



The Rotarian Genealogist

MAY 2025 | FOURTH QUARTER 2024-2025

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT LUANNE NEWMAN

Dear Members,

Happy May to you! Depending on where you are in this big world, you may be starting Spring, starting Fall, or something in the middle.

Take a few minutes to peruse this edition of the newsletter to find upcoming events, tips and tricks, and stories. Look for a new column and think of what input **you would like** us to include.

We hope you'll be able to meet us online on the 10th of May for our **Annual Meeting** and speaker, **Cheri Hudson Passey**.

Will you be at the Convention in Calgary in June? I hope so! We will have a booth and need you to help us meet and greet!

I am very honored to be a "vignette" speaker at the Sunday General Sessions where I will touch on fellowships in Rotary and, in particular, our Fellowship. Mentioning our organization may bring more booth visitors and help grow FORG. If you are there, I hope you'll give a wave!!

I think our membership is the best deal since free parking was invented! You all may have friends that are interested in genealogy programs and assistance. Forward the newsletter and/or [this link](#) for the membership info. Ciao!

Luanne

FORG CALENDAR

01 May

Newsletter Published

10 May

FORG Family Reunion Meeting

Speaker: Cheri Hudson Passey

21-25 June

RI Convention/Calgary CANADA - Visit our booth in the House of Friendship

01 August

Newsletter Published

09 August

FORG Family Reunion Meeting via ZOOM



FORG FAMILY REUNION MEETING



Cheri Hudson Passey

REELING 'EM IN WITH COUSIN BAIT - 10 WAYS TO CONNECT WITH FAMILY

Creating Cousin Bait helps connect with those who may have information about your family. Learn 10 strategies to help you connect and collaborate with family members.

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

FORG Family Reunion

May 10, 2025 19:30 London

1:30 PM Central Daylight Time/US

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89683491543?pwd=hWCzU8Poid5bA2SRTfjs9Zabd9CCE.1>

Meeting ID: 896 8349 1543

Passcode: 217244

Cheri Hudson Passey is a professional genealogist, instructor, writer, speaker, and owner of Carolina Girl Genealogy, LLC. She hosts the YouTube genealogy chat show GenFriends and is a genealogical researcher subcontracted by Eagle Investigative Services, Inc., for the US Army Past Conflict Repatriations Branch. She is involved in many genealogy societies and organizations and is on the National Genealogical Society board. Cheri writes the blog "Carolina Girl Genealogy," sharing her genealogy tips, methodologies, family stories, and research adventures.

GIVE US YOUR BLOGS...YOUR SITES...

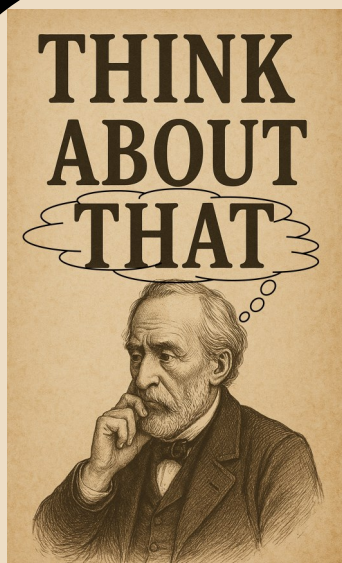
YOUR INFORMATION WAITING TO BE SHARED

Chances are, some of what YOU, like WE like, too! Can you share:

- A favorite speaker you follow
- An annual conference

- A go-to vendor for genealogy merch
- Other pertinent family history info

[CLICK HERE TO SEND INFO TO OUR NEWSLETTER CONTACT](#)



Peter (*Pietro*) was born 1927 in Chicago to parents who immigrated from Sicily. He did not learn English until he was the age of eight since the nuns in his Catholic school spoke and understood him in his parents' native Sicilian. As he learned English, he often helped his parents with communication, even assisting his father in a job interview on occasion.

