



# La Notizia Italiana

*The Italian Genealogy Society of New Jersey*



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1996-2016***

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## **OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY!**



*The first meeting of the Italian Genealogy Society of NJ, then known as POINTers in Person, Chapter 15, at the Botto House.*

The **Italian Genealogy Society of New Jersey** began as a chapter of **P.O.I.N.T.** - (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together). **POINT** was organized in 1987 by Dr. Tom Militello. The purpose of the organization was to create a network for Italian genealogy, and place people who were researching the same area in touch with each other for the purpose of sharing information.

The organization boasted of a membership base of over 5000 members in all 50 states and in many countries around the world.

**POINT** published a quarterly magazine, *The American Journal of Italian Genealogy*, and kept a surname database for use by members. There also was an internet branch, **POINTers in Email (PIE)** where members were able to exchange information online.

The local chapters, known as **POINTers In Person**, were organized in 1992. There were 21 nationwide chapters. Each chapter was independent and set forth its own procedures and schedules of events.

Our group, Chapter 15, (later known as the Lou Costello Chapter), was organized in September 1996 by Annita Zalenski, our first President. The first meeting was held at the Botto House. In need of a regular meeting place, the late Bob Scussel (*see bio on p. 2*) volunteered the Garfield Housing Authority meeting rooms, where we met for several years.

*(cont' on p. 2)*

(cont' from p. 1)



*Above photos:  
Pointers in Person, Chapter 15, at the Botto House, 1996*



*Pointers in Person, Chapter 15, at the Garfield Housing Authority*

## IN MEMORIAM



**Robert R. Scussel, Jr.**

*Robert R. Scussel, age 79, of Pompton Plains, formerly of Garfield, passed away on October 26, 2009.*

Bob was one of the original members of POINTers in Person, Chapter #15. After our first meeting at the Botto House, he arranged for our group to meet in Garfield, where we held many meetings until Bob relocated.

An avid supporter of all things Italian and genealogy, Bob was a member of the Garfield UNICO, past president and cultural and heritage chairman, and a founding father of the Columbus, NJ UNICO chapter. While living at Four Seasons in Columbus, he organized the Ancestry Club. When Bob relocated to Pompton Plains, he started the Italian Round table. He was also a member of the Mus-someli Society of Garfield.

Our next meeting place was the Elmwood Park Municipal Building, which accommodated our chapter for many years. Last year, the Municipal Building was hosting other local groups and was not able to guarantee the meeting space. We now meet at the Clifton Public Library.

**POINT** officially dissolved in December 2013. Our members voted to continue on as an independent organization, known as the **Italian Genealogy Society of New Jersey**. Our group will continue to provide genealogical researchers an opportunity to meet socially, and learn and share information pertaining to Italian research and culture.



## IGSNJ's 10th Anniversary

By Al Marotta

At the fall meeting on October 27, Lou Costello Chapter #15 of POINTers in Person, (*now the Italian Genealogy Society of NJ*), celebrated their tenth anniversary with a special presentation by Ms. Marylou Romano, Artistic Director of the Coro d'Italia. Marylou gave insights as well as hands-on demonstrations of Italian musical customs and culture. Her five year old niece, Antonia Maria Romano, (*pictured at far right with Marylou*) accompanied her. She introduced herself with this opening, "Growing up in New Jersey as a little red-headed Italian-American girl, there was much about my heritage I was proud of, but there was much more I wanted to know."

Marylou discovered that her maternal grandfather was from Aquilonia in the province of Avellino. An earthquake completely destroyed the original town in 1930 and killed 600 people, including Marylou's great grandparents and many relatives. She was able to visit the new town, which was built a quarter of a mile away. The other side of her family came from Castlegrande in the Province of Potenza. Her grandparents originally settled in the First Ward of Newark, NJ, which was one of the cities major "Little Italies." Hers was a close-knit family. All of her extended family lived within a two block radius of one another.

In her presentation, Marylou showed the audience the various parts of the regional Italian dance costume (*pictured above, left*) and accessories (head kerchief, sleeves, apron, white stockings, and fabric ballet-type shoes, etc.) A 1930's book she brought was on display. It featured detailed plates of costumes, reminding us that each region had its own style of dress for special occasions. She was wearing a replica of the costume worn by Rocchina Ruglio Gonnella, when she lived in Caposele, Italy. When Marylou admired a 1939 photo of this outfit in Rocchina Gonnella's home, Ms. Gonnella recreated the hand-sewn costume for the Coro d'Italia.

