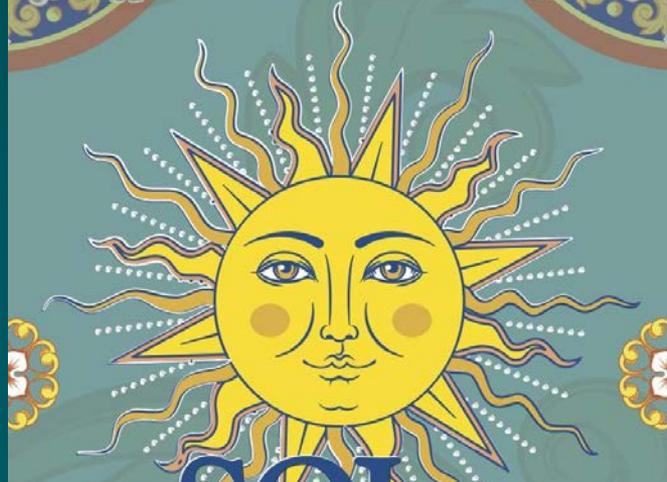


Vacaville  Museum
A Center for Solano County History



SOLE ItaliANO

Italian Roots in Solano County

MARCH 7 - OCTOBER 11, 2020

~ Italian Sun ~

Sole Italiano - Italian Sun

Italian Roots in Solano County



Solano County, like California itself, is a community built on a foundation of immigration. For most residents, the family path to Solano County started with one or a handful of ancestors enduring an arduous journey from a far-off land to make our golden hills home. Like many immigrants, the Gold Rush lured Italians to California, but they stayed and settled in Solano County because of its special qualities: rich soils, temperate climate, good transportation, and available land.

A large wave of Italian immigration came at the turn of the 20th century, largely spurred by poor economic conditions in Italy. High taxes severely impacted the agrarian population, especially in the south, leading many to emigrate. Those who made their way to Solano County wrote back to their families extolling its virtues, then sponsored those who wanted to join them here.

The end of WWI brought another influx of immigrants to Solano County due to political unrest in Italy. Soon after their arrival, immigrants were falsely blamed for bombings in the US, and legal immigration was curtailed. This prompted many Italians to emigrate to South America instead. In the 1950s, quotas were lifted and a new generation of Italians immigrated across the sea to become Americans. Some were following earlier relatives, but many sought to escape the ruins of the war. Better educational and economic opportunities here were a powerful lure. Other Italian Americans stayed to called Solano County home after being stationed at Travis AFB.



While adopting the American way of life, Italian Americans preserved the best of their old traditions -- especially the importance of food and family, and the joy of celebrating both. These traditions are now part of Solano County's rich history and culture and we invite you to come celebrate with us.
Welcome to *SOLE ItaliANO!*

Coming to America





Caterina and Antonio Forneris, c 1910

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

1917

Forneris / Esperance

Antonio Forneris' two older brothers emigrated to South America, leaving him to fulfill the family's military obligation. In 1903 Antonio emigrated to the US, working on bridges to make enough money to bring his wife, Caterina, and child, Marie, the following year. They lived in Southern California and Wheatland, CA, until settling on a fruit ranch in Dixon in 1918. Marie met Joseph Esperance, son of Italian immigrants John and Marie from the Italian-French border region, while in Southern California. They married in 1922 and had a ranch in Dixon.





Gallino / Lombardo

Luigi and Caterina (Rina) Gallino married in 1920, and left Varese Ligure, Italy, for the US that same year. Their daughter Angelina, and her husband Lorenzo Lombardo, lived on a ranch on Steiger Hill in Vacaville for 40 years. Both families bought ranches in Dixon, and a trail on their land there is dedicated to Rina.

