

# FILÒ

A Journal for Tyrolean Americans  
Volume 16



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# An Introduction . . .

Dear Fellow Tyrolean Americans...

We turn our attention not to a valley, but a town, and its tiny area where there survives an amazing culture of the Cimbri who have endured famine, evacuations, war and persecution yet regard being a Cimbri a privilege. The Cimbri culture with its unique language is part of a trinity...a triad...of the Tyrol's three linguistic minorities along with the Mochen and the Ladini. They are neither eccentric nor an anachronism but an exemplar of a community that acknowledges that who they are is indeed who they were...

We too have something to boast about for our Tyrolean American community. We have our Filò ...a Facebook site..and now a totally renewed, revised website...[filo.tiroles.com](http://filo.tiroles.com) that has become more user friendly, enriched and promises and projects ever bigger and better features so that we can indeed boast our independence and self-sufficiency in having a true virtual library. Hooray for us. I must acknowledge and recognize the initial creation and launching of the website by my talented son Christian who struggled with me to create both the Filò and the website. Then along came Sarah Cominelli Chauncey, a passionate supporter of the Filò and a product of the most activist and fervid Tyrolean community of Solvay, New York. Under her tutelage, we will proudly have a sophisticated and progressive resource for our people. Such happenings, I feel, are the invisible yet very real work of our people who have left us, our emigrant forbearers who simply do not want us to forget but to recognize that who we are have its roots in who they were...Thank you, Christian and Sarah...Well done, good and faithful servants...

Lou Brunelli  
914-402-5348

The Filò is to be published and distributed on a quarterly basis and is targeted to the children of our immigrant parents. The Filò (pronounced fee-lò) was the daily gathering in the stables of the Trentino where the villagers met and socialized. The intent is to provide a summary of our culture, history, and customs in plain English to inform and provide you with the background of your roots and ancestry.. If you wish to contact us, call Lou Brunelli at 914-402-5248. Attention: Your help is needed to expand our outreach to fellow Tyrolean Americans. Help us identify them, be they your children, relatives or acquaintances. Go to [filo.tiroles.com](http://filo.tiroles.com) and register on line to receive the magazine free of charge. You may also send your data to Filò Magazine, PO Box 90, Crompond, NY 10517 or fax them to 914-734-9644 or submit them by email to [filo.tiroles@att.net](mailto:filo.tiroles@att.net).



# Introduction to Luserna

**L**userna is not a valley; it is a village yet it is more than a place, it is a culture, a tradition. Precisely, Luserna is south east of the city of Trento, in a “altopiano”, a highland plateau, only 8 kilometers long and extends 1200 and 1600 meters in altitude. It is juxtaposed to the highlands of Lavarone and Folgaria. The territory, characterized by natural terraces, stretches on the underlying Valle dell'Astico creating deep valleys and ridges, with varying degrees of height of six hundred meters. The appearance of the territories surrounding Luserna is strongly marked by the hand of man. You read about the efforts and efforts made by these people to recover every ground meter. The



tion of the Principate of Trento and yet another to the East under the influence of Verona,, Vicenza, Padua and Venice. As boundaries were further defined, Luserna reached its apex in 1920 with 1050 residents.

In the first half of the 1900's, there occurred a series of events that weighed heavily on the Cimbri. In 1911, there was a

Luserna with the Veneto border fire that destroyed the entire village. The Austro-Hungarian administration came to the rescue restoring the entire village. As World War I began, Italy delayed its entrance in the conflict for a year and attacked the Tyrol with Luserna experiencing the very first hostility. (See article). Such were the sufferings of Luserna, that Austria evacuated everyone to Aussing in Bohemia. After the annexation of the Tyrol to Italy, Mussolini invades Africa in 1936 and forcibly coopts Cimbri men, excellent stone masons, to assist in his military operations.

Yet more devastating was the Fascist policy of “ethnic cleansing” that sought to exclude the German speaking populations from the Sud Tirol providing the despicable “options” of leaving the Tyrol or stay and renounce their ethnicity. Through threats and deceptions, 480 Cimbri opted to leave further decimating the Cimbri population that now numbers 300 residents although relatively recent census has a total of 1,072 acknowledged Cimbri in the Province.

