

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC VINELAND

Fall Issue



What is a Vinelander??



The famous Mason Jar with the Screw Top

In the very nice recent edition of the Jersey Fresh newspaper insert, there was an article by Carole Ann Lang entitled, "Vineland Native Revolutionized Food Storage." The article stated that, "Nov. 30 marks the 145th "birthday" of an invention by a Vineland na-

tive, a product that revolutionized food preparation and the eating habits of the world. On that day in 1858, John Landis Mason patented his creation, his Mason jar.

John was the son of a Scottish farmer and was born in Vineland in 1832. As a young man, he moved to New York City, where he established a shop on Canal Street. Here he conceived the idea of his jar that would keep the fruits and vegetables he and his father once raised fresh.

By mid-November of 1858, Mason had taken out his first patent. For the next 75 years, *Mason's Patent, Nov. 30, 1858* was inscribed on the jars."

Well, there you have it. A story repeated many times. Mr. Mason, of Mason jar fame was a Vinelander! So I ask you, what is a Vinelander?? Mr. Mason was born in this area **before** Vineland was founded. He left this area **before** Vineland was founded. He moved to New York, and there he developed the Mason Jar **before** Vineland was founded, and he patented it **before** Vineland was founded. Yet we call him a Vinelander.

The last time that I read about Mr. Mason in the Daily Journal, it was stated by Doug Fuhrmann on Friday, May 9, 2003 that Mason was "born within the borders of the future city of Vineland."

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Thank You!!!
We need your help!*

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Now, all of this raises the question *What is a Vineland??* That question would be linked to another question, which is, “Why do we keep bringing up prominent people and point out that they came from Vineland?” I think that the answer lies in the fact that people from the beginning of time have tried to define who and what they are. This starts in families where the elders explain to the young what and who they are and what is expected of them. Examples are mentioned to provide a guiding image—when your grandfather moved to this area, all of this was woods. First he had to clear the land, and then he had to plant the crops. And you complain about mowing that small piece of lawn!!!

Not only does it exist in families, it also does so in communities and in countries. From what I can see, no great country has ever existed that has not had it's stories and myths of it's great heroes of the past and what the last generation had to do to live up to the spirit of the founding fathers.

So, what is it that we are trying to say when we mention the greats of Vineland past?? Well, first of all, Charles K. Landis wanted his community to be an Ideal Community. He did everything in his power to make it productive, safe, liberal, accepting, and progressive. He gave large awards for excellence. He gave free land to every religion that wanted to build a church, insisted on the clearing of land rather than the speculation on land for profit.

Therefore, it would seem to me that when we mention someone like Mary Treat, who came to Vineland because of the intellectual opportunities that were offered to her, a woman, we are actually trying to make the point of what Vineland was and what those efforts produced. We want to point out how the people of Vineland, having grown up in such an attitude, were able to go on to great things. In essence, we say, “See, Vineland might have been a small country town, but because of the ideals of it's founder, and because the people

that came here were of a like mind and thrived in the atmosphere that he created, the city of Vineland was able to produce great thinkers like Mary Treat, innovators like Mr. Welch of Welch grape juice fame, and a Mr. Durand who encouraged artistic beauty in glass.

So what about Mr. Mason?. He was born in the area that later became Vineland. He was never exposed to the concept of Vineland with it's emphasis on excellence that was fostered by Landis. So what was it about being born in an area, full of trees, mosquitoes, and swamps that imparted the talent and the ingenuity that enabled Mr. Mason to develop his Mason Jar? Personally, I think nothing!! There is little point to including Mr. Mason in the list of Vineland accomplishments because there is nothing that he did that relates to what Vineland was or what it should be. He had no more connection to Vineland than did George Washington!

By the way , WAS GEORGE A VINELANDER???



Be A Part Of History. Help Rebuild The Palace Depression

Yep, it's being rebuilt. This is what it looks like at this phase of construction. You too can help. Call Kevin Kirchner at 856 692 7219 and find out what you can do to help.

No, you do not have to grow a beard, put your hair up in curlers, or use a walking stick, although if you do want a stick, Kevin can sell you one that he made!

Old Homes As History Books



*Home of Armando Maretti
on
Landis Avenue*

We were driving down East Landis Ave. the other day and I passed by an old house with real character. Many years ago, it was a garden spot. Today, it still looks pretty good. That got me thinking—the view of each and every one of those old and beautiful homes is like the cover of a book, each attractive enough to make us wonder what story it has to tell.

The home I was looking at was that of Armando G. Maretti, the son of Mr. & Mrs. John Maretti, the owner of the old Vineland

hotel bearing his name. He was born in Vineland in 1890 and grew up “in our town.” He attended Vineland High School, then went to the Philadelphia Business School, a Quaker College. He showed great talent in baseball, football, and basketball and kept his interest in those sports to his dying day.

He returned to work for the city of Vineland in the office of the Municipal Clerk. Then in 1916 he entered the coal business. He acquired controlling interests in large coal deposits located in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. During World War I he was able to supply many businesses to keep the war machine going. By 1919 he was delivering 250,000 tons of coal a year, with the amount increasing yearly.

It was said of Mr. Maretti that he had a pleasing personality, was ruggedly honest, and always kept his word. He was active in local affairs and did his job well whether a worker or a captain. During the war he helped collect Liberty Loans, and he was involved in hospital projects.

It was my good fortune to get to know Mr. Maretti in his latter years. He often came to the office wearing a pair of overalls and talking with the other patients in the waiting room like a long lost brother.

He was greatly devoted to his garden and spent long hours working there utilizing some younger men to do the heavy work. On one occasion, knowing that I was growing roses he came over with his “crew” and had them plant five different varieties of Peace roses. He made sure that they were planted to perfection, the right depth, plenty of peat moss and so forth.

We also got to know his wife, Mary. She was a lady’s lady—always proper, well dressed, polite, gracious! She was not superficial and was very well read.

Just think how many other “books” there are in Vineland with other interesting stories if we opened the cover and peered inside!!

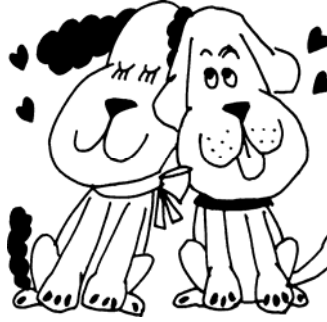
So You Like History!!

Well, you can get some great history if you go to the yearly slide show on Italy held in October, Italian Heritage Month, at the Vineland Public Library.

This year’s show will be called “From Vineland To Venice, A History Of Glass.” It will feature a discussion on the origins of Venice from the time the city was started in the mud flats of the Poe river by people who wanted to escape the Barbarians after the fall of Western Rome. It will feature slides of the creation of some of the greatest glass the world had seen on the island of Murano in Venice, to the importation of glass production to the new world (America) and it’s eventual migration to southern New Jersey, and finally Vineland. Naturally, we will also speak of the great glass blowers of this region, such as Joe Luisi.

Part of the show will be accompanied by the music of some of the musical greats of Italy, such as Rossini, Verdi, and Tosti. It will end with songs sung by the fabulous Andrea Bocelli.

The following great FRIENDS have contributed to "the cause" over the past 2 years. We want to thank each and every one. We cannot afford to pay for news letters, sending out calendars, and so forth without your donations. We need your help, and we appreciate it. We hope to continue what we do, but we do need your help!!



We think you
are great!!

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