Following an informative talk on Italian costumes, Marylou demonstrated the technique for playing some Italian folk instruments: large tambourines, ocarinas, and various rhythm instruments. She mentioned Alan Lomax, an American folklorist and musicologist, who, in 1953 and 1954 recorded traditional Italian folk music styles (especially from small towns) before they disappeared.

Marylou, vivacious with ever-present humor, then demonstrated some dances with the help of her niece and members of the audience.



**Pictured below:**

IGSNJ members Lucille Kent and Michele Marotta





**Pictured from left to right:**

**Left:** Marylou Romano explaining the different musical instruments

**Middle:** Marylou Romano demonstrating the traditional Italian dance steps

**Right:** Display of books and artifacts from the **Coro D'Italia**

**Thanks to Al Marotta:**

For writing the article and supplying the photos of our 10th Anniversary!

(article re-printed from **LaNotizia** February, 2008.

### **From Italy to America: IGSNJ Member Dr. Sandra Lee Presents Her Exhibition in Bloomfield**



(Dr Sandra Lee, pictured at the reception on October 6, 2010  
Photos from her exhibit are pictured at right and below)



In this ethnographic study of old Italian neighborhoods from the 1880's to the 1950's, she interviewed and collected vintage photographs from individuals and families. More than 250 people took part in the making of this book, including another IGSNJ member, our Vice President, Sue Berman. Scans of old photographs and family histories of Italian immigrants and their families in Newark, Belleville, and Nutley are still being collected.

The opening reception was Wednesday, October 6, from 6 - 8PM. The reception was free and open to the public. Food was provided by Nicaastro Gourmet Sauces (of the old Nicaastro's Restaurant in Newark!) The reception was attended by many interested in Italian heritage and culture. Among the attendees were IGSNJ members Al & Michele Marotta, Annita Zalenski, and Maria Carparelli. The raffle prize was won by Michele Marotta.

"From Italy to America: Faces of Italian Immigrants/Italian Americans" featuring images from IGSNJ member Dr. Sandra Lee's Nutley/Belleville/Newark Project was shown at the Bloomfield Oakeside Cultural Center during the month of October. Oakeside Mansion is a poignant location for this exhibit. Many Italian immigrants worked at Oakes Mill in the early 1900's.

Curated by IGSNJ member Dr. Sandra Lee, a professor in the College of Education and Human Services, and a Research Associate in the Alberto Institute of Italian Studies, the exhibit was based on images Dr. Lee collected for Italian Americans of Newark, Belleville, & Nutley, published by Arcadia Press.





"From Italy to America: Faces of Italian Immigrants/Italian Americans" preserves part of the lives and the legacy of these brave men and women, and makes them part of our present and our future," Dr. Lee comments.

New images from local families are being added to the collection, and a second book is planned. The photographs are selected for their historical value and interest, and focus on the original neighborhoods, Italian immigrants, and their families and descendants. The vision of this project is to serve the future by preserving the past images of Italian heritage: neighborhoods, families, work, and religious life.

Dr. Lee is a Research Associate in the Alberto Institute of Italian Studies at Seton Hall.

(Article re-printed from **LaNotizia** November, 2010).

**Pictured at right:**

Michele Marotta, with her winning raffle basket

**Pictured far right, top:**

Al & Michele Marotta viewing photos at the Reception;

**Pictured far right, bottom:**

More photos on display



## ***Favorite IGSNJ Member Recipes:***

### ***Amaretto Cake***

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 pkgs. anisette sponge cookies
- 2 3.4 oz. pkgs. vanilla pudding cook & serve mix
- 2 3.4 oz. pkgs. chocolate pudding cook & serve mix
- 6 cups milk
- 1 cup Amaretto or Kaluha
- 1 cup water

#### **Method**

Line bottom of a 10-inch spring form pan with one package of sponge cookies.  
 Mix 1 cup of Amaretto with 1/2 cup water.  
 Spoon Amaretto mixture over cookies.  
 Prepare chocolate pudding with 3 cups of milk.  
 Let cool for 5 minutes. Pour over cookie layer.  
 Arrange second package of cookies over top of chocolate pudding.



