

PAST & PRESENT

STEPHEN BRUNO, "I AM THE SON OF LUCILLE CRESCENZO SISTER TO JOSEPHINE, ROSIE, CARMELLA, MINNIE, ANNEMARIE, CARMEN, ANTHONY, JOSEPH, DONALD, ALFONSE, AND FRANNY. I READ EVERY ISSUE OF THE JJ AND THE PAST ISSUE OFFERED SOME MEMORABLE REFLECTION. UNCLE TONY KNOWN AS TOOTSY UNCLE CARMEN MY YOUNGER BROTHER AND I VISITED THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD ABOUT 10 OR 12 YEARS AGO. WE VISITED THE CHICKEN COUP, ZIGGIES AND LEO'S BARBER SHOPS AND THE BEER DISTRIBUTOR ON THE CORNER OF 21ST AND INDIANA. WE STOPPED AT CRECENZO'S SLAUGHTER HOUSE, ST. MARY'S AND GIUFRIDI'S GROCERY STORE. WE ALSO VISITED A GARAGE NEAR FRIEHOFFER'S BAKERY ON 20TH STREET. THIS TRIP PROVIDED ME A CHANCE TO FINALLY SEE WHAT MY FAMILY ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT. I RETURNED TO THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD ABOUT 3 YEARS AGO WITH MY YOUNGER BROTHER. THIS TIME WE KNOCKED ON THE DOOR OF THE HOUSE MY MOM GREWN UP IN AND MRS. SMITH LET US IN AFTER WE INTRODUCED OURSELVES. WE TOOK PICTURES OF THE HOUSE. WHAT A COOL EXPERIENCE. THE GRAPE VINES WERE STILL IN THE YARD, BUT OVERGROWN. THESE ARE THE SAME VINES MY GRANDFATHER NURTURED YEARS AGO TO MAKE HOME MADE WINE. I'M NOT SURE IF YOU HAVE HEARD THAT THE SLAUGHTER HOUSE AND MEAT STORE WAS KNOCKED DOWN NOT TOO LONG AGO."

FREDDY CHIARLANZA "THE CHIARLANZA, DELLO RUSSO'S DIAUTOLO'S, CERINO'S AND VARRONE FAMILIES ENJOYED THEIR ANNUAL 'COUSINS PARTY'

THIS DECEMBER. ENCLOSED IS A CHECK. WE ARE ALL FANS OF THE JJ."

VIRGINIA & PAT CIAMMETTI, "THANK YOU FOR PRINTING THE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE MASS FOR THE WAR HEROES OF ST. MARY OF THE ETERNAL PARISH! THANK YOU TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED THE MASS AND TO MY HELPERS, GUS LUDOVICI, FRANK SABATO AND LOU VIOLA. GOD BLESSES YOU FOR ALL YOUR GOOD WORK! ENCLOSED IS A DONATION FOR EXPENSES."

MARY ANN RICCARDI CRISPIN, "THANKS YOU SO MUCH FOR THE ARTICLE YOU WROTE ABOUT MY DAD AND THE GARAGE AND HIS FRIENDS. AT A TIME WHEN IT IS HARD TO FIND A REASON TO SMILE, THE ARTICLE DID MAKE ME LAUGH. WE MISS HIM SO MUCH. MY DAD LOVED THE GARAGE, HIS FAMILY AND HIS FRIENDS. I HOPE EVERYONE WILL REMEMBER HIM ALWAYS. HIS KINDNESS TOUCHED MANY PEOPLE."

ANN B. DIGIACOMO & FAMILY "YOU CONTINUE TO ENLIGHTEN OUR LIVES WITH THE WONDERFUL MEMORIES OF YESTERYEAR, AN ANGEL FROM ST. MARY'S EMBRACED YOU TO KEEP THE FAMILIES INFORMED OF THE PAST AND PRESENT. MAY GOD OUR FATHER CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU! ENCLOSED IS A DONATION!"

