



Friends of Historic Vineland

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WHAT'S IN A NAME???

Centuries ago the custom was started of giving a person a name around the time of their birth. Usually this was just one name, and so to distinguish the person from others of the same name, a second or surname was given such as John the Hunter (John Hunter) or Harold the Smithy (Harold Smith).

As far as the West is concerned, at the Council of Trent in 1463, it was decided that priests administering Baptism should make certain that children were given names of Catholic saints. This was decided because of the Protestant custom which was spreading at that time of giving children names of people from the Old Testament such as Abraham, Samuel and Rachel. It

was also decreed that every parish must keep complete registers of Baptisms with the names of the child and those of the parents and grandparents. (Because of this, it is possible in many instances for Americans to go back to Europe and look up their family history even if it's only for the past 500 years.) During the French Revolution, there was a reaction against that law and complete freedom was allowed in the giving of names. The law was later modified when the French (always a peculiar people) started to use names such as Mort aux Aristocrats (death to the aristocrats).

As far as Italians are concerned (who of course are not peculiar and do everything logi-

cally), it is the usual custom (at least in Italy) to name a child after the grandmother or grandfather. When one couples that with the use of the name of a saint, it can be seen that most people (in Italy) will have the same name.

Isolation was very common in the countryside of Italy in the last few hundred years. So, it was not (and is not) uncommon for most of the people in a town to belong to two or three families. For example, 40% of the people might have the surname of "Iacono," and another 40% are Mattera. Now, when you figure that most of the women are named Maria, and most of the men are Giuseppe or Francesco, one can immediately see that going to that town and asking for Francesco Mattera would be a lost

**EVENTS YOU
DON'T WANT TO
MISS!!**

**Library
Foundation
Dinner Dance
"You're Booked"
Sat,
October 7**

**Art night at the
Vineland Library,
Sat., Oct. 15
starting at 7:00
PM**

**Millennium Event
at the Cumber-
land County Col-
lege Sat., Oct. 21
starting at
10:00 Am**

**Italians and the
4'th Millennium,
a slide show by
Frank De Maio at
the Vineland Li-
brary, Sun. Oct.,
29'th starting at**

cause in trying to find that person. Limpy.”

This gave rise to the common use of “nick-names” in Italy (see, I told you they were logical). That is, they give another name to the person to distinguish him/her from others. Such a name (in Italian if in Italy of course) could be “dumb,” “limpy,” “baldy,” “bananas,” and so forth. Among friends, the nick name would be the only name used. This custom of course drove the FBI crazy in America when they wire tapped the Mafia and tried to figure out who they were talking about on the phone when they taped such conversations as, “Tell Bananas that he’s gotta meet with Crazy at the home of

Now, when it comes to English, we all know the significance of such names as Smith, Hunt, Fields, Green, or White. On the other hand, it might be interesting to consider what some of the Italian names mean!

Here are some last names and what they mean!!!

- Calvo--baldy
- Scarpa--shoe
- Angelucci--little angles
- Barbieri--barbers
- Boccelli--bump (pleural)
- Cresci--(you) grow
- Cugino--cousin
- The prefix “di” means from, and “della” means “of the.” Hence, Della Rosa would mean “of the rose”
- Leone--lion
- Lupi--wolves
- Malatesta--bad head

- Musso--muzzle or snout
- Riccio--curly (like as in hair)
- Testa--head
- Traverso--I cross
- Zucca--squash or pumpkin

And now, here are some first names and what they mean!!!

- Battista--Baptist
- Chiara--clear
- Concetta--a thought
- Agnello--a lamb
- Domenica--Sunday
- Felice--happy
- Pietro--stone
- Angelo--angle
- Rosa--pink (like a rose)

So, if you have some interesting names to report to us, just send us a letter and we would be happy to print them (and what they mean, of course!!).

By: Frank De Maio, M.D.

What Does the Future Hold??