Mix remaining Amaretto with 1/2 cup water and spoon mixture over second cookie layer.  
 Prepare vanilla pudding with 3 cups of milk. Let cool for 5 minutes.  
 Pour over second cookie layer.  
 Refrigerate for at least 6 to 8 hours.  
 (Overnight is best.)  
 Frost with whipped cream or whipped topping.  
 Yield: 10 servings

*Thanks to: Annita Zalenski*

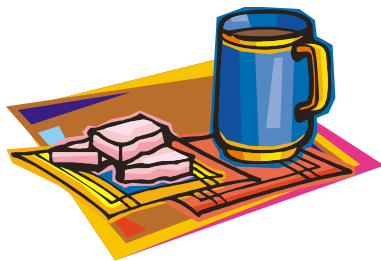
For more IGSNJ member recipes, go to:  
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Enjigc/>

## More IGSNJ Member Recipes

### Butterscotch Brownies

#### Ingredients

1/4 cup butter  
1 cup brown sugar  
1/2 cup flour, sifted  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 egg, beaten  
1 tsp. vanilla  
nuts, chopped



#### Method

Melt the butter.  
Stir in the brown sugar until it is dissolved.  
Cool a little.  
Sift the flour with the baking powder and salt.  
Stir the egg, vanilla and flour into the butter/sugar mixture.  
Add the chopped nuts.  
Pour batter into a greased & floured 8" pan.

Bake at 350° for about 28 minutes.  
Cut while still warm.

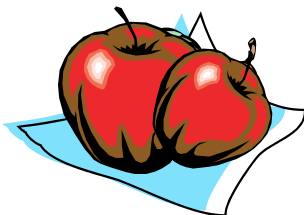
(12 servings)

Thanks to: Maryanne Graham

### Easy Dessert

#### Ingredients

2 cans pie filling  
1 cake mix  
1 stick butter  
nuts, chopped  
extra fruit



#### Method

Spread pie filling in a 13" x 9" pan.  
Pour dry cake mix over the pie filling.  
Swirl with a knife until cake mix is just moistened.  
Sprinkle with nuts.  
Dot with butter.  
Bake at 350° for 50 to 60 minutes.

Possible combinations:  
Spice cake, apples and walnuts  
Yellow cake, peaches and pecans  
White cake, cherries and almonds

Note: I usually add a little more fruit, either fresh or a small can.

(18 servings)

Thanks to: Maryanne Graham

### Almond Ginger Biscotti

This crisp and crunchy cookie is perfect for dipping into a cup of hot tea or coffee.

#### Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour 3/4 cup sugar  
2 tsp. baking powder  
2 tbsp. lemon zest  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 1/2 cups unblanched whole almonds 1/4 cup chopped crystallized ginger  
3 eggs  
2 tsp. vanilla



#### Method

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, 3/4 cup sugar, baking powder, zest, and salt. Stir in almonds and ginger.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together eggs and vanilla; stir into flour mixture. (Dough will appear very dry but will come together when kneaded.)
3. Transfer dough to a lightly floured work surface; knead until smooth. Divide dough in half; shape into two logs, each about 1 inch high and 3 inches wide. Place on a parchment lined baking sheet; sprinkle with remaining sugar.
4. Bake until logs are puffed and outside is firm (the tops may crack), about 30 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely, about 2 hours.
5. Using a serrated knife, thinly slice the logs crosswise, 1/4 inch thick. Lay slices on two parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake until crisp and lightly golden, rotating pans and turning biscotti over halfway through, 20 minutes total. Cool completely before serving or storing.

Note: The logs of dough can be cooled completely, wrapped tightly in plastic and kept at room temperature for up to three days before proceeding with step 5. After baking, they're too hot to slice without crumbling. Allow them to cool completely, and then cut with a serrated knife.

(3 dozen)

Thanks to: Annita Zalenski



**Grandma's Italian Cookies****COOKIES***Ingredients*

6 eggs  
 4 1/2 cups all purpose flour  
 1/3 cup oil  
 3/4 cup granulated white sugar 4 tsp. baking powder,  
 rounded 1/2 tsp. salt  
 1 tsp. vanilla

*Method*

In bowl, combine flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder.  
 In a separate bowl, combine eggs and vanilla.

Add oil to flour and mix well. Add egg mixture.

Dough should be soft. If hard to handle, add flour.

Take a small handful of the dough.

Roll the dough between palms of hand into strips  
 about 2" long and 1/2 to 3/4" thick.

Form each strip into an "S" shape, or  
 coil strip in a circle to form a raised button shape.

Place on floured cookie sheets.

Bake at 375° 10 to 12 minutes. Allow to cool.

**ICING***Ingredients*

1 cup confectioners' sugar  
 1 to 2 tablespoons milk  
 Colored nonpareils

When cookies are completely cooled, they are ready to  
 be iced. The icing uses powdered sugar, with a small  
 amount of milk. Colored nonpareils are sprinkled on  
 top.

Start with powdered sugar and whisk in milk, one ta-  
 blespoon at a time.

Only use enough milk until the proper consistency is  
 reached.

The consistency should not be too thin or liquid.

Cookies can be dipped into the icing, or a butter knife  
 can be used to spread on each cookie.

