



# La Notizia Italiana



*POINTers in Person: Lou Costello Chapter #15*

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**Italian American Museum  
Celebrates the 150th Anniversary  
of the Unification of Italy**

The Italian American Museum of New York will be celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy with the unveiling of a portrait of Giuseppe Garibaldi.

In a telephone interview, Trustee Emeritus Robert C. Ciofalo stated that the portrait, pictured at right, will be officially unveiled at the museum in the coming months. The portrait is painted by renowned Italian American artist, Gregory Perillo.

Born in 1929 in Greenwich Village, New York, Perillo is a painter and sculptor known for his work featuring the American West and the saga of the American Indian. He started studying art when he was 10 years old. His father, an Italian immigrant, loved art and American history. Every Sunday, he would take his son to the museums and at night he would tell him stories about the American West.

At seventeen, he joined the Navy and was assigned as a cartoonist. The G.I. Bill paid for studies at Pratt Institute, The School of Visual Arts, and the Art Students League. In 1950 he met William Leigh and studied with him for five years.

Perillo's interest in Indians continued to grow. He traveled to Nevada, Wyoming and Arizona to learn more about their customs and manner of living. He lived for weeks at a time on Indian reservations to sketch and make friends with the residents. Every year he travels to the West to stay for three or four months. His art authentically portrays the Sioux, the Cheyenne, the Apache and the Blackfoot, occasionally, he does a ranch subject. In the 1970's, he began making sculpture. His art is reproduced on collector's plates and as figurines.



***Giuseppe Garibaldi  
July 4, 1807 – June 2, 1882  
Italian Patriot & Soldier of the Risorgimento***

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According to Trustee Ciofalo, who has visited Perillo's studio, Perillo prefers sculpting to painting. Ciofalo said that Perillo finds it easier to portray things in three dimensions. To achieve the illusion of three dimensionality in painting is much more difficult. Ciofalo compared Perillo to another great American artist, Frederic Remington, also known for sculptures and paintings of the American West.

Trustee Ciofalo also extended an invitation to POINTers in Person to visit the museum.



### **Italian American Museum**

155 Mulberry Street  
Corners of Mulberry and Grand Streets  
New York, NY 10013  
(212) 965-9000

Hours: Saturday 11AM - 6PM  
Sunday: 12 Noon - 6PM



### **Giuseppe Garibaldi**

*July 4, 1807 – June 2, 1882*

*Italian Patriot & Soldier of the Risorgimento*

An Italian nationalist, revolutionary hero and leader in the struggle for Italian Unification and Independence, was born in 1807 in Nice, France. He joined Mazzini's movement in 1833. In 1834, Garibaldi was ordered to seize a warship but the plot was discovered by police and he was condemned to death. He escaped to South America, where he lived for 12 years. There he displayed unusual qualities of military leadership while participating in the revolt of the state of Rio Grande do Sul against Brazil, as well as later in a civil war in Uruguay.

He returned to Italy later that year and participated (again) in the movement for Italian freedom and unification, which became widely known as the Risorgi-

mento (Italian for "revival"). He organized a corps of volunteers, which served under the Piedmontese ruler Charles Albert, King of Sardinia. He unsuccessfully waged war against the Austrians in Lombardy and led his volunteers to Rome to support the Roman Republic established by Mazzini and others in 1849. Garibaldi defended Rome, initially successfully, against French forces, but in the end was forced to "settle" with the French. He was allowed to depart from Rome with about 5000 of his followers. However, the line of retreat reached directly through Austrians controlled territory. Garibaldi's force was killed, captured, or dispersed during his attempt to retreat, and Garibaldi had to flee Italy to save his life.



In 1850, Garibaldi escaped to the United States and settled in Staten Island, New York, and later became a US citizen. He met Antonio Meucci, true inventor of the telephone, and became a resident of New York. Both men lived in the Gothic Revival style, 160-year old house that is now the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum, Staten Island, and worked as candlemakers.

He returned to Italy in 1854 where he settled down on the island of Caprera northeast of Sardinia. By this time, Garibaldi had separated politically from Mazzini, and had formed an alliance with Victor Emmanuel II, the king of Sardinia, and his premier, Conte Camillo Benso di Cavour. Given Garibaldi's popularity and large following, thousands of Italians gave their allegiance to the Sardinian monarch.

