



EFASCE di Philadelphia  
**QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**  
*The Friulan Entity for Social and Cultural  
 Assistance to Emigrants*

EFASCE di Philadelphia  
 P.O. Box 625  
 Flourtown, PA 19031

### President's Corner

Hello Everyone,

I would like to introduce myself. Many of you know me but some do not. My name is Laura Lorenzon Maxwell and I am very lucky to have this great opportunity. Without you we would not be the organization that we are today.

My grandparents and great-grandparents were from Poffabro Italy. How lucky are my sisters and I that three of our four grandparents had roots in Poffabro! While growing up as a child I would spend Saturday nights at Nonno's house, where friends from the "old country" would come to visit. I am so very thankful for these memories. Even though I could not understand what they were saying I knew that these were the kind of friendships that I wanted. Having Nonno Louie (Colussi Bianchini) in my life taught me how to love the traditions and the customs of the Friuli region. If I did not have him, I don't think I would have the same love for the "old Country" as I do.

At the young age of 20 I was extremely fortunate to go visit the "old Country" with my Nonno and family. We were very lucky to be able to stay in a family home Poffabro. While at 20 I did not have the same appreciation as I do today, I do remember the stories Nonno would tell me and he really did walk up a mountain to get home from school. He would tell me about the old road and how the tunnel being built really made things faster. I have lots of stories I could share about how I learned to love Friuli, but the bottom line is I wanted you all to know that I am very vested in this organization and I have been teaching my three daughters the same traditions and recipes that were taught to me.

I am proud to say my eldest daughter Elizabeth is a 4th generation EFASCE member and for those who don't know, her grandfather, Charlie, was one of the founders and the first president of this wonderful organization.

Laura Lorenzon Maxwell, President

### Notizie

- ❖ Our condolences to the Henry family on the passing of Helen on February 25. Helen was 92 years old.
- ❖ Our condolences to the Roman family on the passing of Bruna on March 23. Bruna was 98 years old.
- ❖ Congratulations to Mary Ann and Jim Fortunato on the birth of their first grandchild, and to Esther Colussi on her 5th great-grandchild. Maria and Rusty Connor welcomed their first child, Evelyn Anne, on May 19. Maria's Sister Andrea and her Husband Jay are also expecting their first child in July.

### Upcoming Events

- ❖ **Virtual Social:** Check your email for information on our first virtual Zoom connection! Don't forget *un brindisi!*  
**Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, at 7pm!**  
**Meeting ID: 915 5307 2060**  
**Password: 804263**
- ❖ The 'Eni & Leo Roman Memorial Polenta Dinner' had been postponed until November **2020** at the Venetian Social Club. Tickets will go on sale at the Venetian Club later this summer. Stay tuned for more information as this popular event sells out fast. We will be entertained once again by our beloved **Heimat Klänge Orchestra** as we eat polenta and dance the night away.
- ❖ If anyone is interested in getting involved with the EFASCE Entertainment Committee and help plan our events, please email [events@EFASCE.com](mailto:events@EFASCE.com).

YOU could be featured in the next newsletter!!  
 Send information and/or photos to  
[newsletter@efasce.net](mailto:newsletter@efasce.net) or our PO Box.

### From the EFASCE Directors

Your directors are still working hard to keep our organization running during the CORONA lockdown. The Directors of EFASCE have continued to meet electronically via ZOOM meeting, during the months of April and May. See photos below. Many thanks to Vice President Lisa Roman for setting up these virtual meetings.