Fast forward to a 60-year-old Peter who took his first trip to Italy with some similarly raised Italian friends in the 1980s. They stopped at a "bar" for coffee which Peter ordered, in the language of his parents.

The waiter paused, looked at him and asked him where he was from. He asked the waiter "Why, do I have an accent?" in that same native language. The waiter replied that while he had no accent, he was using old words.

You see, Peter's father Giuseppe was born in 1893 and had arrived in America circa 1905. The language he brought to America had stagnated. It was not the dynamic language that evolved and changed over the years. As progress and industry changed, those newer terms did not enter the "old Sicilian" that he still used. He used the language of the late 1800's. We would imagine anyone speaking even English of the late 1800's would sound unusual in 1980.

Would you agree that other immigrant families, unless they travelled back and forth to their homeland, passed along a stagnant version of their native language? Were these immigrants financially able to make such trips?

This true story is a glance into the past, as we picture those ancestors and life as they lived it....in a different age. It may also explain to us, why, when we use vocabulary from our ancestors, we might just get that same funny look that Peter received.

Luanne Gatti Triolo Newman

[Is Sicilian a dialect or language?](#)

"Think About THAT" is a new column where we share facts or stories that we had not considered or did not know much about. If you would like to submit a memory or clip, submit it to Luanne Newman at Luanne.newman@outlook.com

WHAT TO SEE AT THE RI CONVENTION

We hope you are comin' to Calgary for the June 21-25 gathering of Rotarians from around the world! RI President Stephanie Urchick will speak and has arranged for many activities, and speakers. At our booth in the House of Friendship, visitors will see:

The family tree of founder, Paul Harris and another Rotarian ★ Photos of booth visitors on a large tree ★ Chat with genealogy enthusiasts to ask questions ★ Learn more about the fellowship and what is coming up ★ and much more! ★ ➡➡ **VOLUNTEER AT THE BOOTH** - we need you!!! [Email Luanne.](#)

See you in the House of Friendship in Calgary!!

GENEALOGY LINKS TO CHECK OUT

[Military Acronyms Reference Chart Free Download](#) (*FamilyTree Magazine*)

[Genealogy Ethnic Heritage Links](#) (*National Archives*)

[AZAC Day and what it commemorates](#) (*Geneanet*)

[Some of the best Genealogy Tools in 2025](#) (*TechRadar*)

[Understanding Historical Dates & Calendars for Geneal. Research](#) (*My Heritage*)

May 8th - VE Day—Victory in Europe Day

May 15th - International Day of Families—A day to recognize the importance of families, family structures, and advocate for their well-being globally.

May 25th - Africa Freedom Day

"We are just stars in our family's constellation." -STEPHEN ROBERT KUTA



FIRST FAMILIES OF PENNSYLVANIA

M. Lynn Breyfogle | [Lynn's Family History Journey](#)
Twitter: @MlynnBreyfogle | mlynn.breyfogle@gmail.com

This fall, I learned about two opportunities to hone my genealogy skills. The First Families of PA and Pioneer Certificates of Michigan.

First Families of Pennsylvania



First Families of Pennsylvania (FFP) is a lineage society open to any GSP member who can prove descent from a resident of what is now Pennsylvania during the time periods listed below:

