

NUTLEY UNICO

(*nutleyunico.org*)

FEB. 2023 NEWSLETTER

February Dinner Meeting

Annual Chapter Raffle Results - Congratulations to this year's winners.

1 st Prize –	Art Tuosto, ticket #322	(\$9,000)
2 nd Prize –	Marty DePalma, ticket #103	(\$3,000)
3 rd Prize –	Frank Tidona, ticket #99	(\$2,500)
4 th Prize -	Ada Ferrara, ticket #126	(\$2,000)
5 th Prize -	Rosie Barbosa, ticket #12	(\$1,000)

Good & Welfare

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to:

Dominick Cuccinello who had knee surgery
Charlie Kucinski who is recovering from a medical procedure
Nella Ciccino recovering from a broken wrist

Some good news

Rich Rubino received the 2022 Tech Rep of the Year by Mule Hide Products Co.
for his quality roof inspections throughout the country.

Executive Committee

The committee met on Feb. 22.

- National Business

--Mid-Year Board Meeting will be March 24-26 at the Embassy Suites in Alexandria, Va.

- District VII Business

--District VII Recognition Dinner will be hosted by our chapter on May 23. It will be held at Nanina's. Tickets are \$80. Past President and 2022 District Governor, Marie Solimo, will be recognized at this dinner.

-District VII Brian Piccolo Awards Dinner will be held on March 28 at the Graycliff in Moonachie.

-Lodi Unico Comedy Night – March 24, 7:30 – 10:30 at “Make Wine With Us”, 21 Curie Ave., Wallington. Tickets are \$40. If interested call Mike at 973-340-9804).

-Garfield Unico “Pocket Book” Tricky Tray. Friday, May 12, doors open at 6:30 pm. At Boys & Girls Club of Clifton, 822 Clinton Ave., Clifton. \$35 per person.

-Saddle Brook Unico Bingo Night – Friday, April 21. Doors open at 6:00 with first game at 7:00. American Legion Post 147, 1 Legion Pl., Elmwood Park. If interested contact Jerry Taylor (201-522-3790)

- Chapter Business

- **Our next dinner meeting is Thursday, March 2, at 7:00 pm at Mama Vittoria’s.** We will be treated to a special edition of “Italian Jeopardy” by Danny Marucci.

- Forms were distributed at the Feb. meeting for nominations for the 2023 Unican of the Year and Lifetime Achievement recipients. Nominations are overdue.

- Cathy Marucci reported that we now have 176 members.

- The Chapter will continue to recognize members who had 25, 35, 40, 45 & 50 years of continuous membership, including those who achieved the 25 year milestone during the covid years. This will take place at our spring meeting when the major scholarship recipients are presented. Those to be recognized for the 25 years are Pat Ritacco, Dan Geltrude, Anthony Biondi, Alan Genitempo, Greg Tolve, Joe Cervasio, Barry Maurillo, Tom Sposato, Tom Tucci, Mark DiMaggio, Mario Cocchiola, Lenny Guglielmello, Joe Zarra, Gerard Tolve, Anthony Mascolo and Mauro Tucci

- **BRIAN PICCOLO SCHOLARSHIP BREAKFAST** -

Our annual Brian Piccolo Scholarship Breakfast will be held at the Chandelier, Belleville, at 9:00 am on Sunday, May 21. Our guest speaker will be Channel 5 Sports personality, Tina Cervasio. Tickets to this event will be \$35. Seven to eight scholarships will be awarded that morning. Members are encouraged to attend.

We need baskets or individual items for our “Tricky Tray” that morning. You can contact me or Marie Solimo.

- A Cornhole Tournament is pending for spring/summer.

- 2022-23 calendar:

Upcoming Events

March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1 – Dinner Meetings

The annual St. **Patrick's Day Parade** will be Saturday, March 4. Nutley Unicans will assemble at the corner of the old Holy Family Church on Brookline Ave at 12:30.