Work quickly, as icing hardens, and then it cannot be  
 spread on the cookie.

Sprinkle nonpareils on each cookie quickly before icing  
 hardens.

Repeat above until all cookies are iced.

(3 dozen cookies)

*Thanks to: Maria Carparelli*

**Sheshedu  
(Traditional Sicilian Easter Recipe)***Ingredients*

3 lbs. Polly-O Ricotta  
 9 eggs  
 4 tbsp. Romano Cheese, grated  
 1 lb. tiny meatballs, cooked  
 2-3 large cans College Inn Low Sodium Broth

*Meat Ball Ingredients*

Parsley  
 Garlic  
 Grated Cheese  
 Bread Crumbs  
 Egg  
 Salt  
 Pepper  
 #1 Ground Round

*Method*

Simmer meat balls in a small amount of chicken broth  
 (about 5 minutes) to brown.

Use a large pot.

After the meat balls are removed, more broth can be  
 added to pot for later use.

Prepare the meat balls ahead of time.

Allow to cool before adding to mixture.

In a bowl, combine ricotta, eggs, cheese, and 1 1/2  
 cups of chicken broth.

Stir until well blended.

If too thick, add more broth.

Add meat balls and fold in.

Butter casserole.

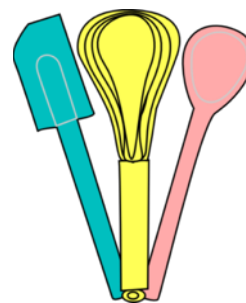
Add mixture and bake in 350 degree oven about one  
 hour. It will bubble.

When knife comes out clean, it's done.

Cut into sections and serve with chicken broth.

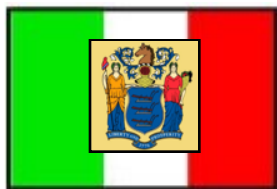
(12 servings)

*Thanks to: Lillian Pappas*



For more IGSNJ member recipes, go to:  
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## The Italian Genealogy Society of New Jersey

The Italian Genealogy Society of New Jersey began as a chapter of POINT - (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together). When POINT officially dissolved in December 2013, our members voted to continue on as an independent organization. We are now known as

### *The Italian Genealogy Society of New Jersey.*

The group, originally organized in September 1996 as a POINT chapter, will continue to provide genealogical researchers an opportunity to meet socially, and learn and share information pertaining to Italian research and culture.

We cordially invite genealogical researchers to attend our quarterly meetings, now held at the Clifton Public Library, 292 Piaget Avenue. Membership is open to all. In addition to our regular meetings we take occasional field trips to genealogical research sites in the New Jersey/New York area.

### **La Notizia Italiana**

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of  
New Jersey**  
(201) 803-9117

#### OFFICERS

**President:** Maria Carparelli  
**Vice President:** Susan Berman  
**Treasurer:** Judi Bonzkowski  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Sal Lagattuta  
**Recording Secretary:** Albert Marotta  
**Newsletter Editor:** Maria Carparelli  
**Web Master:** Annita Zalenski

Your letters and comments are welcomed.  
 We reserve the right to edit submitted materials.

*The Italian Genealogy Society of NJ does not accept responsibility for errors, omissions, or opinions expressed or implied by contributors.*

E-mail: [LaNotizia1@aol.com](mailto:LaNotizia1@aol.com)

Web Site: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Enjigc/>

## Calendar

### IGSNJ Future Meetings:

**November 5, 2016**

10AM, Clifton Public Library

Program: *Italians of Montclair History Project*

Presented by: Donato Di Geronimo

### Passaic County Historical Society & Lambert Castle Events:

#### PCHS Genealogy Club Meeting:

**September 10, 2016**

10 a.m. Lambert Castle

Program:

*Crossing State Lines: Out-of-State Resources for NJ Ancestors*

Presented by Genealogist Melissa Johnson

#### Lambert Castle Concert Series:

**August 7**

5 p.m. at Lambert Castle.

Annamaria Stefanelli and Rory Angelicola present:

*An Afternoon of Italian Opera*

Tickets \$15

**October 3-Nov 4:** Castle Closed

Set-up for Lambert Castle Holiday Boutique

**October 15:**

5p.m. at Lambert Castle on the lawn.

*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow at the Castle*

Recommended for children age 3-12 years.

Donations requested.

*For more information:*

**973- 247-0085 ext 201**

[www.lambertcastle.org](http://www.lambertcastle.org)

### Federici Gallery Lambert Castle

*The Federici Gallery at Lambert Castle  
is now open to the public during museum hours.  
It is located on the third floor.*