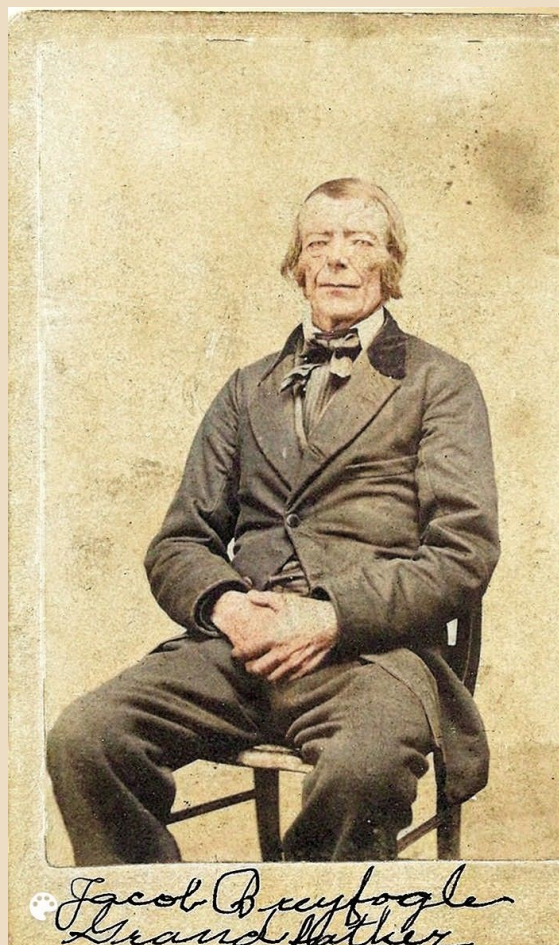
- Colony and Commonwealth: 1638–1790
- Keystone and Cornerstone: 1791–1865
- Pennsylvania Proud: 1866–1900
- Centennial Pennsylvanians: 1901–1924

First Families of PA

The First Families of PA is offered through the [Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania](#). It's not really a Lineage Society, more like an opportunity to record and include ancestors in GSP's [Approved Ancestors](#) database (along with receiving a certificate and a nice pin). They have four "levels" of membership based on the time frame for when your ancestors arrived to PA.

They are rigorous in their evaluation of applications and follow the Genealogy Proof Standards. I had most of the documentation already, but it still took about 15 hours to put together all of the documents required to "prove" my husband's family back to Jacob Breyvogel who fits early in the Keystone and Cornerstone (1791-1865) category. Jacob was my husband, Jim's, 3rd great-grandfather, and was born in Berks County, PA in 1805. This photo (based on his necktie and wide lapels of his suit) was taken between 1860 and 1870. He died in 1871, so that is the latest this could have been.

(continued on page 6)



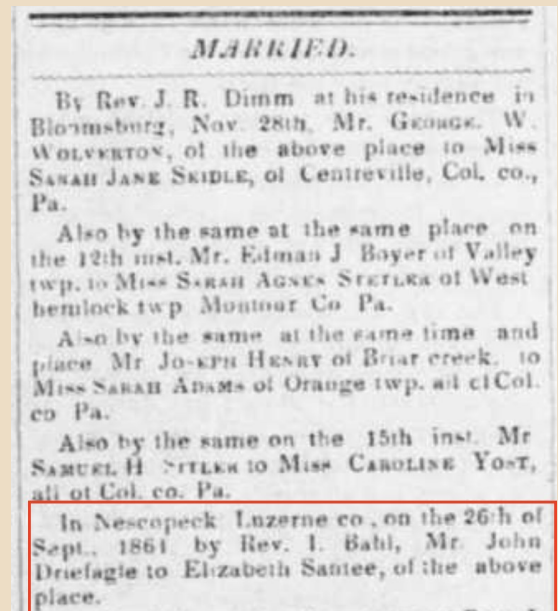
FIRST FAMILIES OF PENNSYLVANIA (CONT. FROM PG. 5)



