto amore!

<http://slowitaly.yourguidetoitaly.com/2012/02/italian-love-foods-aphrodisiac-foods-in-italian-cuisine/>

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**The Italian American Experience in Lancaster
A presentation by Jim Lombardo**

Sunday, May 29, 2022 at 12:00 pm

**Oaks Condominium Clubhouse
291 Black Oak Drive, Lancaster, PA 17602**

**Lunch including subs and salads will be offered. Bring a favorite dessert to share.
Cost \$17. Children 10 and under are free.**

Italian Americans have been in Lancaster County since the turn of the century. Immigrants arrived here, as in other American cities, to find a better life for themselves and their families.

What happened to them and how they settled here has often been neglected with little or no recorded history.

This presentation will look at those hidden years and shed some light on how the immigrants to Lancaster settled, socialized and formed a community, which, due to a successful assimilation, never evolved into a "Little Italy" style community but nevertheless left its mark to this day.

Our presenter, Jim Lombardo, is a native Lancastrian who wrote three short histories of the Italian American experience in Lancaster. He will discuss these works which delve into Italian American local history, Italian shoemakers in Lancaster and the history and present-day success of the Lancaster Bocce League.

-----cut here-----

Number of attendees _____

Name(s) of attendee(s) _____

Total Cost (# of attendees x \$17) _____

Make check payable to "Lancaster Italian Cultural Society" or call Dee Viscardi (717-951-7112) with credit card #.

Mail this form to:

Dee Viscardi

6486 Lincoln Court, East Petersburg, PA 17520

RSVP by May 22

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