

# FRIENDS OF HISTORIC VINELAND

## Founder's Day Edition



**Carl Biletta—One of the “Old Faithfuls”**

### *Founder's Day, 2003*

From all accounts, Founder's Day this year went well. The reason lies in the dedication and hard work of many, many great people of Vineland who participated in the event. Again this year, we had the “old faithfuls” such as Kevin (George Daynor) Kirchner, Abraham (Matt Jordan) Lincoln, Dr. Mary (Carol Paterson) Dunlap, Clara (Rosanne Hughes) Barton, Tony Menone, Matilda (Mary Ribaud) Landis, and so forth. But in addition, we had a number of new historical characters that I would like you to meet.

First of all, we had Mike

(Giuseppe Garibaldi) Mastro who introduced himself as the “hero of two worlds” and spoke about his efforts to unify Italy which ultimately resulted in a stream of Italian immigrants to Vineland. (It is obvious that the history of Vineland should not be learned in a vacuum, and learning about the great events outside of Vineland that modified the history of our town is important. Making the students understand that concept is also important.)

Joe Costanzo took on the part of an early carpenter that helped build Vineland. Joe had a fantastic collection of old tools and he showed how to use them. It was not hard for Joe to do this because he is an accomplished carpenter and has worked on many an old home that was constructed in the old fashioned way. His trick was to use the “hands-on” technique and get the kids to actually use the tools and drill holes and cut wood the old fashioned way.

Sojourner (Willa Mae Latimore) Truth showed up to

talk about the unbelievable effort that blacks made to try to obtain their freedom in early America. Willa-Mae is no stranger to history. Her love is genealogy and she has spent long hours working on local family histories. She has joined us this year, and if we are lucky, she will be back next year. She will be working together with Harriet (Darlene Durham) Tubman.

John Luptin put on his usual display of skill in showing the talent of an old



**Iron Man, John Luptin**

iron worker. He was able to set up a furnace that quickly heated metal to a white hot temperature and then actually had the kids banging away on the metal to shape it!

*This issue is devoted entirely to Founder's Day, 2003. We think it was a great event. The people who participated, made it so.*

*We would like to make it bigger and better each year. To do so means that more and more Vinelanders and surrounding citizens need to take part in the event. You can be a part of it by actively participating, or coming to visit the event. Let your imagination run wild, and join the fun. Here's hoping for a sunny 2004!*

*Thanks Folks!!  
Frank De Maio, M.D.*

It was amazing to watch him at work with the kids hammering away and the sparks flying.

Carl Biletta was able to get Mr. William Gardella to help explain the early finances of Vineland. Few know that Landis basically was penniless when he started Vineland. He was given 500 gold dollars by his mother, then went out and bought the land for 7 dollars an acre, no money down and no interest or principle payments for 3 ½ years. Now how is that for a financial trick? This is a man that, within a few years, was spending thousands and thousands of dollars a year just on advertising.

Joe Ucciferri was there as a friend of Abe (Matt Jordan) Lincoln. Joe was a big, big help to us on both days. He doubled in as an orderly and helped carry some of the wounded to the medical tent when they were shot during a skirmish between the North and South. Next year he will explain surveying. Joe doesn't need any lessons in that field as he is an expert already. Surveying was very important in laying out the boundaries of Vineland and of the individual properties. Also, we should keep in mind that it was the personal surveyor of Landis who drove the original stake in the ground at Railroad and Landis Ave. on August 8, 1861 that put the entire plan of Vineland in motion.

Allen Samuels is not a newcomer to our event, but this year he prepared an outstanding exhibit on the history of the Training School. The School led the nation and the world in the study and treatment of a variety of psy-

chological problems, as well as doing studies on chickens, grape and a variety of other subjects. The intellectual climate in Vineland at the turn of the century made it a natural to host both the Training School which was for boys and girls, and the State School (Developmental Center) which was exclusively for girls.



**Bill Mazza (Station 92.1)  
man of the hour!!**

And finally, what can we say about Bill Mazza from radio station 92.1?? He was great. First of all, somebody stole the tent on the poor guy on Friday, and when it started to rain heavily he and all his equipment was drenched with water. Did you ever see water run out of a lap top computer?? Believe it or not, it actually worked the next day. Bill took it all in stride, and made himself an essential part of the program. He had live interviews during the day, made announcements, played background music from the Civil War period and allowed us to use his equipment when we made announcements.