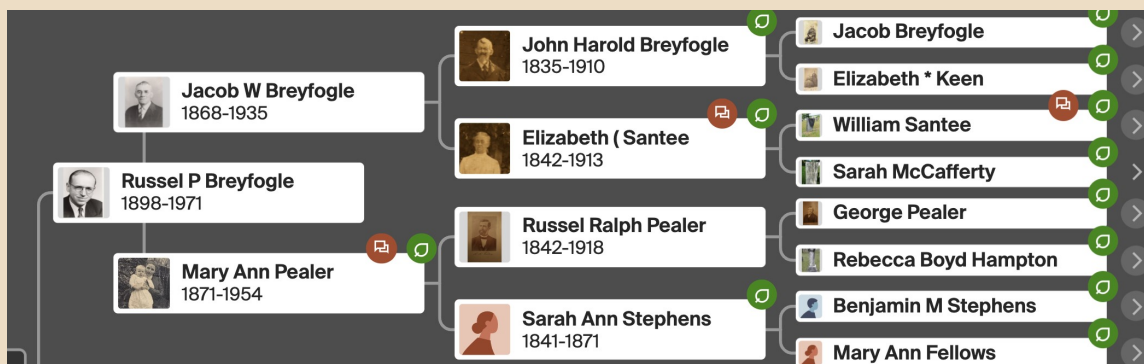
This is John and Elizabeth (Santee) Breyfogle in their younger years. Photo (left and above) provided by Holly Prescott in 2014 in Ancestry.com and colorized using MyHeritage.

The application packet ended up being nearly 50 sheets of paper that includes everything from birth/marriage/death certificates/ records for those that existed for both members of the couple at each generation to newspaper clippings when records aren't available, like this

1861 newspaper clipping (below) for John H. Breyfogle and Elizabeth Harriet Santee (shown left). Apparently getting names wrong in the newspaper is not a new thing....Driefagle is Breyfogle. Yep!



Wedding Announcement in the Bloomsburg, PA Newspaper "The Star of the North" 1861



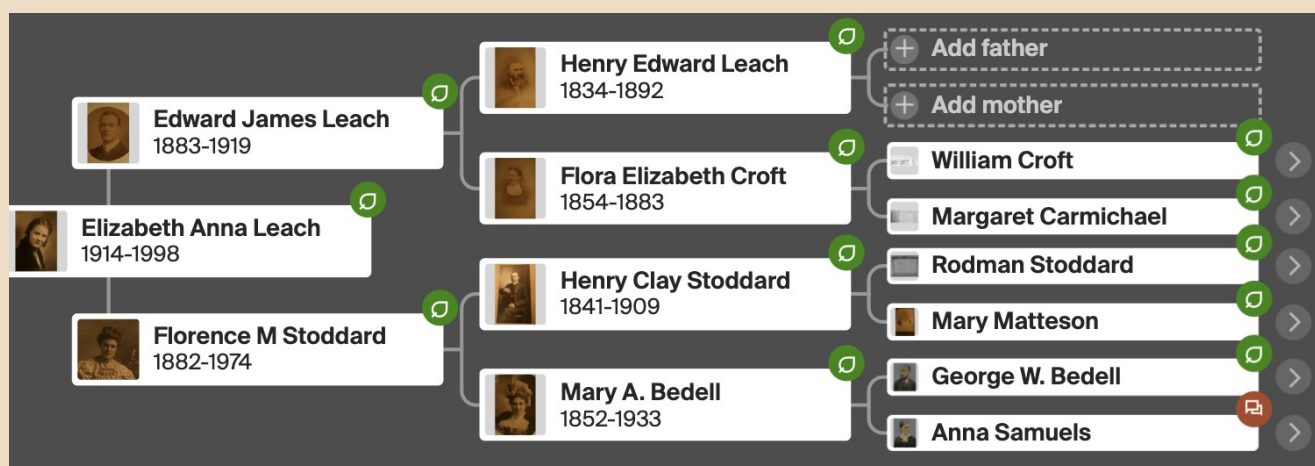
The documentation to Jacob's father, Daniel Breyfogle (1775-1849), is not yet to the level the society accepts and although I have documentation that puts the Breyfogle's in PA as early as 1744, proving the connection between generations is difficult. I will work on it, now that this first application was accepted! Jim's grandfather (Russel Pealer Breyfogle) and his mother (Mary Ann Pealer) were born in Michigan, but everyone else in this tree were Pennsylvania residents. None of these other family names are listed among the First Families, so I have a little work (and investment, each application costs \$75) ahead of me, but it is my goal to eventually prove them.

