

# FAMILY MEMORIES LIFE



Recollections and Family History



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To the Memory of my Grandparents Giovanna & Carmelo Gugliotta

To the Memory of my Grandparents Concetta & Santo Bonaccorsi

To the Memory of my Parents Josephine & Sebastian Bonaccorsi

To my sisters Connie & Joanna

To my Children Lisa & Craig

To my Grandchildren:  
Emma, Lily, Elena, Dexter, Claire, Oliver, Spencer, Amber

And Especially to my Wife Jeannette

*Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.*

Mother Teresa



Taken May 2005 – Mt. Etna, Taormina, Sicily.  
(Collection of Jeannette & Tony Bonaccorsi)

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## **PREFACE (Original draft 2017)**

*Progress comes slowly but steadily if you are patient and prepare diligently*

--John Wooden

Around 1996 I began to jot down events that came to memory as I was growing up. Mom gave me different documents like report cards and pictures. Grandma Gugliotta also started to distribute her pictures and information to her grand kids. On a visit to Girard around 1996 grandma gave Jeannette and I some really great photos and other documents. I became interested in learning more about and documenting my family tree around 2003. I started to spend time with Mom discussing all the family lineage and later in 2004 to prepare for our trip to Italy in 2005. I realized this was not a typical family tree. As time went on I wanted to record all I could remember about my life and family history just so I could relate these stories to Jeannette, Lisa and Craig if they would ask. Since I started this research process Craig has remarked he would like to know more about his family.

After Grandma passed in 1998 my Aunts Francie & Anne discussed going to Sicily to visit family. I began to collect and review numerous photographs and information from my grandmother and my parents. I wanted to know more about the details of my family tree. It then became a need to know and to satisfy my curiosity. I thought I understood the key lineage of my family but I sure was wrong.

I realized as I recalled memories of my past especially my younger years how important and special Family was every day not just holidays. My need to know and understand grew significantly and hence I began my research which started with my Mom & Dad and consequently I spent as much time as I could with them when we visited Baltimore. It is amazing how much my Mom recalled names, dates and locations and not just the Gugliotta family but the Bonaccorsi/Bonanno family as well. As you will soon read nearly all of the compiled family details came from Mom's limitless memory and notes.

Jeannette had the opportunity to enjoy her visits with my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins to exchange laughs and good meals. Lisa & Craig also had the pleasure to know my grandmother – Nonna. So even though many things may sound familiar to them as this book is read, there is a lot more to be acquainted with as the branches of the tree are revealed.

What really touches me are the family get-togethers, visits, parties and yes, the earlier funerals of Grandpa, Grandma and Godfather which all brought back vivid memories of joy along with the sadness. But the more recent emotional and rich nostalgic times truly hit home with the passing of Mom, Dad, Aunt Mary Petrella and Uncle Dom. Why? People traveled hundreds of miles to pay their respects to the families grieving the loss of a loved one. I am not referring to siblings, children or parents, I am referring to "extended family" members that did not necessarily have to attend where a phone call or special card would have been appreciated just as well. Our families would understand attending in person is not necessary. These extended family members like the Rozzos, Paganos and Petrellas traveled over 300 miles to be with family when Mom passed. That meant so much to me, it is difficult to explain. All the

attendees at Mom and Dad's funerals with the exchanged words and hugs really made me realize what a great and close family I am part of and hope this "short" narrative helps others understand and enjoy "Family" as well.

This "account" started as a simple log of memories and events of family and developed from there. It was not intended to be a thorough history and certainly not a literary work. Initially, it was the recollections of my thoughts through "my eyes and my heart" that grew to include family history and more. This work is not written as or attempt to be read as a novel. It is not a chronological record but rather one organized by topics intended for ease of both writing and reading clarity. I tried to identify complete names but when I could not, I used initials or title if known.

Many of the accounts were written for my immediate family (Lisa, Craig and grandchildren) and to increase their familiarity with our family. But as I was writing I included other details and explanations for readers to help understand and enjoy the memories. It is hard to believe what started to be a short review and family description ended to be this larger piece of writing. Lisa and Craig often asked about wanting to understand more of the family: who, what where, when and how and therefore another appropriate motivation for the book.

This work was also never to be philosophical in nature nor to provide guidance although at times these thoughts occasionally appear in the text. The intent was more to show my recollections of appreciation as a son, a sibling, a parent and grandparent to the readers and especially to my children and grandchildren. As part of understanding family and parenting, I included quotations for each chapter. These quotations are taken from books I have read and are identified in the "Bibliography" under "Source of Quotations." I hope you can relate each quotation with the chapter contents. These phrases meant a lot to me as I was writing.

I have tried to maintain the original spelling of cities and peoples from ancient times to the changes that occurred throughout history to help portray the different cultures and rulers of Sicily. I changed to the modern spellings as time approached the more recent thousand years. The name changes from the earlier ancient to more recent modern era are the result of the many leaders and languages used by the varying inhabitants who occupied Sicily.

As I stated above it is not a novel-like book to be read in order cover to cover. This "book" can be read in any order you desire to what interests you. For example, in the Introduction feel free to read the first two and last two pages and skip the detailed timeline history of Sicily for now so to get to the "good parts" as you shall see. It was hard to summarize Sicily's over 3000-year history in a few paragraphs. Of course, go back and read the history later it is quite interesting and plays a big part of our family's culture. Also, time periods jump around with so much going on, so I apologize.

I did not try to create a complete biography of events either. Although it was tempting with all the great stories, events and people in my life. I rather tried to concentrate on main recollections and identifying as much of family history and lineage to preserve details for Lisa, Craig, Emma, Lily, Elena, Dexter, Claire, Oliver and any other future family.

Make sure to read the Afterword and Acknowledgments since they better explain my feeling of family and why I have documented our history. Note the letters “~GB~” throughout; I will explain in the end if you do not figure it out.

## **PREFACE – (Updated 2022)**

Well, a few years have passed since I originally drafted the Preface above. It is now October 2022 and a few things have changed. I continued to make some updates and of course the ever ending error corrections. But it is time to close up the writing. I finished the narrative at least through mid-year 2022. It is a never ending history and there will always be more to come.

The major events that have rewarded our lives since 2017 are:

- I retired from FCA Chrysler in December 2017
- Jeannette retired in December 2018
- We sold our home in Kokomo Indiana and moved back to northwest Indiana to Hobart in February 2019
- We lost Jeannette’s beloved Dad in January 2020
- Craig and Sara blessed us with two more grandchildren: Spencer and Amber
- And not be forgotten (although we wish it could be erased and it did not reward any of us) is the coronavirus pandemic in 2019 to 2022

I want to say with retirement, I was able to review all my notes, pages and photos and could not resist adding numerous items to this book.

Again, I want to emphasize to readers read whatever strikes your interest and remember I did not or could not include every family member specifics or happenings. I concentrated on immediate Bonaccorsi-Gugliotta family. I wish I could add more but I would never finish writing since there is so much family to describe and enjoy. I tried to identify as many family members and friends as possible as described in the chapter “Extended Family.”

Therefore, I hope this short and informal work that documents our family is enlightening; something new is introduced; or simply refreshes the memory of specific persons or events and brings some joy to those who read it as much as I did in writing it. So, read on. I hope you enjoy and share what Family truly means.

ENJOY – AND BEVENUTI [Spero che ti piace questo]

Special Note: Letters or names in brackets “[...]” indicate references to the source of the information preceding the bracket. For example [Pike] indicates the preceding info came from Jeffery Pike, *Inside Guide Sicily*.

## INTRODUCTION.

### A Short History of Sicily and How It Relates to Our Family

*Sicily ought to attract travelers: for its natural beauties and its artistic beauties, since they are as singular as they are remarkable.*

--Guy de Maupassant

On a typical day as the sun rises in the east over the Ionian Sea, the dew on the trees and flowers glisten. The fig, pistachio, almond, hazelnut, olive, grape and citrus leaves all sparkle with a certain light that makes the view alive and magical. As one looks west the breathtaking view of Mt. Etna emerges with its snow covered peak. This is the view and surroundings I witnessed on our 2005 visit to Sicily and of many a Sicilian. The steam, silent but powerful, emitting from its top and numerous side vents reminds one of the potential strengths and ancient history of the area with the gallant mountain known as Mongibello to the Sicilians coming from the Italian *monte* and the Arabic word *gebel* both meaning “mountain.” To the locals, it is also known as a *montagna* with the Latin name of Aetna and is addressed as “she.” [Pike] The panorama is absolutely magnificent. You just want to gaze and contemplate for hours and admire the splendor and beauty of the scenery, the history and the energy of the landscape. This is exactly how I, Jeannette, Lisa and Mark witnessed the island on our trip in 2005.

When Guy De Maupassant, the renowned nineteenth-century French author, visited Sicily in 1885 he toured a major part of Sicily especially the coastal towns. In his book *Sicily* he describes Sicily as “... an indispensable land to see and one unique to the world, in that she is, from one end to the other, a strange and divine museum of architecture.” He describes how the Arabs among the Greek, Byzantine and Norman and Gothic influences over time created some of the similar and but unique arts and styles that stand out as solely Sicilian and not styles of different periods. De Maupassant was particularly impressed on the siting of various monuments and the theaters which provided amazing views of the surroundings and was specifically enthralled with the theater (Teatro) in Taormina. [GdM] When visiting Sicily and this theater in 2005 I was totally captivated as well. The theater with its construction and orientation provides an extraordinary view. While seated inside the amphitheater and looking at the stage presents a view of Mt. Etna that reveals a scene of incomparable magnificence. As I recorded in my trip journal “Looking over the stage is Mt. Etna; it was built around 3 B.C. by the Greeks and rebuilt by the Romans 2 A.D. Here amazing views can be seen around all areas.” We took photographs and bought a painting of the same scene – absolutely amazing. De Maupassant states the Greeks sited their theaters “exactly on the spot where the eye could be stirred the most by the views.”

A summary of various cultures in Sicily for the last three thousand years include the following:

- Greeks:
- Romans
- Vandals



- Goths
- Byzantines (Eastern Europe)
- Muslims (Arabs)
- Normans (NW France)
- Hohenstaufens (Austrian/Germans)
- Spanish
- Houses of Savoy & Hapsburg (Austrians)
- Bourbons, Return of the Spanish
- Garibaldi
- Unification with Mainland Italy
- Americans & English (1943 - 1948 & after WWII)

The first evidence of life in Sicily is around 10,000 BC when at this time it was still attached to the mainland of what now is Italy [TGS]. Over the next few thousand years the rising of the surrounding seas separated the island of Sicily from the mainland and its distinctive occupational history began and this history is remarkable. The consistent volcanic activity of Mt. Etna has developed a very fertile soil that supports wide variety of agriculture especially with vineyards and orchards and has supported the development of civilization in the area.

### **Greeks (734 BC – 263 BC)**

The early recorded history begins about 4500 to 3000 BC in Lipari an island just north of Sicily with its central culture around obsidian the black volcanic rock. Obsidian has naturally sharp edges and was used for making blades for hunting and as a tool for building and making items. The improvement of boats and water navigation increased travel to and from mainland Greece and Italy to around 900 BC when most of the Lipari life was destroyed. Much of the early Sicilian culture can be traced to the excavated ruins that many archaeologists have identified Lipari as “Europe’s museum” and Sandra Benjamin goes on to say Lipari is “...the best place to see earliest Sicily.” [Benj]

The first original peoples living on the island were of the Aeolian, Cretan and Minoan cultures around 1500 BC and then the Sicels and Sicultan civilization became prominent until the Greek immigration began. [Ratti]

The first Greek colonists arrived where they found the best beaches suitable for landing and setting up trading locations and founded Naxos around 734 BC. They settled at the base of the mountain of lava rock and they called it Tauro (later called Taormina). These colonists then built the first structures of stone in Sicily including the first temple to Apollo. They continued their immigration further south in the area called Katane (Name not changed to Catania until centuries later) closer to Mt. Etna. [Benj] During the Greek rule significant building and architectural growth occurred including numerous temples and theaters. Even though all the traditional Greek styles were utilized (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian) they were unique and stood out as uniquely Sicilian. Greeks throughout Sicily built theaters in nearly every town along with their temples. Significant agriculture also took place along with development of the arts and sciences. Hippocrates ruled for about 8 years with positive influence in west Sicily and

overturning the east. [Benj] Socrates was born in Syracuse around 287 BC and was instrumental in various ingenious machines. His relationship to the ruler of the time Hieron II was able to provide the Greeks with superiority to keep the Romans at bay for a few years. [Ratti][Benj] The Greek dominance lasted about 500 years. During this period many considered Syracuse the most dominant city in all of Europe but Sicily was not large enough to withstand future invasions of numerous peoples over the next 1600 years. [Pike]

### **Romans (263 BC – 425 AD)**

The first city to fall to the Romans was Messena (changed to Messina centuries later) beginning the Punic wars. The Romans finally conquered Sicily in 212 BC with the killing of Archimedes and other leaders and began their 600-year rule. Sicily was the start of the Roman Empire. The Romans used Sicily to produce grain for Rome and included cutting down significant forests to supply wood for grain boats to ship product to Rome. During these years the increase of oxen, mules, sheep and cattle increased to support the Roman military. On the hills of the region of eastern Sicily grapes were grown to supply both the locals and Roman military as well. [Benj]

Roman influence took hold in the public works, architecture and entertainment arena. The Theater in Taormina is definitely Roman structure although some of the earlier Greek attributes with its inscriptions and steps are still evident and accordingly this is known as the Greek-Roman Theater. [Bonechi] Roman construction in Katane included a huge new theater built more for circuses, gladiator competition and a drinking water supply system of aqueducts. The occupations of making woolens, growing grain and fruit, sulfur mining and raising sheep were also prominent during this time. The people mostly spoke Greek while Latin was the language of the ruling administrators during these 600 years of Roman Empire in Sicily.

During the early Roman Empire, Christianity still had yet to make a presence, while Jews occupied many towns along with the Romans in the years before and after the birth of Christ. Christians slowly entered Sicilian life from the east late in the first century AD although they had to hide their religious beliefs because of the threat of Roman persecution. It was not until 313 AD that Emperor Constantine decriminalized Christianity and at that time Christianity began its rise. Many of the Greek temples were converted into Christian churches and soon Sicily had its first bishop located in Syracuse. [Benj]

### **Vandals (425 AD – 488 AD)**

The decline of the Roman Empire in Sicily began around 425 AD while the Germanic group from northeast Germany, the Vandals, began their movement south into Sicily. Under the leadership of their king Gaiseric the invasion of numerous towns of Sicily took place until it was conquered in 468. The rule of the Vandals, also known as Arian Christians, increased the use of Latin as the primary language and ties to the Christian church. [Benj] The Goths a different group of Germanic people also expanded rule into Sicily during this time. During the Vandal 100-year rule grain continued to be bring stability to the Sicilian life style. [Pike]

### **Goths (488 – 533 AD)**

Around 491 Ostrogoths under Odoacer took Sicily from the Vandals. [Ratti] This group of Germanic peoples allied themselves with Byzantines and under the rule of Throdoric took control of Sicily centralized in the town of Ravenna. For the Goth's short occupation Sicily lived in a time of peace until the war started by Justinian in 533.

### **Byzantines (533 – 827 AD)**

In 533 the Vandal and Goth rule diminished and the Byzantine Empire began with Emperor Justinian who took control of Sicily. This group, even though Greek, was more known to the world as the Eastern Empire or the New Greece and the Greek Orthodox Church emerged to counter Rome. [Pike] Even with the people being Greek speaking, they had little to do with the ancient Greek ways. [Benj]

The art influence of the Byzantines emphasized colored glass and mosaic styles. [Benj] In architecture the use of large domes emerged along with spires and rounded arches among the primary features. The largest concentration of Byzantine art and architecture is in Syracuse which was the capital of the Empire. Byzantines also developed an increase of icons (lavishly colored art work) and gold-framed paintings. [Pike] The highly skilled artisans developed and utilized ways to manufacture glass cubes of varying sizes and color to create lavish works of art and the use of color carried over into their clothing. [Benj]

### **Muslims – Arabs (827 – 1061 AD)**

Arabs consistently intruded on the Byzantine rule of Sicily for over 100 years (650 - 827) but a dedicated Arab invasion took place in 827 beginning on the west coast of the island. [Pike] They continued their invasion until they overtook Tauromenium, Syracuse and Magna Graecia in 902 ending Byzantine rule.

The new capital of Sicily became Palermo with its close proximity to North Africa. Even though much of the published literature calls this rule “Arab” the Muslim conquerors included various groups of peoples of North Africa. The Muslims or Arabs enlightened the time period with improved and expanded public systems, agriculture, arts, architecture, certain foods and industries. [pike] The more important advancements included the following:

- Public Systems: fountains & baths, fine tunes irrigation systems, reservoirs, storage towers, government offices;
- Agriculture/Food: sugar cane, mulberries, palms, melons, pistachio nuts, papyrus;
- Industries: mining of sulfur, lead, silver, sea salt, cotton mills, and silk factories; harvesting of ice from Mt. Etna; coral & tuna fishing.
- Arts: [Pike]

The Muslims of this period continued the growing and processing of durum wheat but they also introduced the first pasta type food to Sicily with the making of rishta noodles as well as cereals. The making of silk grew to become a major export for Sicily and silk products continue today a significant Italian merchandise. [Benj] Considering the time period, the use of mining ice from the heights of Mt. Etna to make cool drinks, sorbets and sherbets is astonishing. [Pike] [Benj]

The Muslim lifestyle left a lasting impression on the Sicilian scenery and settlements are still visible today in buildings, foods and names. [Benj]

### **Normans (1061 – 1189)**

During the latter part of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Muslim and Greek influence began to diminish and Sicily started to become more European as more English, Norman, French and Spanish increased their presence. First was Roger I and then his son Roger II became King of Sicily. Puglia and Calabria and the Normans emerged as the ruling power but Muslims were still prominent in the daily activities. The Latinization of Sicily began with the immigration from the areas of Pisa and Lombard. William I followed Roger and then the reign of his son William the Good began in 1166 when he was only 14 years old. With the death of William the Good and no heir, the ruling family shifted to Tancred the bastard grandson of Roger and the House of Hohenstaufen. [Pike] During this time period and rule, the ethnic mix began to increase. In various towns of Sicily, the “peoples lived similar lives, associated with one another, and intermarried with different ethnic groups.” The portal towns showed the most ethnic mix and the architecture as well showed the increase of cultures in the mosques, synagogues, both Latin and Greek churches and the larger houses of the prominent citizens. [Benj]

### **Hohenstaufens (1194-1282)**

The Germanic Hohenstaufen dynasty produced a series of Holy Roman emperors’ rule beginning with Henry VI. During the 1200’s kings ruled and rebellions took place until the Easter Rebellion of 1282 which then led to a war between the French Normans (Angevin) and Spanish (Aragonese). But in 1302 peace was reached with Frederick of Aragon becoming ruler of Sicily. Here the Norman rule ended and the Spanish rule began. [Pike]

### **Spanish (1282 – 1720)**

The Spanish rule continued to reign until 1713. As far as influences the Spanish rule deteriorated to the point that much of Sicilian exports ceased as the Europeans particularly the English wanted to use Sicily for buyers of their products like cloth and clothing. The other major influence during the Spanish rule was the increase of Latinization of the island over the 400 years of Spanish rule especially of the language. With the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 Sicily rule went under the House of Savoy. It is with this treaty that Sicily officially coined the name Trinachia (three-pointed island) to distinguish it from Sicily of the previous rulers especially the Spanish. [Benj]

### **Houses of Savoy & Hapsburg (1720 – 1733)**

With the Houses of Savoy & Hapsburg and the Treaty of Utrecht in place, the island of Sicily was awarded to Victor Amadeus Duke of Piedmont-Savoy. Upon his arrival, he found that Sicily was so degenerated that many staples like cereal and other agricultural products had to be imported from Europe. The Spanish invaded Sicily in 1718 but the British fleet then sank most of the Spanish fleet which allowed Austrian troops to land and take over Sicily in 1720. However, the Hapsburg rule lasted only a few years. The Spanish influences still existed and

the itch for the Spanish to take over began with the death of Polish King Frederick Augustus in 1733. [Benj]

The architecture during the Spanish era was influenced by various periods beginning with the Greeks, followed by the Byzantine, Arab and Norman styles. This influence is seen in the medieval churches including Duomo of Monreale (blend of Norman, Byzantine and Arab attributes), those in Erice, Palermo, Cefalu, Syracuse and Catania. The buildings beginning in the 1700's started to take on even more fusion of the Spanish era. This style was so specific it became known as Sicilian Baroque.

### **Bourbons - Return of the Spanish (1733 – 1848)**

King Carlo of Naples and Sicily sailed to Sicily and returned the island back to the Spanish throne in 1735. During the 25-year rule of Sicily by King Carlo, he made numerous improvements in the economy and general administration of the land. But King Carlo made little improvement in the way of life for majority of the populous during his rule. During these years, Sicilian production of grain increased significantly and excesses were exported to traders. [Benj] When Carlo became King of Spain his son Ferdinand then ruled Sicily. The Bourbon rule continued until 1848. During the latter years of Bourbon rule, the industrial revolution had a very positive effect on Sicily and its economy with strong growth in textiles, sulfur, wine, being the prominent products. But one unique additional improvement took place – tourism and visiting personalities. [Benj] This Bourbon rule became the last of the foreign rulers of Sicily. [Benj]

During the mid to latter 1700's various elements took hold. The influence of mainland Italy especially from Naples increased. Various attractions in Sicily fascinated Europeans including Mt. Etna, the numerous historic ruins, unique architectural structures and the landscape of lemons and oranges. [Benj] The general solitude of the island also played a major part of visiting people's agenda to get away from the daily European activities and increase Sicily's popularity.

Among the numerous barons and followers of the arts to visit Sicily was Johann Wolfgang Goethe the famous writer and poet. [Faust] Upon his arrival in 1787 in Palermo he noticed the cultural and lifestyle differences between Sicily and Naples and tried to influence improvements in way of life. He continued his tour of the island with visits from the west side to the east including Agrigento and Catania. [Benj] His visit to Italy and Sicily was not the typical pleasure trip but one to reenergize himself. He was looking forward to review paintings, the landscape and enjoy the sun. While in Sicily he traveled on horseback across the interior of the island from Palermo to Catania and Taormina. Goethe goes on to state "Without seeing Sicily one cannot get an idea of Italy as a whole. The key to everything here is found in Sicily." [Hohendorf] He published his sojourn in his *Journey to Italy* years later in 1816.

### **Garibaldi (1848 – 1860)**

The Revolution of 1848 continued and another revolt under command of Giuseppe Garibaldi in 1860 began the liberation of the island from Bourbon rule and lead to the unification of Italy and Sicily under the leadership of Vittorio Emanuele II of Piedmont. Living in Sicily was still a difficult process and only got worse as the years before the Great War in 1914 approached. [Benj] Even during this time of democracy and parliamentary rule in place, times remained difficult and unfortunately only a very small percentage of Sicilians could vote to participate in improvements. [Pike]

### **Sicily in the Kingdom of Italy (1861 –to Modern Times)**

In 1860 under the rule of Vittorio Emanuele II of Piedmont the Sicilians voted for Unification of Italy and Sicily ending the dictatorship of Garibaldi. During the latter part of the 1800's and beginning of the 1900 noted visitors to Sicily occurred including Richard Strauss the German composer and Oscar Wilde the English actor. Most of the places stopping points were Palermo, Syracuse and Taormina. During this period because of the increase of visitors, numerous inns and villas were built. [Benj]

Another significant visitor to Sicily was Guy de Maupassant in 1885. A primary reason for his venture to Italy and Sicily particularly was to challenge the opinion of the people of France that "Sicily is an uncivilized country, difficult and even dangerous to visit." It did not take very long into his trip to prove that negative opinion of Sicily was completely wrong. He subsequently wrote a book *Sicily* documenting his trip, his findings and details of admiration of the island and its peoples. He goes on to say in his book that Sicily is the "pearl of the Mediterranean." He goes on to say in his book "Here is Catania, a vast and beautiful city, constructed entirely on lava;" and "Were a man to spend only one day in Sicily and ask "What must one see?" I would answer him without hesitation, "Taormina.' " [GdM]

During the first years of unification much turmoil arose both politically and physically especially with the great 1908 earthquake in Messina which destroyed thousands of homes and killed 84,000 people. Simultaneously the emigration numbers increased and even emptier housing occurred. The Great War from 1914-1918 drained the Sicilian as well as the Italian economy followed by Mussolini rising to power in 1922. Not much improved during Mussolini's rule and then WWII activities began in 1937 and continued to 1945 which impacted the area and its people. [Benj] [Pike]

In addition, the final blending of the Italian language in Sicily took place during WWI. Here Sicilians were sent off to war in northern Italy and southern Europe. Many Sicilians learned to speak Roman Italian and discovered the social and cultural life of the mainland. [Benj]

~GB~

## IMMIGRATION

Significant emigration from Sicily to the Americas started during the 1880's to levels of over 11,000 in 1889, over 20,000 in 1898 and steadily increasing through 1913. In 1905 and 1906 over 100,000 and in 1907 over 97,000 left the island [Benj] the year of Grandpa Gugliotta's departure. The peak level was reached in 1913 with over 146,000 the year Grandpa Santo Bonaccorsi and his brother John immigrated to Baltimore. The primary U.S. destinations ports were New York City, and Philadelphia with Chicago also a very popular end point.

## RIPOSTO

The home of the Bonaccorsi and Bonanno families is Riposto which is located on the east coast of Sicily directly east of Mt. Etna on the Ionian coast in the province of Catania. The town's name is thought to be derived from the word "ripostiglio" meaning storage more than likely for the warehouses used in ship trading of various regional byproducts especially wine. It is home of one of Sicily's first public schools and the Naval Institute established by King Ferdinand I. The location of the Naval Institute in Riposto accounts for my Uncle Rosario Bonanno (Zio) and his brother being sailors as I remember from early conversations. The town was also once the location of various consulate offices for numerous European countries, including the United Kingdom and Brazil. The patron saint of Riposto is St. Peter appropriately selected in that St. Peter was a fisherman and is the protector of sailors. There are several festivals that highlight the year including Sagra delle Botti and each summer there is an annual Fish Festival that features Arancino the Sicilian specialty, a fried rice ball, second only to Sicilian cannoli in my opinion. [Summer in Italy] The close proximity to Mt. Etna provides the opportunity for tours, hiking, trails and other outdoor activities beyond the incredible sightseeing panorama.

## ROCCALUMERA

The home of the Marisca and Gugliotta families is Roccalumera also on the east coast of Sicily and northeast of Mt. Etna in the province of Messina. The town was found in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Filippo IV gave the feudal area to the noble family of La Rocca because of the alum quarries. The alum which is aluminum sulfate was used as a dye among other uses. The town name is derived from the presence of the alum mines or *Rocca of alum* in the area.

Roccalumera is a very beautiful area with most of the neighborhoods right off the Ioanian seacoast along the via Nazionale and via Mare. Many smaller villages are slightly inland on the rising hills and surrounding mountains in areas like Allume and Sciglio. In these two areas live many of our cousins and where we visited during our 2005 trip to Sicily. The primary roads include via Nazionale, via Corso Umberto I and via Lungamare Cristoforo Colombo.

The evidence of older architecture is quite evident in homes, churches and business establishments. The most prominent piece of architecture is the *Torre di Sollima* (Tower of Sollima). The structure was used as a military guard-tower providing a place to give smoke or fire signals to the town peoples. During the rule of the Arabs, the tower was modified with larger windows, doors and conical roof replacement. [Sicilia Indettaglio]

The other most important **monuments** of the village are the churches. The **Church of Madonna della Catena** was built in 1893 and the **Church of Madonna del Carmelo** was erected in 1938. The **Church of Santissimo Crocifisso** was built in 1740 which includes a precious wooden crucifix and a wonderful inlaid marble altar. The **Mother Church of Maria del Rosario**, located in the small hamlet of Allume, was built in the 17th century and is a well-preserved example of the famous Sicilian Baroque. The most important church tour family is **Chiesa dei Santi e Damiano** (Church of the Saints Cosmas and Damian). More of this history in “The Beginning – Mia Familia.”

~GB~

One of the best descriptions of Sicily and its people is by Guy de Maupassant. “When we have seen all these monuments – although they belong to different periods and types – have the same character, the same nature, we can see that they are neither Gothic, nor Arab, nor Byzantine but Sicilian. We can affirm that there exists a Sicilian art and a Sicilian style, always recognizable and assuredly the most charming, the most varied, the most colorful, and the most imaginative of all Architectural styles.” Even though this specific passage refers to his observation of architecture, comments elsewhere in his book *Sicily* and in many other resources used in writing this book, identify the same attributes of the citizens and lifestyles of Sicily as well. This very distinctive portrayal by de Maupassant corresponds to the blending of the varied settlers and rulers as described in the Preface and Introduction. [GdM]

Of course, the foods of Sicily are a culmination of the centuries of different peoples settling on this grand island. The grains, especially durum wheat, brought the introduction of pastas and cereals which are a noted food for the Sicilians of all generations. The use of sugar, nuts, and various fruits are the Sicilian trademark of great food and is forever in our lives. Many of the foods especially desserts described in Chapter 5 can be traced back to the varied influences of the cultures identified above.

During our visit to Italy (Milan, Lake Como, Rome and Sicily) in the spring of 2005, I can certainly attest to the beautiful and varied cultures in Sicily as seen in their buildings, homes, foods, art and of course the people. Everywhere we travelled was distinctive and unforgettable.



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## **PART ONE – SETTING THE FOUNDATION**

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### **1. THE BEGINNING - MIA FAMIGLIA**

*A daughter needs a Dad to build a loving house on a foundation of wisdom and understanding.*

--Gregory E. Lane

*"Know what souvenir I wanna take home with me, Grandma? You!"*

--Bill Keane; *The Family Circus*®

*Love is the greatest of all words in our language.*

--John Wooden

#### **The GUGLIOTTAS**

In the town of Roccalumera in the Province of Messina Sicily, my family tree begins. My grandfather's great-grandmother was Giuseppa Marisca Pagano (husband's name unknown) who had a son Gaetano Pagano (more on Gaetano Pagano in Chap. 3 and Fig. 171) and daughter Dominica Pagano. Following my grandfather Gugliotta's lineage, Dominica Pagano married Gaetano Marisca (born February 24, 1834). Dominica and Gaetano Marisca had a son name unknown) and a daughter Giuseppa Marisca (born November 15, 1867). Giuseppa (Giuseppina) Marisca married Francesco Gugliotta (born Feb. 28, 1859 and died in 1929. Francesco's father was Carmelo Gugliotta and his mother was Carmel Carmoniti. (Fig. 166)

Francesco and Giuseppina had three children Carmelo born October 21, 1889 (my grandfather) and Agatina (Zia Agatina to my Mom and my aunts and uncle) and another son who died at age six. Agatina married Francesco Garufi who had three children: Antonia, Giuseppe (Peppo) and Francesco. (See details below and Fig. 171)

See "Extended Family" for the relationship of Grandpa's family to the Pagano's of Girard and how the family of Gaetano Pagano ties into the Bonaccorsis for the first side story into extended family. So, feel free to mosey on to the "Extended Family" chapter for this first interesting surprise of family history but please return back here.

#### **Antonia**

Antonia Garufi married Antonio Prestipino and they had a daughter Rosaria (Sara) (married to Carmelo Cateno) who had a son (Giovanni) and a daughter (Marie). Antonia and my mom exchanged numerous letters before and after Mom was married. She also wrote a letter to Dad. Jeannette, Lisa, Mark and I met Antonia and her daughter Sara when we visited Sicily in 2005. (See "Extended Family" for more.) We also met Peppo Garufi along with his daughter Grace

and family. At that time in 2005 Peppo's brother Francesco (Chico) had a son Giuseppe living in Florida.

During our visit with Antonia and her daughter they showed us a photograph of Grandma's and Grandpa's wedding hanging on the wall. Antonia then showed us photos of all the Gugliottas grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She mentioned Jarrett (Joanna and Ray's son) and with a tear in her eye took my hand when she showed us Jarrett's photo who had passed away that January. We all got quiet for a while, a very touching moment for me.

### **Carmelo**

My maternal grandfather, Carmelo Gugliotta, came to the United States from Roccalumera, Messina Italy at the age of 17. He traveled from Sicily to Naples leaving Naples, Italy April 22 1907 aboard the ship RMS *Campania* and arrived in the port of New York on May 8, 1907. He entered through Ellis Island as so many other immigrants had done. His immigration manifest shows he was with Antonino Sterrantino and they both identified their contact in the United States to be Domenico Sterrantino in Girard. For Grandpa the manifest noted him to be a cousin and for Antonino as his son. I have a photo of Grandpa and Grandma with a John Sterrantino and his wife taken Sept. 1946 After stopping in various cities, including Boston, traveling by train Grandpa made his way to Girard, Ohio. He started working for the Ohio Leather Works about 1908 and one area was in the blacking department. He walked to and from work every day. I have a vivid memory of me sitting on the side steps next to the driveway waiting for him and then seeing Grandpa walking up the hill of Powers Avenue on his way home from work. From what I understand he was at the Ohio Leather Works for about 52 years which means he retired about 1960.

His Compare (Compare is godfather but often extended as a special male friend, buddy) was Anthony Airato, (Compare Airato) His wife was Concetta, known to everyone as Comare Airato (where comare is godmother and often extended as a special female friend). More on the Airatos under "Extended Family" and "Family Marisca - Gugliottas" later in this chapter on the relationship with the Airatos. Other close friends included Compare Philip and Comare Fanny Micalizzi; John and Carmela Briguglio; and Mr. "Giardine" who I remember helping Grandpa dig up the basement when the sewer line was plugged back in the mid-1960's. Noting here this puts Grandpa in his mid-70's and Mr. Giardine at least that old doing this laborious work.

Grandpa served in the Great War, World War I. He enlisted in the National Army on April 1, 1918 in Niles, Ohio. At this time, his address was 29 Lizzie St. Girard, Ohio. I have a copy of his Registration Card of 1918 including his signature which was in clear excellent penmanship, better than the handwriting of the registrars at Ellis Island. His serial number was 2428450 and he was assigned to Company C 832 Infantry. He was later assigned to Company E 325 Infantry as Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class while at St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, Defensive Sector. He was then assigned to American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) June 7, 1918 to May 18, 1919 and honorably discharged May 29, 1919. After Grandpa passed away in 1978 he was

acknowledged with a certificate of thanks as a veteran of the Great War by President Jimmy Carter.

~GB~

An interesting fact about the date of my grandfather's arrival to the United States and the ship *Campania* is Wilbur Wright of the Wright Brothers set sail on the *Campania*'s return trip back to Europe to market their new flying machine: "Will boarded RMS *Campania*, bound for London and Le Havre, in the middle of May 1907 ..." in hopes to make a deal with the French and other governments in Europe. [Tobin] Wilbur Wright began his trip to meet possible buyers sailing from New York on May 18 and sailing "past the Statue of Liberty..." [McCullough]. Another possible renowned passenger at this time was Andrew Carnegie who left for Liverpool England on May 18, 1907 probably on the RMS *Campania* as well since the departure date is the same as Wilbur Wright's account. [Nasaw]

The RMS *Campania* was built in 1893 in Glasgow Scotland and sailed under the Cunard Lines. The *Campania* "was known as one of the finest vessels of its kind and one of the fastest, ... predominant interior style was Art Nouveau, with staterooms and public rooms paneled in satinwood and mahogany, and thickly carpeted." [McCullough] It had three engines and two masts and sailed until 1918. A photograph of the RMS *Campania* is included in McCullough's book The Wright Brothers.

~GB~

## The MARISCAS

Pietro Marisca met and married Anna Gugliotta (born May 27, 1879) in Roccalumera, Messina, Sicily. Pietro was born Dec. 7, 1879 and died Jan. 15, 1929. Anna was born May 27, 1879 and died Sept. 17, 1964. Pietro and Anna had five children.

**Maria** Marisca married Antonio Fama and they had three children Lidia, Carmelo and Gaetano. Lidia married Domenico Romeo (Mimmo) January 9, 1971. We met Lidia and Mimmo on our visit to Sicily in 2005. Maria's sons are Gaetano and Carmelo. One of Grandma's cousins was Fannie Fama, Maria's niece who immigrated to and lived in Philadelphia until her husband passed away and then she returned to Sicily. We met Fannie on our visit to Sicily. Grandma talked about her cousin Fannie often.