There are some interesting customs characteristic of the Cimbri. Soon after Christmas and approaching the Epiphany, children assemble in groups of three with home made costumes simulating the three magi. They carry a pole on top of which is box with a candle within whose light shines through the figure of a star.



Luserna looking south, its cliffs, the Brenta Dolomites

strongest architectural element is stone, used to create terraced fields and gardens that resolve the high slope of certain sites, allowing them to exploit and widen their resources.

There was human activity dating back to the Bronze Age. There were found the tools and equipment for the smelting of bronze, whose elements and traces are still evident in the landscape of the area. Then came the Cimbri... not those mentioned in Julius Caesar's Gallic War accounts but a people from Bavaria. Similar to many peoples who were on the move, they came as settlers probably driven by scarcity or pestilence. They brought the energies of settlers around the millenium along with their language, a variation of “high german” combined with their Bavarian dialects. This language, unique and singular in the Tyrol, is idiosyncratic to Luserna and extends its name to the very people who speak it. The settlements did so well that the Prince Bishop Frederick von Wangen further encouraged yet more settlements in the yet uninhabited highlands so there developed two distinct settlements: one in the Tyrol under the jurisdic-



Aerial view of Luserna





Vorprennen

They go door by door singing carols where they are rewarded with small gifts, confections and coins. The Vorprennen in Martzo is celebrated on last day of February prior to March 1. It properly has ties to pagan spring fertility rites as well the transition from the dark months to the approaching spring. Children scour the forest to gather wood and create a great bonfire with the



Cimbri women with their lace-making tools

participation of all village people who sing along and tell stories.

Seeking to import an industry, Austria instituted a lace making institute teaching the women the art of lace making as a means to establish a revenue creating “industry”



House / Museum of Haus von Prükk



Cimbri with their folk costumes



Church of Luserna



Children celebrating the Epiphany

for the Cimbri families. Lace making is Khnoppin. (See article)

The Institute Cimbri-Kultur Institut Lusern (The Cimbri Cultural Institute of Luserna) was established in 1991 to safeguard and promote the Cimbri language and culture of The mission was to promote the use of the Cimbri language in different social contexts such as the family and the school. It organized Cimbri language courses for adults, producing texts for elementary and middle school students, dual cartoons to facilitate language learning in children from mixed families and produce weekly broadcasts of language newscasts and related programming. The Province of Trento recognizes the Cimbri Institute as a linguistic authority and for this reason it expresses itself on all issues that affect the language and culture of Cimbri.

For more information regarding the Cimbri Institute or the Cimbri community, go to our website: [www.istitutocimbri.it](http://www.istitutocimbri.it) or e-mail: [info@kil.lusern.it](mailto:info@kil.lusern.it); phone: 039 0464789645. Written by Fiorenzo Nicolussi Castellan Cultural Chair of Cimbri Institute and Anna Maria Trenti Kaufman Director of the Cimbri Institute dell'Istituto Cimbri

# Overview: Cimbri, the Language

**T** From the second half of the nineteenth century, there evolved the nationalistic problem of trying to coincide a national language with an individual ethnicity leading to the dramatic outbreak of the First World War was also relevant in Trentino. As the Tyrol evolved into the Trentino, there was indeed the clash of the Irredentist tendencies with the pan-Germanic ones involving the small German-speaking community of Luserna with the creation of an Italian school and a German school. The Church was entrusted to German-language caretakers until the end of World War I. Luserna suffered the interruption of ancient ties with the area of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, and after the war and with the Trentino-Südtirol passage to Italy, the school became Italian and so did the Church with the assignment of Italian priests. These priest were often intolerant and sought in all ways to persuade children not to use the ancient German language. Teachers punished children if they were heard speaking in Cimbri at school, during school breaks, and street games. But the Fascist period of 22 years further deteriorated the situation. This occurred first with the economic crisis of the '30s, and finally with its propaganda that favored the adopting the so-called "options" aimed at expatriating to Germany every "German" element in Italian territory (1939- 1945). The phenomenon of colonization by German "roncadori" on the mountains between Adige and Brenta and to the gates of Verona, Val di Moche, Pergine Roncigno, Pinetano in other smaller towns in Trentino and Veneto and also in Luserna, is part of a large movement of deforestation and colonization of the Southern Alps that began in the 12th and 13th centuries. This emigration was aimed at finding an outlet for the demographic growth manifested in those years. Numerous scholars agree to distinguish between German emigration from Germany called "Cimbri" before 1200 and the subsequent Mochens that came after that date, partly from Bavaria and partly from Tyrol. Luserna is the only "cimbri" community that, after more than seven centuries, has preserved as the local German spoken by the "roncadori" from Bavaria. The "roncadori" were foresters skilled in clearing woods to create pastures for grazing. From a linguistic point of view, the Cimbri is the "oldest