FIRST FAMILIES OF PENNSYLVANIA (CONT. FROM PG. 6)

Pioneer Certificates

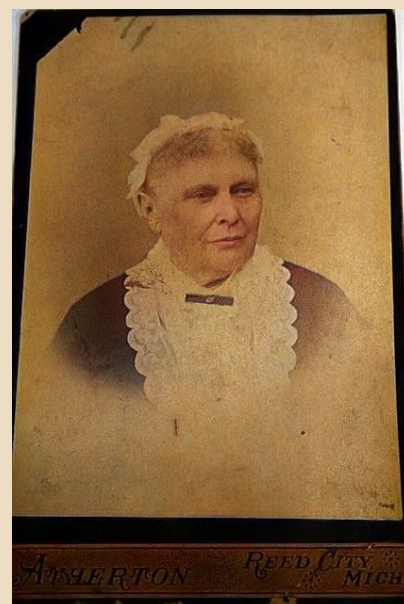
I don't know if every U.S. state has some sort of equivalent to First Families or Pioneer families, but Michigan does, too! In my blog (Michigan, my Michigan) I shared that my mother's family has every grandparent and their ancestors arriving (or being born) in Michigan back to at least the 1860s. Michigan has only two levels to their certification program: Pre-statehood (prior to 1837) and First Families (1837-1880).

After finishing Jim's PA First Families I decided that I would work on an easy line for me in the Michigan Pioneers. Again, none of my family names are already recorded so I had many to choose from. I decided to go with the Stoddard family, my mother's maternal grandmother's side. This took me less than 10 hours and the application fee is only \$25. I'm not sure if I was getting faster or because I have already submitted to DAR on this family I knew I had acceptable proof!



So, the application was submitted for Rodman Stoddard and Mary Matteson as a couple and was also accepted by the Michigan Genealogical Society. I don't have a photo of Rodman Stoddard (1797-1853) but I do have one of Mary Matteson Stoddard (1809-1893) at right. This is from my photo collection and was colorized by MyHeritage.

Rodman and Mary have an interesting story, they actually met in 1822 in Canada when Mary's father (Epaphras Matteson) kept moving west with his family and Rodman was into lumbering. With the Michigan Territory opening up, Rodman bought land from the U.S. federal government in Michigan (Detroit) and Epaphras bought it in Ann Arbor around the same time in 1824. When Epaphras dies in May of 1828 and his wife about 6 months later Mary at 19 is left an orphan. Mary's older sister was married at the time, so Mary and her younger brother were left under the care of a prominent man in the area, Esek Pray. Mary and Rodman were married three months later and the land her parents owned was deeded to Mary's brother.



FIRST FAMILIES OF PENNSYLVANIA (CONT. FROM PG. 6)

The most interesting thing that I found while digging into the documents were the Probate Records for Rodman Stoddard who died in 1853. Mary lived for another 40 years as a widow spending her last decade in Reed City, where my great-grandmother (who I knew!) knew her.

I tried my hand at transcribing these Probate handwritten documents from 1853 which clearly show that Henry Clay Stoddard (my great-great-grandfather) was the son of Rodman and Mary and along with the headstone of Rodman and Mary I could prove their relation. Lots of fun! And now Rodman and Mary are recorded in the Pioneer Families and similar to the First Families of PA the documentation I provided is also available to others. Definitely fruitful and worthwhile exercises!

To the Hon. Joseph C. Bagg, Judge of Probate for the County of Wayne in the State of Michigan

The petition of Mary Stoddard, who is of the age of twenty six years and upwards of the County of Wayne, respectfully shews That Rodman Stoddard late of the City of Detroit in said County of Wayne departed this life in said City of Detroit in said County on Friday the thirteenth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty three without leaving any last will and testament, as your petitioner is informed and verily believes That said deceased was at and immediately previous to his death an inhabitant of said County of Wayne, and that he was then possessor of Real and personal Estate situate and being in the County of Wayne State of Michigan to be administered, and that the estimated value thereof is the sum of fifteen thousand dollars or thereabouts as your petitioner is informed and believes And your petitioner further shews that the names and names of the heirs at law of said deceased are as follows