**Gaetano** Marisca (Uncle Guy) married Guiseppa and had a daughter Anna Maria. Anna Maria married Antonio (Nino) D'Arrigo. As I remember from conversations with Mom and Grandma Uncle Guy had an orchard that he maintained. Not sure if it was his main job or major hobby that is "a garden." Uncle Guy passed away in 1978. We met his daughter Anna Maria and her husband Antonio on our visit to Sicily. Anna Maria and Antonio had two children Maria Pia and Sergio. I remember seeing pictures of Maria Pia when she was only two years old and others as she grew older. Because of my interest in stamp collecting, Grandma started me communicating with Uncle Guy including requesting Italian stamps. I have most of the envelopes but did not save the letters or at least could not find them. Most of

the letters were exchanged around 1966 and were signed by Antonio D'Arrigo. The letters also included additional Italian stamps.

**Carmela** Marisca married Carmela Romeo and they had four children: Natalino, Rosetta, Silvio and Anna. Carmelo Romeo was Grandpa's father's Francesco's cousin. Rosetta Romeo Grasso had three children Antonio, Franca and Mariella. We initially met Antonio and Franca on our visit to Sicily. On our first day in Sicily we had lunch at Rosetta's house located in Misterbianco Catania – what a pleasant experience – it brought back many memories of our Sunday dining at Grandma's in Girard. Rosetta passed in 2022. Antonio and his wife Margherita (now divorced), Franca and Mariella all visited Baltimore in August 2007 just after Mom passed away. We met Anna Romeo during our visit and she also offered her house for us to stay in the future. She was very sociable and showed an enormous affection to us. I could tell she wished we knew more Italian and she knew English because she was very determined to make conversation with us.

**Giovanna** (Giovannina) was born August 8, 1907 in Roccalumera – my grandmother. The story here is Grandma's family knew Grandpa's family and somehow was introduced, they met and got married. Grandpa is 18 years older than Grandma. More of this story below.

**Yolanda** the youngest of the siblings was born 1912 and married Carmelo Marisca. She had two children Giovanna and Carmelo. Giovanna married Santino Casablanca and had one child Chiara who is about the age of Lisa. We met them as well on our visit to Sicily. Chiara was so sweet to us and was our primary and often only interpreter and guide. Giovanna and Santino live in a beautiful home where their back-yard view is of the mountains. Santino worked for the road commission in the toll collecting group. Yolanda passed away in September 1998 only a few weeks apart from her sister Giovanna - Grandma.

~GB~

## **FAMILY –Marisca - Gugliotta**

Sometime after The Great War, Grandpa went back to Sicily to visit family, friends and his future bride, Giovannina (Giovanna) Marisca. He returned to Sicily in 1928 to marry Giovannina and Grandma and were married on February 11, 1928 in Roccalumera, Messina, Sicily and I believe at the Chiesa Santi Cosma e Damiano. Their wedding picture was hanging on the wall when we visited his niece Antonia on our trip to Sicily in 2005. It was the first time I ever saw or even knew it existed. I was awestruck. It is a wonderful wedding photograph with all their family – parents, siblings, cousins and friends. Antonia was my grandparent's flower girl, she looked about four or five years old.

After the wedding, Grandpa returned to the United States on the SS Conte Biancamano leaving Naples Italy on April 25, 1928 and arriving in New York May 4, 1928 and headed back to Girard leaving his new bride in Sicily. At this time, Grandpa listed his residence on the manifest of immigration as 1033 Todd Avenue. Grandma left Sicily and traveled to Naples to begin her journey to her new home in America. She boarded the SS Conte Grande leaving Naples on August 22, 1928 and arriving in New York August 31, 1928 and started her new chapter of her life. Sometime around 1931-32, Grandpa and Grandma moved to 629 N. Ward Avenue, still

home to Grandma until she passed away in 1998. The Ward Avenue home was built in 1922. Ward Ave. was named after James Ward.

My Mom, **Josephine Anna**, the first child of four was born on November 1, 1929 followed by Anna (Oct. 14, 1930), Frances (July 28, 1932) and Frank (Sept. 5, 1936).

Mom's collection of documents included four "War Ration Books" she was assigned during the war and some stamps still remain in "Book 3" and "Book Four." These ration books were issued by the Office of Price Administration (OPA) to control the distribution of certain items, resources or services like sugar, gasoline, certain types of clothing, rubber tires, toothpaste to mention just a few that were determined to be critical for the war efforts. The first ration books were issued in May 1942 with War Ration Book Number One, or the "Sugar Book". To get approved and receive rationing stamps one had to appear before the local War Price and Rationing Board. Each person in a household received a ration book, including babies and small children who qualified for canned milk not available to others. The rations books continued until August 1945.

Mom did well in school and graduated in May 28, 1947. She had appendicitis I believe in her junior year and missed some school time. She told me she still finished with good grades but felt her grades did suffer some. Mom saved numerous documents and school event memorabilia from her senior year including her prom. Included in Mom's scrapbook are numerous newspaper articles of the war, her graduation and various friend and relative weddings. One Youngstown Vindicator article published May 17, 1947 indicated "the graduation ceremony would be held in the school stadium, the 65<sup>th</sup> and the largest commencement (150 graduates) in its history." A Girard News article published after the graduation writes "leading the class were honor students who included: ...Josephine Gugliotta." Another article announces the Home Economics Club of the Girard High School honoring mothers and seniors. The article identifies Mom giving "a resume of the year's work" of the club's activities.

Mom's early jobs as I recall from our conversations and verified with Aunt Fran included working at Reliable Clothing, a men's clothing store on Federal Street, in Youngstown. She worked with a Glenn McCoy.

The second to be born was **Anna** on October 14, 1930. Anna (Aunt Anne) married Rosario Conigliaro January 17, 1953 at 10.00AM St. Rose Church in Girard, Ohio with a wedding breakfast and later a reception at Grandma and Grandpa's house. They also had a wedding dinner for immediate family at the home of Mrs. Mary Molica. They honeymooned in New York City according to the Youngstown Vindicator article of January 19, 1953. However, I have five postcards sent by Aunt Anne and Uncle Sal dated January 21 and 23, 1953 postmarked Hamilton Bermuda. The cards were sent to my parents and to Uncle Sal's sister and brother-in-law Rosario Bonanno (Zio and ZiZi). I clearly remember conversations years ago that they did go to Bermuda. I guess it is possible they went to New York first then headed to the island of Bermuda. They have two children Joseph and Theresa. More in "Extended Family."

**Frances Mary** (Aunt Francie to all) was born July 28, 1932 and married Dominic Airato (born April 18, 1925) on June 4, 1955. They went to Florida for their honeymoon. At the time of their engagement and wedding, Aunt Francie worked at Cary's Drug Store and Uncle Dom at U.S. Steel Corporation in McDonald and then Packard Electric. They have two children Antoinette and Geraldine (Gerri). Aunt Fran. in her senior year, she starred in the play 'A Date With Judy' presented by the senior class of Girard High School on Dec. 2, 1948. She played the part of the laundry woman. According to the Girard News article the lead characters' "mishaps and problems combined to form a heartwarming and extremely laughable comedy." See "Extended Family" and Special Memories, Interests, and Favorites" for more details and events of the Airato connection and their wedding.

**Frank Peter** was born September 5, 1935. He was Uncle Frank to me but Frankie to his sisters and parents. During his junior year in high school Uncle Frank was selected along with nine other local fellow students to attend the Buckeye Boys' State activities at Camp Perry. The ten day program gives students an "opportunity to better understand the methods of government through practical application" and "that government and good citizenship are inseparable" as described in a Girard News article. After graduating from Girard High School, he attended Youngstown State University and graduated with a Chemistry Degree. He went on to work at National Cash Register Co. in Dayton, Ohio for two years and then LECO Corporation for over 40 years until his retirement. His LECO position required him to visit various manufacturing facilities including Easter Stainless Steel and Chrysler. When he was on the east coast he would visit my parents and Aunt Anne and Godfather. Both Eastern Stainless and Chrysler Kokomo had LECO analytical equipment in use. Uncle Frank married Lydia on Jan. 5, 1968 and they had three children: Nadia, Sondra (George Roy) and Frankie (Michelle). Aunt Lydia passed away on the day of Sondra and George's wedding, May 18, 1996. Quite a sad day. Aunt Lydia had been ill for a while with cancer but seemed happy to be at the wedding. We were in the reception hall having dinner when Uncle Frank wheeled Aunt Lydia passed our table. As she went by she stared in my eyes and grabbed my hand and smiled. Minutes later she passed away.

~GB~

My Mom and her sisters and brother grew up in a household where friends, family and extended family were continually visiting and sharing their life, food and happiness. As the siblings were growing up I remember my mom told us how they used to take buckets of water up what is now Powers Avenue to water the "garden" my grandfather nurtured or "green thumbbed." Figs, plums, tomatoes, string beans, grapes, green peppers, peas, squash (zucchini), fennel, lettuce, parsley, basil and of course his pride and joy his sweet corn. These fruits and vegetables were the mainstay of his garden. When visiting Girard everyone talked about his garden and what he raised. As Powers Avenue was developed and homes were built the cultivated area was reduced to the corner three lots on Powers. Eventually Aunt Francie and Uncle Dom built their home on the third lot. The back part of Aunt Fran's lot was also a garden. My grandparents' "smaller" lot is still an understatement, it was a huge garden of two lots all cultivated, planted, cared for and harvested by hand.

Everything about Grandpa and Grandma was warm, devoted and very impressionable. Whenever Aunt Fran and Uncle Dom would drive down to Baltimore to visit, there was a sense of emptiness if Grandpa did not accompany them on the trip. Many of the visits were in the fall after harvesting so Grandpa would join them. The only thing that kept him from coming was “His” garden. Not only his pride and joy, but Girard’s. I remember friends, relatives and strangers passing by admiring his work like an ART.

There was a modest but definite sense of pride there in Grandpa’s eyes and voice when he talked about his garden. He would always explain why this plant here or there, how to cultivate and nurture, how to water, when to pick. But of course, always protecting the product of his labors, his special pride. There was a brick walkway from the house up through the garden. Every year when we visited, Grandpa would remind all of us grandchildren to “keep on the brick walk, with your hands in our pocket or folded together. Never get off the path unless instructed.” He said this with a very clear proud voice never threatening. The main path led to Aunt Fran’s and Uncle Dom’s lot and a side branch to the fig tree and corn plot. I recall many of the bricks were from the local steel mills as their names were embossed on the brick face. Also, off of the main walk was a brick side path to a compost pile beyond a fig tree where ALL vegetation waste from the garden, yard and kitchen were placed. Also, on the brick path was the garage. Here he kept many of his tools, baskets, seeds, picked tomatoes. Outside of the garage was a large wooden barrel with water to store his primary garden tools – shovels, forks rakes. Here I learned my first lesson on corrosion protection and that water does not rust or ruin tools but air. Each of the tools must be cleaned of all dirt and placed in the barrel with only the metal submersed. I remember looking at the fork and shovel as if they were new. Amazing how well he kept his tools and the pride he took in them as well as his garden. I have a piece of the walkway brick, what a memento!

Grandpa loved to read both books and the newspaper and he watched the news on TV every day. I have some of the books he read in my library now. He also admired President Kennedy including the frequent televised press conferences President Kennedy held. I vividly remember sitting in the living room on Ward Avenue as Grandpa sat in his chair and me on the floor watching the TV. I remember how can someone (the president) know so much stuff when asked questions on so many topics that I did not understand; remember I was only about ten years old. Then on a trip to Baltimore around the mid-1960’s, Grandma and Grandpa wanted to visit President Kennedy’s grave in Arlington Cemetery. So, one Sunday we went on a trip to visit his grave and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I remember everyone being so quiet just looking at the grave and eternal flame glowing in broad daylight. It was quite remarkable to watch everyone. Grandpa truly understood current events of the time both local, national and worldwide.

On a visit to Baltimore in the mid-seventies Grandpa and I were sitting at the dining room table at Mom & Dad’s after dinner. Not sure what triggered the conversation but we started to talk about his trips to America, and how he traveled by train from New York to Girard, working at the Leather Works and a little about his garden. I just wished I would have recorded the conversation and therefore would have included more information in this book. I was just

amazed what he remembered and how he talked with such confidence and clarity. One of my most memorable conversations not related to the garden was his questioning me “when are Jeannette and you having a baby?” This questioning began probably on our first visit to Girard as a married couple.

On a visit to Girard in November 1978, Jeannette and I told our grandparents we were expecting our first child and their first great-grandchild. Grandpa and I were sitting at their kitchen table and he held my hand and smiled. He was so happy about the baby; the happiness showed clearly in his eyes. Although his hand was beginning to shake so slightly his grip was still very strong. After we left Girard that visit Grandpa suffered a stroke. Mom and Aunt Anne left for Ohio right after we got home. Grandpa passed away on November 14, 1978. The gathering held at my grandparent’s house after the funeral brought together all of the family, friends and neighbors. Some of those in attendance I had never met before but they knew all of us grandchildren. One person in particular that spent time talking to me was Mr. Joe Perry, a truly friendly kind person who I am sure he was comforting himself as much as me since he had lost a true friend. Being a pallbearer along with my cousin Joe that day just made me so emotional it is hard to explain. Again, another tribute to the appreciation of family and friendship that surrounded 629 N. Ward Avenue, Girard Ohio.

~GB~

In July 1956 Grandma took her first and only trip back to Sicily to see her family especially her Momma. There is a photo of Grandma with her mother, Uncle Guy and his wife Giuseppa and their daughter Anna Maria. Anna Maria married Antonio (Nino) D’Arrigo who corresponded with me ten years later and sent me stamps. Grandma also sent my Dad a postcard writing “ I good wishes and hope you are well, Love and kisses Mamma and Grandma, aunts, uncles and cousins.” At least that is my best translation of her note. The postcard is of the Roccalumera Cassa di Risparmio (Savings Bank on Corso Umberto).

Grandma was very warm, loving, compassionate and had a sense of humor. She never shied away from saying her opinion and her showing her sense of humor. I still laugh at her comments when something triggers a memory. The most memorable times with her which in reality are all the times with her, were the ones helping or at least watching her picking vegetables from the garden and her cooking both in the basement and upstairs kitchen. After Grandma picked string beans and pea pods when I was older, I often helped snapping the ends of the string beans and removing the green peas from their pods. Just watching her work her talent in the kitchen is indescribable. The frying squash & peppers, making sauce, bread and pasta and me simply just sitting and breathing in the aromas. Of course, during my summer stays in Girard after my parents returned to Baltimore Grandma was with me and guiding me in everything I did. This closeness continued as I got older and especially after I married as she developed her relationship with Jeannette, Lisa and Craig. You can see it in her face and smile in all the pictures taken, it was something special. As you will see later many of my comfort foods are derived from Grandma’s menu and kitchen activities.



All the summers spent there in Girard bring back many wonderful memories, but the most vivid memories are sitting under the grapevine talking, often eating, relaxing after dinner and waiting for the next visitors to come. You never had to wait long. I think my grandparents were the most liked and loved “friends” in town. I enjoyed those simple times immensely. And until this day anytime we drive by Girard or I see the name Girard in writing, all those nostalgic comfort memories consume me like no other.

An uncanny occurrence took place a few years after Grandpa passed away while we were in Girard. Grandma had put Grandpa’s honorary military certificate from President Carter in a picture frame and placed it on the corner table between the sofa and TV. On one of our visits to Girard I looked over at the frame and saw an image, after staring a few moments, I realized it was an image of me over the certificate. I blinked to make sure it was what I thought I saw and got the proverbial goose-bumps. After a few more moments of staring, I realized it was my high school picture. Grandma had used the same frame from my graduation picture for the certificate and my image was transferred to the glass. It still is an uncanny thought to this day when I recall this truly happy vision. In 1997, Jeannette, Lisa, Craig and I attended her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party and again it seems all of Girard was there – all our aunts, uncles, cousins and extended family. My cousin Theresa wrote a beautiful poem in honor of Grandma for her birthday, August 1997.

#### A Salute to Grandma’s Ninetieth Birthday

Ninety years ago, in 1907,  
 God sent a gift straight from heaven!

Giovannina the fourth for Pietro and Anna,  
 Along with Maria, Gaetano, Carmela, Yolanda!

Carmelo Gugliotta found his mate,  
 and married Giovannina in 1928.

Giovannina left Sicily on a ship,  
 And traveled to America, Wow what a trip!

Giovannina and Carmelo settled here in Girard,  
 Life wasn’t easy, in fact it was hard!

They had four children of their own,  
 And raised them all, in their Ward Avenue home.

There were three daughters, first Pappina,  
 Then Nanutz and Cecina.

Frankie arrived, and oh what a joy,  
 Finally, they had their little boy!

They could feel the depression all around,  
 So Carmelo planted a garden on their ground.

With Giovannina’s canning and sewing, and his working the leather,

They tried to make life a little better!

The children all married, and left their home,  
Carmelo and Giovannina were finally alone!

The peace and the quiet that soon wouldn't last,  
There'd be ten grandkids to visit, and have such a blast.

The years have gone by, and the grandkids have grown,  
And now there's seven great grandkids for Nonna to call her own!

Giovannina's so lucky, she's had a full life,  
She's been through it all, the good times and strife.

We're all very happy to be here today,  
So, God bless my Grandma on this her special day!!!!

Grandma passed away August 25, 1998. As with Grandpa's after-funeral gathering, Grandma's also brought together all of the family and friends, and some I do not remember meeting before as well. Grandma and Grandpa's circle of friends is amazing, every one bringing food and sharing their fondest thoughts and memories.

I could go on and describe dozens of events and memories but in trying to keep this work "short", I will leave the additional or omitted occasions up to all my sisters and cousins to recollect their favorite ones to tell. My grandparents lived and raised a great family with their hearts and love with Girard, Ohio the center stage. Wilbur Wright of the Wright Brothers fame agrees as well as he stated in a speech he made giving advice to a young man on how to get ahead in life, "Pick out a good father and mother, and begin life in Ohio." [McCullough]

~GB~

### ***Brief History of Girard, Ohio***

The area where Girard, Ohio is located was bought by a group of four land speculators in 1798 one of which was Moses Cleveland founder of Cleveland Ohio. The land was then further divided up into 25 sections where in Great Lot 10 the future Girard would be located. The first settlers to the area around 1802 were the family of Hieronimus Eckman who came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania near Harrisburg and about 70 miles from Baltimore, MD. The Eckmans were Pennsylvanian Dutch. Over the next few years more settlers arrived building various structures and roads. The original village grew due to the future Pennsylvania and the Ohio Canal and in 1836 four men bought the Solomon Kline's farm and found the town of Girard. Although the original name given was Mahoning by the surveyor but later changed to Girard after the Philadelphia philanthropist Stephen Girard. Girard continued to grow and was part of the great industrial revolution with the rest of the country beginning in 1860. The primary industry was iron and steel and leather tanneries. The first was Krehl Tannery on State and Broadway in 1860 and then the Ohio Leather Company in 1896. Also, of note Tod Avenue original home of the Gugliottas was named after David Tod who was born in Brier Hill (Youngstown), became a lawyer, then postmaster of Warren, ambassador to Brazil and eventually Governor of Ohio. [Harris]

The Ohio Leather Company was located on US Route 422 at 1052 N. State Street on 27 acres just north of downtown Girard and north of Churchill Road and the facility was in operation from 1898-1971. It was originally known as Mahoning Leather Company and later changed its name to Ohio Leather Company; however locally it was referred to the Ohio Leather Works. The company produced “Chrome Upper Leather” sometimes referred to “quality upper leather” for shoemakers and handbag manufacturers. Specifically, the products included “Jack and Jill Black Calf; Luxor Colored Calf; White Calf & Side Leather, Fancy Calf Grains and Suedes” as described in the *Story of Leather* published by the Ohio Leather Company in 1949. During the early 1900’s, The Leather works was the “largest processor of calf leather in the United States and employed over 500 people.” [Harris]. The company supplied leather to companies all over the world; including Hanover Shoes and their biggest customer Florsheim during non-war years. However, the most important customer during World War II was the military especially the U.S. Navy. [City of Girard] Over the years when I would talk to almost anyone in Girard, it seems either they or someone they knew worked at the Leather works, including numerous cousins and my Dad. The Leather works was the largest employer in Girard. “Talk to any longstanding resident of Girard and you’ll find that they know someone who worked at the Ohio Leather Company.” [Gatta] As mentioned earlier, grandpa along with my Dad and many of our family and extended family worked at the Ohio Leather Company.

Ward Avenue home of the Gugliottas was named after James Ward. James Ward and his brother William in 1841 founded Ward Iron Mills, the first rolling mill in Niles and played “a prominent part in the history of Niles as well as the entire Mahoning Valley according to the Niles Historical Society.” James Ward also found the James Ward & Co. and The Falcon Nail and Iron Company. All these facilities were located in nearby Niles, Ohio.

~ GB ~

## **The BONACCORSIS**

Our Bonaccorsi family originated from the Riposto-Giarre area in the Province of Catania Sicily at the foothills of Mt Etna. From records found and discussion with Mom’s information, Riposto is the actual birth place of my great-grandparents and grandparents for both the Bonaccorsis and Bonannos.

Salvatore Bonaccorsi married Maria Torrisi (my great-grandparents) sometime in the late 1870’s and had six children: John, Santo, Angelina, Rosaria, Giuseppina, Maria. The two brothers John & Santo along with their sister Angelina are the only three that immigrated to the United States and all played a major part in my Dad’s and his brother’s lives.

I have little information on the two sisters Rosaria/Sara (never married) and Giuseppina. The sister Maria Bonaccorsi married a Micalizzi who had a son Peppino. My grandparents Gugliotta had two very close friends in Girard, Philip and Fannie Caputo Micalizzi (see chapter later in Special Memories) and according to Mom and some discussion, it is possible that my great-aunt Maria Bonaccorsi Micalizzi and the Micalizzis of Girard may be related.

**John** Bonaccorsi was born April 12, 1880 in Riposto, Sicily and died October 20, 1962. From records collected from manifest documents, he originally immigrated on the SS Verona leaving Naples, Italy on March 10, 1913 and arriving in Philadelphia March 26, 1913 along with my grandfather Santo. My memory of Uncle John is minimal since we saw him infrequently and I was only 10 when he passed away. I remember him as a tall white-haired man and always friendly. Usually Uncle Sam was with us when we saw Uncle John; it may be because we were at Uncle Sam's house. Uncle John's first wife was Verna and they had no children. Uncle John's second wife was Catherine they had two daughters Mary (married to William Barbour) and Sara Crone (included in picture at Mom & Dad's wedding). She passed away June 15, 1950

**Angelina** (born March 4, 1895; died June 27, 1978) married Carmelo Bonanno who is also included in Bonanno family description below. Angelina and Carmelo both immigrated to the United States September 19, 1920. They had two daughters Mary (My Godmother) & Geraldine. See below under Carmelo Bonanno for details on Cousins Mary and Gerri.

And lastly, my grandfather **Santo** Bonaccorsi born November 1, 1888. As mentioned above, he traveled to America in 1913 with his brother Uncle John (Giovanni) and their cousins Antonio Lopresti and his wife Ovaria as described above under John Bonaccorsi. According to the manifest the four of them were to go to join their cousins L. Lopresti in Baltimore at 311 S. High Street. For simplicity, I will describe the details of Grandpa Santo's early years in America under the section below "**FAMILY – Bonanno/Bonaccorsi.**"

~GB~

## The BONANNOS

The Bonanno family also originated from the Riposto-Giarre area of the Province of Catania Sicily and according to the manifests Riposto was the primary residence. Over the years the cities of Riposto and Giarre changed from twin cities to separate ones a few times. Again, all the details here in this section are from my Mom and the immigration manifests for each. Salvatore Bonanno married Maria Cavalierre and they had six children: **Enna, Maria, Gaetano, Carmelo, Rosario, and Concetta (Contettina).**

**Enna** Bonanno married Marco Tomarchio and they had six children: Mario; Maria Cocco; Geraldina; Ida Trovato, Ermenia and Salvatore. I have a photograph of Enna's husband Marco and their son Salvatore as identified on the back of the photo. The photograph was one Mom passed on to me.

Mario Tomarchio was a merchant seaman who came and visited the United States in April 1950. I have pictures of him with Zio and Uncle Carmelo Bonanno and a Christmas card he sent Mom and Dad in 1950. Mario introduced his cousin Mary Bonanno (daughter of Carmelo Bonanno and my future godmother) to Dr. Sebastian Russo around 1953. A picture of Mario with his uncles Zio Carmelo and Zio (Rosario) is found in the Photographs section.

**Maria** Bonanno married Alfred Pagano and had eight children. They immigrated to the United States and settled in Struthers, Ohio and were instrumental in the introduction of Mom & Dad.

Maria Bonanno immigrated with her first two children Rosaria (age 2) and Santo (age 8 months) leaving the port of Messina aboard the SS San Giovanni June 21, 1911 and arriving in New York City July 7, 1911. Her husband Alfred was not listed on the manifest for that voyage. Interesting note was Aunt Maria name on the manifest was listed as “Alfia Maria Bonanno.” (See “Extended Family” and “The Marriage of Mom & Dad and Family.”)

**Gaetano** Bonanno was born in 1897 and he married Francesca. They had three children Salvatore, Maria and Sebastian. At some point in time Gaetano and family moved to Argentina.

**Carmelo** Bonanno was born on November 17, 1894 and died June 9, 1973. He immigrated to the United States on the SS Patria traveling from Palermo to New York September 7 through 19, 1920 along with his wife Angelina. They were married in 1917. Interesting note on the manifests record under column “Length of stay in the US – *Forever.*” (Italics by the author) As mentioned above (under Angelina Bonaccorsi) they had two daughters. Their daughter Mary married Dr. Sebastian Russo in Riposto Sicily in 1954. They returned from Sicily via Rome and Iceland aboard Pan American World Airways on November 22, 1954 landing at Idlewild New York Airport (now known as John F. Kennedy International Airport).

Dr. Russo was the son of Carmelo and Rosa Russo of Altarello Sicily. Dr. Russo graduated from the University of Catania in 1950 and he opened his first practice in Riposto. Upon Mary and Sebastian’s arrival in Baltimore they lived with her parents at 5017 Harford Road and opened his practice on the main floor of the house until he moved the office across the street on Harford Rd. Geraldine (Gerri) married Andrew Lioi and lived next door to her parents. It should be noted here that my Dad and his brothers were full true cousins with Mary and Geraldine since both parents married siblings. Dr. Russo had a family medicine practice until his untimely death when he was murdered in his doctor’s office Feb. 27, 1981.

**Rosario** (Zio) was born December 18, 1896 and married Josephine Conigliaro (born April 24, 1911; died June 5, 1957) on April 15, 1934. While still living in Sicily, Zio was also a merchant seaman before he immigrated to America on September 21, 1920. They did not have any children. See Extended family for more history. The major historical event here is they cared for Dad after my Grandparents’ passing in 1936. More on Zio and Zia later in this chapter. Zio passed away January 30, 1972. Both Zio and ZiZi were a major part of my life.

**Concetta (Contettina Concettina)** Bonanno was born December 8, 1897 my paternal grandmother. She immigrated to America in September 1920. It indicates on the manifest register that Concetta Bonanno was “affianced” to Santo Bonaccorsi that is entrusted to be married to him. I will discuss this more below in “Family-Bonanno/Bonaccorsi.” A note here on the various spellings of my grandmother’s name. All three spellings (Concetta, Contettina, Concettina) are found on different documents: from a note written by my grandfather on a photo, immigrations manifests, birth certificate, gravestone and notes from my Mom. For simplicity and clarity, I will use Concetta (unless quoted from a document) since this seems to be the primary spelling from research on Italian names.

A brief comment about the ship SS Patria. It was a French built ship approximately 59 feet wide and 512 feet long with two masts and three engines and owned by the shipping line Cyprien Fabre. It was in service from 1913 to 1940.

~GB~

## **FAMILY – Bonanno/Bonaccorsi**

During the time after Santo arrived in Baltimore while Concetta was still in Sicily, Santo Bonaccorsi sent a photograph of himself to his brother-in-law Carmelo Bonanno inviting him and his wife Angelina (Santo's sister) to bring "Concettina" (Carmelo's sister) to the United States. Santo knows of Concetta and clearly has deep feelings for her as he reveals in his note to Uncle Carmelo. This very touching note is written on the back of his photograph dated Nov. 29, 1917 during the Great War (WWI). Santo is either acknowledging or requesting that Carmelo bring his sister to America after the war. Absolutely a romantic message of sincerity. (See p. 147, Fig. 140) I have translated as much as possible with help from others. His words are (my best translation):

Baltimore 29 November 1917

"My dear brother-in-law Carmelo it is with much pleasure I received your letter of joy else tried to hear your beautiful words, if you after thousand years War to end and you will bring to me Concettina your sister, imagine as I can wait this day please God then you will receive this my photo, am happy to receive your response, yours sincerely in health your brother-in-law Santo Bonaccorsi"

Uncle Carmelo, Aunt Angeline and my Grandmother Concetta finally made the trip to America as shown on the manifest register arriving on September 19, 1920 at the New York port-of-entry. The manifest identified their United States contact as Santo Bonaccorsi his address of 221 S. High St., his original home in Baltimore. The manifest record indicates my grandmother traveled with her brother Carmelo and his wife Angelina (Bonaccorsi) and as described earlier. They left Italy from Palermo Sicily on September 7, 1920 and arrived in New York City September 19, 1920 on board the SS Patria.

It has been long understood including my last conversations with my parents that **Santo** Bonaccorsi married Concetta Bonanno in May 1920 on the boat on their way to the United States. However, after reviewing all the manifests of their voyages to the United States and some other documents the dates did not confirm this sequence of events. My grandfather was already in Baltimore arriving in the Philadelphia port-of entry in 1913 along with his brother John as the immigration manifest documents. However, it is unclear if or when he returned to Italy to marry Concetta in May 1920; I could not find any documents verifying his return to Italy.

The manifest for Concetta indicated that she was "affianced" to Santo Bonaccorsi. There is no record of my grandfather traveling at this time. Therefore, it is uncertain whether they were

married before this voyage in September which would imply my grandfather traveled back to Sicily to marry and then returned to Baltimore separately or they married after my grandmother arrived in Baltimore in September 1920. My grandmother's manifest description could support either scenario. The description affianced along with her last name being signed as Bonanno could have implied that even though they were married she had no official documentation of such since my grandfather was not on the same journey to verify they were married in Italy. (It is my opinion that this is the most probable scenario since Mom and Dad had both stated they were married in May 1920.) It also would be a fair assumption that since she listed her name as Bonanno, it was written as affianced (engaged), and the "Married or Single" column identified her as single that they were not yet married but acknowledge they would upon her arrival to Baltimore. As I have researched, it is common for married women to list their maiden name Bonanno in official documents in this case emigration manifests. For example, my Mom's birth certificate indicates her mother's maiden name Marisca and on my birth certificate lists my Mom's name as Gugliotta not Bonaccorsi. So, it remains a mystery on the exact dates of my paternal grandparent's date of marriage.

My grandparents then moved to 1012 E. Pratt St. Baltimore, MD as indicated on my Dad's birth certificate in 1924. They later moved to 106 Granby St. where they lived until they passed away as discussed with Dad. (I am not sure of this house number since 106 would put it further west close to Charles Street; so, it could have been 1006). This part of 1006 Granby St. (between High St. and Albemarle St.) no longer exists according to Dad and as verified on current maps. It is also possible that the street numbers may have been changed which is not uncommon. My grandfather worked for the City of Baltimore but is not known if he worked anywhere else in his short time in Baltimore.

~GB~

Santo and Concetta had three boys: Salvatore (Sam) Joseph born June 20, 1921; Sebastiano (Sebastian) Anthony born January 20, 1924, and Peter Paul born June 29, 1927.

Dad's birth certificate identifies the father as Santo Bonaccorsi (age 36) and mother Contettina Bonanno (age 25) living at 1012 E. Pratt St., Baltimore "Born Alive" (yes, it states that) at 4 A.M. by Dr. S. Demarco. The Certificate of Birth is the copy Dad acquired for his enlistment into the Army since it was dated Aug. 31, 1942. Note again my grandmother's maiden name is listed not her married name.

Little is known about the various activities that may have taken place by the brothers as children on Pratt and Granby streets in Baltimore's Little Italy other than a few photographs. However, Dad had mentioned playing around the area of the City morgue and City sewage pumping station located off President Street. Not sure if the Bocce courts were near this area or not at that time but I would guess if they were time was spent watching the competition. Currently three bocce courts (at least in 1985) were located at the corner of President St. and Eastern Avenue.

Not many events have been identified or carried down over the years. One thing for sure, the Bonanno and Bonaccorsi families spent much time together since most all of them lived within

a few blocks of each other in the Neighborhood Little Italy. One event that was recorded is a picture of my grandmother and her three sons which look like they are in bathing suits. Grandma was all smiles and quite attractive; this was taken around 1935. Another photo of a family get-together is taken about 1935; it may have been taken at Gwynn Oak Park. This photo (p. 148 Fig. 145) includes: Aunt Josie (ZiZi), Mary Pagano Conigliaro, Grandma Bonaccorsi, Aunt Angelina Bonaccorsi Bonanno, Uncle Pete Bonaccorsi, Concetta Conigliaro (daughter of Mary Conigliaro), Cousin Gerri Bonanno, and Godmother Mary Bonanno. I would guess Dad and Uncle Sam were at school since they were not in the photo.

In March 1936, my grandparents and my Dad become infected with spinal meningitis, an inflammation of the membranes (meninges) surrounding the spinal cord. It is a very contagious disease spread from droplets from the nose and mouth. Both grandma and grandpa passed away on St. Patrick's Day March 17, 1936 a sad day in the history of the Bonaccorsi and Bonanno families. Dad seemed to be sicker than his parents and people originally thought he may not survive. From this point life on Granby Street would be much different.

After the death of my grandparents, the three Bonaccorsi brothers were put under the guardianship of three different relatives to be brought up. Uncle Sam went to live at St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage under guardianship of Uncle John Bonaccorsi on Granby St.; Dad went with Uncle Rosario and Josephine (Conigliaro) Bonanno at 44 Albemarle St.; and Uncle Pete went with Uncle Carmelo and Aunt Angeline (Bonaccorsi) Bonanno at 107 High St. Sometime during the war in the 1940's my Uncle Rosario moved to 3212 Chesley Ave. in the north Baltimore suburbs of Hamilton. which is verified on Dad's discharge papers identify his home on Chesley Ave. While my Uncle Carmelo and his family also moved from Little Italy to the north suburbs of Hamilton to 5017 Harford Rd.

Not much has survived in the way of my grandparent's possessions but what did are exceptional. Some photographs (very good ones), some of Grandma's jewelry, a blanket, Grandpa's Waltham pocket watch and a wallet made by my grandmother for my grandfather. (See p.147, Fig. 141) The wallet is beautifully embroidered by hand with the words "My Thoughts Watch Over You." The pocket watch has beautiful engravings on both front and back: a bird on the front and a shield on the back surrounded by ornamental wreaths.

~GB~

Because Dad was sick in 1936 with spinal meningitis he did not complete 8<sup>th</sup> grade until June 15, 1941 from St. Vincent de Paul School. His certificate was signed by his teacher Sister M. Maxentia and Pastor Rev. John Sinnott Martin. Father Martin was pastor from 1941 to 1965 and was instrumental in the second major renovation of the St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church at 120 N. Front Street. Opening its doors in 1841, St. Vincent de Paul Church structure is the oldest Catholic parish church in Baltimore in continuous use. A grand rededication ceremony took place in 1941. St. Vincent de Paul Church is located next to the Baltimore Shot Tower. When built in 1828 the Shot Tower was the tallest structure in the United States until 1846 and only one of three still standing in the world as described by the Maryland Historical Society and the Baltimore Heritage.



My Uncle Pete was an altar boy during this time period and was probably part of the St. Vincent de Paul Church rededication celebration. A photo exists of Uncle Pete in his mass garments with other altar boys in front of the church. Father Martin also wrote a brief biography of St. Vincent de Paul published around this time in 1943. [Martin]

After Dad finished school in June, 1941 he worked at the Riley Clothes Co. until November 1942 as indicated in his Army records. He “pressed lapels and sleeves of men’s coats in factory using a steam presser” as described in his military record documentation.

