



La Canna Siren

Vol VII Issue I

SPRING 2009

Eolian Descendants Visit Islands Of Their Past

My Eolian Adventure

by Marie Coll

Lipari, the destination of us 33 travelers, was still a long way off as we transferred through the Rome Airport, our energies spent after the night flight from Boston. "My kingdom for a luggage cart or ride on an auto cart," I thought, but no respite appeared. Where were the *gods of chance* when I needed them? But the long walk with heavy luggage and no reprieve toughened us up for what was to come.

Arriving in Catania, we were ushered in long lines through entry gates to a bus that bulged with luggage

(Adventure, Continued on page 4)



Photo by Warry Lomax

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun Aug 2, 2009
(Rain date: Aug 9, 2009)

**Santo Stefano
Festa and Picnic
Maristhill
66 Newton St.
Waltham, MA 02453**

Sat. Nov 21, 2009
47th Annual Dinner Dance
Post 440
295 California St.
Newton, MA

Sat. Nov. 28, 2009
Eolian Christmas
Cookie Bake
PTBA

"Going Home" with Dad by Jane Taranto Lomax

My father was born in America, but his parents and three older sisters were born in Filicudi. Going there this time was only his fourth trip to the islands. I always felt that it was very important someday for me to take this trip with him because it would give me a better understanding of my family's heritage. The highlight of the trip to Filicudi was to visit the home of my grandparents. To actually stand on the veranda and overlook Pecorini Mare was breathtaking. We were able to meet the new owners and it was wonderful to see that they love the home and have done a fantastic job in restoring it to its original charm and beauty. The next day, when we took a boat ride around the island, I discovered something about my grandmother that I never knew. When the captain of the boat took us into the Grotto of the Bue

(Home, Continued on page 5)

A Dip in the Bue Marino by Nina DiFusco

It was another beautiful day on Filicudi! Those of us who had signed up for a "giro," the exquisite boat ride around the island, were sitting with other members of our group waiting and waiting ("Domani, domani!") for our boatman to show up. We had a gorgeous, sunny blue and gold day for the trip. Over an hour late, our man finally arrived, actually two men with two motorboats, and we each climbed in, about six people per boat. We had gotten about ten minutes into our sunny ride when the largest, darkest black cloud I've ever seen in my life floated over us. But we weren't concerned because we knew that Filicudi gets very little rainfall. Of course, we must've been in trouble with Eolo, the god of the winds, because, all of a sudden, the fattest raindrops began falling

(Marino, Continued on page 5)

An English Garden Bed & Breakfast



Who would have thought you can enjoy an English garden on Cape Cod owned and operated by an Eolian descendant, Joe Sangiolo and his wife, Anita? An English Garden Bed and Breakfast sits on 32 Inman Road in Dennisport, MA only a minute's walk to Inman Beach. In their website www.englishgardenbb.com. Joe and Anita write "Our Cape Cod Bed & Breakfast is located . . . just a very short walk to the ocean beach and warm waters of Nantucket Sound. The Dennisport accommodations provide luxury lodging in a convenient mid-Cape location with beautifully decorated rooms, including parlor, library, and spacious dining room where we serve a com-

plete full free breakfast each morning. Each new and beautifully decorated room creates a special mood, private balconies; ocean views, with individual air conditioning/heat... a truly memorable vacation experience. Your vacation accommodations should be much more than your room ... enjoy companionship in our beautiful living room with fireplace, quiet reading and television in the study or a wonderful breakfast (and any time of day conversation) in our ocean view dining room."