CAROL CRESCENZO DONAHUE, "MY DAD OWNED THE BUTCHER SHOP AT CROSKY AND INDIANA, "CRESCENZO'S QUALITY MEATS. MY COUSINS LIVED ON INDIANA AVE. IN A HOUSE THAT WAS USED FOR A SCHOOL MANY YEARS AGO, BEFORE THE NEW ST. MARY'S SCHOOL WAS BUILT ON 22ND STREET. MY UNCLE WAS

JOHN MONTEFUSCO WHO HAD THE REAL ESTATE OFFICE NEXT TO LEO'S BARBER SHOP ON INDIANA AVE. WHEN I READ THE JJ ABOUT RICCARDI'S GARAGE THAT SURE BROUGHT BACK SOME FOND MEMORIES. MY HUSBAND TOM DONAHUE AND HIS FAMILY LIVED TWO DOORS AWAY FROM THAT GARAGE. MY HUSBAND REMEMBERS JOE AND FRANK BORGIONI WELL. HE REMEMBERS WATCHING THEM IN THEIR REPECTIVE SHOPS, AS A KID. I SURE WISH WE COULD GO BACK IN TIME AND BE HOME AGAIN WITH ALL OF OUR FAMILIES IN ONE AREA. KIDS TODAY DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS LIKE TO HAVE AN AUNT AND UNCLE, GRANDPARENT ETC. AROUND THE CORNER. IT WAS A WONDERFUL TIME BACK THERE. THANKS FOR BRINGING BACK SOME OF THOSE MEMORIES!"

GLORIA DITANNO DOMINO, "ENCLOSED IS A DONATION TO THE JJ. KEEP THE GOOD NEWS COMING. YOU GUYS ARE REALLY GREAT."

BERNADETTE MILLER HAMERA, "ENCLOSED IS A CHECK FOR ROCKY BUMPS AND EXTRA FOR THE JJ EXPENSES."
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REGINA POOLE, "I HEARD YOUR BOOK IS FABULOUS! ENCLOSED IS A CHECK FOR THE BOOK AND A DONATION TOWARDS YOUR EXPENSES WITH THE JJ."

ANTHONY TANSKI, "I ATTENDED ST. MARY'S FROM 1958-1965. I WOULD HAVE GRADUATED HAD WE NOT MOVED. MY FAMILY LEFT NORTH PHILLY 40 YEARS AGO. I MOVED TO CALIFORNIA AND ASSUMED THAT THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD DISAPPEARED. IT SEEMS I DISAPPEARED, THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD JUST RELOCATED. IT IS GOOD TO GET

BACK IN CONTACT WITH OLD CLASSMATES AND READ ABOUT THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD. THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PUT OUT THE JJ! A CHECK IS ENCLOSED IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR CONTINUED EFFORTS."

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PHIL VISCONTO, "I ENJOYED READING YOUR OCT. 15, 2005 FALL EDITION ABOUT "THE DAYS OF RICCARDI'S GARAGE. IT REMINDED ME SO MUCH OF MY YOUNGER DAYS WHEN I WORKED FOR MY UNCLE MIKE VASSALLO AT HIS GARAGE AT VANPELT & CAMBRIA STS. MY UNCLE TAUGHT ME TO REPAIR ALL MAKES OF CARS AND TRUCKS. IT WAS WORKING THERE THAT GOT ME TO MEET MY WONDERFUL WIFE OF 58 YEARS. I BOUGHT MY HOAGIES ACROSS THE STREET AT THE GIUFFRIDI'S GROCERY STORE AND MET AND MARRIED ROSE GIUFFRIDI. THE BUSINESS MEN ON 22ND ST. STORED THEIR CARS AT THE GARAGE (BALABANS, THOMMY SHOES, GEO. ELFANT, ETC.). FOR \$10/MONTH THEY GOT STORAGE AND THEIR CARS WASHED EVERY WEEK. IS THAT A BARGAIN? I WAS DRAFTED INTO THE ARMY UPON RETURNING HOME I OPENED MY OWN REPAIR SHOP FOR 40 YEARS. I FINALLY SOLD THE PROPERTY AND THE BUSINESS AND RETIRED. MY UNCLE TAUGHT ME WELL."

A LETTER TO MONSIGNOR BUSCO:

Dear Monsignor Busco,

I'd like to congratulate you on your anniversary of sixty-five years in the priesthood. God has truly blessed you each step of the way, for you have touched many

lives and have made an impact on all you have encountered.

Monsignor, of all the homilies I heard you deliver at St. Mary of the Eternal, the one I remember the most is when you said... "A mother can take care of ten children, but ten children cannot take care of a mother. I see those words come to life more and more everyday at an organization where I belong in the Northeast. The women talk about how their children are too busy with their lives to help mom with small tasks. I constantly put the "guilt trip" on my kids to make them more attentive to my needs-and it works!