Coming to America



Addiego

Vito Addiego emigrated to the US from Verbecaro, Italy, in 1906. He settled in the El Cerrito area and founded a cement factory. Vito helped others in his family emigrate, including brother Francesco (Frank), his wife Teresa, their son Guido and five other siblings in 1958. Everyone in the family worked hard in the factories, restaurants and as groundskeepers. Guido and his wife Yolanda were able to open All-Bay Lumber with Ennio DePianto and Charlie Brusco. About 1973, they bought a fruit ranch in Vacaville, relying on the old foreman to know how to run it. Later, they bought Cafe Bacci and were instrumental in developing Vacaville's Town Square. The family purchased Vacaville's Opera House in the 1990s.





FRANCESCO ADDIEGO
FEB. 29, 1965 ITALY
BLACK
EXP. 8. 1975
NEW APPELLATION 8. 1965



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA

TERESA CAMPAGNA ADDIEGO
14 Aprile 1970
U.S.A.
14 Aprile 1970



Passports for Francesco and Teresa Addiego, 1972 and 1985, and a case brought from Italy by Guido Addiego in 1959

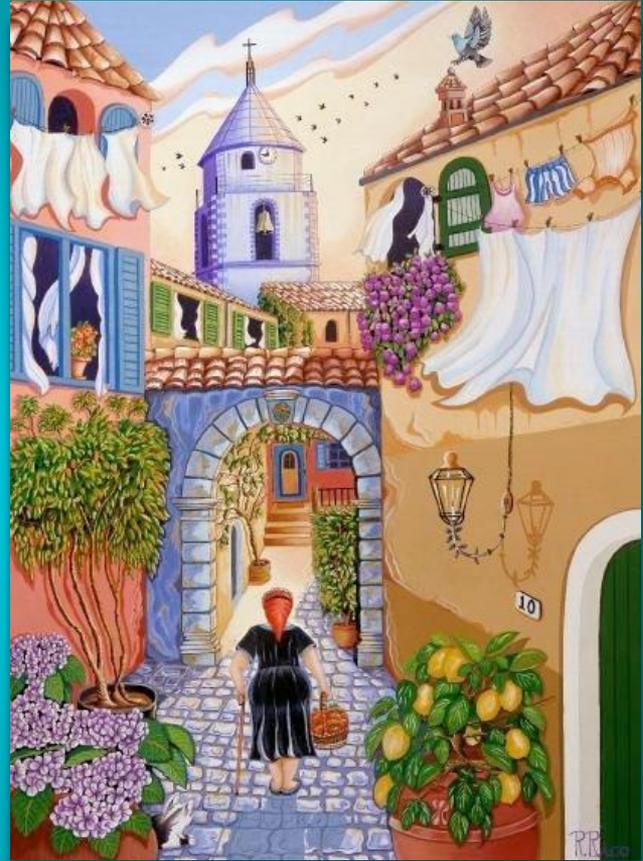
Canclini / Paolini

Pietro Canclini left the Lombardy region of Italy about 1898, settling in El Dorado County. His wife, daughters Pierina and Asunta, and sons Gildo and Tony were able to join him in 1903. "We are in America. We will live like Americans," he told them. When Pietro became a citizen, his wife and under-age children did also, but when Pierina married Fabrizio (Joe) Paolini in 1910 - who was not a citizen - she lost her citizenship. She had to register as an alien during WWII, and did not succeed in getting her original citizenship restored until 1972 - when she looked forward to voting in local elections.



Rico

The Rico family comes from Roccamandolfi in the Molise District of Italy. Costanza sailed to the US in 1901, working in coal mining and for the railroad. He was followed the next year by his wife Filomena and son Dominic. They settled on a cattle ranch in Colorado. In 1917, they visited a cousin on a fruit ranch in Vacaville and liked it so much they moved here. Dominic worked the family ranch until the well went dry, when he went to work at Basic Vegetable. Mike worked in the City Corporation Yard, Mary married Tony Damiano and worked cutting fruit, as did her sister Betty. Louis worked for a Santa Cruz newspaper, and John gradually became owner/publisher of the Vacaville Reporter, where youngest brother Jimmy also worked.



