

Italian Migration To Pennsylvania

By
Frank Palumbo

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Pennsylvania has the second highest population of persons of Italian ancestry in the United States, with approximately 1.4 million, accounting for 12% of our population. (New York is first, with approximately 2.9 million.) Currently, Philadelphia has the State's highest population of Italian-Americans at almost 498,000, with Pittsburgh at second with over 316,000.

Although immigration from Italy to America and Pennsylvania dates back to colonial times in small numbers, this increased dramatically in the latter half of the 19th Century. Early examples of prominent Italian Pennsylvanians in the post-Revolutionary period include Paolo Busti of Milan and Francis Vigo of Mondovi, Italy. Mr. Busti worked for the Holland Land Company and managed the sale and development of over 5 million acres of land in Pennsylvania and New York. Francis Vigo, a fur trader and scout, aided the United States in efforts to remove the British military and government presence from the Northwest Territories and was consulted by President George Washington regarding the military response to the Whiskey Rebellion in Western Pennsylvania.

As far as the immigration chronology, by 1870 there were less than 1,000 Italian-born persons residing in Pennsylvania. By 1890, there were over 24,000, then almost 200,000 by 1910! The First World War in which Italy was a participant, as were thousands of Italian-American immigrants and citizens on the side of Britain and France, resulted in a decline in the immigration rate, but even so immigration picked-up post war and by 1920 an additional 26,000 Italian-born immigrants came to Pennsylvania. Initially, many Italians first came through out of state ports like Ellis Island before going to their Pennsylvania destinations by train. This started to change with increased travel on steamship passenger services like the Red Star and American Steamship Lines going directly to Philadelphia by the turn of the century. Overall, approximately 1 million immigrants arriving by ship between 1873 and

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MENEFEE STARS AT MOUNT PLEASANT

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that he is looking forward to the next By Annual Convention where he hopes to attend as a Delegate of his Lodge. He said that he would like to thank Past State President Anthony M. Lizza for being a great mentor and for teach-

ing him Italian and for being like an uncle to him, lastly he wants to thank State President Michael Cerruti, State Orator Amato Santi, Esquire and all the members of the Grand Council for serving in the positions they individually hold. Special

thank you to the Police Officers and Firemen that signed the hat and shirt and for giving him coins at the last Convention. He is very much looking forward to meeting everyone at the next Convention in Greensburg in 2021.

Cultural Corner

By
Anna Forte

A legend is a folk narrative that may relate to a religious subject or tell a story about the past.

Remember the story of George Washington and the cherry tree? What has been repeated over and over again is that young George was given a hatchet as a gift and he used it to chop down a cherry tree. When questioned by his father, the boy replied, "Father, I cannot tell a lie. I chopped down the tree."

Children are often told this tale when parents want to extract the truth about an incident because George Washington was an historical hero, and youngsters were taught to admire him.

Legends were sometimes exaggerated or meant to carry a message, but most often details are changed as they are repeated from person to person or from one place to another. February, Valentine's Day is celebrated, and gifts and cards are exchanged between loved ones. St. Valentine's Day has become a day of celebration in honor of this mysterious saint and, as a result, various legends have been shared ever since the Middle Ages.

La Leggenda di San Valentino

Today, the Catholic Church recognizes at least three

different saints named Valentine or Valentinus. All three of these men were martyred because of their religious and moral beliefs.

One legend contends that Valentine served as a priest during the third century in Rome. Claudius II, the Emperor, decided that young men should not marry as they would make better soldiers if they were not saddled with wives and families. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied the Emperor and secretly continued to perform marriages for young couples.

When this action was discovered, Claudius immediately ordered Valentine to be put to death. Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape from Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and tortured.

Valentine was a priest and physician who lived in ancient Rome. Unfortunately, because of his religious faith, this young Christian was imprisoned. Later by the order of Claudius the Goth, who ruled from 268-270 A.D., Valentine was beheaded on February 14, 269.

Since Valentine had great devotion for religion and all those he served, his name became associated with

love. The legend is that during his imprisonment, he spent much time thinking about his beloved family and friends. He longed to have some kind of association with them. It so happened that outside of Valentine's cell window grew some lovely violets, which he was able to reach. He picked a few leaves from the violets that resembled hearts and scratched on them these words, "Remember your Valentine." A dove that daily perched on his windowsill carried the message to his loved ones. Many more leaves were sent bearing the simple message, "I love you," and signed, "Your Valentine."

Frequently, lovebirds are found on Valentine cards. The explanation for this is that in medieval times, people claimed that the birds paired off on February 14. This date became significant as a special day to display affection for that "special person."