Monsignor, I guess I'll never live down the "Can-Can" dance I did at Picardi's Restaurant. Occasionally, when I meet people from St. Mary's, I'm still asked if I have those famous red pants. My answer is, "No"... they're too big for me now! By the way, Eva Viola and Jenny Fioravanti were the culprits who put me up to that escapade!

So far, I am in good health and take good care of myself. My children say they will take care of me when I am unable. I tell them they will be well compensated for their sacrifices. I have five children and eleven grandchildren, and they all treat me like a queen.

I missed you at the last St. Mary's reunion and always ask Mario how you are doing. God bless you! I'll never forget that "golden era" when we lived and thrived at St. Mary of the Eternal under your guidance.

Respectfully Yours,

Emily

Emily Laurenzi Luciano

REFLECTIONS FROM 1951 BY JOAN SEIFERT FOX, SME CLASS OF '55

Our family moved to St. Mary of the Eternal Parish from St. Columba's in November. It certainly was an adjustment. The Sisters of St. Joseph (at SC) seemed to have no sense of humor and were very strict. Being assigned to Sr. Mary Stella's room (5th grade SME) was wonderful. Whoever heard of "green" blackboards? Sr. Mary Stella quickly welcomed me into the class and made sure that everyone knew the "new kid." We learned with love and laughter. Those of us who were lucky enough to be in her class will never forget her or her duets with Fr. O'Malley. It was my good fortune to have her in both 5th and 7th grades.

We moved to Hemberger and Clearfield Streets. And my mother opened a flower shop. When you came out of our front door on Clearfield Street there was the rectory and the Picarello family home. Little Mary

Picarello and her husband must have lived there forever. I sometimes imagine I still smell his pipe. Mr. Picarello was blind and St. Mary's purchased their property with the stipulation that they could live there for life. Next to the Picarello home was Fox Welding. Over the welding shop was a large hall that was used for parties and weddings. There is a story that one of our most prominent gentleman, who had a few too many, took a horse up the steps and into the hall. This I do not remember and I am merely repeating what I was told. You may remember that we had the St. Lucy procession every year. The story goes that Lucille (class of 54?) Macchione's mother was blind and was cured by praying to St. Lucy, Lucille walked in the procession in a beautiful blue dress and her mother walked bare footed. Those wonderful traditions, gone! Oh, remember Tamborini's band? After they walked in the procession they gave a concert in the schoolyard. The man with the cymbals always looked to be asleep, but never missed a beat (as far as I could tell). While we are on the subject of entertainment, Pat Tracy (Traitz) organized Minstrel shows and they were presented in the church hall. I barely remember this, but have a recollection of Pat being the interlocutor and calling on other men in blackface and tuxedos; the jokes went over my head.

Well, back to our tour. The building next to our house was the kindergarten and the housekeeper from the church lived there. I remember Jimmy DiGiacomo the church sexton/janitor/all important person that kept everything running and clean. He gave many of us the devil for doing something wrong. Jimmy is an unforgettable character who worked at the ballpark on his days off. At Croskey and Clearfield was Tony Ciacarello the shoemaker. As we walk up Clearfield Street we can see the Hornungs Brewery. Does anyone remember the church bells? I think that is something I miss the most from my youth, church bells ringing. At the corner of 22nd and Clearfield there is DiPietro's Beer Distributor and Sam Candy Store next door. The candy store was run by Sam's brother Nate and at lunchtime and after school SME children mobbed the store. Nate, Lord rest his soul, KNEW that every kid was going to take something and watched like a hawk. Remember the ice boxes with the sodas inside, They were on the right as you went into the store and the counter was on the left. They sold Breyers ice cream and a single dip cone was so huge that it was like a double dip in today's world. As we walked down 22nd St. and it was always "down 22nd", on the right side was Ann Tomassi's dress shop. I cannot tell you how