My Rocca
Richard Rico



Commodore and Florence Row, c. 1902

173	Harold K. Smith	174	John H. Smith	175	John H. Smith	176	John H. Smith	177	John H. Smith	178	John H. Smith	179	John H. Smith	180	John H. Smith	181	John H. Smith	182	John H. Smith	183	John H. Smith	184	John H. Smith	185	John H. Smith	186	John H. Smith	187	John H. Smith	188	John H. Smith	189	John H. Smith	190	John H. Smith	191	John H. Smith	192	John H. Smith	193	John H. Smith	194	John H. Smith	195	John H. Smith	196	John H. Smith	197	John H. Smith	198	John H. Smith	199	John H. Smith	200	John H. Smith
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Passenger manifest, Commodore Row, 1902



Children of Commodore and Florence Row, c. 1912



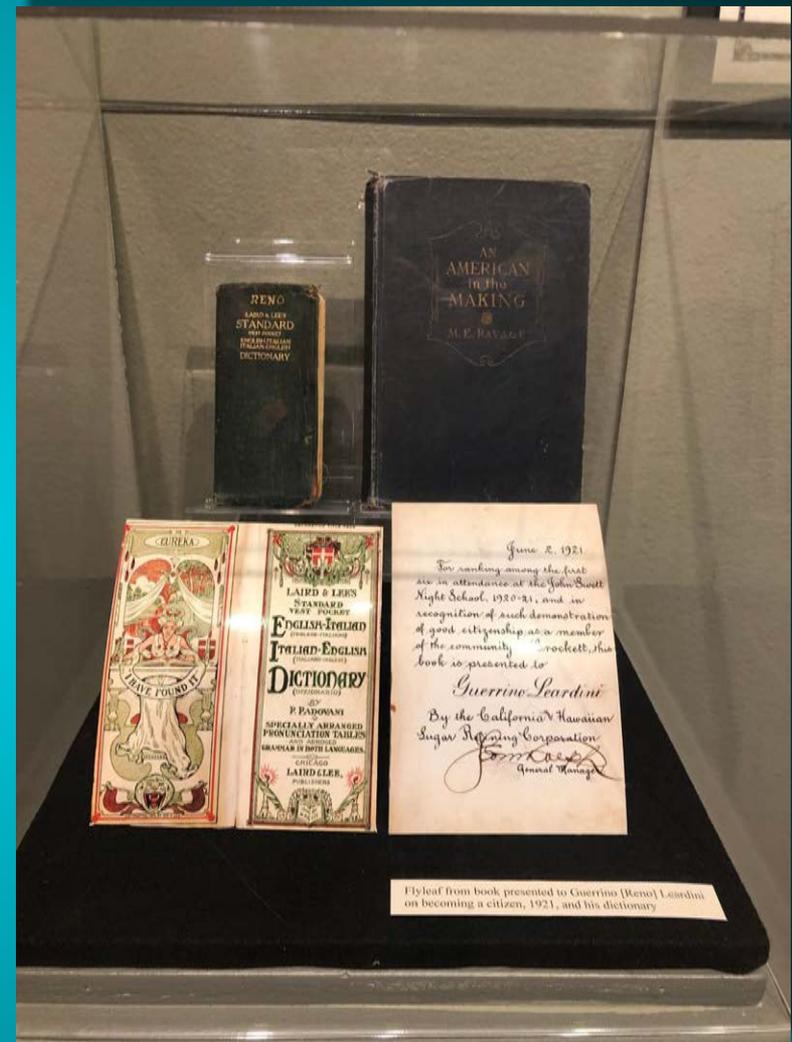
Commodore Row membership certificate, 1902



Children of Commodore and Florence Row, c. 1900

Leardini

Guerrino (Reno) Leardini arrived in NY in 1911 and made his way to Crockett, CA, where he became head painter for C & H Sugar. He was naturalized in 1919, and went back to Italy in 1922 to marry his girlfriend. Unfortunately, she had grown tired of waiting for him and had married someone else. Her sister, Ernesta, had been told by her father to marry someone who would take her to America, and they agreed to marry in 1923. Daughter Fiorentina (Florence) was born in 1924, and Ernesta and Florence sailed for the US that same year. Ernesta became a citizen in 1943. Some years later they moved to Vallejo, and then to Vacaville; Florence found work processing workers at Mare Island.