CULTURE & HERITAGE (The story of Dr. Virginius Mattia's grandfather's recorded exploits in settling in Newark will continue this year.

As noted in previous newsletters, I recently came into possession of a manuscript titled, *The Early Italian Settlers in Newark*. This is a compilation of the writings of the grandfather of Dr. Virginius Mattia, Jr., who resided in Nutley and was the former President/CEO of Hoffman La Roche. Dr. Mattia's grandfather, Peter/Petrino Mattia, came to this country from Calabritto, a province of Avellino, with his family as a little boy and settled in Newark in 1873. He began to write about his experiences, and those of the other early Italian immigrants who came to Newark in the 1880's. His papers were passed on to his granddaughter, Jessie Mattia Rosa, Dr. Mattia's sister, in 1953 upon his passing. They laid dormant for the next 32 years until Senora Rosa's husband transcribed them into a 91 page manuscript in 1985 describing Petrino's recollections, experiences, the problems facing the Italian immigrants, the "firsts" (first school, first macaroni factory, first wedding, first dance in a public hall, first hotel, etc.), problems with the Irish, politics, development of the "colonies" (wards), Branch Brook Park, and many more vignettes.....

I want to continue to provide you with some interesting sections of the manuscript.

INTRODUCTION

"I am writing this, my second history of the early Italian settlers of Newark, NJ.....I had no thought of writing a history – I did it to make it easy for me to answer questions. As we came from the different towns and provinces of Italy, people would ask me, ' Who is he and where did he come from'. So, I got it down in the best way I could to give their names. Later I made memorandums of happenings in the 'colonies'. I felt sorry for the single men and those that left their families back home. I could see them with tin pails go to get food and take it to their lodgings to eat.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

"The First Italian in Newark to Build a Modern Apartment House"

His name was John Casale. He built the apartment house on Clifton Ave. opposite the Sacred Heart Cathedral. On the corner of 7th Ave. and Clifton Ave. was the Essex County Brewery (Now Rotunda Pool). Antonio Gerard was the first to build a four story brick tenement house on 7 th Ave. This was on the south side of the street between Mt. Prospect and Garside St. Every house on Drift St. was built by Italians.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

“The Soldiers Home”

The NJ Soldiers Home was located between 7th Ave. and 6th Ave. All the soldiers were veterans of the Civil War. We came to the area only eight years after the Civil War. There was one Italian soldier there. He was generally addressed as ‘Captain’. He was a tall man and a favorite of the others. The Soldiers Home moved to Kearny. Salvatore D’Auria bought the dormitory building and opened a grocery store at the corner of 7th Ave.

All the land on which the Soldiers Home sat was soon purchased by Italians. The square block on which St. Lucy’s Church and School had only three houses on it. This property was in the form of a Greek amphitheater.

The first Italian spaghetti restaurant was opened in a basement on Factory St. near 8th Ave. It only had a few tables.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

“The Hay Market”

The Hay Market was on the corner of 7th Ave and Summer Ave. There was a bell tower that called out for the volunteer firemen. There were only a few paid firemen at that time. They cared for the horses and equipment.

“The First Macaroni Factory”

Francesco Maulano was the first Italian to manufacture macaroni in NJ. That was in the 80’s when the dough had to be kneaded by hand and the macaroni hung out to dry. In the late 90’s Francesco Chiaravallo started to manufacture macaroni by electric motor power on the northwest corner of Nassau and Sheffield Streets.

Chapter Thirty

“A Few of the Well-Known Residents of the Old 15th Ward (now 1st Ward)”

Seth Boyden was an inventor who invented malleable cast iron, among other things. His home was on Morris and Essex Railroad Ave. (now Lackawanna Av). Boyden St was named after him. A life-size statue of him is in Washington Park.

Thomas Dunn English was a poet and writer who resided on state St. He wrote the lyrics of the song, ‘Don’t you Remember, Sweet Alice Bold?’ It was one of the top hits of the 90’s

John Holland, the inventor of the submarine, at one time lived on Garside St.