peripheral spoken language of the German domain". It was brought in the '30s from the Western Tirol and the neighboring Bavarian territories first to the Asiago plateau and later on to Luserna. Luserna is the only "Cimbri" community that, for more than seven centuries, has retained as a local parlance the old German dialect brought by immigrants from Bavaria but perhaps also from other

German-speaking countries. It is not easy to accurately date of emergence of Luserna / Lusern because the documents related to this community are not few. It does not appear, however, that there existed pre-existing Italian populations. Hence, it can be said that in the peripheral area where Luserna is located, its inhabitants are descendants of German immigrants defined by external scholars "Cimbri", probably the term derives from "Zimbar", or "Zimmerman", or probably was attributed to historians who erroneously identified this German population descendants from the Cimbri defeated by the Romans in 101 BC. From Bavaria and from the German world, the settlement culture was initially carried out, with scattered masses of prevalent use of wood in buildings. Subsequently, the settlement was developed in "Strassendorf". A significant aspect of Germanic culture is found in the "collective imagination" represented by Cimbri legends, which in many respects refer to the Brothers Grimm fairy tales. Some traditions still in use call for German culture as "Die Kronig" = The Three Kings, "Vorprennen in March" = March, "vaschom" = carnival. The cuisine, while typical of the mountains, contains many of the world's favorite dishes such as "sauercraut = sauerkraut," gerstsuppe = barley soup, knödel = canederli, strudel = Strudel ". In Luserna as in the rest of the Austria-Hungary Empire, Andreas Hofer was represented as a hero. In the center of the village the main hotel was dedicated to Andreas Hofer. In the years of nationalism, before the First World War, the opposition between the Italians/Germans (National League and Volksbund) led to the same square to erect another hotel called "Tricolore" just opposite the Andre Hofer Hotel. Written by Annamaria Trenti Kaufman, Director of the Cimbri Institute.



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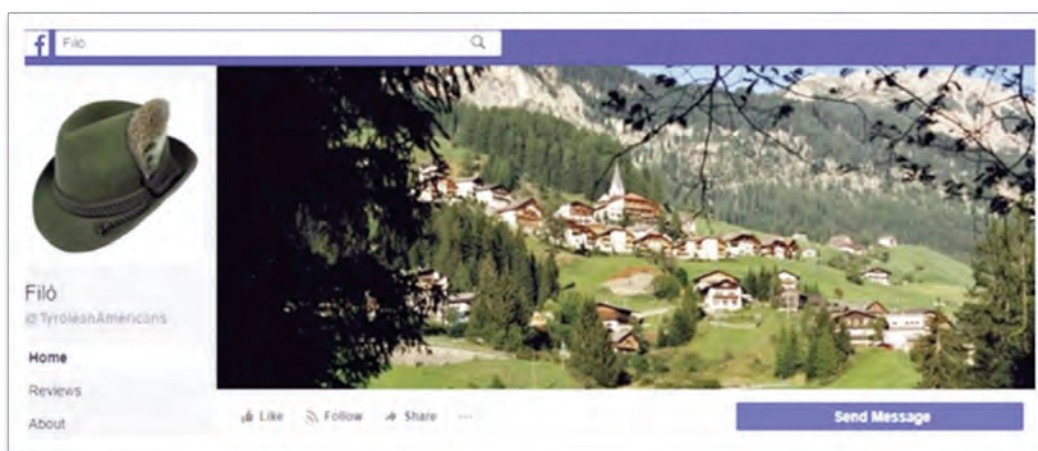
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# Nozze-Engagements & Weddings