~GB~

Dad’s induction date was February 15, 1943 and date of entry into active service was February 22, 1943 when he was 19 years old as shown on his Army documentation. After his 1-1/2 months in the Army Air Force Basic training (probably at Richmond Army Airbase or Ft. Belvoir, VA home of Army Corps of Engineers training) he took a brief leave home and a trip to Atlantic City, New Jersey with his Uncle Saro (Rosario) and Aunt Josephine. As shown in a photo in front of the Friedman’s Cottage. Aunt Josie wrote on the back of the photo “Spent a day there in A. City NJ on April 1, 1943 Benny was in the Army only 1 month and 11 days.” Dad was then assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers 1878<sup>th</sup> Engineer Aviation Battalion as part of the Western Pacific Ryukyus Asiatic Pacific Theater which included the Marianas Islands.

His next training was in Richmond, Virginia at the 428<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force Base as indicated in postcards he sent from April 20 to July 20, 1943. His first mailing was a post card pack of Richmond historic sites. On another post card he writes “Dear Aunt, Writing you a few lines to let you know that I received your letter and wallet. Feeling fine and hope to hear the same from you. Sorry I couldn’t write a letter because I am so busy, please don’t get mad. Your Nephew Sebastian.”

During his stay at Richmond, VA he took a leave to Virginia Beach sending a postcard on September 9, 1943 to Aunt Josephine Bonanno. After Richmond, he went to Mobile Alabama Brookley Field Army Air Force Base sending postcards from September 21 to November 2, 1943. On his first post card note he wrote “Dear Aunt, Writing a few lines to let you know I am at Mobile, Ala. I am at a new camp [*Brookley Field*]. The weather here is no good because it has been raining for 2 days. Your nephew Sebastian.” His post card of Oct. 19 he writes “Dear Aunt, Writing you a few lines to let you know that I am sorry that I couldn’t write to you so soon because I am working day and night, .... Benny.” His last mailing from Alabama was a post card pack of a dozen cartoon cards about the army life.

The 1878<sup>th</sup> Engineer Aviation Battalion was formed on March 1, 1943. The battalion’s port of Embarkation was at San Francisco on Dec 16, 1943.[Stanton Shelby] He shipped out on Dec. 14, 1943 to Hawaii arriving on Dec. 20 in preparation for the Saipan air base assignment. He sent a postcard packet February 11, 1944 from Hawaii. I believe Dec. 14 is the day they boarded ship but did not sail until Dec. 16. The postmark was stamped “Passed by US Army Postmaster” dated 25 Jul 44. This was the last mail received from him during the war or at least not found in Mom’s collection. Sometime during the spring and summer 1944 he headed

towards Saipan. Dad was part of the 1878<sup>th</sup> Engineer Aviation Company A, and Antitank Company for 11 months. He was assigned use of 50 caliber machine guns and 37 mm guns and was classified as Army Technician 5<sup>th</sup> Grade as described in his military records.

This south pacific campaign was part of the invasion of The Marianas Islands located 1600 miles east of the Philippines and about 3200 miles west of Hawaii. Specifically, the assault was directed to three of the Japanese most fortified islands of Saipan, Guam and Tinian in the Pacific. The goal of the campaign was to take over these islands among others to cut enemy lines of communication and provide air bases for long range bombers in the plan to attack Japan's homeland. [O'Brien] The battle of Saipan began with air bombing on June 11, 1944 and subsequent land forces. A joint US forces invaded Saipan on 15 June 1944.

Despite a Japanese naval counterattack which led to the Battle of the Philippine Sea and heavy fighting on land, Saipan was secured by 9 July 1944. Allied Military operations followed at Guam and Tinian and battles at all the islands raged on until July 31, 1944 with all three islands secured by August. The American losses for the Saipan battle alone were 3119 killed and 10,992 wounded or missing. [O'Brien] The carrier battle around Saipan was noted as the "Great American Turkey Shoot" because of the large Japanese pilot casualties.

When the islands were secured, "clean-up operations began on July 31, 1944" and continued through October 1944. [O'Brien] Naval construction battalions (Seabees) began at once to construct air bases suitable for the B-29 bombers, commencing even before the end of ground fighting. In all, five major air fields were built: two on the flat island of Tinian, two on Saipan, and two on Guam. Each was large enough to eventually accommodate a bomb wing consisting of four bomb groups, giving a total of 180 B-29s per airfield. These bases, which could be supplied by ship, and unlike the bases in China, were not vulnerable to attacks by Japanese ground forces, and therefore became the launch sites for the large B-29 raids against Japan, in the final year of the war. [Ambrose] [O'Brien][StantonShelby]

With the island secured, Dad's battalion's landed on Saipan August 16, 1944 and their operations extended through March 26, 1945. From August 1944 until mid-1945 maintaining the island airstrips was priority one. The first B-29 arrived on Saipan on 12 October 1944. The first combat mission was launched from Saipan on 28 October 1944, with 14 B-29s attacking the Truk atoll. The 73rd Bomb Wing launched the first mission against Japan from bases in the Marianas, on 24 November 1944, sending 111 B-29s to attack Tokyo. During the period after the takeover of Guam, Saipan and Tinian, B-29's ran continuous missions north to numerous Japanese positions. In addition, the Saipan airstrip Isley Field was also designated as an emergency landing strip in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. [Ambrose] There were five aviation engineer battalions, Dad's 1878<sup>th</sup> was one, that performed the major airfield construction at Saipan. The Army's aviation engineers played their largest role in the Southwest Pacific campaigns maintaining the airstrips for these three islands.. [Stanton Shelby]

Dad's battalion's primary objective on Saipan was to build and maintain adequate runways for the B-29 long range bombers which were to bomb various strategic Japanese sites and eventually attack the Japan mainland. The B-29 bombers had a wing span of 141 feet and length of 99 feet typically carried "ten-ton load of bombs." [Stanton] The B-29 flying fortresses

with a full payload of 105,000 to 120,000 pounds and when loaded required nearly two miles of runway for takeoff that had to be in good condition. Therefore, the runways had to be maintained in a reliable and safe condition to preserve the safety of the bombers and crew during take-offs and landings.

I could not verify the size of the Guam runways but the ones on Tinian Island were nearly two miles long and as wide as a “10-lane highway and on Saipan they were 8,500 ft long.” Reviewing the numerous summaries of the engineer battalion’s work it is not clear how many runways were concrete or crushed coral. [Stanton] Based on Shelby Stanton’s account of the 1878<sup>th</sup> Battalion, there were two runways, one of concrete crushed stone which was actually crushed coral and a third runway used for spare bombers and other aircraft. The runways were constructed of crushed stone/coral so the stone size had to be closely monitored and this was Dad’s job. The quality of the runways was critical. As you can imagine no large pieces or ‘pot holes’ would be the other acceptable with a “50 ton plus” bomber taking off or landing on the runway. Operators observed the crushing and flow of rock (typically coral and limestone) through a crusher machine. His job was defined as “Completed and fed rock crusher. Sized crushed rock,” as described in his Army of US Separation Qualification record. Dad would say they worked endlessly to maintain the crushing and size of rock or coral. He joked that all they did was watch the Japanese bomb the runway then fill in holes and repeat process for months. Even though many knew something big was up, one thing the Corps’ operators and probably officers did not know that Saipan was part of the support for the future Manhattan Project atomic bomb mission which was finalized to launch from Tinian runway as identified by USS INDIANAPOLIS officers “Secret Project.” [Stanton] Saipan was probably considered a backup take-off option as well. [O’Brien]

However, it is not clear when Dad physically left Saipan. According to Dad’s “Separation Qualification and Honorable Discharge” form he served 2 years 10 months 15 days. He arrived back to the United States on December 16, 1945 and officially separated on December 29, 1945.

Dad collected a few souvenirs from his stay in Saipan including paper money and a Japanese flag. After the war ended Dad then traveled to Okinawa, Guam and Korea before heading back to Hawaii and the mainland. Mom and Dad saved his dog-tags and uniform patches. His patches that I have include: “Technician 5 Stripes For WWII,” “Anti-Aircraft Command Patch” and the “Tank Destroyer Forces Patch.” (See p. 148 Fig. 146) He was honorably discharged on December 29, 1945 at Fort George Meade and headed back to 3212 Chelsey Avenue Baltimore. Now ready for a new chapter in his life.

~GB~

Uncle Sam Bonaccorsi married Margaret Peddicord and they had two boys Paul and Larry. Although Paul and Larry were older than me, we spent a lot of time together when we were younger particularly birthdays, holidays and frequent visits usually on Sundays since they only lived a few minutes away. Before my sisters and I were married we usually spent Christmas Eve with them and enjoyed some good food especially Aunt Margaret’s desserts. Cousin Paul

had three children: Michael, Theresa (Terri), and Stephen. I often played catch football with Larry out in the street when he visited. When I was young less than 10 yrs. Old, Uncle Sam took Larry and I to the Shriner Circus at the Fifth Regiment Armory riding a trolley car to get there.

Aunt Margaret and Uncle Sam both had a sense of humor that could buckle you over in no time, always fun times to be had in their company. Uncle Sam had the stories to tell: funny, humorous and kept your attention. Speaking of entertainment, can Uncle Sam dance. He would bring laughter and amazement at any wedding and especially on the dance floor. His two special partners were his cousins Geraldine and Mary, Uncle Carmelo & Aunt Angelina's daughters. At a wedding when his was nearly 70 (a Bonaccorsi wedding) he kicked into step with Cousin Gerri and everyone was watching them jitterbug like it was 1955, unbelievable. I only wished I had the time and the talent to learn to dance like him. Uncle Sam was a bricklayer and learned his trade under the tutelage of Uncle Carmelo Bonanno. After Uncle Carmelo retired, Uncle Sam eventually went to work for the City of Baltimore either as a utility man including riding shotgun on snow removal trucks (he could not drive) or doing brick work for city projects including a City building in Hamilton. Aunt Margaret was born July 21, 1923. For the longest time she was a cashier for the A&P Supermarket at the Alameda and in Parkville stores. Aunt Margaret suffered from cancer and passed away much too early on March 1985. Uncle Sam developed throat cancer and had his voice box removed. He passed away November 9, 1993.

Uncle Pete was only three years younger than Dad but because of the war and with Dad and Uncle Sam overseas not much has been recorded of his life. He was an altar boy for St. Vincent de Paul Church as shown by a photograph of the entire group in front of the school. Uncle Sam Pagano of Struthers was his confirmation sponsor as shown in another photograph. Uncle Sam Pagano's mother Maria Bonanno Pagano and my grandmother Concetta are sisters. Uncle Pete passed away April 27, 1945 while his brothers were away overseas. Uncle Pete, his parents, and Uncle Saro and Josephine Bonanno are all buried in Most Holy Redeemer Cemetery in Baltimore.

## 2. THE MARRIAGE OF MOM & DAD and FAMILY

*A daughter needs a Dad to be the history of her family for her own children*

--Gregory E. Lane

*On the importance of family life - "The home circle, .. and why it played so large a part of their lives however far those lives reached."*

David McCullough writing on the Wright Brothers

The Gugliotta and Bonaccorsi encounter is quite the interesting set of events. I should emphasize here that many of my "relatives" we spent time with while growing up, I did not know specifically if we were related or just extended family until much later. This part of my history provides the best evidence to the understanding of our family and how our relationships developed. To better describe the details of my parents' meeting for the first time, I will explain a little of the family background, the Bonaccorsi side that resides in Ohio and how they became acquainted with the Gugliotta family in Girard below. Refer to "Extended Family" for more details and clarification and be patient because this can be confusing if reading it too fast. It was challenging for me reading all of Mom's notes then developing and writing up a narrative.

My maternal grandmother Concetta had five siblings as identified earlier under the Bonannos. Her sister Maria married Alfred Pagano in Sicily and then they immigrated to Struthers, Ohio a suburb south of Youngstown. Maria at age 21 and her two oldest children Rosaria age 2 and Santo age 8 months immigrated to America July 7, 1911. As seems the case with both of my grandparents the husband after marriage set sail to America separately from their wives. I have not been able to verify the date Alfred arrived in America. Maria and Alfred had eight children and seven lived in Ohio during the time Dad & Mom met: Santo, Sarah, Dora, Sam, Carmela, Lena and Theresa. Their daughter Mary, Dad's first cousin, moved to Baltimore when she married Frank Conigliaro. Frank is brother to Rosario my Dad's friend and neighbor in Little Italy Baltimore. I will describe later in more detail under "Extended Family" and Fig. 168.

So back to the story. After Dad returned from the war in 1945 he continued to live with his uncle Rosario Bonanno (Zio) and Aunt Josephine (Josie, ZiZi) at 3212 Chesley Avenue in Baltimore. Looking for work he decided in 1947 to go to Struthers, Ohio and stayed with his Aunt Maria (Bonanno) and Uncle Alfred Pagano Fig. 130. When in Girard, Dad stayed with Uncle Tony Trina the Father-in-Law to Dad's cousin Theresa Pagano Trina (her husband is Paul F. Trina) one of the eight Pagano siblings to Maria and Alfred Pagano of Struthers, Ohio.

Dad got a job at the Ohio Leather Company in Girard, Ohio ) for a short time where Paul F Trina worked (Cousin Theresa's husband). This is the same factory that Grandpa worked along with many others in the family and extended family. Dad's Ohio Leather Company ID# was 632; he saved the ID button. Dad said he also worked at a steel mill in the acid pickling

department but after a few months he did not like or could handle the environment but not sure if this was before or after he worked at the Leather Works. Being a steel mill veteran myself, I can easily concur the acid picking process is hot with uncomfortable breathing conditions and plain dangerous.

As I understand the story, one fall Friday in 1947, Dad made the trip to Girard with his cousins from Struthers to attend a Girard High School football game. Not sure on the details how Dad met Josephine Gugliotta but they were probably introduced by his cousin Theresa (Pagano) Trina. Grandpa was a distant relative of the Trina siblings Anthony (Uncle Tony) and Mary Trina Pagano. Uncle Tony Trina's son Paul had married Theresa Pagano (Dad's cousin), more in "Extended Family and Fig.171.". As the story goes, he struck up regular meetings with Josephine and decided he wanted to marry her. So, Dad brought apples to my Grandfather to announce his intent to marry Josephine. Everyone looked very happy that initial year as shown by the photo of Dad and Grandpa taken March 1948 just three months before the wedding.

On June 26, 1948, Grandpa proudly walked his daughter outside and down the front steps of 629 N Ward Avenue into the waiting limousine. They were married at St. Rose Church in Girard, 48 East Main Street, at Noon. Mom's maid of honor was Kathryn Toriello (Kay) and best man was Guy Trina (Paul Trina's brother). Wedding attendees included family from Struthers, Ohio; Baltimore, MD and Girard, Ohio. Kay and Guy were married two months later on August 28, 1948.

Mom and Dad's wedding reception was held at 8 O'clock in the evening at the Blue Crystal Hall in Girard. We have a picture from Mom and Dad's wedding of a large group basically cousins which include the following with naming them left to right:

- Paul Trina and his wife Theresa Pagano Trina (of Girard; Uncle Tony's son)
- Michael Zerbonia and his wife Carmela Pagano Zerbonia (Michael later passed away and Carmela remarried to S. Rigatelli)
- Sara Bonaccorsi Crone (from Baltimore, Uncle John Bonaccorsi's daughter)
- Mom & Dad of course
- Uncle Sam Bonaccorsi (from Baltimore)
- Godmother Mary Bonanno (from Baltimore)
- Geraldine Bonanno Lioi and husband Andrew Lioi (from Baltimore)
- Sarah Pagano Gugliotti and husband Guy Gugliotti (from Struthers, Ohio)
- Rose Morturo Pagano & husband Santo Pagano (from Struthers, Ohio)
- Phil Merlo (Band)

I can imagine the excitement, energy and happiness at this wedding reception with much laughter and fun and of course good food. I have met many of those attending and know the fun I have had with their company over the years especially my Uncle Sam Bonaccorsi and the Trinas.

Mom and Dad spent their honeymoon in Washington, DC and visiting relatives in Baltimore. They stayed at the Ambassador Hotel (Washington's newest air conditioned hotel) June 27 to June 30, 1948. The room was an amazing \$9.00 per night for a total of \$28.14. Hotel costs have certainly changed. Mom kept numerous keepsakes of the honeymoon trip including the hotel bill, sightseeing brochures (Washington D.C. and Mt. Vernon, VA), hotel soap, a cocktail fork, a tiny plastic knife, a pink comb, pencil and red ribbon. See Photos pages 131 and 132.

~GB~

Mom and Dad then stayed with my grandparents in Girard until they moved back to Baltimore around August 1949 and confirmed as my birth certificate states Mom was in Baltimore about 2-1/2 years. Based on the various letters and post cards Dad returned to Baltimore first then followed by Mom a few months later. One of the postcards from Mom states she went to visit Baltimore on August 7, 1949 probably not sure they were going to stay. Again, ironically in the similar manner with both of my grandparents. The amusing story here is my parents went to Washington D.C. and Baltimore for their Honeymoon then a year later moved there; Mom always joked about this occurrence of events, still on their honeymoon? Mom and Dad moved in with Dad's Uncle Rosario Bonanno (Zio) and Aunt Josie (ZiZi, as I called her) on Chesley Avenue.

Dad attended the Upholstery Trades Institute located at 18 E. Lombard St in Baltimore. [Stephenson] His textbook *Practical Upholstery* by John Stephenson was written in 1944; it has his signature on the front inside cover. The book includes all types of furniture, repairs, and techniques and pictures. I remember him doing techniques that are covered in the book as I watched him over the years upholstering many pieces of furniture. The class was made up of approximately 10 students as shown in photograph taken in May 1950. After finishing his Upholstery class, he began working at Monroe Upholstery taking the bus to work each day. Monroe Upholstery was located at 510 S. Monroe St. in a building built in 1890. He worked there until they closed sometime in the 1970's.

He then worked at Clifton Upholstery on Harford Road at 4506 Harford Rd. (Still in business since 1915). He worked at Clifton Upholstery until he got sick around 1981 and retired. Mom remained Chief Operating and Financial Officer of the house. One day in 1981 as Dad was working at Clifton Upholstering spitting tacks his hammer left his hand and went across the room. His grip became so weak that he could not hold on to the tack hammer and that was the last day he worked going on disability at the age of 57. The diagnosis as I remember was severe arthritis of his hands. He also suffered about the same time a breathing disorder which made him short of breath often and minimizing his walking; as I remember this was due to his rib cage not allowing his lungs to properly expand.

In our 2017 Christmas letter greeting from Jeannette's cousins John and Linda Butt, we received a very interesting and touching comment. They had recently had a special footstool repaired and reupholstered at the Clifton Upholstery and remembering Dad had worked there, they mentioned Dad's name. The person they talked to "clearly remembered Benny" and spoke highly of him. This person was the owner Bob Baxter. I contacted him and he responded

“I am the only one that is here when ‘Benny’ was working. I have fond memories of your Dad and would be glad to talk to you about him” and I did.

~GB~

### THE CHILDREN of Josephine and Ben

I was born January 18, 1952 the first son and first grandchild on the Gugliotta side. I was delivered by Dr. Harry Beck at 6:30 a.m. at Mercy Hospital located on Calvert St. in downtown Baltimore. I “was christened on Feb 17, 1952 in St. Dominic Church by Father Bastris.” I will describe additional and important memories later especially in Chapters 4 and 5

One thing I do want to mention is much of my first two years are documented in the complete special occasion card collection that Mom put together in a special scrap book. I believe every card for all occasions were kept and saved in this scrap book. See pages 149-150. Birthdays, Christmas, Valentines, Halloween, Easter, Get Well and others. She also included detailed notes itemizing what I received and other information that I never knew about. Looking at these cards demonstrates the art and prose used back in the Fifties, they are remarkable. The cards are colorful and detailed and a young kid would find them captivating. Many were designed with unique pictures and movable pieces. When I first looked at the scrapbook I was amazed. I read every card and every note for hours.

In 1954 while Mom was pregnant with Connie I spent the summer in Girard, the first of many and the beginning of my love affair with the Midwest and specifically Girard-Youngstown Ohio area. Concetta (Connie) was born August 4, 1954. Obviously, I do not remember anything of this summer except for the numerous photos I have seen of me in Girard. My sister Joanna was born October 17, 1958. What I do remember were the activities on the day of Joanna’s christening although I did not realize it was her christening or even understand “Christening” at the time. Why do I remember? Well I recall standing at the front door at our house on Chesley Avenue while all these people were looking outside like some big celebrity was arriving – my sister and her godparents, cousin Marie Conigliaro (Arbutus) and Uncle Sam Bonaccorsi. Honest I do remember her be carried inside, everyone yelling (don’t forget – me being young the loud voices seem as if it is yelling). Of course, being Italian, nothing is spoken at a normal voice level anyway especially with a crowd and on a special occasion. Then everyone hugging and kissing and going for food. It seems I was simply there watching the commotion, being an innocent, polite and cute six year old as I usually am except maybe for those events described later in “My Early Memories”. I am sure for these later situations I had to be temporarily possessed by some evil demon to be “bad.” Right? ☺

~GB~

Concetta (Connie) and Joanna grew up close to each other, close friends and well as sisters. As kids we got along pretty well – honest - except for the time Connie had a close encounter with a flying car long before the *Back to the Future* version. I cannot remember the situation (although I bet Connie does) but this very small but metal car left my hand and found a home on her face. Boy I still cringe of the yelling. The only other incident was I believe with Joanna (I believe, I hope Connie was not the victim twice) when she had a close encounter with my



20-inch bike. As I recall I was riding down the sidewalk when she rolled or ran down the hill from the front lawn, and the bike rolled over her. All my other memories with my sisters were quite the pleasant variety – really. We had a blast then and still do when we get together.

I do remember two other special happenings involving my sisters. Connie one day decided to pretend she was going to be a famous Hollywood make-up artist and experimented with Mom's lipstick on herself, photos indicate a very detailed piece of work. Joanna had a little different experience, a close encounter with a live pony. This guy was soliciting pony rides on our street and Zio thought it would be a great idea to have this pleasant little girl get her very own pony ride; well the photo here shows a little different opinion – Joanna scared stiff. I am sure Connie and Joanna have their recollection of these two special events I observed but at least I was not party to any blame for these two memories.

The majority of my memories are all associated with family dinners, parties, holidays and get togethers where family interaction and activities were special.

~GB~

Connie met Dave Venanzi through our cousin Paul Bonaccorsi. At that time Paul and Dave worked together at Whitman, Requardt & Associates an engineer consulting firm. Later both Dave and Paul went to work at the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission located in Laurel Maryland. Connie and Dave married July 30, 1983. They had twins, two great girls Christina and Anna on June 11, 1992. Christina is married to Michael Sullivan and have two boys - Sebastian and Lincoln Grayson. Anna is married to Jason Kaiser and they have two boys - Jaxon and Declan David.

Joanna met John Raymond Young and they married April 9, 1983. They had three wonderful children Jaclyn, Joseph and Jarrett. Jaclyn married to Mike Greeson and have two sons Conor and Noah and she also has a step-son Austin. Joseph has a daughter Samantha (Sammy) from a previous marriage. Joseph married Heather in 2019 and have two beautiful daughters Olivia and Madison. Both Jaclyn and Joseph and their families still live in the Baltimore area. Jarrett developed Leukemia at the age of 4, then later developed a brain tumor and sadly passed away in January 2005, a great and brave human with a great sense of humor. Just ask Joseph about their visit to the Strasburg Railroad Museum in Pennsylvania when Jarrett got a piece of coal from a guide and gave it to Joe for Christmas.

Many great memories here with my sisters and their families especially a trip to Hershey Park, many Oriole ballgames and of course the unceasing family get togethers and dinners. One of the added benefits has been the never ending supply of new recipes from not just my sisters but their friends as well as family. See Fig 167 Sebastian & Josephine Bonaccorsi Family tree.

~GB~

Mom and Dad decided to sell their home at the end of 2006 and move in with Connie and Dave, a very unselfish act on their part but it was for the best. The task to empty the Westfield home was an enormous undertaking with Connie and Joanna taking the lead and Dave and Ray providing the muscle. It took a few months. Jeannette and I went up a couple of times to help

review the “savings” Mom had collected and of course the biggest find for me was the collection of cards, letters and photographs which was a major source of information for this project.

Jeannette and I visited Baltimore in June, 2007 partly for Mom and Dad’s 59<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and continue to go through some additional things Mom had saved. Mom was having a little trouble with her feet but otherwise seemed okay. On July 2, Mom called to talk and asked how everyone was doing especially Lisa. Then while at work on the next day July 3, 2007, I received a phone call from Ray saying Mom passed away suddenly. Clearly the saddest day of my life. I felt she knew something may be wrong when she called. She was calm, brief but clear with her questions. I left work, packed then Jeannette and I left for Baltimore. The funeral mass was held at St. Dominic Catholic Church. Ray gave a moving, beautiful and heartfelt eulogy. I asked if I could also say a few words. I remarked how Mom accepted everyone into her home and heart; how she made everyone comfortable and how she expressed her love to all of us. Please refer to the Acknowledgements at the end of this book for details of my tribute to her. After the funeral we met at Connie and Dave’s for food and mingling. Memories of my grandparent’s funeral receptions renewed.

Dad battled his arthritis and colon cancer heroically to live until the age of 84 just a few weeks shy of his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday passing on December 12, 2008. One of last photographs taken of him was with our granddaughter Emma Josephine Eidelman in the fall of 2007. Lisa and Mark gave that photo of Dad and Emma to us that 2008 Christmas. The frame is titled “Nonno and His Little Angel.” What else can be said here. I also said similar things about Dad at the prayer service on how comforting he always was and how much he loved Mom, us kids and grandkids. As a veteran of World War II Dad was buried with military honors and I received the American flag that was draped over his coffin. It is proudly displayed in our home next to his photo with Emma.

### 3. EXTENDED FAMILY

*Make friendship a fine art.*

*The time to make friends is before you need them.*

--John Wooden

This section may require reading and re-reading multiple times to clearly understand all the marriages, events and overlapping of family ties and similar names. Much of what is described here took me many years to fully understand and grasp all the details. It was probably as late as 2005 and even later for me to finally understand the family interrelations.

#### Gugliotta-Pagano

First for the Gugliotta ties with the Pagano family as mentioned earlier. This will require a clear and rested state of mind. My grandfather's great-grandmother was Giuseppa Marisca Pagano (I do not know his great-grandfather's name) who had a son Gaetano Pagano and daughter Dominica Pagano. The daughter Dominica follows my grandfather's lineage as described earlier. Domenica's brother Gaetano begins the link to the Pagano families

The son of Giuseppa Marisca Pagano, Gaetano Pagano married and had three children, Carmela, Anthony and Joe. The daughter Carmela Pagano married Anthony Trina (Uncle Tony); the son Anthony Pagano married Sadie/Sara Basile); and the other brother Joe Pagano married Mary Trina. Anthony Trina and Mary Trina are siblings and I will discuss them more under "Extended Family" below and their ties to the Bonaccorsi side. Here it is noted that Grandpa and Carmela Pagano Trina are cousins and that makes Grandpa Gugliotta and the Anthony Trina's children cousins and Aunt Mary Trina Pagano cousins with grandpa well. The Trinas were a significant part of my time in Girard both as a child and then as an adult as described earlier under my Dad's history and how Mom and Dad met.

#### Pagano/Trina-Bonanno/Bonaccorsi

As mentioned above Uncle Tony Trina's sister Mary Trina married Joe Pagano not knowingly related at the time to the Paganos of Struthers, Ohio on my Dad's side. Uncle Tony Trina became interested to see if Aunt Mary's Pagano family were related to the Paganos of Struthers and according to Aunt Fran the two family trees were not or could not be connected. All this proved to be quite interesting exchange of stories over the years and lead to more confusion to a young kid from Baltimore – me – in trying get a grasp of my family roots.

To further explain the Pagano and Trina families, Mary Trina and Joe Pagano. Joe and Mary Pagano had two boys Sam and Guy Pagano. After her Joe Pagano passed away in 1933 Aunt Mary married Dominick Petrella and they had a son Andrew Petrella. Andrew sent me a Valentine Card in 1953 as found in my Mom's scrapbook. Guy had a dry cleaner and tailor shop located on Liberty St. in Girard from 1951 to 1963. Andrew and I spent time together during my summer stays in Girard especially when I started working at the Arnold Palmer Putt-Putt in Hubbard, Ohio. The Putt-Putt later called Hubbard Funland was owned and operated by the three brothers Sam & Guy Pagano and Andrew. Sam was a school teacher and married Dahlia, Guy married Irene and Andrew married Millie. After the Putt-Putt was closed Guy and Andrew worked at the Girard Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Now to explain the relationships of the Pagano-Trina family to the Bonanno/Bonaccorsi families. Anthony Trina (Uncle Tony) and his wife Carmela had two sons Paul (b. 3-12-1922, d. 9-27-1998) and Guy Trina (in Mom & Dad's wedding) and a daughter Nancy H. Trina (b. 3-25-1921, d. 7-21-2014). See Fig. 171 for details.

As mentioned earlier, Grandpa was a cousin of Carmela Pagano Trina who was married to Anthony Trina. Anthony Trina's (Uncle Tony) sister was Aunt Mary Pagano and later Petrella. So now the relationship between the two families brings us to Struthers, Ohio and subsequently to Girard as mentioned earlier.

Nancy Trina married Frank E. Santagata (9-25-1940). Frank was known to most as Scotch. He was my grandparent's mail carrier for many years. Scotch used to give me and any of the grandkids special attention always smiling and joking with us when he delivered the mail peeking in around the back *door* leaving the mail at the top step or chair instead of the mailbox at the front door. Scotch also sent post cards to my Mom when he was overseas during World War II.

Guy Trina became a close cousin to the Gugliotta children especially my Mom. Guy and his future wife Kathryn Toriello (Kay) both became close friends to my parents and Kay was the maid-of-honor at their wedding while Guy was the only other person in the bridal party'. I have a great photo of the four of them from the wedding. Mom saved two postcards from Kay, the first one sent from Oklahoma in 1947 and a second one from Kay and Guy sent from Washington, DC August 31, 1948 when they were on their Honeymoon. Kay writes "Hello, Comara & Compara, We are having a swell time as far as money will permit us, Love Kay & Guy." I received greeting cards from them for every occasion at least until I was two years old (when the scrapbook entrees stopped). Kay is now living in Niles, Ohio as of this writing in 2015 (but she has since passed away).

Now for Paul Trina and the other cross-link of the two families. Paul Trina married my Dad's first cousin Theresa Pagano of Struthers, Ohio. Here the introduction of Josephine to Sebastian (Mom & Dad) as described earlier in Chapter 2, "Marriage of Mom & Dad and Family" begins. Every year when either I or the family visited Girard, we also made several visits to the Trina home as well as they visited my grandparents. Again, when I was younger I did not fully understand the relationship between our families but I can clearly say it was

always very warm, close and special. Some things I do remember include meeting the Trina's and all their families at St. Rose Church always hugging and greeting with laughter along with the Santagata clan. Nancy Trina Santagata was Uncle Tony's daughter and sister to Guy and Paul Trina. I remember going down Cousin Theresa's basement when we visited because that was the coolest room I guess. Cousin Paul played the saxophone and was in a band for a long time. I believe his brother Cousin Guy Trina also played music, the string bass. In a postcard from Mom to Dad dated Oct. 25, 1950 sent from Girard to Baltimore she writes "... Went down Girard today. Ran into everybody. Teddy & Baby is going to come up while Paul plays. Tomorrow we're going to spend the day over Aunt Mary's. ...". I assume Teddy is cousin Theresa Pagano Trina and Aunt Mary is Dad's aunt in Struthers and baby is Theresa's son Anthony Paul Trina, yep another Anthony. Sometime after cousin Paul retired Paul and Theresa moved to Yurba Linda, California close to her sisters Lena (Joe Poppagallo), Dora (Sabato/Frank Naimo) and brother Sam (Rose Marie). Another fond memory occurred during the wedding reception (early 1970's) for our cousin Linda Conigliaro (Arbutus). Cousin Paul Trina played the saxophone to a Beatles tune, I believe it was either *Hey Jude* or *Yesterday* or both. Cousin Paul says he always carries his mouth-piece and reed with him "just in case." Finally, Cousin Theresa visited Baltimore around 2000 and Jeanette and I were able to see her since we were visiting Baltimore (we were living in Indiana at this time).

As I was compiling all this information on the Paganos, I wondered if there were any relationship between Alfred Pagano (Struthers and husband of Maria Bonanno) to Gaetano Pagano (father of Carmela Pagano Trina). I brought this up with Aunt Fran as I mentioned earlier and she said that Alfred Pagano had similar question and he could not find any ancestry links between the two Pagano families and after some investigation on my part neither could I.

Summarizing the ironic occurrences with the Trina and Bonaccorsi families is found in the numerous post cards collections. During the war Frank Santagata sent my Aunt and Uncle Rosario Bonanno and my grandparents Gugliotta numerous post cards giving them an update how he was doing, very similar to my Dad's postcards. Obviously, no one realized at this time these families (the Bonannos, Trinas and Bonaccorsi) would soon be joined together by yet another marriage -Mom and Dad. Mom saved all the news clippings during the war of friends and relatives' status including Paul and Guy Trina, Frank (Scotch) Santagata, Carmen (Melo) Airato, Jack Airato just to mention a few.

~GB~

## Gugliotta- Marisca

As mentioned earlier my grandfather's niece Antonia wrote many letters to my Mom and Dad. The letters saved were written between 1947 and 1952 and she signed her name Tonia. She also sent her wedding picture of her and her husband Antonio (Nino) Prestipino on October 7, 1950.

Antonia sent my Mom a letter dated February 16, 1948 which she writes

“...how I am content to hear that you will marry soon. I would like to be there on that wonderful day Let us know the exact date of your marriage and so we will make a little feast for you. I’ll think so much of you ... I’ll pray God to give you and your husband the joy and happiness of the world. Listen Josephine after you marry why don’t you come to Sicily? It would be wonderful to have you... Loads of Love Antonia Garufi”.

Nino and Tonia sent my parents a 1951 Christmas card and an Easter Card April 6, 1952 (Was this an omen – Jeannette’s birthday). In the Easter card she wrote:

“Best wishes for Easter your cousins Antonio, Tonia, and (ineligible) Prestipino - our best wishes for your son Antonio Santo, your cousins Prestipino. Catania, 6-4-1952”

The family visits and conversations, all the letters exchanged between Mom and Antonia years ago and Mom’s other letters and telephone conversations from the different relatives in Sicily clearly emphasizes the family bonds shared between all of us and a special one with Antonia, Mom and our families.

During our visit with Antonia and her family on May 5, 2005 we were able to share one of those moments with her. She served us some cookies and she gave Lisa and Jeannette both knitted “booties.” Antonia then mentioned she received many letters and photographs of our families as we were growing up and she brought some family pictures sent by both Grandma and Mom. She had one from Lisa’s and Mark’s wedding and others. When she got to the pictures of Joanna and Ray’s family, she pointed and named everyone. Then when she got to Jarrett’s, she pointed and teared up, she picked it up and kissed the picture of Jarrett. Quite touching and emotional for me as well. Her daughter Rosaria (Sara) then brought out pictures of Grandma and Grandpa’s wedding along with some others of Mom. She then talked about more about Lisa and Craig, where Craig lived and what he was doing. At the time we were in Sicily I yet did not know about all the correspondences that took place years ago with Antonia and my parents as I mentioned above.

When we met with Grandma’s niece Rosetta (and my Mom’s first cousin) her reference to photos she had of our families, the conversation and the lunch she served also made us feel very welcome. The first meeting with Mimmo, Lidia and Anna Romeo was another shower of family warmth. Lidia gave Lisa and Jeannette a gift as well. Talking to Fannie was non-stop (she speaks perfect English), she had so much to say and asked about everyone. She is Grandma’s cousin who lived in Philadelphia for years before she moved back to Sicily.