While guest reviews coincide with the above description they also sing praises of incredible, varied and delicious, full breakfasts, with homemade

"scones to die for," personally accommodating proprietors, "great hosts who know how to look after their guests without ever intruding," rooms that are charming, many with ocean view, and a lodging that is centrally located, all at an exceptionally reasonable price. For information and reservations contact Joe and Anita at engbb@comcast.net and as a bonus *a 15% discount is offered to all Filicudi Associates members.*



EOLIAN TRIP HIGHLIGHTS



Photos by Donna Bevilacqua

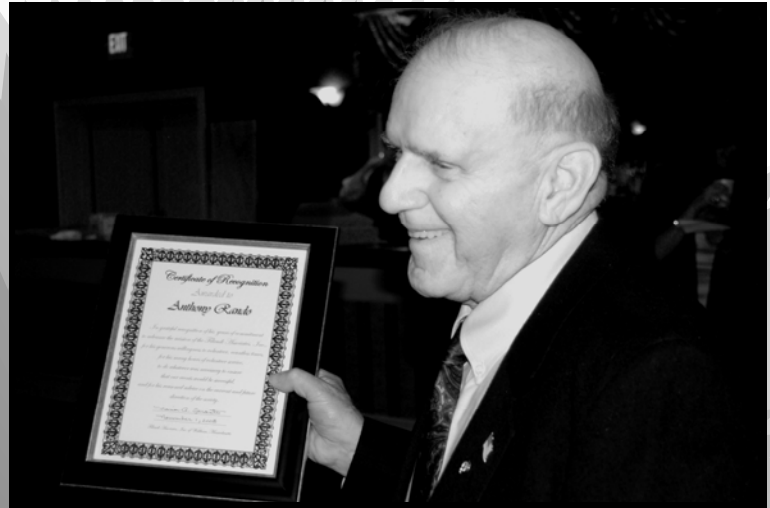
Dinner Dance Awards, Nov 1, 2008



Certificate of Merit

The Filicudi Associates bestowed its highest honor on Mr. Salvatore Pinzone, past president, known to all our members for his love of his homeland, Filicudi, and for the total devotion, energy, advice and support he has given to the association for many years.

(Photo by Jennifer Taranto)



Certificate of Recognition

Mr. Anthony Rando received public recognition for his faithful assistance in the preparations and executions of so many of our events over the years. (Photo by Jennifer Taranto)



Scholarship Award

Ms. Madison LiDonni, a Freshman at The University of Rhode Island, majoring in Italian Studies, received our first society scholarship award granted in 25 years, for her remarkable sense of pride, interest and historical understanding of her Eolian heritage, her academic accomplishments and her financial need. The \$1000 grant was applied to her tuition expenses at URI. (Photo by Jennifer Taranto)

(Adventure, Continued from page 1)

and was challenging to enter because of the narrow bus bays. Then, to the docks of Milazzo we travel weary forged ahead. At Milazzo we found that boarding a hydrofoil presented problems as the weather began to turn unpleasant. The ocean balked, sending angry waves of warning to the shore. The captain hesitated, knowing the power of the sea and its possible cruelty, but decided to take a chance to carry us on to Lipari before nightfall. Casting off, however, he soon struggled with the tentacles of the sea and we passengers became the *retching masses of the teeming shores yearning to be safe*. In some cases the sea won as the crew fought back waves that forced open the cabin doors while they ran around issuing seasick-bags to those who needed them. Yet, tense voyages do end, and, after a little over an hour, this one did too, thanks to the captain, and Our Lord: we landed safely at Lipari, by nightfall, some quite shaken, and all relieved.

"Put your luggage in the car if you can't carry it," we were told. And so, we trudged to our hotel following our guide through cobble-stoned streets, lined with shops, while dodging motor scooters and cars, until we reached our final destination, the Hotel Arciduca, and our anxiety dissolved. Could this journey have taken a full day, with canes supporting bad knees and spent legs, and arms pulling the burdens of luggage? Travel is a pleasure, but it comes with a price.

The day after we arrived, and armed with a printout from a telephone listing for Lipari, I sought to find my family ties, carrying also death and census records to help me in my search. With twelve travelers seeking to discover ancestors, I arrived at the *Municipio*, home of Vital Records as far back as 1820, and entered the building. The look on the employees' faces and the room made me think I had entered a time warp. The huge stacks of giant ledgers of handwritten town records were piled around crowded desks and on tables, and the room already looked full with just three employees working there. Could this place be of a past age; the room seemed mired in yesterday. No com-

puterized records or coherence faced us. The visitors seeking genealogical information were unceremoniously ejected from the building! The message was clear: we were not welcome. The three-person office could not accommodate more than one to three visitors at a time. Only those seeking current certificates for deaths or births were admitted to counter service.