#### April 2020 Directors Meeting

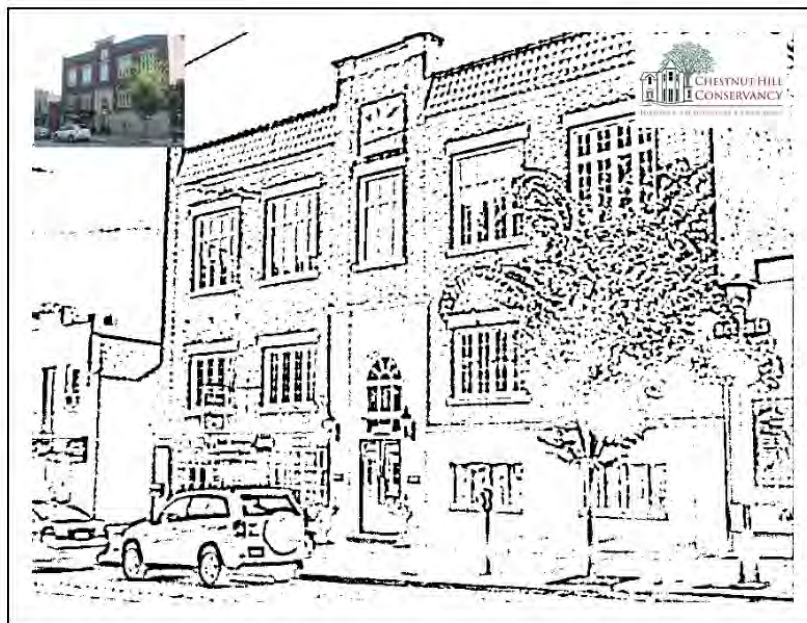


#### May 2020 Directors Meeting



### Color your world

The Chestnut Hill Conservancy has provided coloring pages on their website of historic buildings in Chestnut Hill with a description of their importance <http://chconservancy.org/coloring-pages>. Our beloved Venetian Social Club has been featured! Send your completed colored images to [info@chconservancy.org](mailto:info@chconservancy.org) to be featured on their webpage!



The Venetian Club - 8030 Germantown Avenue (ca. 1845, 1929;

**Note:** Last October, the Conservancy showed many presentations on Germantown Avenue during their "Night of Lights". The presentations have been posted to YouTube for all to enjoy, including *The Italian Artisans Who Built Chestnut Hill*, developed by our member Alessandra Cartelli. Click the link below to go to the Conservancy's web page, to see this and other presentations. <http://chconservancy.org/history-at-home>

## Do You Remember?

By Joe Colussi



On a trip to their ancestors' home in Italy, three Chestnut Hill men found the wives with whom they're shown here playing pool. Left to right are the Edward Romans, the Anthony Filippi and the Valentine Marcolinas.

In earlier newsletters we had a section titled **Do You Remember?**

We recently acquired this photo to continue the column. So, do you remember???

The photo was taken from the February 24, 1952 edition of the Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine.

The article titled '**A Touch of Old Italy**', was written by Steve Bland.

The article describes the emigration of Furlans from Poffabro and surrounding towns to Chestnut Hill. Coming to America, many of the men worked to save enough money to eventually bring their families to America. Settling in Chestnut Hill, many started businesses of their own, with all working as stone masons, tile setters, marble and terrazzo

workers, bricklayers, carpenters, or woodworkers. A caption under one of the photos states "***From this Alpine town, famed for builders of Rhine castles and Budapest palaces a whole colony came to Chestnut Hill.***" The article quotes the father of Maximilian Roman to his son, when Maximilian decided to go to America. "***You are an artisan of Poffabro. For generations, Poffabro craftsmen have gone all over Europe, building churches and castles and public buildings. You have a heritage. Why are you turning your back on it?***" Maximilian came to America and wrote back to his friends in Poffabro "***This is a good place to live and work. You would do good to come here.***" This began the emigration from Poffabro to Chestnut Hill. From 1891 to about 1906, nearly 200 families totaling 1000 people made the trip.

The article also tells the story of how these men worked to provide Poffabro and the surrounding communities with a hospital. During WWII, the U.S. Army maintained a hospital in Maniago. The Army agreed to leave the equipment there after the war, provided that a suitable structure would be built to house it. The people of Poffabro decided that from then on, all monies received from their relatives in America would be put towards the new hospital. From 1946 to the writing of the article in 1952, the Chestnut Hill Furlans sent over more than \$2000 annually to fund construction of the new hospital. The hospital was nearing completion when the article was written.

The article included a section titled '**Vacation Brings Romance**', and goes on to report that in August 1950, 70 years ago this Summer, three bachelors from Chestnut Hill: Anthony Filippi, Edward Roman and Valentine Marcolina went to Europe on a vacation trip. After arriving in Paris, the group decided to rent a car and drive to Poffabro. The group planned to spend a few days in the old hometown, and then drive to Rome and back to Paris. The three men never made it to Rome, and in the words of Tony Filippi, they got "***sidetracked in Poffabro***".