~GB~

## Bonanno

In addition to what was described earlier my Uncle Rosario Bonanno (Zio, Saro) and Aunt Josie Bonanno (Zia or ZiZi) owned and operated International Lunch located at 606 Pratt Street downtown Baltimore from 1947 until 1958. It was located between Piers 3 and 4 opposite what is now the National Aquarium. I do have some brief memories being at the

restaurant counter with their kitchen help and seeing the boats docked on the pier. I have photographs taken in 1955 identifying Odessie, Etta, Ethel and Arnold among others. See p.147, Figs. 142-144. I received cards from Odessie and Etta for all major events, birthday, Valentines' and Christmas as found in the scrapbook and cards Mom kept. Zio and ZiZi also received numerous post cards from Arnold while he was on vacation. See the end of this chapter for the scrapbook history and pages 149 and 150, Figs.147 -154, .

After my Aunt Josie Bonanno died in 1957 Zio eventually closed the restaurant and decided to sell his house on Chelsey Ave. leaving my parents to buy a house in 1959 at 2817 Westfield Ave. I will not go into the details here but read on in Chapter 4 "My Early Years" how this took place from the eyes of a 6 or 7-year-old.

Aunt Josie & Zio sent me my first birthday card to Girard and said " "Miss you terribly " Aunt Josie gave me my station wagon on my first Christmas 1952 and my first guitar Easter 1954.

As I mentioned earlier Maria Bonanno married Alfred Pagano immigrated with two children Rosaria (2-yrs) and Santo (8-mos.) July 1911 so I will not go into that detail again here. Mom saved a great photo of Aunt Maria Bonanno (Dad's Aunt ) and Uncle Alfred Pagano and another from my parent's wedding and I received numerous greeting cards from them as well.

~GB~

## Bonanno-Bonaccorsi

Again, as mentioned earlier Aunt Angelina Bonaccorsi married Uncle Carmelo Bonanno. My Dad's cousin Mary (my Godmother) married Dr. Sebastian Russo and Cousin Geraldine married Andrew Lioi. Most of the memorable events with this extended family but wanted to identify here in "Extended Family."

~GB~

## Conigliaro

As mentioned previously there are multiple marriages between the Conigliaro and Bonanno/Bonaccorsi families, three to be specific.

Josephine Conigliaro married to Rosario Bonanno on April 15, 1934.

Frank Conigliaro married to Mary Pagano on September 30, 1934.

Rosario Conigliaro married to Anna Gugliotta on January 17, 1953.

These three Conigliaros are siblings and they all played a major and important part of my life, my parents and of course my family as I discussed in detail in previous sections and below.

Before I discuss these three marriages further, I want to explain the friendship between Sebastian Bonaccorsi (Dad) and Rosario Conigliaro (my Godfather). Growing up near each

other in Little Italy was a catalyst for the development many of the family memories and for Dad and Godfather this was special. They are numerous photographs of them during the 1930s and 1940s plus many postcards sent by Rosario (Godfather) to Dad and his sister Josephine Conigliaro Bonanno. Two of my favorite photographs are one with Dad, Godfather and his brother Vince Conigliaro taken on June 25, 1939. The other one is with Dad and Godfather in front of a 1933 Plymouth Economy four-door sedan. The photo is not dated but it looks like it was taken just before Dad entered the service during WWII based on comparing him with other photos of this time frame. The photo shows the car looks in excellent shape for being at least 10 years old. This friendship inspired many years of family relationships and memories. In most of the photos Godfather shows a very humorous almost playful pose.

Aunt Josephine (ZiZi) the first to marry into our family tree (to Rosario Bonanno) received and kept numerous postcards. They were sent by her Mother, Concetta Culotta Conigliaro, all her siblings, my Dad, then my Mom, and numerous nieces and nephews. Even though ZiZi was only around for a short part of my life she meant a lot to me. She was there raising Dad, being around after Mom and Dad moved back to Baltimore and being like grandmother to me. Her pictures holding me showed a glow only a grandmother can reveal as seen in the photographs of her and me. Then those with Zio holding me on the hood of his car but I can say I was not the happiest fellow for that pose.

I could not verify how Frank Conigliaro and Mary Pagano were introduced. But it seems logical that Mary Pagano came to Baltimore to visit her Aunt Concetta Bonaccorsi (my grandmother). Since everyone lived near one another in Little Italy, Mary met Frank Conigliaro in Little Italy and a relationship developed. Here the relationship between the Bonannos and Gugliotta and Trina family trees became more involved as detailed earlier.

In August 1952, Godfather (Rosario Conigliaro) took a trip to New York and Canada including stops in Rochester, NY; Buffalo, NY; Thousand Islands, Canada; and Niagara Falls, Canada. I received greetings from each location in postcards he sent to Zio & ZiZi (Mr. & Mrs. R Bonanno). In each postcard he writes "Love to Santo, Love Compare." My first trip with Godfather (Rosario Conigliaro) and Aunt Anne was January 1953 when we drove to Ohio and mom and I stayed in Girard for a while after their wedding including my first birthday. Again, in June 1954 Mom brought me to Girard for my first of many summer stays while Mom was pregnant with Connie. Aunt Anne writes to Zio and ZiZi in a postcard "Had a nice trip, the Baby says Hello, everyone says hello, see you next week."

During the next 14 years our family made trips to Girard with Zio for a few years and then traveled by train in July for our family two-week summer vacation. Aunt Anne, Godfather, Joe and Theresa would visit around Labor Day for a week or so and then return to Baltimore bringing me home. These moments are very special to me and my family relationships especially with Joe and Theresa.

For my Christening Godfather gave me a gold ring, not sure if I wore it but I still have it. He also gave my start in appreciating music giving me a little base drum (more of a Tom-Tom



drum) for my first Christmas. I am sure Mom was “thrilled” with my drum beating sessions. I had that drum for years

In addition to all the holidays and special meals and visits, there is one thing I remember. When Aunt Anne and Godfather were still living in the apartment upstairs of his parents’ house, I remember sitting in their kitchen and watching Godfather make milk shakes. He used a Hamilton Beach mixer which I thought was the coolest machine; not sure why I remember but I do.

Aunt Anne and Godfather were always there to help me, Mom and Dad no matter what and while in Girard he helped Grandma and Grandpa. I learned a lot observing all the family activity that took place. Godfather also picked us kids up after Sunday school on Sunday at St. Dominic after he assisted in the Church’s money collection count. More about Godfather in “Special Memories.”

On Grandma’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1997 a beautiful party was given in her honor. Theresa wrote a lovely poem to Grandma that was shared for all to enjoy as I described in “The Beginning.” Another special memory was when Grandma Gugliotta passed in 1998, Aunt Anne, Theresa and Joe compiled all known recipes that Grandma had saved and made special cookbook Grandma’s Recipes. Obviously most of the recipes were Grandma’s but many came from her family and friends. I have shared this book to many of my friends and family as well. Aunt Anne wrote a touching Introduction and Acknowledgement and Theresa wrote a lovely Dedication to a truly great person - Grandma. They also added interesting comments for special recipes and seasons. Thank you, Aunt Anne and Theresa. This is a touching tribute to Grandma and the Conigliaros and our families.

~GB~

## Airato

The Airatos are a special family as are the Conigliaros and have numerous memorable events and moments even beyond the obvious with Aunt Fran & Uncle Dom and Godfather and Aunt Anne. As I mentioned earlier many notable memories and detailed in Chapter Four and Five. What I want to discuss here are the other Airato family members that are important to me. All the Airatos were close and frequent visitors to my grandparents and Aunt Fran and Uncle Dom. Grandpa was a close friend Compare Tony’s (Uncle Dom’s Dad). Uncle Dom’s parents were my Mom’s Godparents” They sent my parents a “To You and Your New Baby” card and signed it “from your Godfather and Godmother Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Airato. Their visits to Grandma and Grandpa’s us when I was in Girard were always special.

When I had my operation in 1952 Comare Concetta and Compare Tony sent me a special get well card with the miraculous medal attached to the card of a bouquet of flowers and signed it Comare Concetta Airato. On an early visit when I was ten or so we visited Compare Tony. He was working in his garden for a while then we went inside and he made his own pesto sauce. I remember him grinding up herbs and adding olive oil. On a visit to Girard one year

Jeannette and I visited Comare Concetta and she gave Jeannette an embroidered handkerchief. Lovely and special.

Uncle Melo (Uncle Dom's brother Carmen James) and Aunt Rita were always around with their family Butch (Anthony) MaryAnn, Patty. I remember visits with the cookouts and plenty of laughs. On one Girard visit around 1991 we were having a cook-out at Aunt Fran's. I had recently had a root canal but no cap yet and I talking to Uncle Melo about going on a trip to the Pennsylvania resort Seven Springs.

Aunt-Rose, Uncle Dom's sister was married to Joe Airato. Yes, another Airato but I do not believe they are related, something I do not remember being discussed. They would visit my grandparents often as well. They lived on second street close to Girard High stadium. Aunt Rose had a great sense of humor and was fun to be around. They had four children: Anthony (Teenie) who worked for IBM in Endicott, New York, Jack Airato, Sara Jean and Anita. I had my hair cut at Jack's Barbershop often when I was spending summers in Girard until his untimely death due to a heart attack. Jack also sent my Mom postcards while he was in the service.

Mary Airato married Sam Rozzo and had six children: John, Phyliss, Connie, Anthony, Ginny and Marilyn. Another great family with a ton of memories and laughs. During my summers I spent many afternoons seeing and playing with Ginny since we close in age. John (married to Janet) was a teacher and later principal for numerous schools in the Youngstown area. At my Mom's viewing in 2007, John, Anthony and I talked quite a bit about Mom and all our get togethers. Sadly, John passed away in June 2015 at 74. Anthony was my Mom's godson. He was a card to talk to, telling stories and making you laugh all the time. Anthony and his wife Kathy are a joy to be with. Phyllis and Connie often visited Aunt Fran and spent time having laughs as well. When we visited Girard in September 2010 with Lisa, Emma and Lily many of the cousins came to Aunt Fran's house for an impromptu party which was often every visit to Girard. Attending were, Gloria, Anita, Phyllis, Marilyn and Ginny. (See Fig. 132) It was non-stop stories and laughter. Of course, the main attraction was Jeannette, Lisa, Emma and baby Lily. I should say here that every visit to Girard Aunt Fran would take us to Aunt Mary's house for evening "tea and coffee and sweets." Now we usually showed up late in the evening when everyone else was in bed before we had kids. When Lisa was around we would take her when she older before she was married. Those evenings will never be forgotten.

~GB~

## Girard Extended Family

This list would be much longer if I included everyone close to my grandparents and if I could remember all their names. The additional I identify below are those with a specific event reminding me of them. Reading Mom's scrapbook of greeting cards bring back some special memories and names including cards to me from Rose & James Melfi; the Halls; Connie DeProfio; Anunziata and Carmelo Santisi (see below), the Trinas; Giovannina & John

Briguglio; Carmela Briguglio; the Struthers' aunts, uncles and cousins and the list goes on. Great-Grandma Marisca mentions in her letters of March and May 1948 to give "her best to the Briguglios." But following two families I want to describe in more detail.

~GB~

## Santisi

Carmelo and Annunciata (Nancy) Santisi were close friends to my grandparents. They lived on Ella St. in Girard, Ohio. They had a son, Anthony Paul Santisi born April 1951. Anthony and I were pretty good friends, especially since we were so close in age. During the summers I spent in Girard we saw each other frequently. Anthony played the accordion and to this day I still remember him knocking out the melodies. His parents were always great to me as was their friend (or relative?) Angela Gallo. They were always together. Mom had a photo of Carmela Trina (Married Uncle Tony Trina), Carmela Briguglio (married to John), Angela Gallo, Anunziata Santisi and Anthony Santisi taken April 1951 probably at Anthony's christening. I also have memories going to the Isaly Dairy on State St. near Anthony's house to get a cold Klondike ice cream bar. Back then the Klondike also had Isaly Dairy written on the wrapper. Anthony went to Youngstown University and graduated with an Electrical Engineering degree. He went on to work for General Electric was working at Euclid, Ohio. He married Janice Marie Yunk on September 29, 1979. I Believe he is now living in Mentor, Ohio about 30 miles east of Cleveland. I have not communicated with Anthony in years and I need to track him down.

~GB~

## Micalizzis

Philip and Fannie (Caputo) Micalizzi were very close friends to my grandparents and would often visit Sunday evenings just after dinner to talk, drink coffee and enjoy the sweet of the day (pizzelles, biscotti, pound cake or angel food cake are the most remembered delicacies). The coffee drink of choice was instant Sanka with tablets of saccharin. Everyone addressed them as Compare Phillip and Comare Fannie, old and young alike. Those evening are some of the most memorable of all visitors, enjoyable, laughter and comfort sitting and standing around Grandma's kitchen table.

~GB~

## BALTIMORE EXTENDED FAMILY

### Dahlers – My In-Laws

My Baltimore Extended Family chapter needs to begin with embracing the Dahler families. My parents and Jeannette's parents were acquaintances via the VFW probably for ten years before the time we met. Our meeting events will be discussed in more detail later in "Our Marriage" but I want to briefly share some of the highlights of our family events knowing this could be a full chapter in itself. Both of Jeannette's parents are part of large families and most live in the immediate area of Baltimore and Harford Counties.

The initial acquaintances were made at the various VFW functions of which Jeannette and I both attended not knowing or even aware of each other. The wedding of Jeannette's sister MaryAnn would mark a major milestone for us but more on that in the Chapter 7 "Our Marriage." I should note here at the time we were married, the homes from Jeannette's house to the corner of Forge Rd and Cross Rd were all different relatives of Jeannette's Mom including her Grandfather at the corner.

After our wedding the family encounters became a regular occurrence. Sunday dinners and regular summer get togethers especially at the Dahler's home were common. The get-togethers included crab feasts, traditional picnics and the ever popular softball game in the ball field, equipped with back stop in the backyard of Jeannette's parents. Jeannette's sisters' families were also close and we all attended the Sunday dinners and get togethers. There were very few weekends at the time when we were not busy on Forge Road. With all the cousins around having children the attendees increased.

Jeannette's cousins also helped us move from our home on Hallfield Manor to Proctor Lane and I mean move, no moving van company involved. We also had many gatherings with Jeannette's siblings and their families. The holidays were especially active for both of our families. My sisters also attended many of the Dahler functions.

Before Lisa and Craig were born I joined the bowling league at the Perry Hall Lanes. Not sure which took place first but one of my colleagues at Eastern Stainless, Gary Pon, was an avid bowler and asked to me to join a league. Around the same time Jeannette's cousin Rose Butt asked me to join and we bowled together for a few years. My cousin Joe Conigliaro also joined the league for a while. We always had a lot of fun getting together and competing.

We truly had a special relationship between us and our families and extended families.

~GB~

## Bokels

We first met Bill and Gail Bokel at the closing for our first house in May, 1976; they were leaving and we were arriving. A few days later we met them in the front lawn at Hallfield Manor Drive. We lived in the same duplex house building they at 4318 and us at 4320. It was the beginning of a special lifelong relationship. Jeannette and I became godparents of their first child Lauren who in turn became friends with Lisa.

In 1977 we began what would become an almost annual vacation together. This first vacation we traveled to the Playboy Resort at Great Gorge, New Jersey. We had some very memorable stories as we often did on our trips together. One day Bill and I went golfing, the perfect definition of novice wanna-be duffers. On one of tee-offs one of us hit the women's tee marker and the ball bounced back behind us; the other tee shot went errant into a pond of water. Then on a par three hole where the tee was elevated above the green, a single player approached Bill and I and asked if he could play along with us. We both said sure but we are not very good and hopefully we would not hold him up. Not sure who teed off first, me or Bill, but the first shot was within maybe ten feet of the pin, then the next tee shot was even closer. The guy

looked at us and said “that is OK, I’ll play through.” Well Bill and I looked at each other and said that guy thinks we are sharks. WHAT A LAUGH. Those were probably the best shots we had the entire 18 holes. I still laugh when I think of that day.

On this same trip, all four of us entered a bocce ball tournament. Not sure but maybe 10 or so couples. Well the final two couples were the gang of Hallfield Manor and the yep the Bonaccorsis won. Grand prize was a gray ceramic Playboy mug, we still have and keep on our desk as a pen & pencil holder. Honest it was not rigged.

Probably the most memorable event was when we went horseback riding. The four of us made it quite clear we had never been horseback riding and the girls emphasized the fact. Jeannette requested the oldest most calm horse available. We were assigned our horses and Jeannette got Wilbur who seemed to fit the requirements she described. We were being directed by two guides one in the lead and another at the end of the line of about 15 horses. As we were rounding around a turn near the end of the trail we were approaching a green on the golf course. The four of us were the last of the horses and our second guide yelled out to the lead guide to make sure to keep the horse on the trail and slow before getting to the barn. Well the lead horses began to move quicker and Jeannette’s horse did not want to be the last to the barn so he took off at a quick gallop, very quick. He crossed the Golf course green and near a tree that Jeannette had to duck under. Jeannette’s hair was flowing straight out and she looked like an expert rider. In reality she was hanging on for dear life and scared. We made it back but what an experience.

IN 1978 we took a trip to St. Michaels Maryland and stayed at a historical Inn where there was only two bathrooms on a floor. The beds were elevated and required a stool to get into bed. Oh, by the way both Jeannette and Gail were both pregnant with our first girls (of course we did not know they were girls then).

Once the kids were born we went on annual excursions to one of the ocean beaches: Ocean City, MD; Wildwood, NJ; Ocean City, NJ or Virginia Beach, VA. One year we took one trip on the Blue Ridge Mountain Scenic drive including visiting Luray Caverns. On one trip to the ocean we ordered takeout pizza and jogged back to our apartment. I was wearing sandals and tripped landing a perfect belly flop on the sidewalk but I kept the pizza safe as I outstretched my arms. On a visit to Virginia Beach one year we decided to order “Maryland steamed crabs” so we thought. Bill and I went to the restaurant and ordered about two dozen steamed crabs. We waited and waited, we ordered a soda and finally someone came out with a small brown paper bag. Bill and I said that is not ours we ordered two dozen. He said that is two dozen and we then opened the bag to check. The crabs already were cleaned and shell removed. We could not believe it. We laughed but were crying on the inside. When we showed them to Gail and Jeannette, I believe the response was “WHAT!!!” There are other stories as well.

In 1991 Bill, Gail, Lauren and Chip visited us in Indiana. We went to Chicago one day then to Six Flags in Gurnee where we closed up the park. We stopped at McDonalds on the way home to Indiana. During the trip home I decided to drive through downtown saying traffic would be light. Well when we got close to the downtown area the traffic was heavy, not rush hour heavy

but heavy. They could not believe the traffic nor the site of the downtown skyline. Interesting note here is Lisa's first job after college was at Abbots Labs in Waukegan where she lived in just minutes from Six Flags Theme Park and the Great Lakes Naval Base. (Our brother-in-law Butch Howell was stationed at Great Lakes for his Navy training). Later in 1993 we went on a cruise on the Disney Big Red Boat which included a few days at Disney World. We also took trips to three of the Ohio State parks and Oglebay, WV together. Truly some of the best and memorable moments together are when we vacation with the Bokels.

Since then we try and see each other once a year when we visit or take a long weekend vacation when possible. We try to find a location mid-way between Indiana and Stewartstown, PA. A few years back we decided to return to the St. Michaels area and we had a blast. Our fun times together and the stories are endless.

~GB~

## NEIGHBORS & FRIENDS IN BALTIMORE

Some of the neighbors I recall from Chesley Avenue include the Hetchens (Uncle Bob and Aunt Edna), Kathryn Tassi and her family who lived across the street from us; The Martins who lived next door; the Foxwells who were also good friends of the Hettchens; and my friend Jerry who lived a couple of houses east of us. Then there were other numerous friends of our families: the Grecos, Marzullo's, Insley's, Schaeffers, members of the VFW (too many to mention) and many others I have forgotten.

Mr. and Mrs. Sebastian Sessa who lived on Sefton Ave. in Hamilton were good friends of both the Bonannos and Bonaccorsis and were frequent participants in the Saturday evening card games. Here I was often the lucky beneficiary of dropped coins on the floor, the beginning of learning the art of saving money. The Sessas were also neighbors of Ted Zukor superintendent of the Melt Shop at Eastern Stainless Steel when I started there in 1970. Ted Zukor was an avid artist; he painted numerous pieces including one of the Melt Shop furnaces at Eastern Stainless along with others scenes. They were quite good.

John Conigliaro son of Sam & Sara Conigliaro (of Angelina's Restaurant and relatives of my godfather Rosario Conigliaro) was working at Hamilton Jr. High School when I was there. I knew he was interested in trains and I was having trouble with one of my engines. He took a look at it and helped me make the repairs.

I received a Naval Academy appointment nominated by U.S. Representative George H. Fallon but unfortunately, I became a first alternate due to my color-blindness. More on this under Chapter Four "My Early Years." Anyway, back to extended family. Along with recommendations from Poly I received two letters of recommendation from: Bobby Hettchen (Wife's name is Connie; the son of Robert & Edna our neighbors on Chesley Ave.) and John Conigliaro mentioned above. Their letter's both made comments of praise of my parents and to family values. Bob Hettchen worked at the Westinghouse Electric Corp and John Conigliaro

worked for the Baltimore City Schools . Again, this connection of extended family was very special to me and my Parents. I will never forget their kindness in my endeavor to be Navy material and references for my college applications in addition to the many other things they did for our family.

~GB~

## Kissin' Cousins Parties

After a family funeral in the early 1980s some of the cousins discussed we cannot just meet at funerals so we decided to get together at least once per year and sometimes twice a year. We would invite the cousins and meet at one of our houses for a picnic or informal meal. We invited the Conigliaro and the Bonaccorsi extended families. Typically, 20 to 25 people would attend. It was a blast. I believe at the first get together we concluded it should be called the Kissin' Cousins party. After we moved from Baltimore to Indiana in 1989, the Kissin' Cousins continued to meet. One year when Jeannette and I visited Baltimore, the cousins met at an Ellicott City Italian restaurant. About 12 cousins attended including Jeannette and I. Only my sisters knew we were coming so it was a surprise for everyone else. We had a blast.

~GB~

## OTHER COMMENTS

### The Anthony Invasion:

I also noticed that for the first few years my greeting cards were addressed to "Anthony Santo." This I am sure was partly because of the many Anthonys in Girard and I was the youngest or more likely, that was my given name as Mom always reminds others. The first Anthonys were Compare Tony Airato and Anthony Trina (Uncle Tony). The others are: Anthony Rozzo (son of Mary Airato; my Mom's godson), Anthony Airato (Butch son of Melo and Rita), Anthony Trina (son of Paul Trina and Theresa, my Dad's first cousin), Anthony Airato (Teenie, son of Rose and Joe Airato) and Anthony Paul Santisi (his parents, Carmelo & Annunciata, close friends to my grandparents). Anthony was a close friend while in I stayed in Girard. I am sure I have or will mention this again but it is worth it – to me. Whenever some yelled for Anthony when we were together for any occasion in Girard, you would see all Anthony heads pop up or say "Yea!" It was often comical when "Anthony" was called out but also a little uneasy since we were not sure one of the Anthony's may have done something wrong. Now remember I was called and still called Anthony by my relatives and friends in Girard and Baltimore including my Mom, Aunts, Uncles and many cousins.

## **“Special Occasion Cards”**

I have mentioned this scrapbook keepsake of cards numerous times above and later on. Seeing this collection by Mom of the special occasion cards found in Mom’s scrapbook are a unique travel into a time when greeting cards were fine pieces of art and personal communication. Reading each card brought me closer to all my parents’ family and friends; it difficult to explain. Now all the cards are large and they are extraordinary but some of the best cards were from Aunt Francie and Aunt Anne. Looking at each card it almost seems they had been in competition in getting me the best and cutest cards – honest. I would also say, Aunt Josie (ZiZi) was right there as well for the neatest cards as well. I have read them all a few times while writing this. I also should give all my aunts, uncles, friends and everyone else a belated and heartfelt thank you for all the thoughts, cards, gifts, and money for my birth, christening, Easter, valentines, special occasions and all birthdays. Mom wrote down all the details of each event in each card and on the scrapbook pages– so again much thanks. And the get-well cards after my operation in Nov. 1952 they are all special but the one from Aunt Fran telling me “How’s my sweetie? Please get well soon” that was special.

Other neat notes include: my first rocking chair from Aunt Fran and for my first birthday gift from Aunt Anne & Godfather a green flannel shirt and blue jeans. For Christmas 1953 I received my first tricycle from Aunt Fran. Another comment is Aunt Fran frequently addressed me as Butch when I stayed in Girard. Reading these cards and notations by Mom are absolutely touching and sentimental. Mom also collected all occasion cards beyond my first three years in separate envelopes for years. Not only friend friends and relatives but for school occasions, from both teachers and classmates. And yes, I read everyone. Honestly, I do not remember all the names but surprising more than I thought I would.



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## **PART TWO – YOUNGER YEARS – GROWING UP**

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### **4. MY EARLY YEARS**

*Laughter is the best communication of all.*

--Robert Fulghum

#### **MY EARLIEST MEMORIES**

Well of course the beginning for me was January 18, 1952, Friday, 6:30 a.m. delivered by Dr. Harry M. Beck at Mercy Hospital located in downtown Baltimore. I was brought home from the hospital on Jan. 25, 1952; no rush kicking you out of the hospital back then. How do I know this? Mom kept meticulous notes in my “Biography of Our Baby” Journal, at least up to I was two years old. (Gee, what happened around that time?) The journal includes all my birth info, major gifts, major events, medical notes made on Dr. Moltz’s Rx paper, key photos and more. There is also a booklet by Gerber Products describing infant care and training including pages for important milestones. Two interesting sections are ‘A word to New Fathers’ and the other “A word to Grandmothers.” Another booklet is “Your Baby’s Formula and how to prepare it – the Aseptic Method.” Briefly the formula recipe is: 6 oz. Pet Milk, 12 oz. boiling water, 3 level tablespoons of Dextro Maltose #2. Pour this formula 6 bottles 3 oz each.” Some other interesting notes from the Journal Mom recorded are: “First sip from a cup about July 28, couldn’t tolerate juices; given vegetables and cereal March 16; solid food – all the cereals, strained fruits and vegetables.” Yes, these are the correct dates.

My first year I became quite the traveler. I was Christened on Feb. 17 at St. Dominic Church by Father Bastress; went to my Godparents on Feb. 24; and “took my first streetcar ride on April 16 downtown to visit my Uncle Saro’s store. I took my first trip to Girard when I was four months old over Memorial Day weekend, Mom writes “Baby was very good during trip.” Once in Girard I was held by everyone as seen from the photos I observed of Mom’s collected photographs.

The end of the year however was pretty traumatic for Mom, Dad and to me too I just did not know it. Obviously in 1952 I was not aware but it not until I was a teenager I was made told of a surgery I had. I had some sort of blood vessel problem in front of my left ear. I entered “Mercy Hospital on Monday Nov. 10, 1952 at 3:00 PM and was operated on by Dr. De Marco at 10:30AM Tuesday Nov. 11, 1952. I returned home on Sunday Nov. 16, 1952” as written by my Mom on the scrapbook page with all my “Get Well” cards. A note of interest, a Dr. S. DeMarco also delivered Dad back in 1924. What is unclear is whether this is the same Dr. DeMarco or his son; I have not been able to verify at this point nor do I remember Mom mentioning it to me.

My first birthday was in Girard. Mom writes “Was a very exciting day, had much company.” In addition to my parents’ family everyone else we knew in Girard seemed to attend. Mom noted every name in the journal which includes all the Paganos, Trinas and Airato family members.

### **My First Memory**

My earliest memory is at my Aunt Francie’s wedding June 4, 1955; (of course I really do not remember it being a wedding as further described below). A wedding day in Ohio is quite different than one in Maryland. The wedding ceremony would take place in the morning. A breakfast and/or lunch would then take place usually at the bride’s parent’s house. Here immediate family and friends are invited to spend time together until the main reception that would start late in the afternoon or early evening.

Aunt Fran will enjoy this one (although it is a chance that Aunt Anne could have been my hero here). I do not actually remember that it was my aunt’s wedding, heck back then at the ripe old age of two and a half, I did not know what marriage even meant. What I do remember is a house full of people and of one particular moment. I was out on my grandparents’ front porch getting away from the crowd inside, minding my own business when something quite traumatic happened to a scared two-year-old. I was watching the cars go by on Ward Avenue as I would do until this day up to when Grandma passed away. I had on new brown shoes with a white toe; they were Buster Brown shoes. I put my foot with my brand-new shoes under the banister. The toe of my shoe collapsed and got stuck in the depressed position putting pressure on my toes. I was so scared I thought, I broke my new shoes, and so the screaming began. I am not sure whether I thought my foot would be stuck in that shoe forever or because they were a brand-new pair of shoes and I would be in big trouble. Anyway, I believe my Aunt Anne or Aunt Francie came outside to see what was wrong and an amazing thing happened. She took off my shoe and like magic, popped out the toe, put it back on my foot, and gave me a hug. I stood there in amazement with the trauma gone. Now how I related that memory to Aunt Fran and Uncle Dom’s wedding?— Their family wedding picture with me in the front row with those two-tone shoes – Eureka I remember that is the shoe and hence the ordeal happened at their wedding.

### **Another Early Memory**

It was either a Sunday in April 1954 or maybe Easter Sunday and I was dressed up in my Sunday best as seen in the photograph of this event. Fig. 55 Regardless, what I do remember is being very scared. Zio, my Uncle Rosario Bonanno or Uncle Saro to some, picked me up and put me on top of the hood of his black Pontiac. As I recall that hood had to be twenty feet up in the air as I screamed for my life. I also have a photo of me in a fancy dress probably Halloween 1954; fortunately, I do not remember this one. I guess only the most fearful events are part of one’s earliest memories.

~GB~

## EARLY HISTORY

At this point in the life of a middle-class Italian-American boy in the 1950's and 1960's was like most others – sort of anyway. The numerous photographs especially around the holidays and birthdays indicate I was involved the common activities of the time. The photos also disclose many of my future interests. My first train set in 1954 and my first “car” or in my case my station wagon on Christmas 1952 which was a bright shiny red with a nice trunk to store my stuff as I drove around the yard and Chesley Avenue. Additional interests are also revealed as I describe later.

The first twist to the norm of being the only child was in 1954 with the birth of my first sister. Not that Connie was a twist from the norm but what occurred that summer to me was noteworthy. Well, being pregnant (Mom not me) in the middle of summer can be demanding so it was decided to ship me to Girard Ohio for a few months. Now mind you I am only 2 years old but I must have had a blast with all the attention and because for most of the next 15 years I spent my summers in Girard. In today's world this may seem cruel, selfish and maybe even irresponsible to many. But for our family it was a win-win and it generated a lifetime of great memories. As I got older my sisters did not have me to deal with during their summers in Baltimore at least until the summer of 1968. ☺

So, Girard you say (for those not in our family) – what is there to do in a smallish Midwest city like Girard. Well outside of meals, church and family there is GOLF. It seems everyone golfed back then. I believe the only people in Girard that did not golf were me and my Grandparents. Golf in Ohio is a major deal. Two of the biggest names in golf at the time were Jack Nicklaus from Columbus, Ohio and Arnold Palmer from Latrobe, Pennsylvania not that far east of Girard. Uncle Dom and his buddies would golf every week in various leagues including some other uncles and cousins. My cousins Sam & Guy Pagano and Andrew Petrella opened a miniature golf course in 1963 originally named Arnold Palmer's Putt-Putt. They eventually dropped the Palmer tie and changed it to Hubbard Miniature Golf & Playland. Here in the mid-sixties I got my true first job helping out in the “clubhouse” keeping the course clean, serving food and soft serve ice cream and helped maintain the batting cages. I worked there at the Putt-Putt at least four or five summers. I got to play some as well. The Funland operated until 1985.

Speaking of golf, one summer in the early 1980s when visiting Baltimore, Uncle Dom wanted to go golfing. He took me and my cousin Joe to Mt. Pleasant Golf Course to play a round of 18 holes. We were having a good time watching Uncle Dom play a pretty good round. On one hole I chipped in a shot from the fringe of a green and sunk it from about 50 feet. Well I was shocked and excited but I did not show any emotion, hey I was not in a habit to sink good shots and believed I had no bragging rights, so I thought. Well, Uncle Dom just could not understand why I was not jumping up and down and getting excited after making that shot. He encouraged Joe and I all day. He said it is OK to feel good when doing well; something I have tried to remember over the years and how I he made me feel really good that day.

Friday night football in Ohio was also a major activity, remember my Mom and Dad's first meeting? We did not have this in Baltimore until years later. Of course, Girard had their own local hero Mel Tripplet who went on to play for the New York Giants and the 1958 Championship game against the Baltimore Colts. At Girard he won 11 high school letters in football, track and field, basketball and gymnastics. His brother Bill Tripplet was also a Girard High graduate and played football in the NFL.

~GB~

Another thing for me was the special friends and friendships I made over the years in Girard. These include Anthony Santisi, Ginny Rozzo, all the Airato cousins, Debbie Sherock (a neighbor of Aunt Fran and Uncle Dom) and John Ginocchi from Montreal Canada who I believe was a relative or friend of the Briguglios, and numerous friends of my grandparents. Mom had a postcard from the Briguglios stating they were in Montreal Canada visiting a relative, probably John's family. John and I kept in touch for a few years as we exchanged letters and postcards. As I recall John visited Girard at least twice in 1965 and 1966 and we exchanged letters as well. There were other acquaintances made in Girard but I cannot recall their names.

Since I was not in Baltimore for the summers until 1968, I also communicated with various Baltimore friends while I was in Girard. I found out that keeping in touch with friends is a big part of your social life but unfortunately so many family activities take up your time and therefore, the non-family communication dwindles. I realized Mom's policy about keeping notes, letters and postcards is important as I reviewed my personal keepsakes of postcards and letters.

~GB~

## **OUR HOUSE**

We originally lived at 3212 Chesley Avenue in the Hamilton neighborhood of northeast Baltimore. Zio and Aunt Josie moved here from 44 Albemarle St. Little Italy in the late 1940s. Neighbors on both sides of us were close to my parents. The Martins lived to our east at 3214, Miss Anne and Mr. James as we called them. They had two children older than me. The oldest was Anita and the younger daughter was Donna. They did not stay on Chesley very long but we remained close friends after they moved to Harford Rd in Parkville. To the west were the Hetchens at 3210, Uncle Bob and Aunt Edna as we called them. Uncle Bob was a close friend to my uncle, Zio and Aunt Edna was one of my mom's closest friends. They would get together and play cards on many Saturday nights with my Uncle Carmelo, Zio's brother and sometimes Mr. Sessa (I would attend my first funeral as a pallbearer for Mr. Sessa when he passed away). I remember picking up loose change on the floor, which I believe they would purposely drop. My mom and Aunt Edna would spend days making Christmas cookies of every shape and flavor starting just after Thanksgiving right up to the holidays. My favorite were the Santa Claus cookies with the coconut beard and raisin eyes. For more on baking see Chapter Five Food Section – Holidays.

*More Frightful Memories – Related to the House on Chesley Avenue....*

One day Mom went over to visit with Aunt Edna and my Dad was at work. Well when my mom came back she could not get into the house because little adorable Anthony had locked her out. Either I was not aware how to unlock the doors or just too scared to let her in, I am not sure. This did not matter to Aunt Edna. She was yelling at me and somehow managed to get in the house through an opened kitchen window. When she caught up with me I had a close encounter of her hand and my behind. I never touched the locks again. I believe there is a similar story with one of my grandchildren - but who? The name does not flash in my mind.

Well here comes another early traumatic memory. My Aunt Anne had come to visit us on Chesley with my cousin Joe visited us. I was about four years old and Joe was about two and still in a stroller and before Theresa was born. They were leaving and I was not too happy about it. As Joe was being pushed in his stroller on the sidewalk I swung my right leg right into the front glass storm door which unfortunately was closed. And with a crash my leg went through the glass. Before I knew what happened I was on the kitchen table with my mom and Aunt Edna over me. I was not sure what all the fuss was about until I looked down at my right leg and noticed a hole. It seemed large enough to put an orange in it. I do not remember much blood but I do recall seeing the opened wound and it was not a pretty sight. My voice went as loud as I could make it. They were holding me down because I was so scared. The next thing was I was at Dr. Moltz's office where he stitched up my leg. Again, not a pretty sight with me screaming. The scar still exists on my right leg above my ankle.