Disappointed, my friend Maria Taranto and I spent a short time at the Aeolian Archeological Museum.

We then decided to pick up our quest to look for my relatives so we walked along via Garibaldi to find my family. There at the address from my telephone listing, Number 753 was a boutique owned by Francesca Puglisi, my family surname. Her partner Francesca Botella explained that she was at another souvenir shop with her parents. I had an inkling that we were on the right path. Just a block away we stopped to buy a souvenir, an ebony brush with a turtle carved on it. The shop owner said that the Puglisi shop was next door. Francesca was not in but her mother said she would return in fifteen minutes and so would her husband. Maria translated and told her we were looking for family. The proprietor said I must speak to her husband who would be there shortly; but she started to write down the members of the family and it covered four pages with more to follow. When her husband Francesco Puglisi arrived and was introduced, I realized he bore my own father's name, and he bore a resemblance to my father as a young man. Francesco asked why I was there and Maria responded that all but one of my grandfather's children had died and I wanted to find some of my family. Francesco held his hand over his heart and his eyes told me that he understood. He asked to see the information on the census records I had brought and said that his father and my grandfather had the same grandfather. He and his wife set about writing lists of family members who were alive, who had died, and who had migrated to Australia. There were first and second wives and children in my grandfather's family. Maria told him that it might have taken ten years to do this research in Vital Records, and

I told Francesco with a gesture how we were literally pushed out when I went to the *Municipio*. Francesco then asked me for my children's names.

My grandfather Giuseppe Puglisi came to Ellis Island from Lipari in April 1900. His nine living children and one who died were listed in the 1920 census I had obtained thanks to Ruthann Tomassini at Ancestry.com and this information and my grandfather's date of birth listed in the social security death index were vital to locating my family. Francesco introduced us to his 21 year old daughter, Francesca, and said I should tell my children to visit his family and the store. Francesco then gave me a kitchen towel with all the Eolian Islands pictured on it, a photo postcard featuring his store, *Linea Mare*, and home near Lipari's statue of Garibaldi. After this Francesco took us around the block and showed us the family home, and the homes of his brothers in the same courtyard. My friend Maria said that four years earlier she and her brother had rented an apartment in one of the houses. The coincidence was astonishing and confirmed how very extraordinary are the fingers of fate. How very close Maria must have come to meeting my cousin! Francesco gave me one more gift, an engraving of Lipari, so I would remember him; and he asked me to write. We said farewell with kisses and hugs.

Family is very important to Italians. All I could say to Maria was "I am so happy. I could fly home today." I will always remember this moment with great love and somehow in my mind I can see images of my father and grandfather smiling when I look at the photographs of my cousin, wife and family by my side. I am grateful to have found my "roots" as now I understand better who my family was and I am impressed by their courage when facing the odds and challenges life sent them.

Please pay your Annual Dues today.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

(Home, Continued from page 1)

Marino, I knew that I wanted to jump right in, clothes and all, so I did! Later, I was talking with father about how wonderful it was and he told me that my grandmother was like a "fish" and loved to swim. By the time I was born, my grandmother was in her 70's and I never saw her swim. To think that she probably enjoyed swimming in the blue waters of the Bue Marino just like I did brought me closer to her.

We also had a chance to visit my maternal grandmother's home on the island of Salina. Unlike that of my paternal grandparents' home, it is now abandoned. It is sad to think that there is no one to love and care for it. Still in its sad state of disrepair, to us it had its own special beauty. To be able to visit both of these beautiful islands and to see the homes of our ancestors made us realize what it must have been like to live there. But more importantly, what a sacrifice it must have been to leave everything you own and everyone you know to begin a life in a whole new world thousands of miles away. Our grandparents have left us with a wonderful heritage, one that we should be proud of for generations to come.