Garibaldi's dream of a united Italy motivated his successful expedition against the Austrian forces in the Alps in 1859. In 1860 he conquered Sicily and set up a provisional insular government. Garibaldi then conquered Naples, which he then delivered to Victor Emmanuel in 1861 and returned to his home on Caprera. With the annexation of Umbria and Marches

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from the papal government, a united Italy was finally established in 1861 with Victor Emmanuel as its king. The Italian kingdom was missing Rome, which was still a papal possession, and Venice, which was controlled by the Austrians.



At the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, Garibaldi volunteered his services to President Abraham Lincoln and was invited to serve as a Major General in the Union Army. Garibaldi said he would serve under two conditions—first, that slavery would definitely be abolished and second, that he would be given full command of the army.

Both of these conditions were impossible for Lincoln to agree to and the offer was quietly withdrawn.

In 1862, French Emperor, Napoleon III, guaranteed the independence of Rome from Italy by stationing a French garrison in Rome. Garibaldi sailed from Genoa to Palermo in June of 1862, seeking to gather volunteers under the slogan, "Roma o Morte," or "Rome or Death." Garibaldi declared that he would enter Rome as a victor or perish beneath its walls. Garibaldi's venture failed but his men never deserted him. He was allowed to return to Caprera.

Garibaldi took up arms again in 1866. Venice was added to Italy in 1866 after Prussia defeated Austria in the Seven Weeks' War, in which Italy sided with Prussia; Venice was its reward. Then, in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War, Napoleon III withdrew his troops from Rome. With the city of Rome and the remaining Papal States left unprotected, Italian troops moved into Rome without opposition. Rome voted for union with Italy in October 1870 and, in July 1871, Rome became the capital of a united Italy.

Garibaldi spent the rest of his life in Caprera with his third wife, Francesca Armosino, and their children and family members. He died on June 2, 1882.

There is no question that Garibaldi's popularity, skill, heroism and military exploits made the unification of Italy possible. He served as a global example of 19th century revolutionary nationalism and liberalism. An active freemason, Garibaldi thought of masonry as a network to unite progressive men as brothers both

within nations and as members of a global community.

Garibaldi wrote at least two novels during his lifetime, including Clelia and Cantoni il Volontario, 1870. He also wrote two non-fiction works, Autobiography, published in 1889, and The Memoirs of Garibaldi, co-authored by Alexandre Dumas, published in 1861. Five Italian Navy ships have been named after him, including the current flagship, the aircraft carrier Giuseppe Garibaldi. Cities in Brazil and Oregon have been named in his honor, as well. Statues constructed to honor the great Italian hero stand in many Italian squares and in countries across the globe.



## **Garibaldi-Meucci Museum**

*Owned and Administered*

*by the*

*Order Sons of Italy in America*

In the heart of Rosebank is the historic home of the inventor, Antonio Meucci and the legendary hero, Giuseppe Garibaldi. The simple country residence was built circa 1840 in the Gothic revival style. In 1850, Meucci and his wife Ester learned of its availability and soon after began renting it. Shortly thereafter, Garibaldi arrived in New York seeking refuge. Meucci offered him the hospitality of his home and together they worked in his candle factory. Later, in 1854, Garibaldi returned to Italy leading military forces that would provide for the unification of Italy and would win him worldwide fame.

When Garibaldi died in 1882, a committee formed to commemorate the hero's stay on these shores. In 1884, Meucci was on hand when a plaque was placed over the front door of the house. After Meucci's death the house was turned over to the Italian Community to be preserved as a memorial to Garibaldi.

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In 1907, on the centennial of the hero's birth, the house was moved to its present location, and here a pantheon was erected over it. In 1919, the Garibaldi Society turned the house over to the Order Sons of Italy in America. The Order has restored and maintain the house ever since. With the assistance of the cultural department of the Italian Embassy, artifacts were collected from around the world. In May of 1956, the house was opened to the public and rededicated as **The Garibaldi-Meucci Museum**. Today, the museum is a National Landmark owed and operated by the Order Sons of Italy in America. A photo of the museum appears below.