I can't state it any better, so here are the words directly from the article:

***"The change in plans was caused by three Poffabro girls. It was Summer and the girls were pretty. So, when Filippi, Roman and Marcolina finally left Poffabro and began their homeward journey, they were no longer bachelors. Filippi married Neda Longo. Maria Vallar had become Mrs. Roman. And Marcolina had married Rina Brun. 'It was', says Filippi, 'quite a vacation'."***

Best wishes to the Roman, Filippi and Marcolina families on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of these 3 marriages. We thank Esther Colussi for preserving this article and sharing it with us. An image of the preserved article is below.



# A Touch of Old Italy

BY STEVE BLAND

**B**ORN IN 1892, in the small town of Poffabro, Italy, a stone mason named Maximilian Roman made a journey he would compare to the United States. His father could have been more eloquent had Maximilian decided to become a coachman.

"You are an actor of Poffabro," the elder Roman said. "For generations Poffabro craftsmen have gone off over Europe, building churches and castles and public buildings. You have a heritage. Why are you turning your back on it?"

The son shook his head. "I'm not turning my back on it," he said. "But these are hard times. In America there is greater opportunity to work and prosper. I am going there to practice my craft."

So Maximilian Roman came to Philadelphia. In the Chestnut Hill section a home-building project was under way, and there he found employment. He did well, and soon he wrote to friends in Poffabro: "This is a good place to live and work. You would do well to come here."

Then from 1895 to about 1905 came a flow of emigrants from Poffabro to Chestnut Hill. From the town nestled in the Venetian Alps in northern Italy came stone masons, tile workers, marble and terrazzo workers, bricklayers, carpenters and woodworkers. It wasn't a mass migration, but its effect was just about the same: at the outset, the population of Poffabro was about 200. By 1905 it was 190, and today it is less than 100.

The migration continued a pattern. A man would come to Chestnut Hill, do a week or more away as much of his pay as possible. When he had accum-

ulated sufficient money, he would send it to his wife, who would pack a few belongings, bundle up the kids and grab a ship for the U. S. In 15 years nearly 200 families, totaling about 1000 persons, made the trip from Poffabro to Chestnut Hill.

Today, in an area of approximately one square mile, centered about the 8000 block of Germantown ave., reside nearly 100 of the original immigrants and some 1500 descendants, with last names as Roman, Loveman, Braun, Ross, Marcolina and Callan—names that once were associated with the construction of the ornate buildings of Venice, the palaces of Budapest and the castles in the Black Forest of Germany, and now are well known in the construction field in the Philadelphia area.

Some of the original stone masons went on to contract for themselves after establishing an economic foothold, with the result that in Chestnut Hill there now are more than 25 construction firms owned and operated by Philadelphia natives or their descendants.

Men from Poffabro have built, either wholly or in part, some of the buildings at Bryn Mawr College, numerous churches, both in the city and the suburbs, apartment buildings throughout the area, and many country estates. If the now-dead Maximilian Roman could return today, he would find abundant evidence that the artisans of Poffabro have proved worthy of their transportation.

"We have tried to maintain the standards of our forefathers," says 67-year-old Emil Loveman, 3227 Lancaster st., who came from Poffabro in 1892, and now is head of a construction

firm. Company. Getting the stone for the country has been hard to do, and the best way we know how to save labor is by using the kind of work that once made Poffabro famous."

The immigrants and their progeny have played active roles in Chestnut Hill community life, but they never have forgotten the old home town. Each year they make up a parade and send it to Poffabro, to be used as the town fathers see fit.

Shortly after World War II, they founded a drive to provide Poffabro with a swimming community with a lighthouse. During the war the U. S.

Army has maintained a government plant at Merione, in Germantown. When Poffabro and agreed to leave the government there, an excellent residential structure would be erected to house it.

The people of Poffabro decided that they would not leave their town. They would go forward construction, a building. Annually, since 1946, the Chestnut Hill group has met at the home of Ed Roman, 2500 Germantown ave., to discuss the project. The hospital area is nearing completion.