NOTICE

**If any one knows of paesani who are ill, in the hospital, in a nursing home, or have died, please notify Eleanor Vannaria who is Chair of our Condolence and Bereavement Committee.
Tel. 781-893-2553**

(Marino, Continued from page 1)

fiercely on our heads. Thank the other "gods" that Angela Zagami Aucoin was in our boat because she had cleverly stashed her backpack in a dry place, and out of it came an umbrella for her mother and Donna, and for the two people on the front of the boat a plastic rain poncho from CVS. And how did we react to this downpour? We began howling with laughter - almost a little hysterically. Our driver quickly pulled into the Blue Grotto of the Bue Marino for protection, and no sooner did we do that, our guide, Rosa, dove into the water, clothes and all. She came up shouting that she had lost her \$200 sunglasses. At least five people then dove into the water to find the sunglasses, but came up with nothing. Why? Because that day, with

were waiting on the dock, laughing loudly. This, after all, is an exciting event for Filicudi! Donning his clothes, our boatman then docked the boat and went to one of the only two stores in town (luckily one sold liquor), and he came back to the boat with a huge bottle of wine to warm up our very soggy cold bodies. Donna Bevilacqua was so excited that she kissed him "thank you" and we then declared them engaged! When we finally got back to the hotel, we found out that we could not take a hot shower because the hotel was closing soon for the season. So, we all made a mad scramble to find our suitcases, and some dry clothes. (I put my soaked clothes in a compartment of my luggage and when I finally got home to America, and took them out, all the



Photo by Donna Bevilacqua

the heavy rain, the Blue Grotto was Black!!!! Our boatman, by then, stripped down to his boxer shorts (blue and white stripes), led us out of the grotto to the nearest town, where it seemed that everyone living there had heard about our misadventure and

colors had run into each other.) If a picture says a thousand words, then the shot of Fran and Joan all twisted up in plastic epitomizes what we had endured that day. In retrospect, the boat trip became one of the highlights of our adventurous vacation on the Eolian Islands.

Italian Language Classes will be held in September for 10 weeks, once a week for two hours each class. The fee is \$200 and must be paid before the classes begin. Those interested in joining us to learn, or deepen their knowledge of Italian, are welcome. Please Contact at wfirenze@aol.com Wega Firenze, our "maestra," who has taught Italian for many years.

My Lifelong Wish

by Nancy Rando O'Connell

In December of 1918 "Mom," Giovanna Taranto, born in Pecorini, Filicudi arrived in Newton as a 9-year old child with her mother and two sisters. "Grandpa" Giovanni Taranto made his original voyage to the Boston area in May of 1900, returned to Filicudi, then came back and forth a few times, trying to convince his wife Maria to come to the States; she always refused. They would argue, and he would return to the US alone, only to discover that he had left his wife pregnant, again. After his third visit, he decided it was safer to send money for his family's passage to his brother, who packed up the family and put them onto a ship heading for America. Grandpa Giovanni worked hard in America: constructing roads, churches and anything else that needed building in his new country. Eventually, he was able to buy a house in Newton Highlands and rented out rooms to his "paesani."

Meanwhile my dad, Giuseppe Rando, was growing up on Filicudi, and both of his parents, Rosa LaCava Rando and Felice Rando, died within a short time of each other when he was a young man. His siblings were leaving the island in search of a better life, and at the age of seventeen (1920) he arrived in Newton Highlands and rented a room from Grandpa Giovanni Taranto.

Obviously the young man knew the family and felt safe living with them. Mom and Dad had known each other as children in Filicudi. Dad would often smile with a twinkle in his eye as he told us how he used to "bully" Mom. But, a few years after he moved to Newton, Mom started to mature and the neighborhood boys were soon pursuing her. Suddenly, Dad started to look at her in a different light, and asked Grandpa if he could marry her. Grandpa gave his blessing, but asked him to move out because it was no longer proper for them to live in the same house. Dad then moved out to establish a small grocery business in Brighton. My parents were

married on January 1, 1927 at St. Leonard's Church in the North End of Boston and the priest performed the ceremony in Italian. He was 23 and she was 17.