Flyleaf from book presented to Guerrino (Reno) Leardini on becoming a citizen, 1921, and his dictionary



Guarino Leads, left, 1911



Guarino, Ernesta and Florina [former] Leads, 1928



Passport for Guarino Leads, 1921



Passport for Ernesta and Florina Leads, 1924



Guarino Leads's naturalization certificate, 1919



Naturalization certificate for Ernesta Leads, 1919



Dominic Alonzo, center front, newly arrived in the US, c 1900. While part of the crew building the new bridge over Ulatis Creek, his landlady introduced him to Julia Scarpetta, who was born and raised in the English Hills. They married and had a ranch in the hills above Lagoon Valley. Later they had a garden on Merchant Street that provided produce to locals. It was later purchased for the Pacific Hardware shopping center.



Mini

The Minis are a Swiss-Italian family. Lorenzo Mini emigrated to the US in 1869, establishing himself in Vallejo and getting a job at Henry Hagen's Napa winery. His special formula led to two gold medals at the Paris World's Fair in 1889. Lorenzo and Cecilia Mini sponsored many other Italians, providing housing and teaching them English. His brother Damiano (Dan) joined him in 1872 and they partnered in a dairy in 1874. Dan started the Mini Creamery in 1902, which grew to provide 75% of the milk sales in Vallejo, and supplied free milk to refugees after the 1906 earthquake. The Mini ranch expanded to nearly 2000 acres. Their children went on to serve the Vallejo community in many ways.

Passalacqua

Nicola Passalacqua was one of several brothers from Genoa who came to the US in the 1870s. He came at age 19 as a seaman, worked in a drugstore in LA, and then joined his brother Benedetto growing vegetables north of Vallejo. They opened a market on lower Georgia Street. In the 1870s he moved to Benicia and farmed near Lake Herman, married Maria Paganini, and raised 8 children. He bought a large parcel on the west side of Benicia and moved there in 1893. His oldest son Milo operated the Benicia-Vallejo Stage; Frank established the Passalacqua Mortuary in both Benicia and Vallejo, and three of his sisters worked in the Western Creamery and Benicia Fisheries Office. The family was a driving force for the Benicia Chamber of Commerce for many years.



Nicola and Maria Passalacqua with Milo and Carlo, c 1888



Nicola Passalacqua, c 1890

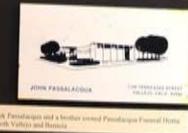


Milo Passalacqua, owner of the Benicia-Vallejo Stage



Daily Time Table
R. PASSALACQUA BENEICIA-VALLEJO
STAGE CO.

Line	From	To	Time
1	Benicia	Vallejo	7:00 AM
2	Vallejo	Benicia	7:30 AM
3	Benicia	Vallejo	8:00 AM
4	Vallejo	Benicia	8:30 AM
5	Benicia	Vallejo	9:00 AM
6	Vallejo	Benicia	9:30 AM
7	Benicia	Vallejo	10:00 AM
8	Vallejo	Benicia	10:30 AM
9	Benicia	Vallejo	11:00 AM
10	Vallejo	Benicia	11:30 AM
11	Benicia	Vallejo	12:00 PM
12	Vallejo	Benicia	12:30 PM
13	Benicia	Vallejo	1:00 PM
14	Vallejo	Benicia	1:30 PM
15	Benicia	Vallejo	2:00 PM
16	Vallejo	Benicia	2:30 PM
17	Benicia	Vallejo	3:00 PM
18	Vallejo	Benicia	3:30 PM
19	Benicia	Vallejo	4:00 PM
20	Vallejo	Benicia	4:30 PM
21	Benicia	Vallejo	5:00 PM
22	Vallejo	Benicia	5:30 PM
23	Benicia	Vallejo	6:00 PM
24	Vallejo	Benicia	6:30 PM
25	Benicia	Vallejo	7:00 PM
26	Vallejo	Benicia	7:30 PM
27	Benicia	Vallejo	8:00 PM
28	Vallejo	Benicia	8:30 PM
29	Benicia	Vallejo	9:00 PM
30	Vallejo	Benicia	9:30 PM



Frank Passalacqua and a brother owned Passalacqua Farmstead Home in both Vallejo and Benicia.