Mary Stoddard wife of said deceased of the City of Detroit aged forty four years
 Henry C. Stoddard of the age of twenty two years
 Charles M. Stoddard of the age of twenty years

Mary Stoddard of the age of eighty years
 Eliza Stoddard of the age of fifteen years
 Catherine Stoddard of the age of fourteen years
 Henry C. Stoddard of the age of twelve years
 Nathan A. Stoddard of the age of nine years
 Asst. Stoddard of the age of six years
 Mrs. L. Stoddard of the age of two months
 of the City of Detroit children and heirs of said deceased

Your petitioner therefore prays that all persons interested in said Estate may be duly cited as required by law, and as to this Court may seem proper, and that administration of said Estate may be granted to Mary Stoddard widow of said deceased and that such other and further order and proceeding may be had in the premises as may be required by the Statutes in such case made and provided

Mary Stoddard
 Dated at Detroit
 May 17 A.D. 1853

Handwritten probate documents (1853) left and above



CARLENTINI AND OMAHA: A CHAIN MIGRATION STORY

Nick Cimino | League City, Texas USA
ancestorpuzzles@gmail.com | ancestorpuzzles.com

A plaque on a building in Omaha, Nebraska reads, “This is Little Italy. In the early 1900s, immigrants came from Italy because ‘the streets of Omaha were lined with gold’. In Omaha there were jobs, an entrepreneurial spirit and an opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their families. They did just that.”

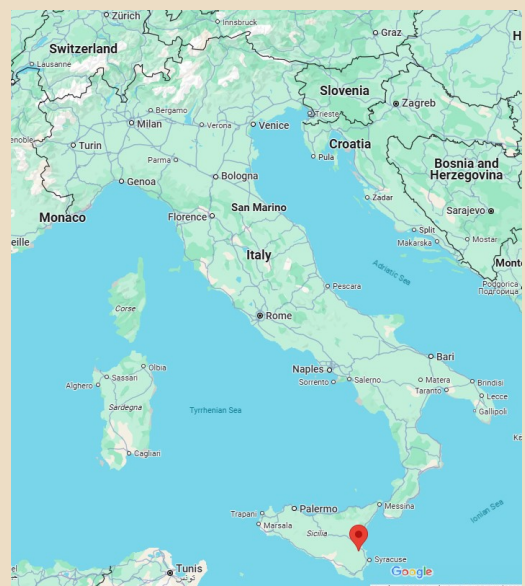
That's right, there are people with Italian heritage in Nebraska! The Italian neighborhood of Omaha was officially dubbed "Little Italy" in the 1910 census. My great grandfather, Antonino Cimino, immigrated from Carlentini, Sicily to Omaha in 1906. He appears in that census of Omaha in the household of his sister, Lucia and her husband, Filadelfo “Delfi” Calafiore. My great grandmother, Maria Ossino and her three children including my grandfather immigrated to Omaha in 1911.

Here is what the book *Italians of Omaha* had to say about Omaha's Little Italy as it existed in the 1930s:

"The most distinct Italian colony, from an ethnic standpoint, and in which segregation is most intense with the highest ratio of foreign-born, is Omaha's Little Italy. It lies in the eastern part of the city, south of the downtown business and industrial section. It is here that the Sicilians are in the majority with an astoundingly heavy representation from the towns of Lentini and Carlentini . . . if one were to stand on the corner of Sixth and Pierce Streets and question the Italians who passed, the tabulation would show Lentini and Carlentini in the Province of Syracuse as the place of origin of seven out of ten persons."

The connection between Carlentini and Omaha is an excellent example of chain migration which can be defined as the social process by which immigrants from a particular area follow others from that area to a particular destination. It can be further explained as “that movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and employment arranged by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants” (Macdonald).

(continued on pg 10)



CARLENTINI AND OMAHA: A CHAIN MIGRATION STORY (CONT.)