Another well known citizen of the old 15th ward was Henry Doremus. He was a building contractor who went bankrupt, then years later, paid off all of his creditors and was elected Mayor of Newark.

Chapter Thirty-One

“Central Ave. to the Newark-Belleville Line”

On Sussex Ave., corner of Norfolk St., was the small frame Church of St. Augustine, where Italian babies were baptized and many Italians were married.

“Roseville Park”

On 1st St. North of Orange St where the Newark Academy is now was Roseville Park. Many Italians had picnics there. Meetings and drills were also held there by the Columbian Guards.

Chapter Thirty-Three
“The Downtown Area”

In 1900 Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor of wireless telegraphy, came to Newark and sold shares for his company in the New Auditorium. He invited me to go with him to New Brunswick to see one of his first wireless towers that was being erected. Later, when he came to New York in his boat, The Electra, I had the pleasure of having dinner with him.

On Central Ave. between Halsey St and Broad St John Casale had the first hotel in Newark owned by an Italian, The Savoy Hotel.

On the northwest corner of Broad St and Central Ave was Menning Drug Store. It was in that store that Mr. Menning invented talcum powder.

“The First 5 & 10 Cent Store in the World was Started Here in Newark”

Frank Winfield Woolworth, who conceived the idea of a 5 & 10 cent store, opened his first store in Newark on Broad St between Central Ave and Washington Place, opposite what is now the Broad Theater. His stores later expanded throughout the country and in England & Scotland.

Courtland Parker, the father and grandfather of the lawyers and judges, had his beautiful home on the east side of Broad St between Lombardy and Fulton Sts. Dr. Kipp, one of the best known eye specialists in the U.S. had his office and home on that block.

Senator James Smith Jr. and State Senator Michael T. Barrett resided on Washington Pl.

All around Washington Park were wooden posts with a hole in which was a large iron chain on which the boys used as swings. The boys kept the police on the run trying to stop us. In the late 90s the posts and chains were removed. The statue of Seth Boyden and a bronze bust of Dr. Coles were erected. Dr. Coles is the author of the poem ‘The Rock of Ages’. He later move dot Scotch Plains where he died.

Titus Bakery was on Lombardy St. It was famous for its Washington Pies, a square of about 1 ½ inches thick and 7 inches square which sold for a penny.

About where the Newark Museum is was the home of Marcus T. Ward, with its marble fountain on the lawn. Nearby was the home of Peter Ballantine, the brewer.

On James St. was a small school known as ‘The Mush and Molasses School’. A few of the first Italian girls went there. The girls were given free lunch of mush and molasses

North of the Newark Public Library on Broad St was Giovanni Franchis’s fruit and confectionary store, the first Italian store of its kind in the city in 1873.

On the corner of Bridge and Ogden St was and still is the Lime Works. The first Italian to work there (1878) was Francesco Cozzolino.

The Bridge St. Bridge was the only vehicular bridge across the Passaic River. In later years the Clay St and Jackson St Bridges were built.

On the block between Orange St. and the Railroad was the North Ward Bank (now the corner of Broad and Orange Sts.)

On the southwest corner was a cheap hotel, 'The U.S'. What is now the Berwick Hotel was originally called the Continental Hotel. It was the largest in the city. It was owned by the manager of the William Cody (Buffalo Bill) Show. Buffalo Bill visited Newark frequently.

In the later part of 1873 Stefano Rolli opened a fruit store on the northwest corner of Morris and Essex Railroad Ave and Broad St., making it the second Italian fruit store in Newark.

On Belleville Ave. (now Broadway) between 7th Ave and Broad St. was the Osborn Pottery. It specialized in making vases and umbrella stands. Mr. Osborn erected a theater on that site. Many Italian amateur plays were given there.

To be continued.....

F. Cocchiola

Please forward any changes in email addresses, good & welfare items, questions for the Executive Committee or questions concerning the newsletter to me at fcoch@aol.com (Frank Cocchiola)