Part of the Community

Part of the Community

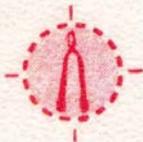


Italian Americans have made significant contributions to Solano County life, from agricultural work to business ownership, professional services and local cuisine. Families such as the Alonzos, Breas, Damianos, Caligiuris, Lanzas, Libonatis, Pippos, Poggettos, Ragos, and Scarpettas were ranchers, and some continue to ranch today. The Simonini family ranch in Cordelia bordered the Nelson Quarry, where other Italian immigrants worked.





Peach Harvest
Richard Rico



Vaca Manufacturing Co.

Home of the Vaca Pruning Shear

A. W. MARINO & SON

137 BUSH ST. VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA
PHONE: 448-3977



Downtown Georgia Street in Vallejo was lined with several Italian-owned businesses with family names like Passini, Seghetti, Lenzi, Bellentini, and several Castagnolis. Albert Encerti's father worked at both Starr Mills and the brick works in Vallejo.

Many new immigrants were fishermen - especially in Collinsville - and cannery workers all along Solano's waterfront. Grizzly Island was once home to several Swiss-Italian dairymen, and cows dotted the island's landscape. Still others found work on Mare Island, the Benicia Arsenal and, later, Travis AFB. And, of course, our local love of Italian cuisine came from the many restaurants and eateries owned and founded by Solano County residents of Italian descent.



The Five Ladies, 1916, standing, Frances Thomson (2nd from left) and Barbara (2nd from right).



The Libbey 1924 car and family who bought it.



An advertisement of the Libbey family.



1924 Libbey 1924 car.



1924 Libbey 1924 car.



1924 Libbey 1924 car.



1924 Libbey 1924 car.



The Class of 1914, Catholic Grammar School, including Frances Thomson, Barbara Thomson, Eleanor Libbey, Vera Libbey, and John Libbey.



1924 Libbey 1924 car.



Frances Thomson at the Libbey's 1924 car, August 1916, 1916. Libbey's 1924 car, August 1916, 1916. Libbey's 1924 car, August 1916, 1916.



1924 Libbey 1924 car.





Small caption card below the framed photograph of the man at the desk.



Small caption card below the group photograph.



Small caption card below the framed portrait of the man.



Small caption card below the small photograph of the person on the ground.

Small caption card below the microscope.



Small caption card below the folder and document display.



Part of the Community

Coming to America

Food and Family



"My relatives passed down to their children the greatest gift of all, family togetherness and a great love of food and wine."

Marianna Iuliano Schiavone



In our changing world one constant remains: the importance of family, and the joy of cooking and eating food together. Old kitchen tools are just as valued as the new ones, and recipes are carefully handed down to new generations, today as they were yesterday.

Catch the infectious pleasure and enjoy the traditional dishes from original Italian homes and in our local restaurants whose cuisine was inspired by another time and another place.



M a n g a



The Schirrone family
Dinner was usually
a formal event.
Check out their table.



Mary and her daughter
at the dinner table.



The Schirrone family.

B e n e



Celebrating another
birthday for the
Schirrone family.



Joe and his family.



This is the first Italian
dinner in America. All
Dinner tables had to
be set up. The more
people the better.