In Omaha, the Salerno brothers, who came from Carlentini, were the driving force in the process of recruiting immigrants from their hometown. Joseph Salerno immigrated in 1895 and by 1898 had a listing in the Omaha City Directory as a shoemaker based in what became Little Italy at 420 South 10th Street. His younger brother, Sebastiano, arrived in 1897 and quickly established a clothing business in what is now the Omaha Old Market. Joseph invested in buildings at 6th and Pierce Street that became stores and rooming houses.

In 1904, Sebastiano secured an appointment as a steamship company agent. He became a *padrone* who returned to Carlentini to increase the passenger transportation business between Sicily and America. In the decade from 1901-1910, Omaha received almost 2,500 people from Italy. These new residents, in addition to those who had come earlier, formed the nucleus of the Little Italy of the city

An article published in the *Omaha World Herald* in 1961 gives an interesting snapshot into the role played by Sebastiano Salerno with the Sicilian immigrants.



Flag of Sicily

"The train was late. It was three o'clock in the morning before it reached Omaha. Among the passengers who spilled onto the station platform were two 26-year old Italians, fresh off the boat. Neither spoke English. Sebastiano Salerno, their one-man reception committee, had no trouble picking them out of the crowd. He loaded

them into a horse-drawn cart and drove to the Red Palace, a rooming house-restaurant at Fourteenth and Leavenworth Streets. Mr. Salerno proposed a schedule for Sebastiano Troia and Charles Mangiameli. Eat first, he advised, and then sleep to noon. After that they might like to look over the town. The following day they would report for work at the Union Pacific railroad shops. Mr. Troia hesitantly asked what the job would pay. A dollar sixty a day, Mr. Salerno said. Mr. Troia translated that sum on his fingers. Eight lira! He and Mr. Mangiameli hugged each other. They were rich men! They abandoned thought of sleep and sightseeing. There was money to be made. Thus, it was that at 8 o'clock that same morning in 1906, five hours after their arrival in Omaha, Sebastiano Troia and Charles Mangiameli happily went to work" (McMorris).

What started as a trickle of immigrants grew quickly. Census reports for 1900 indicate 449 Italian natives lived in Omaha. In 1910, there were 2,331. The flow continued strong until World War I" (McMorris). Today, "of the approximately 60,000 Omaha residents who claim Italian heritage, two-thirds descend from Omaha's late 19th and early 20th century immigrants from Carlentini" (Shelley). (continued on pg 11)

CARLENTINI AND OMAHA: (CONT.)



*Wedding of Carmela Cimino and Pasquale "Peter"
Defazio, Sioux City, Iowa USA, April 1918*

These immigrants brought with them, not only a willingness to work hard to make it in their new land, they also brought customs and traditions. They brought their foods and music. The Feast of Santa Lucia, celebrated in Carlentini for hundreds of years, found its place in Omaha. The first Santa Lucia Festival in Omaha took place in 1925 and was organized by Grazia Bonafede and her husband, Rosario Caniglia. The Caniglia family were one of the first families from Carlentini to settle in Omaha's Little Italy. Grazia made the trek from her home near Sixth & Pierce Streets to the church at five every morning to say her prayers. As the story goes, she would pray to Santa Lucia and promise her that she would be honored in her new home in America.

Today the heart of Little Italy has moved to 10th and Williams, the site of the Saint Frances Cabrini Church and the Sons and Daughters of Italy Hall. Last July, Omaha celebrated the 100th Santa Lucia Festival in the streets around the church. Carlentini has been celebrating the Santa Lucia Festival for over 400 years.