**Bell Did Not Invent Telephone,  
US Congress Rules  
*Scot Accused of Finding Fame by Stealing  
Italian's Ideas***



Italy hailed the redress of a historic injustice after the US Congress recognised an impoverished Florentine immigrant as the inventor of the telephone rather than Alexander Graham Bell.

Historians and Italian-Americans won their battle to persuade Washington to recognise a little-known mechanical genius, Antonio Meucci, as a father of modern

communications, 113 years after his death.

The vote by the House of Representatives prompted joyous claims in Meucci's homeland that finally Bell

had been outed as a perfidious Scot who found fortune and fame by stealing another man's work.

Calling the Italian's career extraordinary and tragic, the resolution said his "teletrofono", demonstrated in New York in 1860, made him the inventor of the telephone in the place of Bell, who had access to Meucci's materials and who took out a patent 16 years later.

"It is the sense of the House of Representatives that the life and achievements of Antonio Meucci should be recognised, and his work in the invention of the telephone should be acknowledged," the resolution stated.

Bell's immortalisation in books and films has rankled with generations of Italians who know Meucci's story. Born in 1808, he studied design and mechanical engineering at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, and as a stage technician at the city's Teatro della Pergola developed a primitive system to help colleagues communicate.

In the 1830s he moved to Cuba and, while working on methods to treat illnesses with electric shocks, found that sounds could travel by electrical impulses through copper wire. Sensing potential, he moved to Staten Island, near New York City, in 1850 to develop the technology.

When Meucci's wife, Ester, became paralysed he rigged a system to link her bedroom with his neighbouring workshop and in 1860 held a public demonstration which was reported in New York's Italian-language press.

In between giving shelter to political exiles, Meucci struggled to find financial backing, failed to master English and was severely burned in an accident aboard a steamship.

Forced to make new prototype telephones after Ester sold his machines for \$6 to a secondhand shop, his models became more sophisticated. An inductor formed around an iron core in the shape of a cylinder was a technique so sophisticated that it was used decades later for long-distance connections.

Meucci could not afford the \$250 needed for a definitive patent for his "talking telegraph" so in 1871 filed a one-year renewable notice of an impending patent. Three years later he could not even afford the \$10 to renew it.

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He sent a model and technical details to the Western Union telegraph company but failed to win a meeting with executives. When he asked for his materials to be returned, in 1874, he was told they had been lost. Two years later Bell, who shared a laboratory with Meucci, filed a patent for a telephone, became a celebrity and made a lucrative deal with Western Union. Meucci sued and was nearing victory - the supreme court agreed to hear the case and fraud charges were initiated against Bell - when the Florentine died in 1889. The legal action died with him.

Yesterday the newspaper La Repubblica welcomed the vote to recognise the Tuscan inventor as a belated comeuppance for Bell, a "cunning Scotsman" and "usurper" whose perfidy built a communications empire.

*Above article from **The Guardian** by Rory Carroll Monday, 17 June, 2002*

### Upcoming Events at The Garibaldi-Meucci Museum



Exhibit **"The Colors of Venice & Burano"** by Fritz (Steven) Weiss - from January 14 to April 11  
Sat, January 14 – Wed, April 11, 2012

An artist's reception was held on January 14 for **"The Colors of Venice & Burano"** a collection of digital images which is part of **"The Italian Collection"**, consisting of over 5,000 images taken over a 14 day period.

The transformation from the original photographs to the final digital images has been a two year project. Among the challenges working on this series was the objective to present the infinite textures and vibrant colors of the Italian experi-

ence, layered in centuries of classical history, culture and art.

All original photographs were shot with available light. The raw digital images were then enhanced using multiple layering techniques and maximizing color saturation.

All images in this exhibition "The Colors of Venice & Burano" are imaged and printed in limited editions not exceeding 50 proofs plus 4-5 artist proofs. All prints are signed/numbered limited edition prints accompanied with a Certificate of authenticity.