many times I pressed my nose to the window and just dreamed about the beautiful clothing. I have never been able to find someone with the exquisite taste that Ann had in women's clothing. Everything was unique and you never saw yourself coming or going. A secret, she only bought things in sizes that would look good on you. If you were too heavy for the dress, it did not come in your size. Ann is a very clever woman. The two undertakers on 22nd Street were Louis DiGiacomo and Frank Nicastro, Being the florist's daughter; I knew both of them more than I wanted. On Fox Street was the Rosen's Cut-Rate which sold many personal items. The girls secretly bought lipstick there and of course are mother never noticed. As you approached Clearfield Street on Fox, there was Braciolo's owed by Tony Dambra. I never knew why they called him Braciolo, but this was "Little Italy." I suppose this explains it. The store was a converted garage and it gave you a feel of the 9th Street Market. On Friday night if you had a car and left your parking space before the Bingo Party began at the church you could not return until after 11pm when Bingo was finished. The neighborhood smelled like onions on Friday night and sauce on Sunday mornings. You could always smell bread baking three times a day at Meli's Bakery on

Clearfield Street. Isn't it funny what you remember?

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL REUNION

We are so happy to announce that the November 6th Reunion of St Mary of the Eternal – Classes 1960-1969 was a huge success. Many thanks to almost 200 persons, alumni and guests together, who attended the party at Galdo's Caterers in South Philadelphia. A great time was surely enjoyed by everyone. There was dancing to the oldies, delicious food and over 30 door prizes given away. Bob and Rose Corapi provided picture-taking of many guest posing in front of a large back-drop of St. Mary's. Everyone who attended received a commemorative glass mug and program book, which contained some wonderful stories and quite a few class and personal pictures sent in by many of our classmates. In attendance were also a few classmates pre-1960 and a few post-1969. It was a wonderful mix of classes! The Committee is looking forward to planning another successful reunion for the fall of 2007. Everyone who attended expressed an interest in getting together again. If you are not on our mailing list and want to be included, contact Paula Digiacomo-Fan at fan@vitetta.com - cell 610 308 0797 or Sal Mattoccia at Salvatore.mattoccia@resolute-midatlantic.com - home 610 534 1640

"NEIGHBORHOOD RECIPE UPDATE!"

HELLO NEIGHBORHOOD COOKS!

This edition of the JJ finds me knee deep in menu writing for my new Dining Room opening at the end of this month. I'm still on cloud 9 from the seven fishes we postponed until New Year's Eve! What a fabulous idea that was. I always include a few comfort foods on my menus and it makes me think of our readers. Dad and I have received quite a few inquiries on the cookbook. I have less than 30 recipes to date.....which doesn't make a very juicy cookbook if you know what I mean. I hear pork is making a comeback (the other white meat). Does anyone have a family pork dish they still serve? I am told we will soon see several chocolate cafés pop up on the east coast. Chocolate recipes are always valuable in a cookbook. In my home with 3 teenage daughters, chocolate has replaced one of the four food groups! I always wanted to see a few renditions of the chocolate raviolis...or maybe the version stuffed with chestnut puree-yum! Does anyone still do a fruitcake? How about eggs vermicelli for a comfort food? I understand will see more home grown items available over the counter for gardeners. Does anyone still grow citrus fruit, olives, long hot peppers or any unusual produce? Let me know as we can include these instructions in the cookbook as well. I am still really excited to continue the culinary traditions of 'the neighborhood', but I need your help. These recipes can be photocopied from your hand written recipe card.

Chef's Tip: The next time you make rice, take some of the zest (not the white part....it's too bitter) from any citrus fruit-orange, lemon or lime. Use approximately

1 tablespoon to 2 cups of rice. Mince this up and add it to the rice just before serving. Your family will enjoy the fresh flavor it adds! Chef Deb

Advanced Orders Now Being Taken For New Nostalgic Calendars:

Send your \$5.00/copy today for the new calendar. We must receive a minimum of 250 "advanced order" payments before going to production. Don't delay send your check today and mark it new calendar! Your check will be held until we have received payment for the minimum of the 250 needed to cover the cost of printing. You may also send a nostalgic photo that you would like to be included in the new calendar. Mario Amici has recently discovered some vintage pictures that I know you will cherish!

PRAYER TO SAINT RITA OF CASIA. MY CONSOLER.

GLORIOUS ST. RITA, THOU WHO MIRACULOUSLY SHARED IN THE PAINFUL PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, OBTAIN THAT I MAY BEAR THE SORROWS OF THIS LIFE WITH RESIGNATION, AND PROTECT ME IN ALL MY NEEDS.

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