### Vacation Brings Romance

In August 1914, three young Chestnut Hill residents—Anthony Filippi, Ed Roman and Edward Roman, 40 Willow Grove ave., and Valentine Marcolina, 3817 W. Chester st.—went to Europe on vacation. Filippi and Roman were born in Poffabro, were brought to Chestnut Hill as children in the early 20's.

In Paris, the two decided to rent an automobile and drive to Poffabro. They planned to spend a few days at the old home town, then drive to Rome and return to Paris. Filippi was with a girl. "We returned to Paris all right, but we never got to Rome. I guess you might say we were sidetracked in Poffabro."

The change in plans was caused by three Poffabro girls. It was Roman and the girls were merry. So when Filippi, Roman and Valentine finally left Poffabro, they began their return journey, they were no longer laughing.

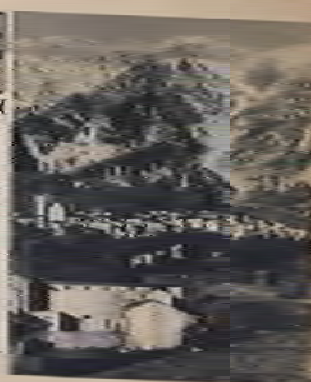
Filippi had married. With Joseph Marie Vallier had become Mrs. Roman. And Marcolina had married. She was "It was," says Filippi, "quite a mistake."

### Brides at Home in U. S.

The new husbands returned to Chestnut Hill and began to sweat out action by U. S. immigration authorities that would permit their brides to enter this country. Such action was forthcoming early last summer, and by July each of the couples had settled down to housekeeping in Chestnut Hill.

The brides have made a rapid adjustment to the American way of life, and everybody is happy, with the possible exception of some of the single males back in Poffabro who may feel that there is such a thing as carrying the hands-across-the-sea policy too far.

Social center of the Italian-American community in Chestnut Hill is the Venetian Club, 800 Germantown ave., founded in 1924. Dominating the five-story building, built entirely by club members, are a large emblem of the "Lion of Venice," the seal and stamp of the city of Venice, which is about 80 miles from Poffabro.



From this Venetian Alpine town, famed for builders of Rhine castles and Budapest palaces, a whole colony came to Chestnut Hill.

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER MAGAZINE, FEBRUARY, 1911

## A Furlan's Guide for Staying Active During the Corona Virus Shutdown

by Joe and Esther Colussi

With the shutdown still in place and everyone getting bored from staying home.

Here is a list of things you can do to stay busy at home.

1. Make home-made gnocchi. – unfortunately, I do not have a handed-down recipe to share. The only advice I know from Mom is – “Use IDAHO potatoes!”. I cheat and buy frozen P&S brand gnocchi.
2. Go out and pick *pestenala*. – This brings back childhood memories of climbing fences at local farms to pick *pestenala* with my *Ajna Melia* and *Ajna Vilma*. I looked in my yard, but the weed & feed I applied last year removed my hopes of a yard picked *salata*. FYI- dandelions have lots of minerals.
3. Listen to music from Friuli. Live stream: <https://www.sorriso.it/>. It's “*Più giovane che mai!*”.
4. Make *salamora* (brined cheese). Eat as-is or make frico. Ingredients: lidded jar or crock, water, salt & cheese – store in the refrigerator. Mom says “add enough salt to float an egg” – too little and your cheese turns to mush. Those with high blood pressure, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE EATING!
5. Look up new Furlan words at <http://www.friul.net/multilingue/> This site offers translations of several words between: English, Furlan, Italian, Spanish, Slovenian, German and French.
6. Make a birdhouse or put out some seeds and watch all the different birds that come. It is breeding time of year – for wrens the hole should be the size of a quarter, or the larger birds will go in. The wren at my house lost a battle with a sparrow because the store-bought birdhouse had a large hole.
7. Plant a garden. You have time to dug up your whole backyard, but if you are new to gardening, start with a small patch or planter box. You will appreciate your efforts when you get to eat from it later.
8. Mix a polenta the old way - Not using a microwave or the quick cornmeal. Good for about 45 minutes and a few glasses of vino. Be careful when the polenta spews up like a volcano – 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns!
9. Pick your Mother or Wife some wildflowers, and a few for the Blessed Mother – it is still May.
10. Bake some biscotti per *La Festa del Papà*. <https://www.sorriso.it/ricettario/biscotti-la-festa-del-papa/> Other traditional recipes are available on the site; look under 'RUBRICHE' > 'RICETTE'.
11. Tile something – it is in your blood and will come naturally. Start small, maybe the outside of a ceramic pot or a trivet, before working your way up to your laundry room or a bathroom.
12. Watch YouTube videos from “the old country”. Here are a few links to get you started:

Poffabro & Frisanco: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obUml\\_MKQD4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obUml_MKQD4)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p\\_pEsBMLPOc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_pEsBMLPOc)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZKnveluz\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZKnveluz_Y)

Carnia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhDhkUmq6HA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCh5AGEU2Uk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-L-HsqeUyB4>

Vajont Dam Disaster: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkGnnc8Ezlk>

13. “*Voltâ li scuete*” – a favorite saying of my Father to visitors – “Why are you leaving so soon? Do you have to go home and *voltâ li scuete*?” You have to make the *scuete* (cheese curd) before you can turn them - email [newsletter@EFASCE.net](mailto:newsletter@EFASCE.net) to request a recipe and directions.

I hope everyone stays well, and you enjoy the ideas and humor above. If you try any of these ideas, please **BE SAFE** & wash your hands! If needed I will work on an installment for the next newsletter.



Image posted in [Friulani in Italia e nel mondo](#) Facebook Page

Learn Furlan - By Joe Colussi

In keeping with the topic of the pretty ladies of Poffabro in our 'Do You Remember' section, and as a belated tribute to our Mothers, here's part of a poem taken from 'La Valle del Colvera', by Marina Roman Ros, Alma Pellegrini Mazzoli and Armida Colussi. Many thanks to Lora Freifeld, Madalena Lorenzon, and Javier Grossutti for their help in translating this poem. The words are presented as spelled in the book.

My sincere apologies to the ladies from Casasola, and a belated Happy Mother's Day to all our Mothers –  
**you are ALL beautiful and we love you ALL!**

*In Pofavri a son chê bieli,  
 in Frisanc a è la flour,  
 in Ciasasola and'è una sola  
 nancja chê nissun la vowl.*

In Poffabro there are the beautiful ones,  
 in Frisanco there are the flowers,  
 in Casasola there is only one  
 Even though no one would want her.

\*\*\*\*\*

*In Andreis a è la fievra,  
 in Frisanc al è il sugàt,  
 in Pofavri a son chê bieli  
 dal calour di vin e lat.*

In Andreis they have the fever  
 in Frisanco they are all dry  
 in Poffabro there are the beautiful ones  
 of the color of wine and milk. (Refers to rosy cheeks and pale skin)

\*\*\*\*\*

*E ce conta a essi bieli  
 Se nal è ancj' il biel fâ,  
 a è la gracia che ch'â conta  
 e ch'â fai inamorâ.*

But what does it matter to be beautiful  
 Even if beauty makes you,  
 it is the graces that count  
 And that will make you fall in love.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Maridàivi zuvinini,  
 toleîsu ce ch'a vi ven,  
 na steit spetà da vignî vecj,  
 chi li rosi a diventin fen.*

Marry in your youth girls,  
 take what comes to you,  
 don't wait to get old,  
 that the flowers will become hay.

The poem dates back many centuries when all the small hill towns were rivals under different rulers. There are 19 more verses to this poem in the "Canti e Villotte" section of the book.

*Villotta* (pl. *villotte*) is a type of song found mainly in Northern Italy, especially in Friuli.

Often using folk music or songs in dialect, the structure of the modern *villotta* has four lines of verse followed by a refrain. *Villotte* from the sixteenth century are typically dialect songs that frequently contain nonsense syllables and passages. (Wikipedia)

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 Use #EFASCE or #EFASCEdiphiladelphia  
 on social media!

**Italian Classes** are currently postponed. Visit our website or contact Madalena at 215-233-2687 for more information.

Officers

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