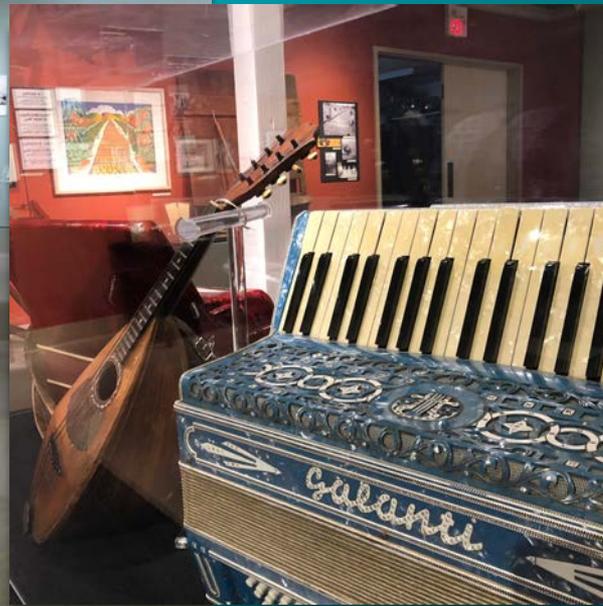
Dinner was a festive time
at the Molisana home. There were
always so many people that they
ate outside.



"I think it is the passion for food and wine and the love for each other that makes it taste so good."

Marianna Iuliano Schiavone







Francesca Altieri grew up on Kendal Street in Vacaville and donated her father's brick oven and tools, kitchen table, grape crusher and wine press to the Vacaville Museum. The items in this kitchen display are from several families: Addiego, Alonzo, Altieri, Esperance, Leardini, Gallino and Rico









Olivia Pina, Marzano working wine press and making pure berry balsamic, 1980s



Domenico, Antonio (far right) BBQ'ing with friends, 1980s. Scungione & Antonio hosts



Carapagnolo family, 1980s



DiMichele family, 1980s



The Lastra Family



Leardini family, 1950s



Wine

Grapes were planted by Solano County's earliest European settlers, John Wolfskill and the Vaca/Pena family. German, French and Italian immigrants planted more grapes in the 1860s, and more than 79,000 gallons of wine and brandy were produced in Solano County by 1866. When vineyards all over California were hit by phylloxera in the 1860s, only Green Valley was able to continue producing wine.

The Simoninis opened Cordelia Winery in 1885, with regular shipments to Chicago. Prohibition became law in 1919, and nationwide less than 10% of wineries survived.







EARLY YEARS

When you think of the Lanza family, you think of wine. The history of the family is intertwined with the history of the wine industry in the Suisun Valley. From the early days of settlement to the present, the family has been a part of the story.



GROWING THE BUSINESS

The Lanza family's commitment to quality and innovation in wine-making has led to the growth of the business. Through hard work and dedication, they have established a reputation for excellence in the industry.



MAKING GREAT WINE

The art of winemaking is a family tradition. From the selection of grapes to the fermentation process, every step is done with care and expertise to create the finest wines.

Suisun Valley



THE FUTURE



THE LANZA FAMILY



The Lanza family is proud to share its story and the passion for wine-making that has been passed down through generations.





In 1944, Mario and Lena Lanza joined brothers Salvatore and Manuel Brea, who had founded Wooden Valley Winery in 1933, the year Prohibition was repealed. The Lanzas became sole owners by 1955; their son Richard (Chick) became winemaker in 1960. Chick delivered wine in gallon jugs or 25-gallon barrels along a route that extended into the Bay area.

Chick solidified Solano as a winemaking region in 1982 when he successfully lobbied the US government to establish Suisun Valley as California's 12th official American Viticultural Area - just a year after Napa Valley was acknowledged.



Serving Their Country

Serving Their Country





From the Boys in Camp
[Text of a newspaper clipping]



[Text of a newspaper clipping]



PLEASE
DO NOT TOUCH

War Department Reports
Death of Michael Libonati, Jr.
[Text of a newspaper clipping]

[Text of a newspaper clipping]



[Caption text]

A year after the Armistice of September 1943 made Italy an ally of the US, instead of an enemy, about 250 captured Italian soldiers were housed at the Benicia Arsenal. They were one of the Italian Service Units that contributed millions of hours of service in support of the US war effort.

The Italians embraced the chance to learn English and interact with the local community, especially the Italian-Americans. The Italian prisoners of war were released in the evenings, and only had to report back at night.