Speaking of Dr. Moltz, my memories of the doctor's office were usually not fond ones. I got tonsillitis and I assume in pain and had a difficult time keeping my food down. I needed my tonsils removed. On April 10, 1957 I had my tonsils removed by Dr. DeMarco, Jr. I guess it took place in a hospital as I remember everyone around me was in white and but things were fuzzy. Someone was trying to get me to eat plain toast; I thought how could I, my throat was so sore. I believe my Godmother Mary Russo was also there. Mom saved at least 12 get well cards I received. The cards from Grandma, Grandpa and Uncle Frank was signed with "Buy yourself some ice cream with this" and the one from Aunt Mary (Conigliaro) and family came with a similar instruction "Tell mommy to buy some ice cream for you." I sure hope those instructions were fulfilled. Note here Dr. DeMarco is identified as a "Jr." so maybe this is the doctor's son that delivered Dad as discussed earlier in this chapter.

*A Nice Memory*

Actually, not all my early memories were unpleasant or traumatic. One early one memory while living on Chesley Avenue was waiting for my Dad to come home from work. Since he did not drive, he took the bus to and from work, the Number 19 line that traveled Harford road, then North Avenue for a short time and then south towards City Hall. On one particular day I remember waiting and watching tentatively for him while I was riding my tricycle. Up and down the street in front of our house I would go further until he was in site. I raced to him like no one ever road a bike before. It was a very comforting and obviously lasting feeling.

~GB~

## MY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YEARS

I attended Hamilton Elementary School Number 236. The school was located on Old Harford Road and Christopher Avenue. The school was red brick, what else, and “C” shaped. Traveling on a school bus in kindergarten and most of the first grade seemed like the school was in a different City. More about the first grade bus ride later under First Grade.

*Kindergarten                      1957-1958                      Teacher:                      Miss Ellen Placht, Rm 102*

My memories of kindergarten are obviously few except for the aroma of crayons and paint and my teacher Miss Placht who I remember was young and friendly. In reviewing memorabilia from Mom’s collection, I read a note from Ms. Placht introducing herself as “my teacher and looking forward to meeting me in September;” the envelope and card were addressed to me. I also received a Christmas card from Miss Placht. I am not sure you see “card giving” very much today. I remember a few years later I saw her picture in the newspaper announcing her wedding and of course Mom had the wedding notice among her newspaper clippings.

I rode the bus to school and believe I was in the afternoon session. According to my report card my attitude was good. The first quarter report most of the areas was identified as “is making satisfactory progress.” By the second quarter I was “doing very well.”

It seems I was alert child and usually one of the first to volunteer. If anyone from Purdue, from one of my Merrillville Chamber colleagues or someone from Chester Engineers would read this they would laugh and heartedly agree. Specifically, while I was with Chester Engineers, we had a conference call with all the regional offices of Chester with Tony Lisanti (Chester President) announcing Chester Engineers was going public (February 29, 1996). After Lisanti finished speaking, he asked if anyone had questions. Well I chimed in first and Tony Lisanti’s remark was “why am I not surprised it would be Tony.” Then Chuck Voltz remarked “that’s where his money was” and we all laughed.

Anyway, back to Kindergarten, it seems my trauma did not elude me in school. Miss Placht says I have “adjusted very well since his little upset.” I believe we were doing a play about Hawaii or Indians and in the middle of the presentation I had to go to the bathroom. Unfortunately, I did not tell the teacher in time and my body could not hold it any longer. She goes on to say that I “enjoy all the activities, show exceptional skill” in all areas of the kindergarten program, and shows special interest and talent in art. Well I guess I was at my best then because my art skills seem no better today.

My second semester report was much the same except for a comment from Miss Placht. She states she “was quite disappointed” in my refusal to go to the train station. Miss Placht expresses “It did not seem at all like Anthony since he is generally such a mature child.” Well today this one puzzles me too since I love trains and going on trips. I have thought about this and the only thing I can surmise today is I may have thought that we were going on a “trip” on the train and leave home and I did not want that to happen without my parents.

My mom's comments on the report are touching. She writes that she is satisfied with my report hopes I continue to do as well in the future; and that "we are very proud to have such a good report of Anthony."

During this year we had to make a collage on the topic transportation relating to the trip to the train station. I remember doing some of the work at home. The only other memory was getting to school and lining up in the playground in the back of the school waiting to go in the building. Sometimes this caused butterflies especially when the weather was wet. Don't know why but I remember some anxious times waiting outside.

*First Grade                      1958-1959                      Teacher:                      Mrs. M. Robinson, Rm 103*

Mrs. Robinson had some kind remarks, "Whenever I think of Anthony I think of a well-mannered little boy with beautiful big brown eyes. He has done splendid work this year, and I have enjoyed teaching him." Well it is amazing what a little charm can do. She sent me a "Thank You and Wishes for a Happy New Year" card that January 1959.

During this school year we welcomed the birth of my sister Joanna Marie, October 17, 1958. I do not really remember the birth announcement or any fuss about her birth but I do recall the big party and all people over our house on Chesley which must have been for her christening. Everyone from Ohio came down. It was hectic as I mentioned in Chapter 2 "The Marriage of Mom & Dad."

The other memory during this year was another traumatic experience. Sometime in late fall of 1958, I was coming home from school on the school bus at Chesley Avenue. The bus stopped in front of my house and I started to get off when I saw a terrible sign on the front lawn - "For Sale." Well I panicked, looked at the bus driver and thought "what do I do, I don't have a home any more, where are my mom and dad?" I guess I could read enough and sort of understood what the sign meant, I really thought I was abandoned. I cannot recall what made me get off the bus but I must have since my parents and sisters are still around. Wow, what a rush! Well we moved in March 1959 to 2817 Westfield Avenue still in Hamilton area. This is the same street as My Aunt Anne, Uncle Sal Conigliaro and Cousins Joseph and Theresa at 3007 Westfield.

I believe in 1958 or 1959 on a Sunday afternoon was the occurrence of a car accident involving the Conigliaros. I remember sirens and much later a phone call. I am not sure if it was their accident or coincidentally I remember sirens that day. My uncle was driving his 1957 brown Chevy with his family. Theresa was being held by Aunt Anne which must have protected her from the impact since I recall people making comments about it. Joe was in the front seat and received cuts to his face and upper lip. The accident involved a fire truck hitting my uncle's car from the rear. My uncle suffered the only serious injury with a broken left arm. Their next car I remember was a 1960 Pontiac LeMans.

*Second Grade                      1959-1960      Teacher:              Mrs. Audrey J. Edwards, Rm 201*

Mrs. Edwards was a very pleasant teacher and always helpful. Her class was always calm as I recall, I guess the students were mostly well behaved? She lived on Chesley Avenue just up the street where we used to live in a single-story house set back off the street line than the other houses.

A review of my second-grade report card indicates I enjoy school and art. Again Art? I guess it is more my interest to put things together rather than art itself. I remember one project, which was to construct our house. I made a house out of cardboard painted a light green two stories, windows and door. From what I remember it was not half bad for a seven or eight year old.

Some of the comments from Mrs. Edwards are “Anthony’s desire to sound out words independently is most beneficial to him. He really enjoys school, doesn’t he? Anthony has a flair for art. He can combine materials and arrange them in a most attractive way. He should be encouraged in this. Perhaps the extra reading activities has challenged him.” Art again a strong suit? She continues “Anthony gets along well with others and is anxious to help his classmates and me.” Well this last remark sounds like something I would hear from our son Craig’s report since he was always helping his classmates even when he was not supposed to during class. Can this be hereditary?

*Third Grade                      1960-1961      Teacher:              Mrs. Dorothy H. Hoen, Rm 215*

Well third grade was a somewhat non-eventful year since I do not remember any significant occurrence. I guess no traumatic events.

My report card indicates that my handwriting improved from a satisfactory to doing well by the fourth report. Mrs. Hoen was another wonderful teacher. She comments to my parents “Anthony’s keen interest has been outstanding this year - a result, I’m sure, of your making so many books and opportunities available to him. It has been a pleasure to work with Anthony.” It seems books are beginning to become a part of my main interests. More on books later.

*Fourth Grade                      1961-1962      Teacher:              Mrs. Mary A. Lucia, Rm 315*

Again Mrs. Lucia was a wonderful teacher. Mrs. Lucia remarks that I am “an eager learner,” and “The class was especially pleased with the lovely booklet he made for science.” It is a blank what exactly this booklet was about but it may have been about Maryland Indians (but that would be history). Mrs. Lucia states “His choice of reading in our individualized reading program is both rewarding and challenging to him.” This was the time I became interested in biographies and historical books. This is also the year I became “four eyed.” I received my first pair of glasses around in March of 1962. My eyes were examined by Dr. Sardo and the optometrist was Clark-Appler-Loeber. I do not remember any anxiety with my first pair of eyeglasses and there was very little reaction at school that I can remember.



*Fifth Grade                      1962-1963      Teacher:        Mrs. LaRue P. Hart, Rm 300*

Well this year was my breakthrough year for good grades well except for handwriting. My strongest subjects were reading; language; social studies, science, health and safety; music and art. What - language, music and art? I guess the mind can be fooled. This year I received an Honors report in Social Studies and Health for outstanding interest and achievement. I think this was the year I prepared a report with a large poster on anatomy. The poster was a drawing of the body and all the major organs with a brief description. The poster was up in the closet for the longest time but not to be found today.

*Sixth Grade                      1963-1964      Teacher:        Mrs. Anna Massok, Rm 304*

This was a pretty good year for me. Mrs. Massok was interesting and challenging. We had special reading classes, self-pacing program. The Massoks lived in Parkville and during the year, I spent time with Mr. Massok who was an avid rock and mineral collector. He did a lot of stone cuttings and polishing for jewelry. I met with him a few times when he showed me his collection and equipment and he showed me how to cut and polish stones as well. Mr. Massok gave me many pieces of polished stone, which I still have.

The classmates that seem to stand out are Les Bell, Karen Owings, Ann Vanorsdale and Don Griswold. I became friends with Les (more on Les in Chapter 4 and stamps) and Karen, though I remember taking a liking to Karen during my fifth and sixth grade years and Don became a close friend as I will discuss later. Others friends I spent time with and remember included Christina Landis, Gary Dorsch, Dean Alban, Craig Slotke.

During this year I also remember Dino Petrucci coming to class late on occasion since he had to serve at the 6:00 AM mass at St. Dominic Church in Hamilton. I understood the reason why he arrived late but many others did not probably since they were not Catholic. Also, during this year my interest in sports really increased – baseball, basketball, football stick ball and handball (baseball with no bats, just using your fist to hit a pinkie ball). We played at recess, evenings and weekends at the school playground and at the North Harford Rec Center not far from where we lived off Old Harford Rd.

One very vivid memory during this school year remains CLEARLY etched in my mind as it does with everyone who was around then, November 22, 1963. We were in the playground at recess all the way to the back east end of the property, it was about 2:00 P.M. Ralph Waterhouse's mom came running towards the playground very disturbed, shocked, and crying saying President Kennedy was shot and killed. Well, I remember everyone going completely silent. We stopped what we were doing and just stared at each other stunned. I was scared!! Was the madman coming to Baltimore next, was the end coming. It is amazing how an eleven-year-old can think when an occasion like this occurs. The three-block walk home seemed like the longest and scariest ever. It was very eerie, I wanted to constantly look over my shoulder. When I arrived home my Mom was upset and watching TV. Walter Cronkite on Channel 2 CBS was broadcasting and he too was visibly emotional. Of course, the eeriness did not lessen

any with the live TV broadcast of the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald (the suspected shooter of Kennedy) by Jack Ruby on Sunday. The eeriness did not disappear, not through the weekend, and not for a few weeks later. We had Monday off from school to morn and watch the funeral. We sat quiet and rigid on the floor watching the funeral activities. The procession included the caisson used for Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt, the rider-less horse, John Jr. saluting as the procession went by. What an event, what a tragedy, what a memory!

~GB~

## MY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

I attended Hamilton Elementary School No. 41 located at Bayonne and Sefton Avenues. The principle during the 7th and 8th grades was Mr. Charles Wolfe. During the 9th grade the principal was Mr. Richard Doak and the Vice-Principal was Mr. Leo Heaney who also was a lecturer or deacon at St. Dominic Church. Mr. Doak later became principle at the new Northern High School where my sisters attended and some friends who did not attend Poly, like George Benson (later husband to Karen Owings) and Gary Dorsch two of my closer friends.

I walked to school with various friends and neighbors and usually walked home a different way. In the morning I would walk down Old Harford Rd., cross Harford Rd., then cross a church parking lot and walk down White Ave. to Bayonne to the school. In the afternoon the walk would usually go on Sefton to Westfield and sometimes to Glenmore back to Harford or Old Harford to home. It depended who I was walking with. Some names I recall are Eddie Dodd (who lived on Harford Road just north of Chesley), Eddie Starleper (later married a friend and neighbor from Westfield Avenue Sondra Hodgson), Diane Layne a neighbor of Eddies, (I later dated Diane's sister Susan for a short while).

*Seventh Grade            1964-1965      Homeroom Teacher: Ms. Philesa Weagley, 7<sup>12</sup>*

Ms. Weagley was my Social Studies teacher. I do remember being out of school for almost week with the flu.

The school had a trip to the New York World's Fair and our class was fortunate to attend. We took the train to New York and transferred to a Long Island RR commuter train, spent the day and returned later that night. Pretty exciting especially those who had never rode a train before. The train ride for me was old hat since we went to Ohio each summer on the train but still exciting. The most vivid memories were the train ride, seeing the "Unisphere" and various foreign exhibits. I later duplicated (or at least attempted) the main attractions of the World's Fair on my annual HO train Garden with the Unisphere, dinosaurs and some buildings.

Not too many other memories from this school year, other than my French teacher who was young, quite tall, quite blond and quite attractive. Ah the French.

During the end of the school year and the summer between seventh and eighth grade is when I shot up in height to pretty much to what I am today. I started playing basketball with the North Harford Recreation Center more on this under Eighth Grade.

*Eighth Grade                      1965-1966                      Homeroom Teacher: Mr. Frank Climer, 8<sup>1</sup>*

School was a little more difficult this year, not sure if it was my lesser diligence or just trying to adjust to more difficult work. The tough ones as I remember were English, French and Social Studies. They all involved a lot of memorizing which I did not like and had difficulty doing. Also, during this school year, I obtained my nickname "Tony." My algebra teacher Mrs. Jacobs on the first day of class was calling out everyone's name. When she came to me on the class list "Anthony," she said "I guess you go by Tony?" I replied, scared to disagree with a teacher, "yes ma'am." Up until then I was not known as Tony in school.

I started participating in more sports this year, especially basketball, both in school and for the neighborhood recreation group the North Harford Recreation Center (Rec). We were 8th grade champs and tops in the Rec. Council as well. I was the tallest in the school least for the first half of the year until some others started to catch up.

I received my confirmation this year at St. Dominic Church. Those getting confirmed were arranged from the shortest to the tallest. My number was No. 97 or 98, only Mike Arthur (future high school buddy) was taller than me. The ceremony was presided by Bishop Austin Murphy who was pastor at St. Dominic from 1944-50. I took the confirmation name of Patrick. The reason now is unclear. In retrospect I wish I would have chosen Carmelo after my grandfather but the nostalgia and meaning was not yet there in 1966. Our daughter Lisa took care of honoring my grandparents with her given middle of Carmela and confirmation name of Marisca.

*Ninth Grade                      1966-1967                      Homeroom 9<sup>1</sup>*

I do not have or remember the name of my homeroom teacher but believe it was my English teacher. I also do not have my report card but I remember this being better than the 8th grade with my weaker classes still being English and French.

We had a battle of the bands to select the band to play at our "Senior Dance" which was won by Eddie Starleper's band *The Morlocks*. The big song of the time was the Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction*.

My official dating began in the 9th grade. I went to a dance with Fern Hahn at her church located on White Ave. We also went on school trips together, that is we often sat next to each other. I also remember meeting Eddie Starleper's girlfriend's (Diane Layne) and her sister Susan who was in 8th grade. Susan and I wrote to each other during the summer of 1967 my last full summer in Girard. I believe she was in Lima, Ohio while I was in Girard. A very pleasant girl and fun to talk with - down to earth. Diane was Eddie's girlfriend for only two years because he met my neighbor Sandra Hodgson. Sandra lived across the street on Westfield, the former house of Ralph and Katherine DiBenedetto's and their children Dolores (DeDe), Jean, and Alex. My parents remain close friends with them for years.

I graduated and received the American Legion School Award Certificate and bronze medal "For God and Country; Courage, Honor, Leadership, Patriotism, Scholarship, Service" that

presented by the Hamilton Post No. 20; I also received the PTA award for "Outstanding Scholarship Achievement" that included Roget's Thesaurus as one of the top four students (two boys and two girls). I still have and use it (although Word has a Thesaurus). Lisa and Craig also referenced it while in school. The other boy was Don Griswold and one of the girls was Ann Vanorsdale. I cannot remember the second girl's name. It was a nice and memorable ceremony in the school auditorium, which Mom attended. We sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" and "The Impossible Dream."

~GB~

## **MY HIGH SCHOOL YEARS at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute**

Before I describe my high school years, I think it would be appropriate to acquaint readers to Baltimore Polytechnic Institute (Poly). The Baltimore Polytechnic Institute was founded in 1883 originally as the Baltimore Manual Training School. It "was considered the first educational institution in the United States to establish technical manual training as part of the curriculum of a public school." The name was changed to Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 1893 because of the increase on the curriculum content of engineering emphasis including drawing, mathematics, sciences and mechanics of materials. It should be noted that the three early principals from 1886 to 1921 were all members of the U.S. Navy with engineering backgrounds. These gentlemen provided the students the foundation for mechanical design, proper equipment operation and steam generation and as you will read below for the requirements for the senior boiler test assignment. We always hear how engineers cannot spell or have poor writing habits. However, I can attest that all our engineering and lab reports had a 50% grade on English and the other 50% on technical content. Initially the school was all male until 1974 when females became full-time students and so Poly became co-ed. The primary focus for the studies remains engineering and primary sciences.

*Tenth Grade                      1967-1968                      Homeroom M<sup>2</sup>*

I played junior varsity football somehow with no glasses. Attended all the dances and school activities like the musicals and Poly Follies. I met many new friends at Poly since the school was open to all students in Baltimore City and not restricted to school districts as the other high schools. I also played CYO baseball for St. Dominic in the summers of 1966, 1967 and 1968.

*Eleventh Grade                      1968-1969                      Homeroom N<sup>2</sup>*

A rude awakening, I may say, the classes became much more difficult this year. Mr. Jenkins was my Physics teacher, a great guy and teacher, he made things interesting with a touch of humor. He had this 10-foot slide rule over the blackboard he would use and often had the students use it to verify a class or homework problem.

During the summer of 1968 during one of my CYO ballgames being played at the North Harford Rec fields an odd thing took place. I was on first base and stole second and for whatever reason I continued to third base safely beating the throw. Well the coach for the other team came up to me and asked if I ran track and I replied "No." He told me I should meet the

Poly coach and ask him to try-out because he “liked the way I ran the bases.” I made the Poly track team and I was pretty happy. I ran varsity track: the 440 yd. and mile. On June 8, 1969 I ran at the Maryland Jaycee meet held at Woodlawn HS and placed third with a time of 53.4 seconds. I remember it being a tough race, the track was shaped much different than Poly’s; the turns were short and the straight-a-ways were longer. My legs said “to turn it on” while my head said “it is not yet time” as I passed the goal posts; I thought it was a long way to the finish so I held up just a little bit too long; I should have listened to my legs. I did pass a couple of guys; the leader was a good couple of strides ahead but the next three including me were bunched together. I did not have quite enough to pass the second-place runner who beat me by half a stride since I started my kick too late, of course, I only beat the fourth runner by only a half a stride as well, actually a very big lean ahead. A pretty exciting race. In the stands were my sister Connie, her boyfriend Don, and Barbara Wheeler my current steady at the time.

St. Dominic was playing a game at Clifton Park in the spring of 1969 and the pitcher for the opposing team was one of Poly’s best, Joe Rommel. Well Mike Arthur and I both had multiple hits against Rommel and one of mine was a homerun hit to right center field and it rolled far enough for me to round the bases. Mike had an exceptional game as catcher. Anyway, the Waverly coach was at the game and asked Mike and I to be at their next practice and we both made the team. During the summer of 1969 I played for the Waverly American Legion baseball team and it was quite the experience. I was fortunate to play with them, it was an honor. The players were 17 to 19 years old and very good. I did not start many games but played enough to gain some real experience. The coach was very helpful in understanding the final points of playing especially on defense. Unfortunately, I could not play in 1970 as a nineteen year old because I started college and had to work.

#### *Twelfth Grade 1969-1970      Homeroom K<sup>2</sup>*

I remember being much more serious about my study habits and doing problems over and over. All my teachers had a major influence on improving me both academically and as a person. One thing I noticed afterwards was that my three years of high school homework was very much a loner activity compared to college where teamwork is stressed. The best classes were Physics and Physics Engineering with Mr. Chuck Gneiting. His most memorable saying was when he explained problems using Bernoulli’s equation of fluid energy and water flow in a pipe, “there is no electrical input, and the thing isn’t even plugged in.” To this day I have a better grasp and understanding of energy and fluid dynamics than other engineering principles much to Mr. Gneiting’s teachings. In engineering classes, we conducted numerous lab activities and experiments.

One of the activities in Physics Engineering was to study how a drop of milk behaves entering a cup of coffee. It was videoed using a high speed camera. On playback at a much lower speed, you can see the drop bounce in and out of the coffee two or three times, amazing. In our engineering lab we had a large pressure/vacuum chamber where we performed numerous experiments.

Part of our graduation requirements we had to develop and prove some scientific theory, conduct the research and write a paper describing our results. This was called the “Senior Boiler Test.” It was called this because it was a requirement dating back to the early 1900s to test the performance of the school’s boilers. When we moved into our new facility in 1967, federal and state safety laws did not allow students to work on the boilers and conduct tests. Another requirement for graduation we had to make a full size drawing first in pencil or grid paper then an ink drawing on linen of the cross section of a globe valve. We had to take measurements and draw the valve to scale with only one correctable mistake in ink or draw it again. No pressure. I still have my drawings.

A fellow student Owen Williams, for his senior project, did a simulation of the moon’s surface to explain why the footsteps of the astronauts look as if the moon’s soil was wet. The footprint impressions were caused because of the low atmospheric pressure of the moon. Owen simulated the moon’s lower pressure by creating a vacuum to correspond to the moon’s surface using the pressure/vacuum chamber mentioned above. Owen’s project was influenced by the first lunar landing by US astronauts in July 1969. We conducted numerous other experiments as well. For my senior project I conducted flow experiments to prove Bernoulli’s Theorem. Briefly I used food coloring in water and varied flow rates made numerous trials and calculations to define and prove the difference between turbulent and laminar flow.

I ran varsity track for three years, my times came down some over the three years, usually around 52 to 52.5 seconds. The relay times a little faster. I was usually the second or third fastest time. We had an awesome mile relay team around 3:25 which placed second in the Maryland Scholastic Association (MSA) finals behind Carver I believe. I think City won the overall championship while we placed third. Poly’s other strengths were in the 100, 220, 880, and 140 yard high hurdles. I cannot remember how we were in the field events. Our mile and two-mile were average to a little better depending who we ran against.

I went on a Senior Cruise dinner and dance with Barbara Wheeler which cruised around the Baltimore Harbor on the Port Welcome. No senior prom in the traditional sense. We also attended a senior dinner, guys only, at the Blue Crest North. On a separate evening around 9 or 10 couples went to dinner at the Brentwood Inn in Dundalk. A really fancy place at least to us high school seniors. Oh, yea the food was fantastic.

#### *Additional Comments - High School*

The school had three to four dances each year and as I remember I went to all of them. It was a neat thing to be able to bring friends over our house after dances. I had a great bunch of friends these years. Sometimes we would go over Stuart Jacob’s or once at Jeff Scherr’s house. One dance at Halloween included a costume contest to name the “Ugliest Man at Poly” where I went as “Bonny Baby” all decked out in beard (made by rubbing carbon paper on my face), mustache, baby bottle and diaper (a large blanket). Of course, I dressed at school. Unfortunately, I came in second. Tony Sessomes dressed like the hunchback of Notre Dame won.

I received a Naval Academy appointment as an official candidate for admission nominated by Representative George H. Fallon as I discussed earlier under Extended Family. After my

application was accepted I went to Annapolis for an all-day Medical-Physical Aptitude Examination reporting at 7:30 a.m. on July 16, 1969. Mike Arthur was also nominated and he drove to Annapolis. Once I completed the all-day physical, the last activities of the day were the eye tests. The need for glasses were acceptable except I could not pilot a jet. However, I was medically disqualified because of "Defective Color Perception - not waivable." Therefore, I became a first alternate due to my color-blindness. It was still a great feeling and honor going through the nomination process and visiting the academy.

~GB~

### *General Comments – School Years*

A unique opportunity exists for students on the east coast especially in a city like Baltimore is the school sponsored numerous field trips to famous historical locations. Now I do not mean any normal trips. Being a colonial city and state and living only 35 miles from the nation's capital provides for some very interesting excursions. We usually had two field trips per school year. We went to Washington DC at least four or five times: Washington Monument, Capital Building, and probably three trips to the Smithsonian Institute. Other trips included Mount Vernon George Washington's home, Fort McHenry, The Baltimore Shot Tower, and the Carroll Mansion (one of the Maryland signers of the Declaration of Independence) and other sites in the Baltimore area.

In elementary school we attended and sometimes were part of some TV shows. One was a discussion of Baltimore history and I remember we had to remove our tie clips so not to interfere with the microphones. Another trip we went to the Hippodrome Theater to watch the 1939 movie *Gone With the Wind*. Also, we attended the annual May Flower festival at Mt. Vernon Square in Baltimore and went to the Lyric Theatre to hear the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Growing up Catholic but not attending catholic school, we were required to attend Sunday School (before it was called CCD). We went on Sundays taught by nuns and on Wednesday late afternoon taught by a seminarian. The nun I remember the most was Sister Eleanor who I had for a couple of years in the mid 1960s.

And on a final school note I must mention Donald Griswold in more detail. Don and I attended school together from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and our first year of college at Drexel University. As we grew older or especially when we were in junior and senior high it seems we did almost everything together outside of family activities. And actually, he participated in a few of the family events.

We were on the junior high intramural soccer and basketball teams; we played unorganized sandlot baseball and football and on one occasion he convinced me to play a game of rugby. We attended school dances together and some other high school activities. He would often come to our house after dances and during our Drexel freshman year he came over with Mike Arthur, John Bush I have a great photo of us with my Dad. I also spent time with Don's parents; they were great people as well always friendly. His mom Marlene would often meet my mom walking around shopping in "downtown" Hamilton. His Dad Harold Griswold was a teacher

at Poly and a 1939 Poly Grad. I liked to run home from school often so Mr. Griswold would take my books and street clothes home with him. I would then stop by his house and pick up my belongings. Mr. Griswold also wrote a great history of Poly in 1984 titled *Baltimore Polytechnic Institute: The First Century*.

So, as you can see school in Baltimore was not too bad and had numerous fond memories.

~GB~

I attended Drexel University in Philadelphia starting in 1970 and graduating in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering. As I explain in Chapter 6 I also was required to participate in the cooperative education program working at an approved job during semesters when not taking classes. I met some great people at Drexel as well including Cindy Sudor, Dave Gleassey, Joe Jones, Audrey Smith and many others. I ran varsity track for two years and competed in the Annual Penn Relays held at Franklin Field home to the Drexel Dragons, Univ. of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Eagles. Some special memories include meeting Dr. Charles Everett Koop Chief of Surgery at Philadelphia Children's Hospital and Professor of Pediatrics at Univ. of Penn at a Drexel Conference; John Carlos, 1968 US Olympian; Billy White-Shoes Johnson, NFL Player (he ran track Widner College).

I attended Purdue University for my Masters but will discuss this in Chapter 7 "Our Marriage."



## 5. SPECIAL MEMORIES, INTERESTS AND FAVORITES INCLUDING FOOD

*Make each day your masterpiece.*

*Acquire peace of mind by making the effort to become the best of which you are capable.*

--John Wooden

I would like to begin “Special Memories” with a clear and distinctive set of feelings. As I was growing up and even into adulthood there are certain events that bring to mind some very comforting experiences each time they occurred. Whenever we met with Uncle Sam and Aunt Margaret, Aunt Anne and Godfather, Aunt Mary and Uncle Frank from Arbutus and of course our family of Girard and all their families very special memories occurred. I had with a sense of happiness and comfort that is hard to explain. It was a great feeling - I could not wait for it to begin nor wanted it to end. Writing this book now makes me understand the meaning and purpose of family and those wonderful feelings even better.

### **FOOD:**

Well what else would one expect in a book of memories of an Italian family but FOOD – the Italian glue and center of all else except maybe the cucina – kitchen itself. There are many meals, holidays, occasions that could be a book itself but I would like to summarize those that are special and of course that I can remember. I am sure my sisters would add others but these are what vividly come to mind.

Regular or normal meals in no particular order except memory again.

- Monday through Thursday (this goes back to when Friday was still meatless, until around late 1960’s after the 2nd Ecumenical Council under Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI)
  - Pasta: Rigatoni, medium shells, rotini; (long before penne was a common word). Spaghetti or spaghetinni (thin spaghetti) on occasion
  - Sauce – Mom’s sauce made fresh each time except for a little left over and refrigerated for a day or two. Everyone has tried to replicate it: Connie, Joanna, Jeannette all very close and still very good, but....
  - Mom’s Special Beef Stew: beef cubes, carrots, potatoes and that special sauce
  - Baked hot dogs with diced potatoes, green and red bell peppers with olive oil. This was baked in a large aluminum baking dish with handles which I later was informed around 2006 that it was in fact a lid for a large bake pan that my Uncle Saro (Zio) and Aunt Josie used in their restaurant on Pratt St. in downtown Baltimore.

- Mom's homemade green pea soup with homemade dumplings – nothing like it in the world period! Made with ham, fresh split peas cook until perfect and then the addition of homemade dumplings at the right time just before taking the pot off the stove.
- Saffron rice, maybe not too often but enough that I remember it well.
- The ones I forgot ....
- Friday - (Of course where else but in Baltimore and in an Italian household that this is truly special!)
  - Rock Fish baked with lemon
  - Smelts pan fried – a delicacy that most loved but not so much for me because of the roe -fish eggs which were in many of the fish, those I did not enjoy.
  - Crab cakes pan fried, occasionally baked. Homemade but as I can remember close to the Old Bay can recipe but I am sure Mom added her own twist.
  - Stuff artichokes – mmm mmm; stuffing made from fine bread crumbs, pepper, grated cheese and I am sure some other special ingredient(s).
  - Calamari sauce over spaghetti, again nothing like it in the world. My sisters and Jeannette make it just as tasty. The calamari contribute most of the flavoring with no close completion.
  - Mom's own version of Pasta Fagioli - Here I believe everyone else does it wrong, they make it too complicated. It should be simple: elbow macaroni or small size pasta, chick-peas (garbanzo, ceci or cecida), tomato sauce, and seasoning.
  - Lentil Soup – as best as I can remember it was meatless and served on Fridays most often; by that I mean on occasion she may have made it with ham and of course not on Friday. Connie & Joanna have Mom's recipe which I have yet to try.
  - Mom's special goulash - potatoes, squash, string beans in a tomato base.
- Saturday
  - Honestly, I do not remember anything different here from the rest of the week
  - Left-over's; Just little less formal than during the weekdays
- Sunday
  - Well this is tough because most days all run together but homemade specialty pastas were common for Sundays and holidays
  - Baked ham; Lasagna; Manicotti
- HOLIDAYS - Same as Sunday except ten times as many people in the house!
  - Thanksgiving, Easter, New Years and Wedding Soup
  - Christmas Eve-We would often go to different houses to celebrate but the theme of course is food and in this case seafood.

- Christmas Cookies – Oh My!!! How do I even start to describe what was artfully made each holiday season? “Aunt” Edna Hettchen and Aunt Anne coming over the house for days between Thanksgiving and Christmas, beginning around the first week of December and continuing until almost Christmas. You name it was made. My favorite ones of the 10 – 15 types or more made that stand out are the Hungarian nut rolls, multiple shape and decorated sugar cookies, sesame, Chinese noodle, snow ball and the most popular the Santa Claus cookie. These cookies took a lot of work and time to make. This cookie was the face of Santa, thicker than normal cookies, and about four by three inches in size. Each part of the face was painted with food coloring and then accented with coconut for the beard, eye brows and hair, red sugar for hat and the eyes of raisins. Each one when completed was individually wrapped in plastic wrap. Numerous others made but to remember .....
- Easter - Lamb, Easter bread, Easter Rice, homemade Easter eggs, vanilla cream, peanut coconut,...
- Special Occasions
  - Same as Holidays except there are even more people in the house!! Of Course the Dolce here is unbelievable: from cakes, pies, puddings, cream puffs and over the years the new concoctions from Mom’s incessant reading of magazines and cookbooks and sharing recipes from friends and relatives. The stand-out by far were Mom’s decorated cakes.
- Dolce – Desserts and Sweet (beyond ones described above), some identified below:

This category is a difficult one since if it was ever made or served by anybody Mom made it; and over the years Connie, Joanna and Jeannette made their special contributions both the old standbys and that something new. Of course, you have the numerous recipes in “Grandma’s Recipes” book by my Aunt Anne and cousin Theresa. I can probably fill a book just listing the all the recipe names. I know here my sisters would be able to correct the details and especially the numerous omissions and I hope they do and of offer up a sample as a reminder.

- Some of my memorable and obviously favorite are custard pie, peach pie, tapioca puddings, lemon pie, chocolate pie, cream puffs and Mom’s cakes.
- Mom made cakes for any occasion including for dozens of friends, relatives, and even for people she did not know that were referred by others.

See later in this chapter for my favorite foods in the section “Favorites.”

Other providers of nourishment, cuisine and indulgences:

Aunt Anne Conigliaro: Well much of the traditional meals are similar but the one item that I will always remember was her Italian cream pie that she made on special occasions. I also believe this was one of my Godfather’s favorites. It was thick, creamy and huge and one of the most decadent dessert you could taste.

Aunt Margaret Bonaccorsi provided more continental meals but she also was a big cake and pie maker. It seems she always had a crystal cake and pie plate stand with glass cover showcasing her recent creations on her dining room table. But the one thing she made that is imbedded in my memory are her cream puffs – flaky shell and that rich cream filling.

I know here my sisters who are great cooks in their own right would be able to correct the details and especially the numerous omissions and I hope they do and as I mentioned earlier I hope they offer up a sample as a reminder.

## **INTERESTS & HOBBIES**

It seems all my special interests and hobbies can be traced back to specific family, friends and occurrences which included: reading, history, stamp collecting, woodworking, and crossword puzzles. The initial activity for each is very clear and vivid as I reflect on them below.

### Reading

As usual and as might be expected it starts with Mom. Her constant encouragement to read books and observing her read the newspaper front to back made an impact on me. Back in the 60's and 70's Baltimore had three daily papers – the Morning Sun, the Evening Sun and the News American (News Post) and we subscribed to and read all of them. Headlines, sports, and the crossword puzzles were all there. Of course, Dad read them as well mostly headlines, big stories and emphasis on the Orioles and Colts. A point of interest that should be noted is the Baltimore Sunday Sun in the “lifestyle” section included weekly articles on currents books, stamps, and travel which often described some important aspect of history past and current. I would frequently cut out these articles and saved them for reference as I reviewed my stamps and book topics.

Another important contribution to my book reading was influenced by both Mom and Aunt Margaret (Uncle Sam Bonaccorsi's wife). Aunt Margaret worked at the A&P for a long time especially at the Alameda location. The A&P store and the local Eddie's Supermarket (Owned by Eddie Howard) would frequently have promotions which included books. Some of the books were specialized for example, encyclopedias, the space program, classic novels for kids (Robert Lewis Stevenson and Mark Twain), etc. For each of the promotions Aunt Margaret and Mom would purchase the books often as Christmas and birthday gifts. A testimony here to support this is from my Third-Grade teacher Mrs. Hoen when she commented to my parents “Anthony's keen interest has been outstanding this year - a result, I'm sure, of your making so many books and opportunities available to him ...” as I identified earlier in Chapter 2.