It was my lifelong wish to travel to Filicudi. In September of 2008, I finally arrived there with the Filicudi Associates tour group and saw my mother's home in Pecorini Mare, only to discover that my dad's home was just a stone's throw away, behind the Church of San Giuseppe. Wow, what a surprise it was to realize that Mom & Dad lived so close to each other their entire lives! It was also a shock to see the simple and basic way that both parents lived, and amazing to think how well they learned the American culture and came to speak the American language. Kudos Mom & Dad! I doubt that my generation could do as well. Dad always kept that twinkle in his eye for Mom; and Mom became the dominant partner in their wonderful long and happy life together. Their hard work and loyalty to the family is what real love is all about. "Thank you, thank you, Mom and Dad, for all your sacrifices and love."



SOCIETY OFFICERS 2009

Cathy Umina, President
Roland Vanaria, Vice President
Jennifer Taranto, Recording Secretary
Maria Taranto, Correspondence Secretary
Donna Pinzone, Treasurer.

HARD TO STAY, HARD TO LEAVE

by Anna Pancaldo Deluca

This was my and my husband, Joe's first trip to the Eolian islands and it was especially dear to my heart since my father was born and grew up on Filicudi. He left as a young boy of 13 and migrated to Argentina with his mother, father and two sisters. Finishing his education in Argentina, he met my mother and at the age of 18 he and she left via boat to New York. He has told us many of his trials and tribulations, stories about his life, but not until this trip did I realize how hard it must have been for him to leave and how hard it must have been for him to live on Filicudi in the post WWII 1940's.

On this trip my father was able to show us the home where he grew up and the places where the family cooked, washed their clothes, etc. I now have vivid memories of the beautiful view of Pecorini harbor my grandmother must have had while washing the family clothes, and cooking the family's food, and it was a touching experience to see photos on the grave-stones of my great grandmother and my great aunt. I was especially amazed at how much work it must have taken just to live in those times.

Newsletter Staff

Editor: Maria Taranto

Assistant Editor:

John 'Curt' Mahon,

Lay-out:

Tom Taranto

Photo Staff this issue:

Jennifer Taranto, Nina DiFusco,
Warry Lomax & Donna Bevilacqua

Contrib. Writers this issue:

Maria Taranto, Marie Coll,
Jane Taranto Lomax, Nina
DiFusco, Nancy Rando
O'Connell, Anna Pancaldo
Deluca

La Canna Siren is published in the
Spring (April/May) and in the Fall (Oct/
Nov.)

La Canna Siren
c/o Maria Taranto
24 Trafton Road,
Framingham, MA 01702

CUCINA EOLIANA

Vino Cotto (“cooked wine”)

Okay, Vino Cotto is not cooked wine, not by a stretch! But the literal translation is “cooked wine.” Back before sugar was plentiful to all (and when our collective health was probably better for it) Sicilian sweeteners consisted of more “natural” unrefined substances like honey and vino cotto. It is the sweetener used in most traditional Eolian cookies. Vino cotto, a thick-syrup, is made from boiling the juice of grapes (grape must) before it ferments into wine. Simple to make, its taste differs admirably from molasses, which our immigrant grandmothers used in America when they could not purchase vino cotto. Actually, you can purchase vino cotto nowadays, but how much more “Eolian” to make your own. Of course, acquiring the ingredients and having the time to make vino cotto may be a challenge. You begin with a box of white or red grapes or grape must. One box of grapes makes about 6 liters of vino cotto. Into the grape-must stir in a handful of ashes, made from burning some dried grape branches. Cook slowly for about an hour. Leave to sit for 24-48 hours. Strain through a fine cloth such as a few layers of cheesecloth. Re-boil for about three hours until it is thickened. Pour into clean bottles to store. Keeps unrefrigerated for months. *Compliments of Maria Mondello, Melbourne Australia as found on the Internet 3/11/2006*

A more elaborate version can be found in Susan Lord and Danilo Baroncini’s delightful cookbook Pani Caliatu published in Lipari by Centro Studi e Ricerche di Storia e Problemi Eoliani, Maurolico 15, Lipari, Isole Eolie, Italy as given in the recipe below.