When they were shipped home in 1945, many left new families to which they later returned. Tom Barbieri of Benicia and Ray Bini of Vallejo are two of the "returnees".

Aliens in the US - those born in Germany, Japan and Italy - were required to register with the government. Pierina Paolini of Vacaville was one of the registrants. 583 were removed from Vallejo, an especially sensitive area with Mare Island. Those left were restricted from some areas, had a 9 PM curfew, and were limited to within 5 miles of their home. The US Attorney General, Francis Biddle, urged Americans to "avoid economic or social persecution of enemy aliens" that might create bitterness and possible acts of sabotage by them.

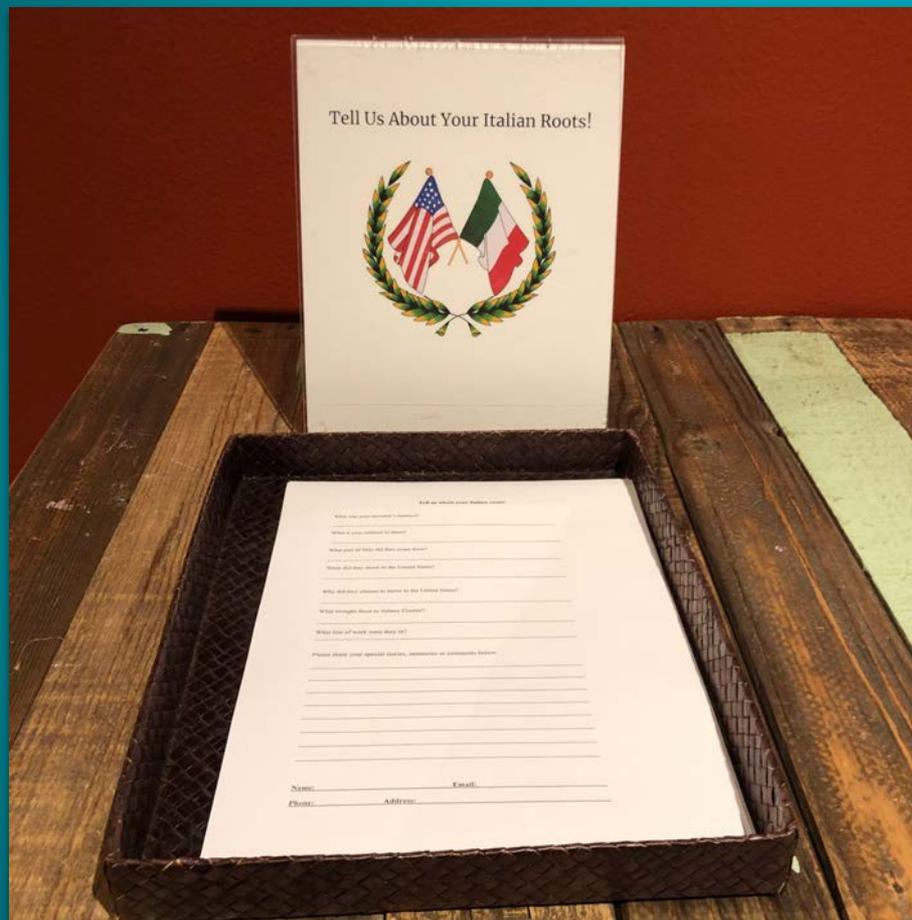


"They were outgoing, friendly and very interested in learning English. And very interested in being able to come back to the US." *James Milburn, a civilian Arsenal employee*

Thank you to the following for making this exhibit possible:

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Sons and Daughters of Italy,
N. Solano Co.
Vacaville Heritage Council
Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum



Tell us about your Italian Roots!

The form is available in the Sole Italiano -Virtual Tour email. You can also share your story via email info@vacavillemuseum.org



The Vacaville Museum hopes to open soon. Then, we invite you to please join us for the sights, sounds and smells of Italy. Learn how Italian immigrants helped shape the history and culture of our community, and continue to shape Solano today.

Buona salute, until we can be together again!

*Joanie Erickson
Executive Director*