One unique book or booklet shared with me was published by the Baltimore News American in the early 1960's titled “Baltimore Firsts.” Ironically, Kokomo, Indiana our future home has the nickname “City of Firsts” which attracted further reading in many areas. This Baltimore history booklet was small about 4 by 5 inches with a light blue outer cover and guessing around 50 pages in black and white not very big but as I recall at least 50 or more items were identified and described. I would read this booklet over and over and as I remember it was quite worn but still in good shape to read. Sadly, I have not seen this book in years since we moved from

Baltimore in 1989. Hoping one day I will find it inside one of my early books (another request for St. Anthony). Anyway, some of the firsts as I remember include: first Catholic Cathedral in the Country, oldest Catholic Church in the country (not the cathedral) and the first catholic bishop. Also I remember, first umbrella manufacturer in the USA, first monument in honor of George Washington, first railroad B&O, first telegraph message Baltimore to Washington, first school to integrate before the US Supreme Court decision (Baltimore Polytechnic Institute my alma-mater), first US museum (Peale Museum), first ships built in America, beginning of the first US highway as we know in Baltimore Pulaski Highway US Rte. 40, first steel building, first typesetting machine by Mergenthaler (high school named after him), first catholic seminary St. Mary's, first US congregation of Judaism, first research based institute Johns Hopkins University, and the first Symphony Orchestra in the US. There are other firsts but these are the ones I can remember and since this is not a history of Baltimore I will not go on.

In addition, supporting my interest of reading are the regular subscriptions and book ordering program while attend elementary and Junior High School provided and published by Scholastic Books. I ordered numerous books through this program and I remember not buying some because I thought they were too expensive. Most of the ones I purchase were \$2 or less. I have most of these still in my Library. The ones I truly remember are the Mark Twain and Robert Lewis Stevenson books and especially the book titled *The Thinker*.

Somewhat of a confession should be made here. Yes, I did read these books noted above both fiction and non-fiction which I enjoyed. However, once I entered High School my interest in reading especially fiction took a nose dive and I mean sub-earth surface serious nose-dive. I became involved in other activities and my school assignments took up a significant amount of time. Most of the required reading books in English classes seemed to be just words by authors and I was not sure what they would help in life. I simply did not get the classics purpose back then. Yes, these books are classic and considered excellent reading but they just did not interest me. In Junior High, I did not have as many negative memories of books read compared to the books in High School. I am talking about some noted authors here: Charles Dickens (David Copperfield), Emily Dickinson (Three Little Women), Arthur Miller (Death of a Salesman), Ernest Hemingway (Grapes of Wrath), and others. They simply did not pull me in and I struggled at times.

The rest of my literary story improves. After college I said I will not read another technical book at least for a while. Too much intense detail, information and tiring. It seems my brain needed a rest. Now it sounds I am reversing direction of what I thought in high school – well not exactly. The good news I remember reading non-fiction back in Jr. High (Wright Brothers and Guadalcanal) which were biographical and historical. Then one day I saw some books in the mall bookstore about Maryland and Baltimore and thought these may be interesting. Not sure which books I purchased first but the earlier ones included: Baltimore: A Picture History 1868-1968, Maryland – A History; Russel Baker autobiography; The Neighborhood: The Story of Baltimore's Little Italy; and Hyman Pressman's Watchdog of Baltimore (signed by Pressman). All of these books were published in the late 1970's and very early 1980's. So,

with these books began my journey into historical non-fiction and biographical books. As of this writing my library consists of over 900 books nearly all are non-fiction.

During this period in the mid-1980's I established that I wanted to read at least one book on each of the presidents. I have accomplished this goal at least for now in 2022. I need to read a book on President Joe Biden to meet my goal.

### Stamp Collecting

I became interested in stamps while visiting my grandparents in Girard each summer. They received numerous letters from relatives in Sicily and I found the stamps were unique and many were quite fascinating. Grandma noticed my interest and began sending me stamps which continued for years. As Mom recognized my interest in stamps, she showed me her collection that she started around the early 1940's. After she knew I was serious and probably responsible enough she gave me her collection and album which was pretty impressive.

Then in Junior High School I started to talk to one of my classmates Leslie (Les) Bell who was a very serious collector. His albums were huge and he collected stamps from nearly every country. He and I would meet at each other's homes to review our stamps, trade and update our albums. His parents would then take Les and me to stamp "expos" where thousands of stamps were on display and for sale. Les also introduced me how to contact various Postal agencies of different countries via letters. I was able to buy stamps directly at face value. Some of the countries' postal services I communicated with were Dubai, Yemen, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, Umm Al Quwain (now Umm Al Qiwain), Fujaira (now Fujairah), Ajman, Federation of South Arabia, Lebanon, Philippines, Sharjah, San Marino, Rwanda, Romania, Sierra Leone, various African countries, etc. Many of these smaller Arab countries later merged into the United Emirate States. Stamps from these counties were impressive and shortly thereafter the United States released stamps of beauty as well.

I was also influenced by President Franklin Roosevelt. Reading and watching a TV show about him, I saw his main hobby was stamp collecting. So now my hobby is the same as a president back then!! I continued to buy stamps at the post office and also at retail stores when affordable to fill in gaps of my collection. I believe I have nearly every stamp the US issued from around 1929 to mid-1970's. I bought many of the special commemoratives over the years from the late 1970's to around 2001. These are so interesting to review. They included: a tribute to the Peanuts cartoon, WWII battles, arctic animals, Irish immigration, Elvis, major popular mineral stones, popular blues singers, the US Circus, classic children books, Grace Kelly, country singers, US states, Norman Rockwell paintings just to name a few. Then Jeannette started to give me the annual US commemorative yearbook for my birthday so I pretty much have of many of the US stamps issued through 2014.

Now to tie in my interest of historical and biographical reading and commemorative stamps from all countries from the early 1900's to around 1980's and how stamps included specific and significant information. For example, some of my favorites are:

- Clara Barton founder of the American Red Cross 1948

- 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Volunteer Fireman, 1648-1948; Peter Stuyvesant; Organizer of the first volunteer fireman in America; Unselfish Public Service – Courage – Duty; including two pictures of typical equipment back then
- Juliette Lowe, Originated the Girl Scouts of the USA 1948
- Transcontinental Railroad 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary showing photo at Promontory, Utah 1944
- Francis Scott Key – Showing Key family home in Baltimore, Fort McHenry and 1814 US Flag
- American Chemical Society 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1951
- American Automobile Association founding 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1952
- Engineering Centennial, features George Washington Bridge over Hudson River 1952
- Land Grant Colleges 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary features Michigan State & Pennsylvania State 1955
- Doctors Mayo, honoring the brother endowers of Mayo Foundation 1964
- Fort Bliss Centennial, El Paso, Texas, 1848-1948; shows picture of fort and guided missile launching indicating its current use as a guided missile and anti-aircraft center
- Woman Suffrage, 1920-1970; includes signs “Right to Vote” and “Votes for Woman” before and after scenes
- The States Ratify the Constitution 1788, each state’s 200 years since ratification
- 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Printing in Colonial America; 1639-1939; picture of first printing press
- Centennial of Baseball, 1839-1939, includes picture of an early baseball scene

I can go on listing numerous key landmark events from the stamps issued but they are endless. The important thing here is the extent of knowledge that can be learned from just examining stamps. During the 1960’s and 1970’s different people supplied me stamps from their mail including Uncle Frank, Grandma, Sister Joanna (Mail from Nurad), Uncle Bob & Aunt Edna and their friends the Hunters, different people from Eastern Stainless, colleagues from Chrysler and the Bokels just to name a few. Also, after Lisa and Mark were married they traveled to numerous countries and presented me stamps from nearly every nation they visited. Today commemorative stamps are less informative than years ago. The stamps typically just portray a key person, a photo and name but no history. Most stamps are still attractive and accurate do not include the detailed information as in bygone years.

### Woodworking

Now for woodworking which is not as straightforward subject as history, reading and stamps but still definitive for me. I guess my first exposure is from Dad who as an upholsterer often had to repair the wooden framework of the furniture before adding his cover artwork and I truly mean artwork. His craftsmanship as well as the final results were truly amazing. From spitting tacks, to laying out the materials, the stretching, folding and finishing a piece of furniture – unbelievable. I would sit and watch him for hours as he completed a restoration. He would take furniture trashed by others and restore it to new. Furniture frames would be

loose, broken, and misaligned and Dad would repair it to support its users and the upholstery. Sometimes nothing more than a few screws or nails, but often supporting braces, brackets and gluing. He would use special wood glue and sometimes hide glue which came as dried flakes which had to be heated and melted to use.

The next significant influence was watching Uncle Dom working in his basement workshop (It seems everything has a Girard, Ohio connection). Being a machinist, he had skills that carried over to woodworking and his shop – a true shop. I always admired his shop, tools and organization. He had a large workbench along two walls with drawers and storage (which he made), a drill press and other tools and of course a large Sears Craftsman table saw which I would guess was early 1960 vintage. It had a chute to collect dust and outfeed tables. Uncle Dom was always tinkering doing or repairing something in his shop and just like me watching Dad at home I would spend a lot of time with him each summer in his shop when visiting Girard. The one item or multiple items I admired most that he made was the storage and shelving for Antoinette & Gerri for their upstairs bedrooms.

The next influence occurred in both junior high and high school. We had to take shop classes and I took mostly woodshop. Here table saws (used only by teachers) workbenches, sanders, lathes, etc. were all available. All the shop teachers were excellent and very supportive and encouraging. Some of the items I made included: slotted mail holder, small corner shelf, small open top trinket box, another trinket holder but hand carved to give it a concave shape; a mallet and the big item a foot stool. I still have all of these items and most still in constant use.

Well the stool I made in school now brings me around to my godfather, Rosario Conigliaro, Uncle Sal to all but me – he was Godfather. Well during the latter 1960's or early 1970's Godfather decided to take an adult woodworking class at a local high school (either at Northern or Parkville). One day he asked if he could borrow the foot stool I made in 7<sup>th</sup> grade 1965 so he can make one in his class. He did borrow the stool and I believe he made at least two, one for himself and one he gave to Mom and Dad. For a long time, Mom & Dad used it to get in and out of Connie & Dave's car or van. After Mom & Dad passed away I then received the stool from my sisters that Godfather had made. Now I have a matching set and still have both in use with their original finish.

Now not be outdone I need to mention that Mom and Aunt Anne were required to take woodshop at school as well. I cannot remember what Mom said she made (sorry Mom) but I have seen what Aunt Anne made. One of Grandma's cutting boards had Aunt Anne's initials 'AG' imprinted on it. That cutting board was still in use until she passed away. I hope that treasured board found a good home.

When Jeannette and I bought our first house on Hallfield Manor in 1976, I built my first workbench in the basement laundry room. I used that bench in my shops at Proctor Lane, LOFS Crown Point and Kokomo. I still have it in use yet today in my Hobart garage. In addition to the bench I built a wall storage cabinet at Hallfield Manor. What makes this special is Mom gave me an article from one of her magazines. The article had pictures and detail description how to build the cabinet. It had storage for tools on the wall part and additional storage on the doors. I covered the cabinet and doors with the paneling I used for the basement walls so it



was not an eyesore when someone walked into the laundry room to use the bathroom. I kept nearly all my tools at that time in that cabinet. Mom was very pleased how it turned out and she was another influence on my woodworking.

At our house on Proctor Lane I installed a family room and bathroom. I had some of my pipefitter friends, John Mauer and Len Brossett, from Eastern Stainless Steel help me with the rough-in and plumbing. I decided to make my own wall cabinets. I needed to make some doors that were somewhat appealing so I had a co-worker, Carl Markert help me here, my next woodworking influence. He had a Shopsmith multi-purpose tool and he helped make the door panels and especially with some routing. That Shopsmith machine is an amazing piece of equipment, it can perform numerous woodworking functions.

I hope I continue make items for our home and for the grandchildren. See their faces light with something just for them is special for them and rewarding to me.

### Crossword Puzzles

Now for my last major interest crossword puzzles. This is pretty simple how I started doing crossword puzzles – Mom. She was always working on them sometimes 2-3 a day since each of the three newspapers we subscribed to had one. Eventually, she would let me do one and I thought this is crazy. In the beginning the clues and answers had to be of a foreign language or universe, none of them made sense. But yet Mom would crank them out like she wrote them. Uncle Dom Airato was also an avid crossworder and I would watch him during visits to Girard.

Then when I started working at Eastern Stainless Steel in 1970, the steam engineers particularly Jim Miller would solve the puzzles. Now at that time Jim was in his 60's (I thought he was a very old man, sorry Jim) and he would crank out the answers as well. Now granted I told myself, I do have a high school diploma and working on a Chemical Engineering degree, it cannot be that tough. Well the joke was on me. It took me years and I mean years to get better at solving them. After graduating high school Mom bought me a crossword puzzle dictionary which helped a lot but still it took time to understand the clues and the strategy that went with them. Then Craig was doing them on occasion when he visited us and that brings back memories.

~GB~

### **FAVORITE GIRARD OHIO MEMORIES**

I have already identified many specific events related to Grandma and Grandpa Gugliotta and family but there are some others that left a lasting impression on me as well. These special ones include the following:

- Start off with the train ride from Baltimore to Youngstown, yes, we went by car a few times with Zio but the trains – that was special. We did this during the span of 1954 – 1969.
- Spending time with Aunt Anne, Godfather, Joe & Theresa in Girard when they came up for vacation and then the ride back home with them.

- Shopping excursions to Girard-Youngstown stores: Sparkle, Kroger, Hills, McKelvey's, Eastwood Mall, Drug Store in Girard, and others on Belmont Avenue and State Street.
- Girard Charles Shop a men's clothing store that Grandma went often. Especially the time she bought me my first pair of flared multi-colored pants in 1967 or 1968. Oh, the 60s!
- Sweet treats: Dairy Queen, Isaly's, and hand dipped ice cream in Sharon, PA. Grandma loved her Dairy Queen and we would go as often as we could whenever we visited. A very special comment is after Grandma passed away a park bench was placed in front of the Girard Dairy Queen engraved with: "In Memory of Carmelo & Giovanna Gugliotta." What a lasting landmark to terrific people, parents and grandparents. (See Photographs on p.162 Fig. 172)
- Specialty Stores Stambaugh's: and a large specialty store that seem to have everything (this was late 1970's or early 1980's. We made many trips there with Uncle Dom and Aunt Fran.
- During my summer stays Grandma and Aunt Fran often took me to the annual IFH Feast of Mt. Carmel and as I remember there was a parade, food, fireworks and meeting a lot of people. The IFH is the Italian Fraternal Home where Uncle Frank took me to some weekend activities like bocce ball or lunch. One gentleman that Uncle Frank introduced me to had a son who works in the steel mill and had some fingers cut off. The local hospital preserved the fingers and they went to Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore where they were able to reattached them. The father was so grateful a hospital had that kind of experience and knowledge to save his son's hand. This was in the late 1980s.
- One special place that I originally went with Grandpa, Dad, or Uncle Dom over the years was Girard Hardware Store. I remember the store vividly today. It had everything. Eventually, after Jeannette and I were married we would go to buy something to fix at Grandma's or even buy something for our home. I thought this is where I want to work and as I got older; this would be the best retirement job. I remember the time Grandma's bathroom sink faucet handle broke; the one with the ceramic handle. I am not sure I ever saw them anywhere else. So, a trip to downtown Girard Hardware store was needed. We found the part in minutes and the faucet was repaired like new.
- Entertainment: These special Sunday trips included Idora Park and Liberty Park. There were two special trips to Geneva-on-Lake where we went with the Pagano's and Irene's brother Joe and then of Course Cedar Point. Cedar Point was usually a convoy of cars including the Airatos & Rozzos and I am sure others. Often most of the Anthonys would go (Me, Butch Airato, Anthony Rozzo, one time I believe Anthony Santisi went, not sure about Anthony Trina). Anyway, anytime someone would yell for Anthony we all would respond, and as we got older it became quite comical as I mentioned before. Of course, this happened anytime we would get together not just on group trips.

- One memorable event I believe at Cedar Point in Sandusky Ohio when the guys (the Anthonys) rode the Scrambler all in the same seat. It spins two ways, the seats and entire ride. Anyway, I ended up on the outer part of the seat, the four Anthony's squeezed in. When the ride was over you could fit another person. Me sitting on the outside it seemed I was squished to half the size. This is before I took Physics and did not know about centrifugal force and sitting on the outside was not the ideal place.
- Another ride was a non-powered swing pendulum; two people would get on and try to swing it up and around, standing vertical the entire time. Well Ginny Rozzo and I got partnered up against all the others and were either the first or only ones to get it to around.
- Frequent visitors when we were in Girard: the Rozzos, Comare & Compare Airato, Aunt Rose & Uncle Joe Airato, Uncle Melo and Aunt Rita Airato, Aunt Mary Petrella, Guy & Irene Pagano, Andrew & Millie Petrella, Sam & Dahlia Pagano, Cousins Theresa and Paul Trina, Comare Fannie and Compare Phillip, the Briguglios, etc. When any of these families visited we always had a special time.

## **FAVORITE THINGS**

### Food – Personal Favorites

Let's talk comfort food first:

- Roasted and fried bell peppers (red, orange, yellow), the aroma!
- Figs
- Gnocchi
- Cannoli
- Crab cakes broiled made with blue crab meat; sorry Baltimore is is hard to top the above
- Meat Loaf, Mom's and Jeannette's are the best
- Extra Dark Chocolate 70% or greater cocoa

Overall foods:

- Pasta: rigatoni, rotini
- Main dish – meat loaf; manicotti; steamed crabs; any blue crab dish; soft crabs
- Jeannette's: Chicken and Broccoli (handed down by her sister Maryann), her Salmon
- Vegetable: Brussel sprouts, beets, grandpa's corn on the cob, lima beans, chick peas
- Dessert: cannoli; Gelato (Fruit or Chocolate), key lime pie

## Restaurants

- Pick any in Baltimore's Little Italy
- Caesar's Den – Baltimore
- The Bowman – Baltimore
- Steamed Crabs Balto. - pick a place
- Mexican Grill (Johanns) Kokomo, IN
- Mi Familia –Kokomo, IN
- Hawg Heaven - Kokomo, IN
- Louie's Coney Island - Kokomo, IN
- Hobart - El Poblanos

Still developing Hobart connections

## Music

- Artist
  - Drifters
  - Three Dog Night
  - Perry Como
  - Diamonds
  - Sam Cooke
  - Paul Anka
  - Dell Vikings
  - Sugarland
  - Zac Brown Band
  - Bobby Darin
  - Four Tops
  - Temptations
  - Yes
  - Martina McBride
  - Bobby Rydel
  - Queen
  - Victor Borge
  - Pentatonix
  - The Eidelman Girls & Dexter & Oliver
  - Future Grand kids' songs

- Songs
  - And I Love You So (Perry Como; written by Don McClean)
  - Goodnight Sweetheart Goodnight (Spaniels)
  - Save the Last Dance for Me (Drifters)
  - Boardwalk; and This Magic Moment (Drifters)
  - Come Go With Me (Dell Vikings)
  - Remember Then (Larry Chance & the Earls)
  - I Believe (Larry Chance & the Earls)
  - Sh-Boom (Crew Cuts)
  - Last Date (Floyd Cramer)
  - Unchained Melody (Crests w/ Johnny Maestro; Righteous Brothers)
  - Love Me (Elvis Presley)
  - For Your Love (Ed Townsend)
  - You Were On My Mind. (We Five)
  - I Want You, I Need You, I love You (Elvis Presley)
  - King of the Road (Roger Miller)
  - Mack the Knife; and Beyond the Sea (Bobby Darin)
  - Heart and Soul (Little Jan & the Radiants)
  - Volare (Bobby Rydel, Dean Martin, Jerry Vale)
  - Al-Di-La (Jerry Vale, Sergio Franchi)
  - Church Bells May Ring (Willows)
  - Turn Around Look at Me (Vogues)
  - Lean on Me (Bill Withers)
  - Its Only Make Believe (Conway Twitty)
  - Blue Moon (Marcel)
  - Crying (Roy Orbison)
  - Somebody to Love (Queen)
  - Bohemian Rhapsody (Queen)
  - Crazy Little Thing Called Love (Dwight Yoakam; Queen)
  - Dear Future Husband (Meghan Trainor)
  - White Christmas (Clyde McPhatter, Drifters)
  - I Loved Her First (Heartland)
  - Halleluiah (written by Leonard Cohen, covered by numerous artists)
  - Bridge Over Troubled Water (Simon & Garfunkle)
  - Fur Elise (Emma, Lily, Dexter)
  - Entertainer (Emma & Lily duet)
  - Any song played by Emma, Lily, Elena, Dexter, or Claire
  - A Day at the Carnival and Winter Wind. (Dexter)
  - Twinkle Twinkle Little Star; (Oliver)
  - Canon (Emma & Lily)

## Colors

- Not sure why I am listing this category because I am color blind but one must have a favorite color right? Why these? Probably because they are my high school colors.
- Highlighters – Orange
- Overall - Blue

## Literature

- Authors:
 

○ Stephen E. Ambrose	○ Jon Meacham
○ Rick Atkinson	○ Condoleezza Rice
○ Doris Kearns Goodwin	○ Jimmy Carter
○ David Halberstam	○ Evan Thomas
○ Walter Isaacson	○ John Clancy
○ David McCullough	○ Edmond Morris
○ Nathaniel Philbrick	○ Mark Twain
- Books
 

Selecting a favorite books list is a challenging task since I usually do not read a book that does not interest me. Even if the book may not be the best written but the topic is a favorite, I may still consider it a “good” book. Further, my favorite authors’ books could probably all be on this list. Of the 760 books I have read (at least those in my library and on my book list at the time of this writing), I first identified 217 as best reads and of those I further drilled down to 79 best reads. This list still too long so somehow, I finalized it to the following 30 or so. Anyway, here are the top 30ish as of today and not in any particular order:

  - *Truman* by David McCullough
  - *The Great Bridge* by David McCullough
  - *The Wright Brothers* by David McCullough
  - *Sicily: Three Thousand Years of Human History* by Sandra Benjamin
  - *Madame Secretary* by Madeline Albright
  - *A Memoir* by Barbara Bush
  - *White House Diaries* by Jimmy Carter
  - *Chrysler* by Vincent Curcio
  - *My Life* by Bill Clinton
  - *Fatso: Football When Men Were Really Men* by Arthur J Donovan, Jr.
  - *Elizabeth the Queen – The Life of a Modern Monarch* by Sally Bedell Smith
  - *Ben Franklin* by Walter Isaacson
  - *Fifties* by David Halberstam
  - *Yours Is a Precious Witness* by Margherita Marchione

- *Day the World Exploded* by
- *Nothing Like It in the World* by Stephen Ambrose
- *Wrigley Celebrating 100 Years* by Sports Illustrated
- *Fenway Park – 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* by John Powers and Ron Driscoll
- *Ain't the Beer Cold* by Chuck Thompson
- *Harry Truman's Excellent Adventure* by Matthew Algeo
- *Six Frigates: The Epic History of the Founding of the U.S. Navy* by Ian Toll
- *Wooden: A lifetime of Observations and Reflections* by John Wooden
- *The Day of Battle* by Rick Atkinson
- *The Man Who Made Wall Street – Anthony J. Drexel* by Dan Rottenberg
- *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* by Condoleezza Rice
- *Seabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand
- *Unbroken* by Laura Hillebrand
- *Franklin & Winston* by Jon Meacham
- *Away off Shore* by Nathaniel Philbrick
- *Mayflower* by Nathaniel Philbrick
- *The Queen Mother* by William Shawcross
- *Destiny and Power- American Odyssey of George H.G. Bush* by Jon Meacham
- *Beneath A Scarlet Sky* by Mark Sullivan
- *Code Breaker* by Walter Isaacson
- *Rise Up* by Rev. Al Sharpton
- *My Vanishing Country* by Bakari Sellers

## 6 – EARNING A LIVING

*A daughter needs a Dad to teach her that family is more important than work.*

--Gregory E. Lane

This chapter will briefly describe my journey of working and its unique experiences. Some quite different while others are highlighting milestones and those who helped make it happen.

### IN MY TEENS

My first honest work that I earned payment goes back to my younger teens up through high school – cutting lawns. Now mind you I did not personally own a mower or other tools and I typically used my parents. On occasion, I would use my customers' mower. I had approximately 10 – 12 lawns in the general neighborhood, maybe not all at the same time but I was busy. I had some neighbors that took me to their parents or other acquaintance to manicure their lawn. This was nice consistence money for a kid who obviously did not drive. The major drawback often was my allergy to fresh cut grass. At times it was so bad I tied a handkerchief around my nose and mouth to minimize inhaling the fine debris (before face masks were available). I am sure it was a sight to behold. I also had to change the oil on the mower and keep it clean from built up grass, my first exposure to preventive maintenance. Not sure who guided me here but I do remember reading the owner's manual for instructions and I know Dad gave me guidance.

The next source of income during the same time period of cutting lawns was shoveling snow. The frequency nowhere near the lawn jobs except for a pretty significant blizzard with high winds and drifting in the winter of 1966. However, the snow accumulation although deep did not make the top ten Baltimore storms. I remember walking down the middle of Harford Road to the drug store on Northern Parkway to pick up some medicine for someone in the house. Anyway, Francis (Jay) Gaeng and I walked the neighborhood for about a 3 to 4-block radius and we collected over \$120. With over \$60 in my hands I thought how I could even spend all this. I am sure Mom and Dad were impressed. Not sure exactly how many houses we did but I recall well over 20.

Also, during this period, I occasionally worked with my Uncle Saro (Rosario Bonanno) "painting" about a half dozen times as I can remember. I did some sanding, scraping and clean-up and earned a few cents.

As I discussed in "My Early Years" I worked at the Hubbard Funland Putt-Putt course with my cousins for a few years.

Also, my cousin Joe Conigliaro's Uncle John Conigliaro also a painter asked Joe and I to help him out some Saturday's over a couple of years. Here is another example of the extended family ties that meant so much to me and my parents. Uncle John would often take us to



breakfast before going to the jobsite. I remember that being so cool and almost adult like. One job in particular was quite infamous – painting the dock lean-to roof at the Rubberoid Asphalt Shingle plant (later known as GAF-Rubberoid). The story goes Uncle explained to Joe and me what he wanted done because he was going to another part of the plant or different job altogether. Mind you I was about 15-16 years old while Joe was about 13-14 years old. Well we sorted started out okay but we were working overhead and it seemed the ladder shook more than a mild earthquake. We tried every Rube Goldberg option to improve our platform and footing but Bonaccorsi found out then that he and heights especially unstable heights do not get along. I know Uncle John was not happy but I do not remember him showing any external emotion. Heck deep down inside he may have been laughing at us. I know we always did a good job on other assignments so hopefully this one was one for the not to assign or remember list.

During 1968 and 1969 I worked many Sundays and an occasional Monday at Angelina's Italian Restaurant, owned and operated by another Uncle and Aunt of Cousins Joe and Theresa, their Uncle Sam and Aunt Sara Conigliaro along with his Aunt Angelina Tadduni. Aunt Angelina's husband Joe passed away a couple of years before this. I performed whatever was needed at the time including washing dishes, helping prepare salads, dishes, grating cheese, dishes, peeling potatoes on an automatic peeler and help cleaning up. I loved the experience and working with the Conigliaros and Aunt Angelina was a joy. They loved their work and customers. I think they enjoyed teaching me a few things around the kitchen – no secrets of course but a lot about dedication and something as I now know as "customer service."

I guess at his point it would be appropriate to briefly tell the history of Angelina's restaurant since it will play a prominent point later. Well "Aunt" Sara and "Uncle" Sam along with the Angelina and Joe Tadduni operated a grocery store and in 1952 they decided to open a restaurant in Hamilton on the corner of Harford Rd and Rosalie Avenue (I have an article from the newspaper describing the history). Sara and Angelina were sisters – Russo - and grew up down the street on Rosalie. Oh, by the way another lawn I cut on occasion was the Russo sisters parent's home. After they sold the restaurant in 1969 Angelina continued to cook there for years. Aunt Sara and Uncle started a new venture, a produce store up the road in Parkville. Another point regarding the relationships my parents had with Aunt Sara and Uncle Sam Conigliaro, Angelina and Joe Tadduni and Aunt Sara's other sister Mary and husband Ray who also lived in the same block as the restaurant on Harford Road.

Lastly regarding the Conigliaro connection, Santo Conigliaro (another cousin of Joe & Theresa's and son of Sam & Sara Conigliaro) had me baby sit their daughters (Marie, Michelle, Marlene) frequently. Well one evening after the girls were in bed Marie came downstairs while I was studying and said her sister Marlene was missing. Marlene was only about 2 years old and I was seating near the outside door so I know she did not leave, I still was in early panic mode. We went upstairs looking for what seemed much longer than the 2-3 minutes we were wandering around. We finally found her in her baby doll cradle snug asleep. I picked her up and placed her in her bed – crisis averted. Of course, when Santo and Judy returned home I told them of the mystery and we had a laugh, although not that funny to me at least not that

night. In addition to babysitting, Santo was installing a flagstone patio and Joe and I helped out a few Saturdays. When it was done it was beautiful and I had another lesson in do-it-yourself (DIY) skills and craftsmanship.

These last few paragraphs clearly explain further what I wrote earlier about extended family and friends and how they respect and support each other. From my perspective it further strengthens the deep appreciation I have for the opportunity.

~GB~

### Middlestadt

My job in the summer of 1969 at Middlestadt Corp. arose from Baltimore Polytechnic's (Poly) networking program for students that identified available part-time and full-time jobs. Since Middlestadt was located near Woodlawn on the west side of the Baltimore Beltway I-695 and I did not drive the interview took place at the school. Middlestadt manufactured steel expansion joints for concrete paving where the primary use was for highways and airport runways. I was fortunate enough that an employee lived in Hamilton and drove me to work each day. I was hired to produce drawings of the rollers that made the parts for the expansion joints along with other parts and equipment. Later in the summer, I also worked on the production line mostly packaging the product. Middlestadt asked me to work over the Christmas holiday for a few days which I did.

~GB~

### COLLEGE & ADULT YEARS

#### Drexel

As part of my partial scholarship from Drexel I had to participate in a work study job on campus. The one I selected, though I am not sure why, was in the Psychology lab. I guess it was the best available work study job that fit my class schedule. The professor was conducting experiments on how tadpoles hear or respond to certain stimuli. I help performed some of the experiments, took notes and prepared reports. This same professor owned a white Porsche and small sailboat. He gave me my only ride in a Porsche and only sailboat training and sailing experience I ever had.

~GB~

#### Eastern Stainless Steel -Eastmet Corp.

During my senior year at Poly, I used Poly's networking system to select a 1970 summer job just as I did in the summer for my 1969 Middlestadt job. It was senior year and I knew I would be attending Drexel which required students to work during non-class terms. I reviewed the list and selected Eastern Stainless Steel. I considered this summer job at Eastern as a possible Co-Op (Cooperative Education Program) job starting the summer of 1971. I was selected along with another student to interview for the 1970 summer job. We drove to the plant in Eastpoint for the interview. I interviewed with the Chief Engineer Al Elliott and I showed him my linen

drawing of the globe valve along with some other work and college goals. I was given the job and started the Monday after our senior trip to Ocean City, MD. My 17-year relationship with Eastern began.

A brief summary of the history of Eastern Stainless explains some of the early steelmaking in Baltimore. It was originally founded as Eastern Rolling Mill Company in 1919. The original plant design was developed by Frederick Wood who left the Maryland Steel Co. when Bethlehem Steel took over at Sparrows Point. Wood was the primary engineer, designer and president of the Maryland Steel Co. later to be bought by Bethlehem steel in 1917. Wood decided to leave Bethlehem Steel and start a new company in Eastpoint, the Eastern Rolling Mill Co. Eastern Rolling Mill rolled carbon steel up until World War II when along with many other industries changed their product line to support the war effort and, in this case, they rolled copper for the military for various types of shells casings. After Wood passed away in December 1943, John M. Curly Sr. founded the Eastern Stainless Steel Co. changing its product line to the rising demand for stainless flat rolled products. John senior passed away in the mid-1960's and his son John M. Curly Jr. took over the operations. In the 1980's the company changed the corporate name to Eastmet which included a distribution network and a smaller aluminum processing company.

My first work period in June to September 1970 and my official first Co-Op session June through December 1971 was in the Plant Engineering Department. The 1971 period I worked for Dale Gordon Vick who replaced Al Elliot upon his retirement. During this work period another local student James Kelly worked with me in Plant Engineering. The other engineers in the Plant Engineering department were Charles Ted Schlatzer (Poly grad 1930), Joe Lockwood, Ken Robinson, Leroy Stebbins and Lou Savar were all influential to my learning engineering processes. During the summer of 1971 Al Alcantara Vice President asked me what my major was at Drexel and my interests. Learning I was a Chemical Engineering major and interested in environmental he suggested I should move to Plant Services and arranged a meeting for me with George E. Foss Director of Plant Services. Plant Services had a wide variety of disciplines including all air, water and solid waste management; all pollution control operations; natural gas systems (furnaces), propane systems, water distribution; fire protection; acid and oil systems, powerhouse (steam boilers, electrical distribution, compressed air) operations; heating and air conditioning; and general buildings and grounds. So, it looks like my future was locked in.

The Powerhouse steam boiler operators are required to be certified and have a Stationary Engineers license. All the operators took me under their belt and taught the boiler process – operations and safety. One operator specifically Ed Lewis went through all the required literature and requirements for the licensing test. After months of studying, Ed took me downtown for the certification test. I past and earned my Stationary Engineers license for the State of Maryland – my first certification in my career. This experience in the Powerhouse is another example of being mentored by my colleagues and especially in this department because it would be directly applied in my Chester and Chrysler responsibilities and for which I am grateful.

After graduation and numerous on campus and site interviews I decided to stick with Eastern Stainless as my full time job. A decision I will never regret. Even though Eastern was a relatively small company, it was still a major player in the stainless steel industry and I was able to get involved in all aspects of its operation, management and personnel. Some of the major jobs I was involved with included redesign of the Melt Shop air pollution dust control system, cryogenic gas system and controls, two significant wastewater treatment plant upgrades, hazardous landfill design and installation, direct purchase of natural gas from the well head suppliers instead of the Baltimore Gas & Electric, and of course the daily activities involving heat treat furnaces, utilities, fire protection and chemical storage and distribution to keep the plant operational. Two other activities I participated in were with the Maryland Industry Group (MIG) and the Stainless Steel Industry of the United States (SSIUS). MIG was involved in working with the central Maryland utilities to ensure fair rates and legislation to the industrial sector and other major activities. SSIUS was involved with all federal governing agencies associated with energy and environmental rules and to ensure fair practices with the stainless steel industry. Both of these organizations exposed me to a wide range of companies and personnel that provided extensive help in my job at Eastern and with my subsequent assignments at Chester and Chrysler. Working with George Foss and his entire department was special from Bob Crews to the instrument men, wastewater treatment plant operators, furnace heat treat crews and the supervisors who worked for me Paul Gartelmann, George Flowers and Carl Markert. These experiences were profound and directly impacted my success on all my future employments.

All the projects I worked on at Eastern supported future undertakings but two specifically played a major part. Participating in the ASME Nuclear certification process and going through Chapter 11 bankruptcy at Eastern played a direct role in similar events at Chrysler. At Eastern I worked on the Quality procedures required to meet the ASME Nuclear certification which included heat treat furnaces inspections and calibrations, emergency procedures for power outages, safety guidelines for hazardous materials and specific procedures for proper wastewater treatment control. During Eastern's events related to Chapter 11 bankruptcy, we had to follow very specific operational and financial processes including monitoring all energy usage, vendor cost control and payment schedules among other tasks. All these activities also had a very similar path of events at Chrysler. I will discuss the Chrysler impact more below.