It is interesting to reflect, as we read over the tale of young Valentine, that the patron of lovers was an Italian. Perhaps, this is what led to the famous saying, "Italian men are great lovers."

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LODGE NEWS



ITALY HERE WE COME!

Custodes Pacis will be hosting a ten day trip to Italy from September 9th to September 20th, 2020. We hope to have plenty of company from our brother and sister Grand Lodge members throughout Pennsylvania as we connect with our heritage, history, and culture where it all began!

Thanks to great work by CP Brother Russ Capacio, our trip committee, and our Italian Language-fluent and culturally astute travel agent and tour guide Daniel McGee, this is going to be a fantastic trip that truly includes much of the best of Italy!



St. Peter's Square, Vatican City, Rome
Photo by Caleb Miller on Unsplash

ranked by Forbes as among the most beautiful cities on Earth, the hub of Renaissance art, culture, commerce, and science. Florence was established by Julius Caesar in 69 BC and was the Capital of post-Resurgimento to Italy from 1865 to 1871. It was also the home of the rich and powerful Medici family, the great Poet Dante Aligheri, and Michelangelo, painter of the Sistine Chapel and sculptor of the David included in our walking tour of Florence. During our four days in Florence, there will also be an optional lunch-included tour to the historic cities of Pizza, home of the famous Leaning Tow-

er, and Luca, with its cobblestone streets and medieval walls that surround most of its old city.

There will also be optional tours to San Gimignano in the Siena province in the beautiful Tuscan hills, famous for its religious frescos, medieval churches, towers, vineyards and a winery we will visit for included lunch.

Speaking of Italian food, or cuisine more accurately stated, our trip to Italy includes a welcome dinner in each of our cities of lodging and daily breakfasts – thirteen included meals total). After our stay in Florence, we'll head northeast towards Ven-

After arriving in Italy, we'll check-in for the first of our four star hotels stay for three nights in Rome, Italy's Eternal Capitol City and the home of Christianity, gladiators, and the World's greatest empire of antiquity. In keeping with such history, tours included with our Rome itinerary will be to the Vatican and Saint Peter's Basilica, with optional trips to the Colosseum and Pompei on the beautiful Amalfi Coast. (Don't worry – No volcanic eruptions since 79 AD!)

Next we'll travel north by private luxury coach to Florence in the Tuscany region,



The Roman Colosseum
Photo by David Köhler on Unsplash

ice, but will stop for a day trip to Bologna, the historic capital of the Emilia-Romagna region. Among Bologna's many famous sites are the Piazza Maggiore with arched colonnades, its cafes and medieval and Renaissance structures such as City Hall, the Fountain of Neptune, the Basilica di San Petronio, and the-somewhat leaning towers of Asinelli and Garisenda.

From Bologna it's on to Venice, the city literally built on the Adriatic Sea and its lagoons. Venice is the home of the amazing Saint Mark's Basilica of the 11th Century and many other incredible structures, some dating back to the 5th Century AD! Water taxis serve as cars and the canals are the roads to get around within much of the 118 small

Islands of Venice. And yes, a gondola tour is included during our stay!

Optional tours here are visits to the lagoon towns of Burano, known for its brightly painted fisherman's houses, bussolai buranei, (butter cookies) and famous colored lace and garment making, as well as its leaning bell tower. What is it with Italy and its' leaning towers?!

The optional tour also goes to the Island of Murano, with its' world renowned ornate glass ornaments on display in its' shops and at the Murano Glass Factory. (I know my wife will definitely be spending her Euros here.) From Venice we head home. Oh well, it can't last forever. But the experiences, memories, and pictures from this trip will last a lifetime. Don't miss it!



Medici Chapel, Florence
Photo by Mark Boss on Unsplash

Policicchio Wins District 9 Scholarship

Olivia Policicchio is a first year student at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, PA, majoring in public Policy with aspirations of working as a political consultant. During her first semester she earned a 3.5 GPA. Olivia is a member



District 9 Scholarship Winner Olivia Policicchio

A Message From The Pennsylvania Commission for Social Justice

The purpose and mission of the Pennsylvania Commission for Social Justice is to protect the history of Americans of Italian decent from stereotyping and discrimination while also highlighting their contributions.

We, the members of the Pennsylvania Commission for Social Justice, would like to hear of any injustice being done on any American of Italian descent, and would like to work with the Dante Commission to right these wrongs. We can be reached through the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania Sons and Daughters of Italy.

We must strive to