Vinu Cuottu (Cooked Grape Must)

Ingredients 10 liters (10 quarts) white or red freshly pressed grape must; 2 quinces; 3 sun-dried figs; 1 carob pod; 2 handfuls sifted vine shoot ashes (about 150 g/6 ounces made from burned, pruned vine shoots); one sour cherry branch.

To make: Cut the quinces in quarters and put in a large heavy stainless steel pot with the must, figs, the carob pod and the ashes. Bring to a boil and stir with a sour cherry branch for flavor. Lower the heat and reduce by one fourth. There should be about 7 ½ liters/quarts of reduced must. Let stand for 24 hours. Filter through a double layer of cheesecloth or a very fine sieve. Put the pot back on medium heat and reduce by half, stirring now and then. At this point there should be about 3 ½ liters/quarts of the “cooked wine.” It is done when the foam that covers the surface looks yellow, but not brown in color. Make sure its yellow and no darker – otherwise- the “cooked wine” will be too cooked. Pour into bottles or jars and seal.

Recipe from Nerina Ferlazzo, Vulcano

THE ITALIAN ELBOW

An Italian grandmother is giving directions to her grown grandson who is coming to visit with his wife: "You comma to da fronta doa of de apartamentha. I'ma inna apartamentha 301. Thera issa bigga panel at da fronta doa. Weetha you elbow, poosha button 301. I will buzza you een. Comma inside. De elevator ees on da righta. Gett' in, and weetha you elbow, pusha 3. Whenna you gett' out, I'ma onna da left. Weetha you elbow, hitta my dor-rabell."

"Grandma, that sounds easy, but, why am I hitting all these buttons with my elbow?"

"Whatta you meana . . . You cominna empty handedda?"

Our Deceased Members and Friends

RECENT OBITUARIES

Anthony J. Giardina on January 2, 2009 at age 92

Marc John Firenze on January 3, 2009 at age 10

Joseph Santolucito on March 19, 2009 at age 92

Benny J. Cappadona on March 23, 2009 at age 89

Dolores Mollica Paino on April 9, 2009 at age 80

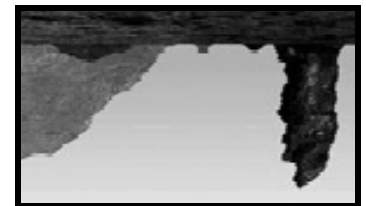
Prelude to Mothers Day Brunch, A Tribute to Motherhood

On Sunday, May 3rd at the Newton Marriott over three-dozen mothers and daughters gathered and enjoyed good food, spirited conversation and tributes to motherhood and family. Although everyone is not a mother, everyone has had a mother, so our society's tribute to motherhood and family a week before Mother's Day was an event whose meaning all were able to appreciate. Cathy Umina, our president greeted the guests, Donna Pinzone who organized the event read her moving tribute-to-mother poem while Christina Russo Rando talked about her trips to Filicudi and shared some wonderful old photos of her family with the group. Women also brought in and shared favorite family recipes. The women were so excited that they spontaneously offered the advice that the celebration should occur at least a once a year! Needless to say, "A good time was had by all!!"

100th Anniversary Gala 2010

Year 2010 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Filicudi and Saint Stephen societies that later merged. We as a society plan to celebrate this event with great joy and we welcome your assistance. We will sponsor a Gala Dinner Dance and plan on hosting over 600 guests. Because for our 90th anniversary we had to limit seating to 500 guests and had to turn people away we ask you to make plans early and let us know well in advance that you wish to come. We do not want to disappoint anyone. We also welcome your assistance in realizing any of the activities that will make up this grand celebration. So contact us and let us know of your intentions. Within the next few months we will begin meeting to discuss our Gala preparations.

We're on the Web
[Http://www.filicudi.org](http://www.filicudi.org)



Filicudi Associates of Waltham, MA
 % Maria Taranto, Editor
 24 Tatton Road
 Framingham, MA, 01702