I need to mention as well the guidance of Eastern's executive management of Purchasing, Quality and Finance. These departments consistently mentored me on their processes and had me involved in numerous activities that helped me mature my business career. In particular, the support I received first as a summer intern, then as a Co-Op student, permanent employee and later as a department head after George Foss's retirement was exceptional. There are many people I should acknowledge but I especially need to mention the leadership of John M Curley II, Chairmen of Eastern, Al Alcantara vice-president then president, Ed Curley vice-president purchasing, George Foss and Bob Crews. Enough words cannot express my gratitude to these individuals who gave me a chance to launch my working career as described below under the Chester and Chrysler section.

I want to summarize my many conversations with George E. Foss. He was so profound in guiding and mentoring me more than I could have imagined at the time looking back today. In addition, he talked to me about having a strong relationship with your children which I recorded on yellow-lined paper during the Fall of 1972. Points that I call his “Foss-isms.” George wrote all his notes, memos and letters on yellow-lined paper unless it needed to be official then they were typed (pre-computer era). I have applied these words of wisdom not only to Lisa and Craig but to our grandchildren where we can and to everyone I have worked with in all my working career. I will discuss George’s influence on me more in the “Afterword.”

Summarizing my time at Eastern and simply put – nothing I could have done or participated in at other jobs including additional college courses can equal what I learned and experienced at Eastern ever. I used what I acquired at Eastern up to my last working day at Chrysler from a technical, operations viewpoint, management insight and how to treat people. I passed on to those in attendance at my retirement party as well as nearly every day on the job about listening, helping and encouraging others all the time.

#### Chester Engineers; Chester Environmental

In 1987 I left Eastern and went to work for Chester Engineers’ Kennett Square, PA office about an hour from our house in Perry Hall, MD. Chester was headquartered in Pittsburg, PA. I could summarize much more here but feel it is not necessary to further support family since so much took place I would not know when or where to stop. But I do want to elaborate more on Bob Laslo. While I was at Eastern, Bob was the project manager for many of the major projects I was conducting with Chester Engineers. Bob recruited me during the summer of 1987 to work with Chester who was expanding their market region into the steel industry. Therefore, in September 1987 I began my Chester career working for Bob in Kennett Square office.

My primary clients then were Eastern Stainless, Reading Railroad (of Monopoly fame), RCA/Thomson Electronics, Wawa Foods and Chrysler. After two years in Kennett Square I moved to northwest Indiana and opened a Chester Midwest office to primarily consult with the Steel Industry, and the vast opportunities that the Chicagoland and northwest Indiana area presented.

My major clients here were US Steel, Midwest Steel, Chrysler, General Motors, Zenith, RCA/Thomson Consumer Electronics, Kraft Foods, Wheeling-Pitt Steel, and the City of Chicago. Quite the experience.

## Chrysler - FCA US

In 1998, Chrysler's engineering manager Cliff Gray at the Kokomo Transmission Plant (KTP) asked me to join them and in October I did. I worked with Cliff Gray when I was with Chester and consulting with him at the Chrysler Indianapolis Electrical Plant. I started out as manager over the Powerhouse and Wastewater Treatment Plant. After three years, I moved over to the Environmental Department to help write up operating procedures to support the KTP Chrysler goal to get ISO-9001 certified. This is the first reference with the experience mentioned above while at Eastern for the ASME nuclear production process procedures. The work at Eastern was instrumental in helping me contribute in preparing the required quality and environment standard processes that had to be written, documented and followed. After a couple of years in Environmental then I moved over to Facilities / Manufacturing Engineering.

In 2009 Chrysler filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and now my Eastern bankruptcy experience paid dividends here as well. I participated in the various activities of the plant operation under bankruptcy specifically required procedures associated with the utility companies, the various contractor interactions and specific accounting methods.

I continued in Facilities Engineering participating operations issues, project design and construction, asset control and capital project management. I worked with engineers, contractors, finance and plant production. I retired in December 2017.

~GB~

I want to discuss how family atmosphere is recognized and appreciated in the workplace for me. At my retirement party held at the plant I gave out some token rewards, mostly books and notes I had acquired and used throughout my career. Items was both serious and entertaining. I also shared my last "talk" discussing "always be willing to help others, to ask for help for yourself, to listen and have some fun." I briefly acknowledged some of my mentors over the years from Eastern Stainless, Chester Engineers and of course Chrysler. Specifically, I personally thanked the following:

- Susie Holston (Administrative Assistant for Manufacturing Engineering the entire time I was associated with Chrysler KTP from 1990 until 2017);
- Don Marcum, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator;
- Jim Hackler, Manufacturing Engineering Clerk responsible for capital asset database;
- Jim Linginfelter, Facility Engineer; and
- Kim Carpenter, Facility Engineer and Facility Engineer Manager.

All of the above individuals were a special part of my KTP family and contributed immensely to the success of the Facility Engineering program which I was honored to share with them. The above list can easily be expanded to dozens that I shared time with at KTP. I will always be grateful for their help and guidance each day. I also need to recognize John McAdams who I met while working with Chester while he was with RCA/Thomson in Marion, IN. I then hired John around 2002 to be our Powerhouse, Wastewater Treatment and General Plant Facilities Engineer. He was one of the best and made the daily operations and contractor relationships

an effective and professional. Truly a dedicated all around family member that I will always value. We also had our fun at times. Before I retired John gave me a wooden bowl his brother-in-law made, a beautiful item. Jeannette and I use it for candy and more recently to store our COVID masks.

The Facilities Engineers group, represented that day by Aaron Seamon, presented to me a thoughtful and humorous speech highlighting various events involving me over the years. He also gave me a token gift as well. Ten of my most quotable sayings I had used over the years, also referred to my “Tonyisms,” were printed around the words “Holy Cannoli” and placed on a 5-gallon bucket. Aaron said I can use the bucket to store all the scrap wood I generate in my shop. I still have the bucket and yes, I have scrap wood in it. Two of the sayings are:

- “You can’t be half pregnant”
- “That’s partially true”

Now some of the wording may be slightly different but the context is there. Leslie Raab recorded the whole presentation and gave it to me before I left. It is a very special remembrance of my Chrysler-KTP family. All my days working at KTP were special for me but that day Friday December 15, 2017 was especially meaningful. As I learned throughout my life and working career, people at the work place must be treated as family with honesty and respect which is how I always regarded them and our relationships. Therefore, it was important to me and for my co-workers and friends at Chrysler hear me say to everyone “Thank You”.

Also, Jeannette attended the festivities that day to hear me give my final talk, it was emotional. I only wish Lisa and Craig could have been there to meet the great people I worked with for nearly 20 years, almost 30 years if you include my Chester years consulting with Chrysler.

~GB~

Speaking of Jeannette, it would be appropriate here to discuss her vital roles for earning a living.

As I mentioned in Chapter 7 “Our Marriage” Jeannette worked in downtown Baltimore for the Fidelity & Deposit of Maryland (F&D) starting in 1973 until 1979 when Lisa was born.

When we moved to Indiana to open the Chester Regional Office she became our Administrative Assistant. After the Chester Merrillville office was closed and I was in Ann Arbor and Findley Ohio, Jeannette worked for Federated Insurance located in Hobart, IN. Interesting fact here is the office is about a mile from our Hobart home and we pass by it often when we go to the grocery store or downtown Hobart. When we relocated to Kokomo and after a few months she started working for Patriot Insurance. Finally, “retiring” in December 2018.

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**PART THREE – MIA FAMIGLIA – My Family**

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## **7. OUR MARRIAGE**

*The best thing to hold on to is each other.*

--Anonymous

Because Dad was a WWII veteran, Mom and Dad were members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). Mom was an auxiliary member as a spouse. The group was a service organization and held regular meetings throughout the year including “suppers” and fund raisers. I remember numerous VFW members, some were neighbors, that attended certain functions and the weddings of family members’ children. I will get to this more later.

One auxiliary member was Jeanne Sheldon, her Dad John was a veteran and VFW member. Jeanne although only a few years older than me became a friend of my Mom and frequently attended dinner at our house possibly to drive Mom to the meetings. Well at one of those dinners in March or April 1973, Jeanne brought her cousin Jeannette Dahler to my parent’s house. Earlier in the day, Jeanne had taken Jeannette to downtown Baltimore to help in her job search for a job after graduation. Jeannette’s parents were also VFW members and friends of my parents.

I must note here that I was not home for this dinner with Jeannette and Jeanne. I was at Drexel at the time so all these comments are recollections from my Mom and Jeannette later. Even though Jeannette knew of my parents specifically my Mom as “Josephine, the nice lady” she did not know she had a son Anthony until she saw my high school picture along with Connie and Joanna above the television in the living room. Sometime after that night maybe on the drive home, Jeannette mentioned to Jeanne that she did not have a date for her sister Mary Ann’s wedding. Jeannette was the maid-of-honor for Mary Ann’s wedding. Jeannette was the maid-of-honor for Mary Ann’s wedding. So Jeanne suggested I should be her date for the wedding saying “Tony was a nice guy” and Jeannette then agreed to talk to me.

Jeannette’s parents were friends with Mom and Dad because of the VFW. Therefore, often during the summer and fall they would bring my parents fruits and vegetables that Jeannette’s dad grew in his garden. Mind you his garden was no ordinary garden, much bigger than my grandfather’s which I thought was huge. I am sure Jeannette’s Dad cultivated nearly an acre of tomatoes, corn, beets, string beans, strawberries, peaches, apples and for my Mom he started growing green peppers. Jeannette on at least one occasion made the ride into the “city” when her Dad would make the special delivery of goodies to Westfield Avenue.

Okay back to the dinner with Jeanne, Jeannette, my parents and sisters. So sometime after this dinner I either talked to Jeanne or received a letter from her, honestly, I do not remember



suggesting I Call Jeannette and talk as soon as I can and introduce myself since we had never met. So, I came home Easter weekend to get things rolling because the wedding was May 5 only a couple of weeks away.

I arrived home from Drexel for the Easter weekend Friday, April 20, 1973. I finally got the nerve, sat on the bottom step of the stairs going to the second floor and made “the call.” I introduced myself I guess, not sure of the initial conversation but Jeannette got around to ask what I was studying at Drexel. Well my mind went blank and no words flowed from my mouth as I thought how do I describe Chemical Engineering. Eventually, I said something and it definitely made a lasting impression but not a positive one. Years later Jeannette told me she thought I was just a guy going to college for the sake of going to college. We have laughed about it since.

We planned for dinner the next night with her cousin Jeanne driving. We decided to go to Angelina’s Italian Restaurant the one I worked at while in high school. Jeanne picked up Jeannette then to my house to get me. Not sure of the exact instructions from Mom but it went a little like: “behave, be nice, be polite and do not do anything dumb, this is Mr. Charlie’s and Ms. Mary’s daughter.” So, I walk to the car and get in the front seat with Jeannette in the middle. My first impression was pretty memorable Jeannette was quite attractive. Any way the pretty memorable unfortunately took a twist. As we were driving to the restaurant only about 5 minutes away, a spider started to crawl across the car windshield – yes on the inside. Well I wanted to be the hero and get the monster – it didn’t work - I missed. My memory is a little fuzzy but I believe Jeannette saved the day.

So, we had dinner and the rest of the evening went quite well. I really enjoyed her company and she was very attractive, interesting and I felt pretty good for a first date and a blind one at that. Well that is of course my version until to you hear Jeannette’s version. Jeannette asked about being her date for her sister Mary Ann’s wedding and of course I said yes. When I got home Mom and Dad asked me how it went and I said wonderful, I really like her and the dinner went well. I do not believe I mentioned the spider incident at that time, why spoil a perfectly good dinner date story. Mom made sure that I did not do or say anything to embarrass her regarding Miss Mary, Jeannette’s Mom. I remember later as Mom retold the story, it sounded like I was “goo-goo eyed” about Jeannette as I supposedly slid down the door way– yea I guess I was. Jeannette’s take - “he seems like a nice guy.”

Well May 5 rolled around pretty quickly and the wedding went well. It seemed like I knew quite a few people especially the VFW members and they knew me so I was being watch by everyone it seemed. Actually, it was not that bad and it did make it easier and more comfortable talking to different people there. I had a great time, dancing, eating and meeting all Jeannette’s family. The introductions and conversations I remember the most are: of course, Jeanne and her parents John and Rose Sheldon; Jeannette’s Aunt Dorothy (pregnant with Sandy) and her husband Uncle Joe Thomas; and her cousins Joan and Charles King – all who were very friendly greeting and talking to me.

My next conversation with Jeannette when I returned back to Philadelphia was an invitation from her to go “camping” Memorial Day weekend with her family and friends. I said yes since exams would be over and I would be home for the summer and fall on Co-Op at Eastern Stainless Steel. This was a fun but chilly weekend. We slept in a trailer along with many others while newlyweds Butch and Mary Ann slept in the back of their Pinto. I remember it being very cold out that night. There are two specific events I remember. The first is we all sat in a circle at least 20 of us and played a game of “recall.” It started with someone whispering a short phrase to the person next to them and each person repeating it until it was back to the original; it was amazing how many word changes occurred even returning to some of the original words. It was interesting, amusing and funny to watch and hear everyone comment about what they remembered. The second memory of the weekend was using the outhouse in the cold temperatures. My first outhouse experience.

During May 1973 I decided I better be getting some wheels so I can visit Jeannette. However, since I did not have a driver’s license and obviously, we had no car, I went to Pete’s Cycle Shop on Harford Rd. in Hamilton and bought a Schwinn Varsity bike which I still have. The sales tech was Don Griswold of my Poly days. I rode it a few times to her house and only twice riding back home since she felt it was too dangerous. So for the other nights, we loaded the bike in the back of her Dad’s Ford station wagon and she drove me home. Jeannette remembers one time driving home from work with Lou and Charlotte they passed me on Bel Air Road just past Putty Hill Road as I was riding my bike to Jeannette’s house. When home I rode around all of Northeast Baltimore including around Lake Montebello.

~GB~

At Sondra & Eddie Starleper’s wedding in June 1973 Jeannette and I started going “steady” when we decided to continue “going out”. Later in the year we decided to get engaged and I bought her engagement ring at Zale’s Jewelers. We decided to get married after I graduated from Drexel. We picked the date of September 6, 1975. So, our two-year engagement began.

The next two years flew by between school, visiting, studies, finding an apartment and planning the wedding of which the latter was mostly done by Jeannette and her parents. During this time my cousin Joe Conigliaro took me to get my driver’s license during my senior year in November 1974 in his Chevy Vega. Then the following spring Joe took me to his cousin’s (John Conigliaro son of Vince) dealership Fox Chevrolet on the west side of the beltway. I purchased a new 1975 brown Chevy Nova hatchback “supped” up with no power steering and no air conditioning - a \$3000 deal. I took delivery the first week in July. After we picked up the car Jeannette drove it home to her house and then I drove it for the first time from her house to my Westfield home later that evening. I finally got to drive to work in my own set of wheels without riding shotgun with someone else.

~GB~

Our wedding ceremony was held at St. Joseph Church, Fullerton Jeannette’s parish and it was officiated by Father Gene Nichols with the reception at the LaFontaine Rouge at 3407 Bel Air Rd.

## Our Marriage

On the morning of the wedding I needed to take twenty or so tins of homemade cookies to the hall before the guys (me and my ushers) got dressed. So, I along with Dave Gleassey, Joe Jones and Tony Bredariol, we dropped the cookie cans off at the hall and on the way back we stopped at a bar on Bel Air Road (I have cannot remember the name) and got a ceremonial “toast” in before the big event.

Upon return we started to unpack the tuxes and found that some needed repair including shirts, pants and jackets. Not sure of the specifics but under direct command of Mom and Aunt Francie the repairs began - arms up, legs out, spinning. All motions like a well-choreographed play. Except no talking by the cast (the guys) just the directors (Mom & Aunt Fran) under their total control. It started out somewhat amusing but became serious until the repairs were completed with the groom, best man and ushers in their best dressed look – flashing light-gray tuxes the best the 1970’s can offer. Our bridal party was: Joann (Maid-of-honor) and Maryann Howell (Jeannette’s two sisters), my sisters Connie and Joanna, Jeanne McKeldin (Jeannette’s cousin, and Noreen (Jeannette’s friend); Joe Jones (Best Man and Drexel friend), Joe Conigliaro (Cousin), Butch Howell (Maryann’s husband), Jim Dahler (Jeannette’s brother), Dave Gleassey (Drexel friend, roommate, and Tony Bredariol (Poly and Drexel friend).

Then off to the wedding we went. The wedding was quite special not only because it was our wedding but because so many friends and relatives attended about 180 in total. Watching Grandma and Mom coming down the aisle escorted by Cousin Joe with Bob McKeldin singing Ave Maria was moving. Still to this day when I hear Ave Maria being sung I reminiscence watching Mom and Grandma through the sighting window (a thin slit in the wall between the “dressing room” and the main church) walking down the aisle and into their pews. Bob McKeldin is married to Jeanne, Jeannette’s cousin that introduced us. More proof of extended family support.

The wedding reception was great. I Remember walking around greeting everyone, having a good meal, lots of hugs and dancing to live music. We had a sit-down dinner and it was followed up with an open buffet for seconds and dessert. We saved the cake topper which we froze and ate on our first anniversary which still tasted pretty good. The band was the Admirals and our first dance song was *And I Love You So* by Perry Como. The song was written by Don McClean of *Bye Bye American Pie* fame. Including our grandparents, aunts and uncles, VFW members, cousins and friends we had a guest from Italy Rihanna, a relative of Aunt Lydia’s. Quite the special touch for me and I am sure Aunt Lydia. I gave a quick thank you speech towards the end of the reception, more dancing and poof it was over. We had time so we went to the 7pm mass back at Joseph’s Church where we just left about 5 hours ago. This was such a memorable day filled with great moments and photos, a wonderful time.

~GB~

Our first home was in the Apartments located on 12 Haylock Court off of Perry Hall Boulevard. We decided to buy a house before our lease expired so we would not need to renew. In 1976, we bought a new home located at 4320 Hallfield Manor – a duplex house also in Perryhall, MD. Then in 1984 we moved to a single dwelling at 3732 Proctor Lane in Perry Hall.

This time frame in our life can also lead into a book in itself, with so much to recollect. I will just list a few of the more memorable events. The three years before Lisa was born began many friendships and family growth that help set up our future.

The ten months at our apartment went by quickly. Working full time at Eastern Stainless and getting used to the daily responsibility of earning a living and beginning to save money for the future. It was not long that various people at Eastern suggested Jeannette and I consider buying a house specifically Bob Dennis, George Foss and Bob Crews. Staying in an apartment was not a wise investment. Housing was booming and affordable particularly in Perry Hall. We crunched the numbers and decided buying a house was the right thing to do.

Buying our first home introduced us to our future dearest best friends Bill and Gail Bokel (See Extended Family).

In 1976 we took our 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary trip to Niagara Falls and numerous other locations. We went to Ocean City MD for a few days then went to Thousand Islands New York (recommendation of George Foss, Supervisor at Eastern), then to Ontario Canada, finally making it to Niagara Falls. But we did not stop there. We went to Girard, our first trip as a married couple, then to Toledo, OH to visit Jeannette's Aunt Dorothy, Uncle Joe and her cousins, then back to Girard and finally home. Two weeks traveling with only a AAA Triptik and maps, no GPS and no smart phone to guide us to places to eat.

We made numerous home improvements to both houses, transforming them into homes. We finished off both basements, a major swing set with activity center and a covered patio in 1985 that went the entire width of the house at Proctor Lane. The patio with concrete floor, brick walls and pillars were made possible with the help of Jeannette's brother Jim and my Uncle Sam Bonaccorsi the bricklayer. Numerous family gatherings and holidays were held on this patio including the Kissin' Cousins get-togethers.

We obviously took many trips to Girard sometimes twice a year. Eventually trips with Lisa and Craig as I will discuss later. We took my parents to Girard when we went and often took them to the ocean during summer vacations. These trips were priceless with Lisa, Craig, Mom and Dad just enjoying themselves.

~GB~

From the time we were married until late September 1987 I worked at Eastern Stainless Steel. During my entire time at Eastern, I was involved with numerous environment projects and many of them required hiring an outside engineering firm. One firm was Chester Engineers. Two of the projects were pretty extensive: major rebuild of our wastewater treatment facility and the installation of an onsite landfill. My experience in all the projects would support a book on its own so I will not go into details here. I do summarize some of the major events under Chapter 6 "Earning A Living." However, the key fact is Chester Engineers recruited me to work for them which created a significant milestone in our life.

So, in September 1987 I changed jobs and started my career at Chester. For two years I worked in the Chadds Ford then Kennett Square offices. In 1989 I get a call from Chester's vice-

president asking me to open a Chester office in the Chicago-Northwest Indiana area. Jeannette and I talked about the move and since the kids were young (10 years and 7 years) we decided yes, we should go. It was a tough decision to leave family and Lisa and Craig leaving friends and cousins. In August 1987 we packed up two cars, my Mom and Dad, Barney our dog and oh yea the kids. Jeannette and I each drove one of the cars stopping in Girard, no surprise, then off to Lakes of the Four Seasons (LOFS) in Lake County Indiana. LOFS was a community east of Crown Point but it was in the Crown Point school district and post office address.

Then in 1997, Chester was bought by U.S. Filter and the company decided to merge my Indiana office with the one in Ann Arbor Michigan. No one was happy. We did not want to move before Craig graduated from high School nor move out of state because Lisa was entering Purdue in September. The new milestone began to be revealed into our future. Tuition and expenses more than double living out of state. I was doing significant work with Chrysler and US Steel at the time. So, during this time after the Indiana office was closed, I took an apartment in Ann Arbor. I was working on a Chrysler wastewater treatment plant upgrade near Detroit, MI for a while then worked on a US steel job in western Ohio. I lived in Ann Arbor for seven months then about six months south of Toledo while working on the US Steel job during the week and return home on weekends.

~GB~

I was able to attend Craig's school activities band, track and cross-country meets which fortunately most were on the weekends. For the events during the week, I would travel to wherever he was and enjoyed every minute. But as fate would have it, I received a call in June 1998 from the Chrysler engineering manager Cliff Gray who hired Chester to consult at Indianapolis Electrical plant during 1987-1989. Cliff was now engineering manager at the Kokomo Casting Plant and was moving over to the Kokomo Transmission Plant (KTP) and needed an engineering supervisor to oversee the powerhouse and wastewater treatment facility. This decision for the family was straightforward – Yes! Lisa and Craig would both be at Purdue which was closer to Kokomo than Crown Point. So, I started with Chrysler-KTP in October 1998.

I took an apartment in Kokomo in October 1998 and made the weekend treks back to Crown Point until Craig's graduation. We sold our house in LOFS Crown Point in July 2000 so Jeannette moved into the Kokomo apartment until our house was completed. During these four months Lisa and Craig stayed in the apartment for a short while – a great family bonding moment. We officially moved into our new Kokomo home at 2018 Cameron Dr. in November 2000.

The twenty years in Kokomo were filled with great memories both at Chrysler and with family. Visiting were Jeannette's parents who made numerous trips, Jeannette's Aunt Dorothy and Uncle Joe from Toledo, OH, Jeannette's sister Joann, the Bokels, and others. But the most memorable are those with Lisa, Mark, Craig, Sara and all the grandchildren especially for the holidays. In 2008 Mark's parents visited and joined us for Thanksgiving - Emma's first Thanksgiving.

After retirement, Jeannette and I decided to pack up and move to Hobart, IN near Crown Point to be closer to the Lisa, Craig and our Grandchildren. More on this part of the family memories below in Chapters 9 and 10.

The discussion of music in our lives could be discussed in a couple different chapters but I feel this may be the best begin it now since it involves Jeannette and I spending time with family and friends. The topic of music more specifically attending concerts and live band performances. I did mention attend various dances in school as described in “My Early Years” but growing up in the 1960s through the 1980s afforded ourselves to numerous live music performances. My first live concert took place in 1967 I believe when 5 or 6 of my classmates attended a live performance of Freddie and the Dreamers and Gary Lewis & the Playboys at the Lyric Opera House and yes, we took the Baltimore City bus. At Drexel around 1972 a group of us attended an Oldies Concert at the Philadelphia Convention Center, music from the 50s and 60s. This concert really enhanced my interest to the oldies’ genre.

After we were married, Jeannette and I took my parents to various concerts including Jerry Vale the Italian singer with Buddy Hackett the comedian; Robert Goulet singing his hit list and, on the play, South Pacific; a performance by The Four Tops and The Temptations. But my favorite, and I believe my Parents as well, was the concert by Perry Como for a few reasons. During lining up waiting to get in the Painters Mill Theatre Brooks Robinson (Baltimore Orioles’ Hall-of-Famer) with his wife and daughter. I nodded to him and gestured to my Dad who in turn nodded as well. Big smiles all around for me and Dad. Then the performance by Como was unreal, I did not realize his voice was that strong and amazing. We had a terrific evening.

Also, during these years of the 1970s and 1980s night clubs were popular in Baltimore. We attended frequently, many with dinner with family and friends listening, dancing and dining.

## 8. CHILDREN

*Fatherhood is responsibility; it's definitely humility; a lot of love and the friendship of a parent and child.*

--Denzel Washington

### LISA

It was a cool evening in March as Jeannette (pregnant with Lisa) was watching *Charlie's Angels* eating her main staple – soup. I was already in bed. Jeannette came up a little before midnight as she was thinking or feeling tonight may be the night. She woke me and said she felt a minor pain so I pulled out the note pad and wrote down the time to start the pain/labor log. We were instructed in the birthing classes to keep a log of each potential labor pain and that the first pains would come an hour or more apart so no big deal back to sleep I went. Well it seems the baby could not tell time because in ten minutes Jeannette said she felt another slight pain. Okay this is not normal but it was our first baby. We just laid there for a while and Jeannette says I believe “Oh no my water broke!” Definitely a time to make ready and head for hospital at about 1:00am. Jeannette calls the doctor and after she changed the water broke again. She changes again grabs the prepared bags of clothes and we left for the 20-minute drive to Greater Baltimore Medical Center.

We arrive at the hospital before the doctor so the shift doctor takes Jeannette and she gets prepped. After a little while they proceed to instruct her to push. Jeannette says I am waiting for my doctor. I believe she faked pushing but it did not fool him. Finally, our doctor arrives and before long without any labor pains per se at 3:34am our new baby girl is born – Lisa Carmela. Lisa because we liked it and Carmela after my Grandfather Carmelo who had passed away the year before.

It was not long thereafter while she was in the recovery room we called our parents. Everyone excited to hear we had a baby girl. Way back then in 1979 we did not find out whether it was a boy or girl until the birth. Lisa was baptized May 5, 1979 by Rev. Raymond Gribben at our parish St. Joseph Church in Fullerton, MD.

Lisa during her first 6 months had her days and night reversed. We or should I say Jeannette took care of her and tried to get Lisa on schedule but no such luck unless you asked me how things were. Around when Lisa was three- or four-month, as the story goes, people at work asked me how everyone was doing. I said great Lisa is sleeping through the night and all is good. Well we attended a work function of some sort later in the year maybe around October or November and one of the wives was talking to Jeannette and commented that it was great the baby was sleeping through the night. This sort of took Jeannette by surprise and maybe even thought they were referring to another couple but they were not when they said Tony was keeping everyone up to date. The rest of the story was cleared up really quickly in that Lisa just recently started to sleep at night and that Lisa was often awake at night before then. I realized my bad when the baby woke up during the night good old Dad – me – never heard a whimper from Lisa or Jeannette – yep I slept through it all.

As Lisa approached 9 – 10 months she started to say her first words – “ball” and “kitty cat” and by 18 months she was communicating pretty well with us in short sentences. The major challenge with Lisa was her potty training - the birth of Craig made that happen quite quickly as Jeannette told Lisa “I will not have two in diapers at the same time.”

Some of Lisa’s special memories and were all good and pleasant except the first time she wanders away while we were in White Marsh Mall. We were in Sears by the main door and something caught her eye and she wandered off. Panic set in. However, we quickly found her in front of the store next to Sears with someone watching her by the door.

When she was in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade at Gunpowder Falls Elementary School, her last in Baltimore she had a teacher who had a very unique hobby, spelunking – cave exploring. Her class of 20 or so and 6 or 7 adults went exploring in the caves at Harpers Ferry West Virginia a little over an hour drive from our house. These caves were private that is no public touring. We explored two separate caves one in the morning and one in the afternoon. I would not have selected this journey but I was so glad we went. It was unbelievable and oh by the way I will never do it again. We climbed, crawled, walked over deep crevices, jumped water streams and saw bats. Most of the kids loved it. For some, it was obvious they were not comfortable but no one panicked or caused any uproar.

We then moved to LOFS Crown Point, IN when Lisa was ten and in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. In school Lisa participated in Choir at Taft Junior High and took Tae-Kwon-Do up until high school. In high school she joined the track and cross-country teams at Crown Point and did well as did the team. The girls team went on to place in Conference, Regional and Semi-State track events and took second place in the State Cross-Country Championship one year. One item regarding cross-country – do not ever mention Brown County Indiana to Lisa as a great place to go and visit. Lisa has said she will never return to Brown County because of the hills and grueling practices they had during each summer’s cross-country retreat/camp there. Now today she may soften her opinion but I will not test the theory. ☺

Crown Point schools emphasized and encourage students to participate in various areas particularly woodshop, home economics and painting. Lisa made a Baltimore Oriole wall clock, a wooden name plate for me and a pink accent pillow. She also made some wonderful paintings or other art work.

Lisa’s first piece of art was a self-description entitled “Whom I’m Like” which describes her personality using various metaphors. Now I had this stored in the den on the top shelf in Kokomo but not in view. Jeannette picked it up one day in 2017 and looking at it said she does not remember Craig doing this. Then we noticed it was made by Lisa. Why did Jeannette make this comment? Well the descriptions nearly all describe Craig perfectly and I mean perfectly. Jeannette and I do not remember making this correlation when Lisa originally brought this piece home. For example: “I’m like a chimpanzee because sometimes I’m wild and hyper” and “I’m similar to a Mexican jumping bean because I don’t like to stay still.” The piece is clearly signed “By: Lisa Bonaccorsi.”



Lisa's next work of art we have kept and displayed in the kitchen is a watercolor of a person in a poncho and sombrero sitting next to a flower pot she completed in 1994. To me it is an excellent piece depicting the scene; you can visualize yourself seeing this person sitting quietly in the sun and we are proud to have it hanging. Her other works of art are the Baltimore Oriole Clock and Baltimore Oriole collage mosaic poster. See p. 141 for her art work.

Lisa went to Purdue University receiving her degree in Bio-Chemistry. She worked summers at an analytical laboratory in Valparaiso and after graduation went to work at Abbott Laboratories in Waukegan-North Chicago. Jeannette and Lisa drove up to the area and helped Lisa find an apartment which they did in Gurnee. Of course, meeting Mark, her future husband, while at Purdue was a major event in her life. They were married on Sept. 6, 2003 the same date of our anniversary. See more of Lisa and Mark's life under grandchildren below.

~GB~

## **CRAIG**

It was a cold night in January 1982 when our lives were about to change again. It snowed the day before but on this night it was now clear but the roads were slick in certain areas. I went to bed the normal time since I had to work the next day. Jeannette wakes up a little after 4:30 am on January 8<sup>th</sup> with that funny feeling again but no pain. She then wakes me up and asks although I do not remember the exact words but something like this "Do you think I am having the baby now? Well after Lisa's quick arrival we were not going to hesitate leaving for the hospital for our next child's entry into the world. We immediately decided to get dressed and head to the hospital. Jeannette had already resolved with the doctor if she called him that he, Jeannette and I were to head directly to the hospital with no hesitancy. Jeannette called Gail & Bill Bokel our neighbors and my parents. Gail was to watch Lisa while Dave picked up my parents and brought them to our house to relieve Gail. We left the house about 5:15am and arrive at the hospital just after 5:30. The hospital was notified of Jeannette's short or no labor condition so they took us to delivery room immediately. Our baby boy wasted no time and was born at 6:03 am just 20 minutes after we arrived. After a few minutes I held Craig and then went back out to the car to get Jeannette's bag and complete any needed paperwork. Everyone in the waiting room when we arrived was still there and could not believe that Jeannette had given birth that fast since we walked in like things were normal.

Again, in the recovery room we called Mom and Dad B. at our house, they barely just arrived and they could not believe we had the baby already. At first Mom just thought we called to say we arrived at the hospital and give them status or whatever she was expecting us to say. She was convinced Jeannette had the baby when she heard Craig crying. Craig was baptized April 4, 1982 by Rev. Robert Hartnett at St. Joseph, Fullerton.

Craig's younger years growing up were a little more "exciting" or eventful than many toddlers. Craig really did not talk until he was over two years old but do not worry he knew how to communicate. Also, I swear Craig and Lisa talked to each other in baby language and had no problems understanding their conversations. Okay so a brief summary of some of Craig memories. During about a three- or four-year period starting when he was 2-1/2 years old

began his run of minor injuries and visits to either the emergency room or medical centers. The first thing Jeannette always said about Craig was “He is her sunshine baby.” He always woke up happy” and kept everyone laughing and he still does. Like the times he would hide while we were shopping especially in the clothing departments where he would disappear in a clothes rack not knowing that we could see the clothes moving – most of the time.

Back in Baltimore he would pick flowers for his Mom but they were not always from our garden. Another time Jeannette was so happy that Craig finished his peas only to find out that he put them in the trash. However, he never lied that he ate them; he was very careful to say “the peas were gone.” Jeannette just thought that sure was imaginative of him.

Summarizing all of Craig’s feats of imagination and energetic activities can be found in a letter Jeannette wrote on March 7, 1997. This was Craig’s freshman year of high school and the Moms were requested to write “something from the heart” about and to their child. I came across this letter while researching for this book and part of what Jeannette goes on to write:

“The whole time you were a toddler, I prayed the day would come that you would live long enough to become a teenager; ... With you around, life was and is not boring;” regarding taking his grabber away - “the wind story, .... According to you a big gust of wind came, blew it off the refrigerator and you caught it;” and regarding the disappearing peas story mentioned above “... I was so proud that you got your dessert.”

This letter when I read it made me laugh, tear up and just simply made me feel happy to be a Dad, Craig’s Dad. See P.153 for the entire letter.

When we moved to Crown Point we lived in a development that did not have sidewalks. My parents came with us to help move. The first full day there we told Craig (age 7) to get his bike and ride around while we were unpacking. After a few minutes Craig came back into the house upset. We asked him what was wrong (I thought maybe his bike was broke). Craig said he cannot ride his bike because there were no sidewalks. After explaining to him it was okay he took off and rode all around. He came back and gave us a complete report what he saw.

For a couple of years Craig was a member of Cub Scouts. He participated in an overnight camp at Deep River Park, an egg drop contest, car maintenance badge and some woodworking projects. His two major builds were a bird house and napkin holder with the latter still in use in our kitchen. We mounted his birdhouse in our front yard in Kokomo where it remained when we moved.

Craig in high school did really well and he enjoyed himself. He participated in band, orchestra, track and cross-country all four years. He had the opportunity with the band to travel to two college bowl games, Tampa Bay Outback Bowl and Georgia Peach Bowl. With the orchestra they went to Disney World and played at the Epcot Center.

As did Lisa, Craig also made a clock in woodshop (an apple) and a green throw pillow. We still have both pillows and keep in our bedroom. Craig’s first painting of importance was a

watercolor of yellow flowers done in 2nd grade. It is a beautiful piece especially for a 7-8-year-old and very realistic. We had it hanging in the Kokomo kitchen nook and now in the Hobart “Children’s Gallery” located in the lower level family room. His second “major” piece of work is a poem and ink drawing about him and his character. Both of these works are also in our lower level family room. Of course, Craig’s trademark artwork which he used to leave everywhere is his interpretation of a brontosaurus now known as an **Apatosaurus**. For example, he made his drawing in his notebooks and on other pieces of paper and messages. In Crown Point we found this dinosaur drawn under the small kitchen table which we now also have down in the “Children’s Gallery.” His most advanced piece is the mosaic of this prehistoric animal he made for his English-History class in his senior year. Not only was this mosaic large about 24 by 40 inches but it was made of Skittles – yes Skittles. We drove all over the Crown Point area to get them and one store actually sold them by color in bulk. Craig still has his masterpiece to enjoy.

But back to his ink drawing, here he was quite prophetic in his words as well as his art work. His words although simple hit home about Craig’s passion and traits. See “Afterword” for details of this memorable piece. See p. 142 for his art work.