The islands of Venice and Burano in the Adriatic Sea have a revered history dating back over 1500 years. Venice rose from the marshes with buildings erected upon wooden piles surrounding a network of canals and bridges. For centuries it was the center of trade between Europe and the Orient. The small picturesque outer island of Burano historically had roots as a fishing village, its canals lined with bright multi-hued houses insuring their visibility in the mist.

This show will run through April 11, 2012.

### The Garibaldi-Meucci Museum

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*The Garibaldi-Meucci Museum is owned and administered by the Order Sons of Italy in America.*

*The Garibaldi-Meucci Museum was the home of Antonio Meucci, the true inventor of the telephone, and a refuge to Giuseppe Garibaldi, the legendary hero who championed the unification of Italy. For over 50 years the museum has fulfilled its mission to preserve the legacies of these great men, and to promote understanding of the Italian-American heritage through cultural, artistic and educational programs and classes.*

*Regular museum hours are 1 p.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday through Saturday. Admission is \$5 per person, members and children under 10 are free. Call ahead for groups of 10 or more. The first floor of the museum is wheelchair accessible, but the restroom is on the second floor. At press time, program funding has been provided through the Order Sons of Italy in America; by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; the Office of the Staten Island Borough President, Richmond County Savings Foundation; Northfield Bank Foundation, and by grants allocated by New York State Senator Diane Savino and New York City Council members Vincent Ignizio and James Oddo.*



### **POINTers in Person**

The POINTers In Person program, an autonomous branch of **POINT - (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together)** was founded in 1992. Our group, Chapter 15, was organized in September 1996. The 21 nationwide chapters of POINTers In Person provide genealogical researchers an opportunity to meet socially, and learn and share information pertinent to Italian research. Each chapter is independent and sets forth its own procedures and schedules of events.

We cordially invite Italian genealogical researchers to attend our quarterly meetings. Membership is open to all. In addition to regular meetings our group takes occasional field trips to genealogical research sites in the New Jersey/New York area.

Membership in our parent organization, POINT, is not a prerequisite to joining our group; however, it is highly recommended

### **La Notizia Italiana**

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#### **The Lou Costello Chapter**

POINTers In Person  
Chapter 15

Northern New Jersey  
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#### **OFFICERS**

**President:** Maria Carparelli  
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Your letters and comments are welcomed.  
 We reserve the right to edit submitted materials.

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## **Calendar**

### **POINT Chapter 15 Future Meetings:**

#### **Future Meetings:**

Elmwood Park Municipal Building, 10 AM

#### **May 5, 2012:**

Program: "*Shot Down Over Italy*"

Book Presentation by John Lanza

### **Passaic County Genealogy Club:**

#### **February 11, 2012**

10 a.m. at Lambert Castle Museum:

Genealogy Club Meeting:

Presenter: Maureen Wlodarczyk:

*"Past--Forward :*

*A three-decade and three-thousand mile journey home."*

#### **March 10, 2012**

10 a.m. at Lambert Castle Museum:

Genealogy Club Meeting:

Presenters: Carol Sheaffer and Nancy Wilson:

*"Don't Forget the Ladies: Finding and Identifying Women in Your Past"*

### **Passaic County Historical Society:**

#### **March 7, 2012**

7 PM. at Lambert Castle:

Society Quarterly Meeting:

Presenter: Kathleen Galop

*"Jacqueline Kennedy's Historic Preservation Legacy"*

### **Lambert Castle Events:**

#### **January 28 -September:**

#### **2012: A Presidential Year.**

*An exciting new exhibit at Lambert Castle exploring the role of the 44 Chief Executives in our cultural history.*

#### **February 17**

#### **2012: A Presidential Year**

#### **Official Opening Reception**

Friday, 7 PM, Lambert Castle.

#### **February 20-26**

#### **Presidents' Week.**

*Lambert Castle open seven days. Children free with paid adult (limit two children per adult). Scavenger hunts (ages 4-12)*

#### **March 10-11**

#### **Local Authors' Showcase**

Saturday, 1-5 pm, Sunday, 10:30 AM-5 PM,

*Talks, book signings, panel discussions featuring local authors.*

*Regular museum fees.*

**For more information on PCHS**

**& Lambert Castle Events:**

**973- 247-0085 ext 200**

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