I read a publication on a lecture by Joseph Treat on “The Future of Vineland.” This was written around 1880. He had some good things to say about Vineland as it existed at that time and predicted that it would progress to be even greater. Now, I presume that Joe was the husband of Mary (Treat). You all know Mary, of course. She was the one that played around with bugs and wrote letters to Darwin (the famous man who wrote the book “The Origin of the Species.”). I figured that a man smart enough to marry

Mary might say something worth reading.

Joe predicted that Vineland would grow from a city of 12,000 to 50,000 and then even more to 100,000 people . He felt that Boston at that time was the Athens of America, but that Vineland would be a society “superior to all.”

He hoped that Tobacco, “that abomination would be banished from Vineland, and that young ladies would refuse to associate with the young men who, by

smoking, make themselves perpetual nuisances.”

He felt that dogs should be banned. He said that “dogs belong to hunting. No dog has any business in Vineland!”

He also had a lot to say about women’s rights and their right to vote. They could not vote in those days, and he spent a considerable amount of time explaining how women had the right to vote and the men of Vineland would recognize their ability and their right to do so.

The Future of Vineland, (Cont.)

Seems to me that being married to Mary, he knew what side his bread was buttered on, and as for Mary, she must have spent her day doing more than chasing after bugs.

Of course, he did have some great wishes when he said that "lawyers here will work in their own fruit orchards, instead of pleading law for a living." Unfortunately he was messed up and thought that there would be no law suits in Vineland.

He was also messed up about doctors when he said that "doctors will be so glad and proud they live in a place so healthy that no one can be sick, and **they** will work like the rest!!!" Work like the rest--come on now, how messed up can you get!

He also spent a great deal of time talking about how intellectual Vineland would be-

come, which of course is what our school board is working on right now and should be ready in the near future.

Well, there it is folks, what we were supposed to be. You can figure out if we have lived to up what some of the great Vinelanders of the past hoped we would be.

By: Frank De Maio, M.D.

Vineland Is A Melting Pot: By Ross Kuhnreich, age 16

The similarities between the Vineland of yesterday and today are striking. Charles Landis envisioned a city with a main street running through it's heart with an environmentally suitable area to raise a family and to find job opportunities. He also wanted a settlement close to major cities, booming with loads of diverse cultures. Certainly Vineland is rich in all of the above.

No one can deny the fact that Charles Landis was a visionary and progressive for his day. He understood the value of the melting pot concept. He realized the many contributions each and every group could provide to the enhancement of our city.

Unfortunately, there was prejudice then and there is prejudice now but for the most part there was and is acceptance and tolerance. For example, during the Civil War period we had abolitionists in Vineland who spoke against slavery. We also had

men that fought in the Civil war because they believed in equality for everyone.

Later, the Italians found a safe haven in Vineland. That not to say it was all "smooth sailing" for them, because they too encountered hatred. Fortunately, they grew in numbers, were accepted, and left their mark all over our city. Take a ride through our neighborhoods and read some of the street signs such as Italia, Dante or Genoa Ave. How about some of our schools such as Dane Barse or Dippolito?

In the late 1800's the Jews came into areas outside of Vineland such as Norma, Rosenhayn, and Alliance. Later, after the Holocaust another wave of Jewish immigrants--the survivors--came to Vineland to start their lives anew. Many became very successful as businessmen or as poultry farmers. My grandparents were among those in the

egg business. They had the original Green Acres, then eventually they went into a retail business.

Today Vineland has a very sizable Hispanic community and like the immigrants before them, their contributions to Vineland are many. There are other groups, and though I have not mentioned them, I don't mean to minimize their importance because Vineland has certainly benefited from many, many groups. A common element among the many groups has been the desire for their children to work hard and become productive citizens.

Its comforting to know that we are still defined by our diversity. Charles Landis did have his quirks as do many of us in Vineland today, but his vision of a city for all people is what gives our little corner of the world its uniqueness, in spite of all our quirkiness!



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