### **Partners:**

It is our intentions to have each re-enactor be accompanied by another person to help with the program. So, if a re-enactor

wants to visit another site and so on, there will always be someone in the tent. Re-enactors such as Kevin Kirchner made effective use of this technique by having the Jersey Devil (Jeff Triante) at his side. Also, Rosanne (Clara Barton) Hughes had Paula Grucio, Carl Biletta had Bill Gardella, Matt (Abraham Lincoln) Jordan had Joe Ucciferri and Mike (Giuseppe Garibaldi) Mastro had Luis Walker by his side.

### **Group Sponsors:**

We have had a number of groups that attend and participate. Examples are the Woman's Club that is present with Carol (Dr. Mary Dunlap) Patterson, the Art Alliance with many of it's members present to help when they get the kids making kites, Robert Trivellini working with the Southern Civil War Re-enactors when they train the kids in the basic rules of infantry, and Mrs. Cornelia (Viola Smithcors) Hancock who is supported by the local Lyon club of Civil War re-enactors as they put on the women's afternoon tea.

We also had the Vineland Public Library send over some very talented ladies who have a special touch with the kids.

### **Our Themes:**

Our theme this year was "fun for the kids." We really did have a bunch of things that they could do. First of all, we had Kathy & Mike Shondeck who has special training in showing the kids how they had fun in the old days. This constituted 3 legged races, hoop racing, catch the hoop (called Graces) and so forth. The Art Alliance again had kite making



***Art Alliance:  
Making Kites  
The Old Fashioned Way***

and 200 kids had their creations flying through the air as they raced across the green. Kids were able to watch pottery making, weaving, taste the cookies made by the Boy Scouts, join the army and have training in marching and drilling, get a free Civil War army cap, and walk a rope bridge. Unfortunately, the horse and pony did not show up so the kids missed out on those rides this year.

I think it was also fun for them to hear the cannons go off, watch the battles between the North and South, and speak to all the historical characters that were present.

Having students see adults participate in an event of this type, especially on Friday which is devoted exclusively to the kids, also gave a great message as to the interest that we adults have in their edu-

cation and that adults can have varied interests. Finally, they definitely got the message that history can be fascinating and can be fun.

**The Future:**

We would love to see a Hispanic group sponsor a tent. For the past few years, we have not been able to attract someone to represent the Hispanics who constitute a considerable portion of the population of Vineland. Also, we would love for the Sicilian American Club or the Italian Benevolent Society to become a part of the event. After all, Garibaldi did liberate Sicily from the Bourbon kings of Naples.

Swanson's Hardware store has promised to set up a communications booth that will discuss the history of communica-

tions. If they sell a few Cell Phones in the process, good for them!

We can always accommodate other businesses or clubs. How about the Rotary Club? Maybe they can help somehow.

I would really like Todd & Lori who wrote the "critical" article about Founder's Day to join the fun. They had so many suggestions about what others should do for Founder's day that we would love for them to set an example and show us what they can do! It would be great if they play the role of a newspaper editor such as Uri Carruth and give the history of newspapers in Vineland. (After all, Charles K. did start the first newspaper in Vineland.) We might even get Charles K. Landis to "answer the criticism" in the peculiar and unique way that he responded to Uri Carruth (just kidding folks, but we really would welcome them to be a part of the fun!!).

We certainly plan to enlarge upon the theme of "Camp by Candlelight." We had it this year, but it was basically rained out. Next year, we plan to make it a bigger part of the Civil War reenactment. We should have some camp music and if we can get some kind hearted stores to do so, might offer coffee and cookies for the visitors.



***Training To Join The Army. They Kept Their Caps***

***Vineland, The Old Egg Capital Of The World. Grandma Clara Barton (Roseanne Hughes) Is Proud Of This One***



***Charles K. Landis speaking, C. Hancock looks on!***



# More Scenes From Founder's Day 2003



Sue Fanelli, Making Paper



Ready, Aim, Fire!! Get Those Rebels!!



*Taking The Wounded To The Surgical Tent.*



*Tony, The Master With Wood, Showing How To Use Old Tools*

## ***DO YOU WANT TO JOIN??*** TO BE A MEMBER

- BENEFACTOR.....\$100
- SPONSOR.....\$50
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- INDIVIDUAL.....\$30
- STUDENT.....\$5

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The Friends have no connections with the Vineland  
Historical Society or any other society!

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Mail to: Friends of Historic Vineland  
C/O Frank De Maio, M.D.  
1047 Almond St.  
Vineland, NJ 08360