While there are many other cases of chain migration where contacts have faded, the relationship between Omaha and Carlentini has flourished due to the hard work of Sheri Kanger, the third generation of an Omaha family that traces its roots to Carlentini, and Carmelita de la Guardia who immigrated with her parents from Carlentini when she was four years old. They share a passion for their ancestral home and have worked with many others to establish the Siculo Italia Foundation, with a mission to "formalize a relationship and strengthen the long-standing bonds between the cities of Omaha and of Carlentini, Sicily". (Shelley). Their efforts came to fruition when, in 2021 the mayors of Omaha, Nebraska and Carlentini, Sicily, formalized a Sister City Friendship Agreement, acknowledging the century-old bond between the two cities, enriched by shared history, family, faith, culture, and traditions. In July 2022, Mayor Giuseppe Stefio made his inaugural visit to Omaha. Mayor Stefio was officially received by Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert and attended the 98th annual Santa Lucia Festival, hosted by Omaha's Italian community.

Then in August, Mayor Stothert led a delegation of over 100 people to Carlentini, where they received a warm welcome. This visit coincided with the Santa Lucia Festival in Carlentini, a tradition celebrated for over 400 years. A team of translators facilitated the reunions between families spanning from America to Sicily. In honor of the historic relationship, Mayor Stefio dedicated a park in Carlentini named Parco Omaha.

Sources: The Italians of Omaha. Written and compiled by workers of the Writers; Program Work Projects Administration in the State of Nebraska ; sponsored by Order of Sons of Italy, digitized by Google and available at: HathiTrust <https://babel.hathitrust.org/> Macdonald, J. S. and Macdonald L. D. (January 1964). Chain Migration, Ethnic Neighborhood Foundation and Social Networks. The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly, Vol. 42, No. 1. p. 82. McMorris, R. (1961). Salernos Brought Italians to Omaha. Omaha World Herald Sun,. Oct. 15, 1961, p. 25. Shelley, R. (2024). Omaha's Italian Community: A Culture of Social Engagement. Douglas County Historical Society. [Available here.](#)

FAMILY RECIPE SHARING

Let us know if you have a family recipe that you will share with your FORG Friends.

Forgotten Cookies

Luanne Gatti Triolo Newman

2 egg whites, at room temperature
2/3 cup sugar
pinch salt
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup finely chopped pecans (optional!)
1 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°. Beat egg whites until foamy. Gradually add sugar and continue beating until they hold stiff peaks. Add salt and vanilla. Stir well. Stir in pecans and chocolate chips. Cover cookie sheet with foil and grease with butter or margarine. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto the foil. Put in oven then turn the oven off. Leave overnight in oven with door closed.

GERMAN POTATO SALAD

from Sue Wille Kunz



Ingredients:

- 5 lbs potatoes boiled, cooled, peeled, and sliced
- onion chopped
- celery chopped
- 1 lb bacon-cut up and fried-pour off some of the drippings
- 3 T flour to thicken-slightly rounded
- 1-1/2 c water
- 1-1/2 c vinegar
- 1 1/2 c sugar
- 1-1/2 t dry mustard
- 2 t salt

Directions:

Mix in saucepan and cook until thickened. Pour over potatoes, onions, and celery

"German Potato Salad was what Norma Gielow Wille made for all family occasions-particularly in summer."



GOT A DATE?

Do you struggle with dates? It's safe to say we all study a slew of Sundays and Saturdays sometimes in September as we look for birth, death, or marriage dates.

One fun day in some parts of the world is 04 May or May 4th. So you say you saw the science-fiction film full of familiar fearless fighters and flyers?

You may check [Wikipedia](#) for many details, but some say it has to do with Star Wars, Luke Skywalker ("Use the force, Luke") and perhaps a slight liturgical paraphrase, which often elicits a reply of "And also with you!" This is one date you do not need to worry about entering in any software or etching it in stone...simply **CELEBRATE!**

VARIATIONS and LOCATIONS of DATE FORMATS

DD-MM-YYYY

South America
Europe
Africa
much of Asia

MM-DD-YYYY

United States
Canada (sometimes)

YYYY-MM-DD

ISO 8601 Standard
Technical and
International contexts

Source: NCES

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR
OUR BOOTH NUMBER

Unable to attend
the convention?