Craig attended Purdue receiving his degree in Chemical Engineering. Lastly, his experiences endured when he first took his job with Cargill after graduation. The initial job placement to Florida involved him renting a U-Haul box truck and trailer to transport his belongings and car and then the two-day journey with Jeannette and I from Kokomo to Port St. Lucie, Florida. Subsequent moves over eleven years took him from Florida (two locations), then Cincinnati, Ohio, then Omaha, Nebraska and back to Crown Point, IN all with Cargill.

Well the main highlight of his Cargill journey at least in his personal life was meeting his future wife Sara Reid in Cincinnati. They were married on Nov. 7, 2009 and moved to Omaha Nebraska. For the next highlights of their life and ours see Chap. 9 - Grandchildren.

-GB-

Jeannette and I have been fortunate to be close to everyone especially the last four years with the families and grandchildren. The spontaneous meals, visits, interactions and enjoyment with the children are priceless as is the tasting of new dishes and recipes from Lisa and Sara.

-GB-

Another reflection I want to recognize are the photographs of Lisa and Craig with my grandmother, Mom and Dad and their Mom Mom and Pop Pop. Looking at them as I selected the ones I wanted to include in this book, I noticed a special expression in all their eyes and faces – they sparkle with sincere happiness and joy. Many are in the Photographs.

All of the stories recorded here and the numerous others that Lisa and Craig have been a part of make Jeannette and I so happy and for me proud to be their Dad. The relationships continue to grow today with Lisa being a great Mom herself and Craig being a great Dad.

## 9. GRANDCHILDREN

*Make a memory with your children, spend some time to show you care; toys and trinkets can't replace those precious moments that you share.*

--Elaine Hardt

*I think parenting and coaching or teaching are the same thing. And they are the two most important professions in the world. .... The parents must set the foundation early. It is often too late by the time a child goes to school.*

--John Wooden

I know there is not a lot of history yet with our grandchildren with just over fourteen years but what has been attained is priceless and precious to me and Jeannette. With each additional birth the enjoyment, love and “proudness” increases exponentially. Until you become a grandparent it is nearly impossible to define or explain the feeling.

I will discuss some unique events for each grandchild. For Emma her arrival started out like she had waited long enough to enter this world and it was time to make her entrance in a “flash.” Lisa and Mark were walking to dinner on March 28, evidently a nice evening but still cool. During the walk, Lisa said to Mark startled “ my water broke” and then they had a cold walk back to their house and head to the hospital. Lisa’s incident was a little more intense than her Mom’s water break story of Lisa. Lisa or Mark called us with the news and off we went to Wrigleyville. We arrived about 3am shortly after Emma was born at 2:29 am CST as I can make out from her hospital name card. Her Mom and Dad were exhausted but ecstatic for their first child and our first grandchild. No name announced at this point. She was beautiful. While still in the hospital the next day they announced the baby’s name, Emma Josephine. Well we and particularly me was overjoyed with her middle name since Mom passed away in July 2007 just before Lisa became pregnant. Many of us, Jeannette and I especially, believe the miracle of this birth was under the hands of Mom and for me maybe even my grandmother had an additional influence because of the recent problems Lisa had getting pregnant. A noteworthy comment here is Lisa and Emma were born on the same day March 29 and at the nearly the same time based on EST 3:34am for Lisa and for Emma at 2:29 am CST (3:29 am EST) just five minutes apart. Also, Lisa was born soon after my grandfather passed away and Emma born after my Mom passed away. Both Lisa and Emma took on middle names of their grandparents.

Each new birth continued to bring much happiness to all of us, Lily Alice (May 17, 2010), Elena Rose (Jan. 9, 2013), Dexter Owen (April 2, 2013), Claire Marisca (March 26, 2015) and Oliver Sebastian (Oct.19, 2015), Spencer Anthony (July 24, 2019) and Amber Dawn (Sept. 2, 2021). (See more below next page) A touching and important expression with their respective middle names is its identification of family. This entire narrative I have emphasized family values and relationships as being so significant and essential to our heritage. Each family needs to be very proud that these children will carry on an identity forever to link family of generations with the names given by their parents.

A touching one for me is the photo of my Dad holding Emma at 8 months taken in November 2008 shortly before he passed away. Lisa & Mark gave me a framed photo of Dad and Emma with the engraved title “Nonno’s Little Angel.” Even though Mom was not here to share in the joy of all the great-grandchildren, this photo helps share the moment “flashed” in front of my Dad.

-GB-

Below are some of the highlights of the many things we have done or do with the grandchildren. For Christmas 2012 when Emma was 4½ and Lily 2½ we made Christmas ornaments for the Lisa and Jeannette. Emma glued pieces together and painted some accent colors and we inserted a photo of Emma and Lily. I had Lily lend a hand adding some glue and putting it together to help make it special.

Each year Jeannette prepares dozens of eggs of unique color stuffed with goodies for each grandchild. We hide the eggs and then we have the egg hunt. The kids have a blast and in 2016 as Dexter and Elena were in “true serious seek and find” mode since they knew their colors and they understood that a certain color is theirs. Since then Claire, Oliver and Spencer have added their excitement finding the eggs. I also enjoyed taking them on wagon rides in the yard and visiting the parks is always a joy. I cannot wait to take a bigger group each year as the younger ones grow older and want to participate in various activities.

Watching Elena and Dexter meet the first time when they could interact and play, first in July 2013 when neither were walking. They began playing like they have been together and friends forever. They are still that way today. They are a trip to watch and just adorable. At Elena’s first birthday cake sharing moment, Elena and Dexter had chocolate cake over their faces and high chairs. As time goes by our stories with each grandchild will increase and be more special, funny and memorable. Like Dexter and I playing with his cars early on pushing them on the dining room table and then finding Elena wanting to join in. Playing different board games with Dexter and Oliver who surprisingly have an excellent handle on the games’ strategies.

-GB-

Emma and Lily took up music first, both piano and violin. It is a joy watching them practice and perform at home and at their recitals. It is amazing how well they progress month to month year after year, up until today. Lisa and Mark, especially Mark take a special interest in coaching them along. Then Elena started piano and violin as well again continuously improving. She already knows what songs I like from her lessons and she will play them for me. Then Claire started piano as well but changed things up and took up also the cello. She recently had her first recital playing three selections. Dexter is also taking piano lessons. He is also doing very well and I am enjoying the music. Oliver started piano this year and is also doing very well playing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Mary Had A Little Lamb and some Christmas songs. I cannot wait until they have a few more years of playing and maybe they all can play in the “family combo.” All their talent is remarkable and a treasure. Just to sit back and listen to their practices and performances is absolutely calming and amazing.

Another special interest the first six grandchildren have acquired is ART. The six oldest have prepared some very interesting, unique and excellent pieces of art. From painting of birds, still life, scenery, among others. Dexter has been drawing of life forms and cars and trucks. Now these are not some abstract forms but realistic creations with interesting details. Dexter has taken a keen interest in all vehicles (cars & trucks), their history and specifications. He knows his cars. I love it. See Photographs p. 151-2 for samples of the grandchildren's art work.

Getting back to our seventh and eighth grandkids, Craig and Sara blessed us with our third grandson and seventh grandchild Spencer Anthony. At three he is active and non-stop much like his Dad at that age. On September 2 2021, they blessed us with our eighth grandchild and fifth granddaughter Amber Dawn. Now Amber is the calmest most content happy child I have ever witnessed with a very dazzling smile. She can sit look around and play alone without any making any noise. She is also totally entertained by her three brothers. She has started crawling around following the activities of her brothers or maybe avoiding them. We shall see when Amber begins to walk what changes are instore for all of us.

A final note I want to address is on my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday Emma prepared a collage of our early photos together along with a very beautiful and emotional poem entitled "Grandpa Is" describing many of the things we have shared together. Her gift really touched me when I opened it and read it. But what also makes her gift so meaningful is it truly shares what grandparents and our family strives to do and what I have addressed in this book – Love, Share, and Enjoy each other at all times because time goes by in a "flash."



**Fig. 137:** Easter Sunday April 17, 2022, (left to right seating on sofa), Emma, Lily, Claire, Oliver, Elena, Dexter, (on laps), Amber, Spencer

## 10. THAT DAY/YEAR IN HISTORY

*The best thing to spend on your child is your time.*

--Arnold Glaskow

It is interesting to remember what happened in the national and world news on important dates of our lives like birthdays, weddings, etc. Here are some of our family's big dates.

**Sebastian Anthony Bonaccorsi      Born January 20, 1924**

### News:

- First Winter Olympic Games in Chamonix, France
- First Coast-to-Coast radio hook-up
- Thomas J. Watson company renamed International Business Machines (IBM)
- Johnny Weissmuller sets 100-yard freestyle record (Future Tarzan actor)
- "Happy Birthday to You" published by Claydon Sunny
- Radio stations in Chicago, Des Moines, San Francisco, Denver among others begin radio transmissions
- First crossword puzzle published
- J. Edgar Hoover appointed head of FBI (Holds position until 1964)
- President Coolidge signs immigration law restricting immigration
- President Coolidge signs law making all Native Americans American citizens
- First photo sent experimentally (facsimile/fax) across Atlantic by radio, US to England

### Movies:

- *The Great White Silence*, Herbert Ponting,
- *Greed*, Erich von Stroheim
- *The Iron Horse*, John Ford
- *The Navigator*, Buster Keaton, Donald Crisp
- *Sherlock Jr.* Buster Keaton, Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle

### Books:

- *So Big* by Edna Ferber
- *The Plastic Age* by Percy Marks
- *The Little French Girl*. By Anne Douglas Sedgwick
- *The Call of the Canyon* by Zane Grey
- *Diet and Health* by Lulu Hunt Press
- *The Life of Christ*. By Giovanni Papini
- *Mark Twain's Autobiography* by Mark Twain ( I have it and read it)

### Music:

- *It Had to Be You*. By Isham Jones Orchestra
- *King Porter Stomp*. By Jelly Roll Morton

- *California Here I Come*, Al Jolson, Buddy de Sylvia
- *The Call of the South*, Irving Berlin
- *Rhapsody in Blue*, George Gershwin, Paul Whiteman's Orchestra
- *See See Rider Blues*, Ma Rainey, Louis Armstrong

### **Josephine Anne Gugliotta Born November 1, 1929**

#### **News:**

- Beginning of the great depression, October 30, 1929, Stock Market crash starts, Oct. 24 "Black Thursday" and Oct. 29 "Black Tuesday"
- "The Broadway Melody" starring Bessie Love is released, first film with sound to win an Oscar (Outstanding Picture)
- St. Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago
- Mother Teresa arrives in Calcutta to begin her missionary work
- Comic strips "Buck Rogers," "Tarzan," and "Popeye" appear
- Herbert Hoover Inaugurated; first telephone on President's desk
- First regularly scheduled TV broadcasts (3 nights per week)
- First Academy Awards, Picture, *Wings*,
- Vatican City becomes a sovereign state
- First color TV demonstration
- First foam rubber made
- German airship by Graf Zeppelin completes round-the-world flight
- Unilever Corporation formed
- Game of Bingo invented

#### **Movies 1929:**

- *Double Whoopee*, Jean Harlow, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy
- *Bacon Grabbers*, Jean Harlow, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy
- *Men O' War*, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall
- *The Virginian*, Gary Cooper, Walter Huston, Randolph Scott
- *The Cocoanuts*, Marx Brothers
- *Hollywood Revue*, Joan Crawford, Buster Keaton, Jack Benny
- *The Karnival Kid*, Walt Disney, Mickey & Minnie Mouse
- *The Man with the Movie Camera*, Vertov, Dziga
- *Pandora's Box*, Pabst, Georg Wilhelm
- *Blackmail*, Alfred Hitchcock,

#### **Books 1929**

- *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque
- *Dodsworth* by Sinclair Lewis
- *Dark Hester* by Anne Douglas Sedgwick
- *The Art of Thinking* by Ernest Dimnet
- *Harry the Eighth*. by Francis Hackett

#### **Music 1929:** Some interesting titles here, many popular in the 1960s & 1970s

- *Singin' In the Rain* by Cliff Edwards and Nick Lucas
- *Makin' Whoopie* by Eddie Cantor
- *Ain't Misbehavin'* by Fats Waller



- *Marie* by Rudy Valee
- *The Basin Street Blues* by Louis Armstrong
- *I'm in Seventh Heaven* By Al Jolson
- *Little Orphan Annie* By Coon-Sanders Orchestra
- *A Precious Little Thing Called Love* by George Olson
- *Tip-Toe Through the Tulips With Me* by Nick Lucas
- *When you're Smiling* by Louis Armstrong
- *Puttin' on the Ritz* by Irving Berlin

### **Sebastian & Josephine. Wedding Date - June 26, 1948**

#### **News 1948:**

- First color newsreel filmed
- "Ted Mack's Original amateur Hour" begins
- First tape recorder sold
- Mahatma Gandhi assassinated
- WBAL TV channel 11 in Baltimore begins broadcasting
- Babe Ruth's final farewell at Yankee stadium and passed away two months later
- Transistors invented by Bell Laboratories
- Allen Funt's "Candid Camera" TV show debuts
- Harry S. Truman is re-elected president
- WJZ-TV channel 13 in Baltimore begins broadcasting
- First *Polaroid* camera sold, invented by Edwin Land
- 

#### **Movies 1948:**

- *Easter Parade*. Judy Garland, Fred Astaire, Peter Lawford
- *Hamlet*. Laurence Olivier, Peter Cushing, Eileen Herlie
- *Key Largo*. Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Edward G. Robertson
- *Red River*. John Wayne, Montgomery Clift, Shellie Winters.
- *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Abbott & Costello, Lon Chaney

#### **Books:**

- *The Big Fisherman*. By Lloyd C. Douglas
- *The Naked and the Dead*. By Norman Mailer
- *Crusade in Europe*. By Dwight D. Eisenhower
- *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living*. By Dale Carnegie

#### **Music:**

- *Twelfth Street Rag*, Pee Wee Hunt
- *Manana*, Peggy Lee
- *Little White Lies*, Dick Haymes
- *I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover*, Art Mooney
- *Woody Woodpecker*, Kay Kyser
- *Love Somebody*, Doris Day, Buddy Clark
- *Because*, Perry Como

- *Underneath the Arches*, Primo Scala

**Anthony S. Bonaccorsi**

**Born January 18, 1952**

**News:**

- Queen Elizabeth II succeeds King George VI to the British throne
- First plastic lens for cataract patients
- Alan Freed holds first rock & roll concert in Cleveland, Ohio
- Mr. Potato Head is first toy advertised on television
- First jet airliner passenger service begins
- Concept of integrated circuits, basis for modern computers is published
- “Adventures of Superman” starring George Reeves premieres on TV
- First “Bandstand” broadcast with Dick Clark in Philadelphia
- Woolworth’s opens first store
- Clarence Birdseye sells first frozen peas
- Dwight D. Eisenhower elected president of the US
- First modern 3-D movie premieres, *Bwana Devil*
- Nation's first intensive care facility established at [Johns Hopkins Hospital](#).
- Polytechnic High School (My Alma Mater) in Baltimore integrated.
- July 30. [Chesapeake Bay Bridge](#) in Maryland opened.
- Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant founded
- First plastic heart valve developed

**Movies:**

- *Scaramouche*, Janet Leigh, Eleanor Parker, Stewart Granger
- *Singin’ in the Rain*, Debbie Reynolds, Gene Kelly, Rita Moreno
- *High Noon*, Grace Kelly, Gary Cooper, Lee Van Cleef
- *African Queen*, Humphrey Bogart, Katherine Hepburn
- *Greatest Show on Earth*
- *Moulin Rouge*

**Books:**

- *The Voyage of the Dawn (Chronicles of Narnia #3)* by C.S. Lewis
- *Charlotte’s Web* by E.B. White
- *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway
- *Foundation and Empire* by Isaac Asimov
- *The Silver Chalice* by Thomas B. Costain
- *The Caine Mutiny* by Herman Wouk
- *The Sea Around Us* by Rachel L. Carson
- *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Norman Vincent Peale
- *The Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- *The Natural* Bernard Malamud

**Music:**

- *Blue Tango*, by Leroy Anderson

- *Cry*, Johnny Ray
- *You Belong to Me*, Jo Stafford/Orioles
- *Here In My Heart*, Al Martino
- *Tell Me Why*, Four Aces; Eddie Fisher
- *Glow Worm*, Mills Brothers
- *3 O'clock Blues* B.B. King
- *I Only Have Eyes for You*. The Swallows
- *Lawdy Miss Clawdy*. Lloyd Price
- *Goin' Home*. Fats Domino

### **Jeannette Dorothy Dahler Born April 6, 1955**

#### **News:**

- *Scrabble* board game debuts
- Columbia Univ. scientists develop atomic clock accurate to one second in 300 yrs.
- Elvis Presley makes his 1<sup>st</sup> TV appearance
- Polio vaccine tested by Jonas Salk announced
- Ray Kroc opens first McDonald's fast food restaurant in Des Plaines, IL
- US Supreme Court orders school integration
- First automobile seat belt legislation enacted in Illinois
- Grand opening of Disneyland in Anaheim, California (televised)
- First electric power generated from atomic energy transmitted
- Hurricane Connie ends after killing over 40 in NC, SC, VA, MD
- Hurricane Diane kills over 400 in N.E. US
- Velcro invented, first patent
- James Dean, actor is killed in a car crash aged 24
- Al Kaline (Born in Baltimore) Detroit Tiger, youngest MLB batting champ
- Mickey Mouse Club premiers
- Tappan sells first microwave oven
- Supreme Court of Baltimore bans segregation in public recreational areas
- Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to move to back of a bus
- Owen Chamberlain and Emilio Segrè discover the antiproton, a form of "antimatter"

#### **Movies:**

- *Mister Roberts*, Henry Fonda, James Cagney
- *The Rose Tattoo*, Anna Magnani, Burt Lancaster
- *East of Eden*, James Dean
- *Love Is a Many Splendored Thing*, Jennifer Jones, William Holden
- *Rebel Without a Cause*, Natalie Wood, James Dean
- *Marty*, Ernest Borgnine
- *On the Waterfront*. Marlon Brando, Grace Kelly wins Academy Award
- *Lady & the Tramp*. By Walt Disney

#### **Books:**

- *Lolita*, by Vladimir Nabokov
- *The Magician's Nephew (The Chronicles of Narnia)* by C.S. Lewis
- *The Return of the King (The Lord of the Rings)*, by J.R.R. Tolkien
- *The Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, by Tennessee Williams
- *Guinness Book of World Records*. First published

#### Music:

- *Sincerely*. By the McGuire Sisters (No. 1 for ten weeks)
- *Ballad of Davy Crockett*, Bill Hayes, (Also Tennessee Ernie Ford; Fess Parker)
- *Come Back My Love*. By Wrens/Cardinals
- *Rock Around the Clock* by Bill Haley & Comets
- *Day-O. (Banana Boat Song)* by Harry Belafonte
- *Blue Suede Shoes*. By Carl Perkins, later by Elvis Presley
- *Love Is A Many Splendored Thing*. Four Aces
- *Unchained Melody*. Les Baxter; later by the Righteous Brothers
- *Sixteen Tons*. Tennessee Ernie Ford
- *Ko Ko Mo*. Perry Como
- *Only You*. Platters
- *Mr. Sandman*. Cordettes
- *Life is But a Dream*. Harptones
- *Seventeen* - Boyd Bennett
- *Mystery Train*. Elvis Presley with Scotty and Bill

### **Our Wedding Date    September 6, 1975**

#### News 1975:

- City of Saigon surrendered and remaining Americans evacuated, ending Vietnam War (April 30)
- President Gerald Ford escapes two assassination attempts (Sept. 5 and Sept. 22)
- *Saturday Night Live* premieres on NBC, with George Carlin as first host.
- Home Videotape systems (VCRs) are developed by Sony (Betamax) and Matsushita (VHS)
- Altair home computer kit released for consumers to build own personal computer

#### Movies:

- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Jack Nicholson, Danny DeVito, Christopher Lloyd
- *Jaws*. Steven Spielberg, Richard Dreyfus, Roy Scheider
- *The Great Waldo Pepper*, Susan Sarandon, Robert Redford, Margot Kidder
- *Nashville*, Jeff Goldblum, Lily Tomlin, Julie Christie

#### Music:

- *Rhinestone Cowboy*. Glen Campbell
- *Philadelphia Freedom*. Elton John
- *Fame*. David Bowie

- *Love Will Keep Us Together.* Captain and Tennille
- *Thank God I'm A Country Boy.* John Denver
- *The Hustle.* Van McCoy & The Soul City Symphony
- *Magic.* Pilot
- *Cat's in The Cradle.* Harry Chapin
- *I'm Not Lisa.* Jessi Colter
- *You're The First, The Last, My Everything.* Barry White
- *You Are So Beautiful To Me.* Joe Cocker

**Lisa Carmela Bonaccorsi**

**Born March 29, 1979 at 3:34 AM**

#### News

- Three-Mile Nuclear Power Station accident, March 28, 1979 (was in newspapers on March 29)
- Baltimore Oriole manager Earl Weaver wins his 1000<sup>th</sup> game
- Margaret Thatcher becomes first woman Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- Sony introduces the Walkman
- Attorney Edward Bennett Williams buys Baltimore Orioles from Jerry Hoffberger
- Hurricane David kills over 1,000
- Lee Iacocca elected president of Chrysler Corp.
- Mother Teresa awarded Nobel Peace Prize
- Iran Hostage crisis, 90 hostages taken for 444 days
- Trivial Pursuit board game developed

#### Movies

- *Alien.* Sigourney Weaver
- *Moonraker.* James Bond, Roger Moore
- *Star Trek: The Motion Picture.*
- *Kramer vs Kramer.* Dustin Huffman, Meryl Streep

#### Music

- *YMCA.* By Village People
- *In the Navy.* By The Village People
- *The Devil Went Down to Georgia.* Charlie Daniels Band
- *My Sharonna.* Knack
- *Different Worlds.* Maureen McGovern
- *Message In A Bottle.* Police
- *Lonesome Loser.* Little River Band
- *Wonderful Christmas.* Paul McCartney

**Craig Anthony Bonaccorsi**

**Born January 8, 1982 at 6:10 AM**

#### World News

- British overcome Argentina in the Falklands war
- Israel invades Lebanon in attack on PLO
- Princess Grace of Monaco dies in auto accident
- First permanent artificial heart implanted at Univ. of Utah Medical Center
- Space Shuttle Columbia makes first operational mission with a four-man crew deploying two communications satellites
- MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) diagnostic machines introduced
- First genetically-engineered plant approved for sale – the Flavr Savr tomato
- Birthday of Stephen Hawking

#### Movies

- *E.T.-the Extra-Terrestrial*
- *Tootsie*, Dustin Huffman
- *Gandhi*. Ben Kingsley
- *The Verdict*. Paul Newman

#### Books:

- *Schindler's List*. Thomas Keneally. ( Have and read it)
- *The Color Purple*. Alice Walker

#### Music

- Birthday of Elvis Presley, Jan. 8; *Don't Be Cruel* and *Hound Dog* go on sale 1956
- *Thriller*, Michael Jackson
- *Physical*. Olivia Newton-John
- *Eye of the Tiger*. Survivor
- *Ebony and Ivory*. Pail McCartney and Stevie Wonder
- *Always on My Mind*. Willie Nelson
- *Pac-Man Fever*. Buckner and Garcia

## AFTERWORD

*Sports are fine, but children must be exposed to other things by their mothers and fathers, and that includes books, reading, and learning.*      --John Wooden

The major portion of this writing (that you just read, I hope) is the recall of the events of our family and specific recollections combining information from my memory together with my parent's memories, selected events and related information from a large family network. Therefore, this is not a biography in the literal sense but a book of recollections and history of family. What once began as a few pages of events became a "I did not want to forget list of memories" into a full family history narrative and thus this book.

In trying to recall many parts of the past it sure would have been better if I had a journal to fall back on. So, one significant suggestion I want to make to everyone especially to our children and grandchildren is please keep a journal of some type. It does not have to be one with only private personal occurrences but at least identify people in school, teachers, special events, restaurants, favorite foods, books, music, and places visited. This is so valuable just to refer back to if you need to remember a name of someone or when a certain event took place. Record those key memories. So even if you miss a few days or more, there is still detail you will not believe took place when you go back and read it 10 -20 years later. I kept a nice journal during our trip to Italy in 2005 and even though it was short I was able to recall some information that maybe I would not have remembered otherwise.

A second and more important principle is spending time, as much as you can when you can, with your children and grandchildren; their first and foremost teachers are their parents and to a lesser extent their grandparents, although the roles are different both are necessary. Showing interest, support, and encouragement is a major element for success for anyone and in any situation. To reinforce this guideline, I want to share George Foss's thoughts he gave me back in 1972 as my supervisor and mentor, they are:

*"Words of Wisdom*

*Encourage your children into many things: hobbies, scouts, sports and other social activities.*

*But do not ignore them. Help them in any way possible especially for their confidence in themselves.*

*Most important participate with them. Sports, be a coach or manager; scouts, be a troop leader or chaperon for hikes and camps. Show your interest in their activities and in them, your children.*

*A good relationship will develop; they can talk to you and more – respect you as people as well as their parents.*

*Take. Time – Love*

*George E. Foss, Jr. Fall 1972". (A great person, mentor and friend)*

One aspect that intrigued me as I wrote this narrative was all the references used as noted in the bibliography are from my personal book collection, no book or material was bought specifically for this project except for looking up on the internet more specific details for Riposto and Roccalumera and facts included in “That Day in History,” contacting St. Vincent de Paul Church in Baltimore to verify certain facts and they sent me various pieces of literature for reference and verifying some details about Dad’s World War II patches and as identified in the Bibliography under “Sources Consulted.” .

I hope some of these stories and accounts brought back special memories for you as much as it did for me drafting and writing this. It simply made me think, understand and fully appreciate the meaning of family and its importance in our daily lives. Nothing – I mean nothing - is more important than FAMILY. Looking over the old photographs, cards, letters and history notes, many even before Mom and Dad were married and I was born, opened a special connection of family to me that I could not imagine as I thought about who different people were and how they knew or were related to me. So, I hope then you can remember some of the occurrences I have talked about and you can add your own memories or recall similar ones from your younger years with those mentioned here and your own family and friends. Keeping a record of events in a journal and can be as simple as my Mom’s scrapbook of greeting cards, letters, notes to self and her collection of newspaper clippings. Yea I know today newspaper are almost dinosaurs but any kind of event recording would work.

Especially seeing photos of my grandparents, parents and sisters as I was younger made me sit back, breathe and note how special a past I had. The special photos and greeting cards from my aunts, uncles, cousins and friends added even more meaning of family to me and truly appreciate what I have. Then I looked at photos of Jeannette when we met and first married, then holding the two special people in our world Lisa and Craig and it seems nothing could be happier or more satisfying. Then the grandkids arrive and the special feelings and moments of happiness peaked again. Hence the selected pictures I have included help portray that feeling of family and happiness at least for me.

Of course, being a guy and lover of sports especially Baltimore sports, I want to mention a story as told by Frank Gifford in his book The Glory Game to help explain the meaning of family and friends. Gifford, a member of the 1958 NY Giants was invited to attend a special fundraiser in Baltimore for ‘Fourth and Goal’, an organization to help older players who need assistance. Gifford goes on to explain when he arrived to the fundraiser there “was the feeling in the room – something I’d never really understood ... until that night.” He was surrounded by many of the players of the NY Giants and Baltimore Colts– rivals - of that great NFL Championship game of 1958, “The Greatest Game Ever Played.” He says “The Colts had been a band of brothers too. And their bond was as strong as ours.” He emphasizes how proud he and the New York Giants were to play in that game the Colts won. Art Donovan “Artie” then goes front and center and sings the song “I Wish You Love” intended for all the old-timers being recognized as well as the Giants team. Gifford says “That night was about all of them – not just about the Colts, but about the Giants too,” their families and the family of football players. There were quite a few teary-eyed old NFL warriors in the seats that night in



Baltimore. This story, its meaning and its relationships to others correlates to the same special bonds that take place within the family and extended family – ours.

With this example for the meaning of family brings me to Jeannette, Lisa and Craig. How Jeannette and I met may not be so different that others except for family ties that existed before we met, albeit small but the parents knew each other which made for a very special relationship for me and Jeannette's parents from the beginning and I believe somewhat similar between Jeannette and Mom and Dad. From this initial meeting and foundation our relationship then flourished. Jeannette got to meet and know my grandparents Gugliotta which was extraordinary how it developed and became so comfortable. Especially Grandma – her food, her love and you cannot forget her humor and how she nurtured her relationship with Jeannette. Grandpa kept reminding us “when are you going to have his first great-grandchild?” Every time he saw us we heard the reminder “when?” Well you heard that story earlier already. Jeannette raising Lisa and Craig was no straight-forward task as with any children but worth it, tending to their needs, cuts and bruises. Supporting them in every task as they grew up and still today – there is no stronger bond of love then between a mother and her children. Jeannette, Lisa and Craig are proof of that.

Lisa and Craig – well not sure how much better they could be. They are level headed, caring, have been a sparkle in our lives, have great spouses, and SUPER loving kids our grandkids. Did I say how terrific the grandchildren are?? I hope when they get older they can talk to me and their parents about this book and their family history even more. I have the same feeling when I see or talk to them now as I had visiting Girard and when my grandparents came to Baltimore – it is indescribable. Simply put - A Pleasure!

On March 27, 2016 when visiting Lisa for a birthday weekend, Jeannette and I attended mass at Faith, Hope, Charity Church in Winnetka. A visiting priest from Loyola College Father Katsouris said mass. In his homily, he discussed excerpts from a class taught by a fellow professor at the college, Sean O'Brien, PhD Loyola University Chicago. In this class Professor O'Brien teaches – ‘Four Virtues of Life. Two of the virtues Dr. O'Brien goes on to describe are:

- A good Book is to be completed by the reader.
- A good book upon reading it should make you improve, try and make yourself better.

So, as you are reading, consider these two thoughts sparked by Dr. O'Brien:

- bring to mind all the great things you have witnessed and were part of throughout your life and accomplish more, and
- improve your life with family and friends and reach for new levels of happiness.

With that I would like to end with a personal example created by Craig in verse and drawing (His ink drawing referenced earlier and poem reproduced below) to emphasize John Wooden's maxim above at the beginning of this afterword (...*exposed to... books, reading, and learning*)

and may I add music to Wooden's list as Craig has expressed. Craig's "poem" describes how important your personal interests are; they need to be supported and respected, and there is more to life than work and the 4R's, although these are primary, you still need to participate in a variety of activities to be: complete, be yourself and be happy. I am not sure my interpretation is exactly what Craig was intending but that is the beauty of the personal expression in art. Craig's extension to John Wooden's quote are his profound words I will always enjoy and treasure:

"Take my legs from me  
                   I will still be a Runner  
 Take my ears from me  
                   I will still hear the Music  
 Try as you might – I won't change"

By Craig Bonaccorsi 2000

In closing:

There is no greater gift a Dad can have or receive than:

his wife, his children and his grandchildren;  
                   his parents and grandparents.

This is not my story – it is OUR STORY!

So, in closing a round of THANKS and HUGS for everyone.

Love,

From Your,

Great Grandson  
 Grandson  
 Son  
 Husband  
 Brother  
 Cousin  
 Uncle  
 Nephew  
 Dad  
 Grandpa

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS - GRATITUDE**

Writing this narrative has allowed me to truly understand my family and extended family tree and truly appreciate the meaning of family. This journey has taken me from my great-great-great grandparents to my grandchildren, a total of eight generations. I was able to learn the history of Sicily, its people, its culture and its foods and how it all relates to my experiences and of course my family. Quite the journey.

I want to thank my family specifically my sisters Connie and Joanna for providing the balance during our growing and maturing years and for sharing all we have been through together and among other things making sure the cookie list was accurate. How much they mean to me was amplified during recalling memories and developing the ideas and stories for this book.

Thank you to my aunts, uncles and cousins (too many to list individually here) in guiding me and contributing to many of the stories described and portrayed in the appropriate chapters. In addition, I want to thank all the extended family, friends and acquaintances for the many contributions they all made during my growing up years which still continue.

I like to thank the St. Vincent de Paul Church archivist Barbara Hodnett for her assistance in tracking down Dad's teacher and Pastor at the St. Vincent School and help describe the history of the school and parish.

Obviously having no research partners or staff beyond those I have acknowledged here I relied on the rock of my family tree. I want to specifically thank Aunt Francie and Uncle Dom who provided all the comfort and guidance they gave during my long summer stays in Girard away from my Baltimore home and especially for Aunt Fran's contribution to expand and clarify the meeting and marriage of Mom & Dad and other comments of the manuscript. A special thanks must also go to Aunt Anne and Godfather who in my years growing up helped me and my parents in the many events, dinners and bringing me back to Baltimore those summers I stayed in Girard. To Uncle Frank and Aunt Lydia giving me guidance over the years as well.

I also need to extend a special thanks Joe, Theresa, Antoinette and Gerri for being around in Girard and in Baltimore for their companionship growing up and making valuable additions and corrections for various events, names, locations and family tree details. For Aunt Fran, Antoinette and Gerri for their help in reviewing the draft manuscript.

Of course, none of the family details - and I mean none - would be possible without the immense database from the memory of Mom & Dad and for their unending love and caring in raising us three siblings and bringing family and friends into their home. Though Dad did not talk about the war much, the details he remembered and gave on his unit, base locations, his Army serial number and other information was incredibly accurate. How do I know? Well after he passed away Connie and Dave found his military documents and when compared with the information he gave me a few years before, they were exact. This also included house addresses from when he lived in Little Italy and his military information. As I mentioned earlier, it is amazing how much Mom knew about her family and remembering details for both sides of the family is remarkable. The time Mom spent with me over the years to learn and to develop my listening and learning skills was special. Also, I was so fortunate to have her read

the early writings of the “Family” and my “Early Years” before she passed away over 14 years ago. I just cannot thank Mom enough for EVERYTHING period. I, we were blessed to have Mom & Dad around long enough to enjoy the grandkids and sharing our lives together.

Mom and Dad’s desire, attitude and actions to do your best, do good to all and to make others happy is the life blood of Family. To summarize Mom and Dad can be explained by the words I spoke at Mom’s funeral mass and at Dad’s prayer service:

- ◇ How Mom and Dad was the foundation for our entire life engrained with her parents and siblings that was passed on to us (Me, Connie and Joanna);
- ◇ How Mom remembered everyone’s birthday and special occasions, sending cards to all;
- ◇ Mom Communicating to all family and friends especially her relatives in Italy even though they never met each; She sent numerous letters to her grandmother Marisca and others (especially to Antonia Garufi Prestipino) and made many phone calls to her cousins;
- ◇ How Mom & Dad welcomed all family and friends into their home with open arms; a very large extended family circle;
- ◇ How Mom & Dad shared love and compassion to all: time, food, and sympathy for the loss of loved ones;
- ◇ When growing up my sisters and I observed our parents treating family as friends and friends as family and how we supported each other.

Finally, I need to thank Lisa and Craig for being Lisa and Craig, two wonderful children growing up, marrying wonderful spouses and having eight MAGNIFICENT grandkids that make all of this book worth it for me as for them. They have inspired me to continue to be a better parent, grandparent and student. Yes student - during the time I was studying for my Professional Engineer’s exam and Master’s degree, we worked together in the Crown Point home basement office doing homework together, one profound support group. THANK YOU, my children.

Of course, the biggest thank you goes to Jeannette. Proving she is the foundation of our marriage and mother-hood to Lisa and Craig that is second to none. I reread all the letters and cards she sent me while in college and later including ones she sent to my parents Yes, I found them, Mom saved all of Jeannette’s letters -yes all of them. She reviewed much of the writing and provided necessary input and improvement. She has given me help, guidance, encouragement to keep going forward in everything we do. THANK YOU.

And, as must be said – any and all errors of events, facts, names and interpretations this writing contains are mine alone. Even though there will be no sequel☺, I hope any corrections or improvements will be brought to my attention and as necessary, an erratum of some sort may be submitted including a photo history. Yes, even with over 160 photos are included there are many, many more.

-GB-

Finally, “-GB-” For the few if any that did not figure out; the letters stand for:

**Gugliotta – Bonaccorsi.**