In the Trentino, the traditional rules of inheritance mandated that all children, both male and female, receive equal shares of an estate. As a consequence, every generation had to enter into agreements so that new families could achieve economic independence. For this reason, weddings were often arranged within a limited circle of friends and distant cousins so as not to disperse the inheritance.

Most young couples chose to live with the groom's family. An engagement was confirmed in the rectory with a handshake indicating a promise of matrimony. Bride and groom, accompanied by their fathers and baptismal god-fathers would sign a 'bulletin' or official announcement of marriage. The betrothed would then exchange some gifts: the bride would present the groom with a shirt she had sewn and embroidered, a tobacco pouch, or an embroidered belt for festive occasions. Rarely a pocket watch or a watch chain might be included. The groom would give his bride a distaff for spinning, or a needle case, perhaps a case for her knitting needles, or a shuttle for her loom. All his gifts were richly decorated with engraving. At times, a silk handkerchief or a pair of shoes might be added.

On the three Sundays following the signing of the bulletin, the pastor would read it in church. During this time, the groom would acquire traditional gold objects for his future wife. Depending on his financial status, he would buy earrings, rings, coral necklaces and barrettes to adorn her hair. If the bride's family was able to give their daughter a dowry, some days before the wedding the groom's father would take inventory of the dowry and determine its monetary value. The dowry usually consisted of furniture like a wedding chest, or a chest of drawers. Sometimes a bed and mattress, along with linens and blankets would be included. Dresses, earrings and rings

could be added along with objects passed down by the bride's mother, e.g. a spinning wheel or kitchen utensils. Money could also be added to the dowry. All the items were duly noted in a 'carta dotale' or dowry certificate, drawn up by a weaver or a tailor in the presence of two



Wedding Gift from my Dad to my Mother

witnesses. In the event of the bride's death, the groom had to return everything to her family. The dowry itself was loaded on a cart and transferred to the groom's house either before or a few days after the wedding.

The wedding was always celebrated on a Sunday. The groom would go the bride's home and from there, the wedding procession walked to the church. The bridal dress was quite plain and dark in color. It would be used again on festive occasions and ultimately it would become an everyday dress. On leaving the church, the newly-weds would find their path blocked by boys who had strung ribbons and cords over tree branches which they had placed in the way. The groom had to pay a toll of money and/or candy in order to pass by and proceed to the wedding dinner in the house of either the groom or the bride.

The honeymoon trip was usually to one of the sanctuaries in the region or to visit some relatives who lived at a distance. Written by Daniela Finardi of Mezzocorona, Coro Verticale, and the Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina.



Bride presented to the Spouse's Mother



Wedding gathering



# La Fontana...The Village Fountain

Each and every village has two hall marks, two identifying and significant markers: the village campanile or bell tower and its fontana, the fountain. Our emigrants had indeed special and tender memories of these two things, their place and their function in the life they left behind. While the



1968- My mother Adele and my Zia Rita

campanile beckoned them throughout the day to their religious realities and their “bread of life”, the fontana gave them the precious water to sustain the bodies of their families and live stock, delicious water originating from their mountains. Along with the welcome ringing of the bells throughout the day, the constant gurgling of the water flowing into the fontana were the reassuring sounds and life melodies. To the understanding of the tremendous importance of the fontana, one needs to imagine and realize life without interior plumbing, the all important water for cooking, cleaning, bathing, laundry. There were no appliances. The fontana was often situat-



On the left, my mom Adele, brother Tommy, Yours Truly and village neighbors

ed in the piazza or village square, centrally located to perform its vital role and function. It had two sections. The water flowed from an often decorative pipe situated in a column of granite into the first of two sections. The first section was the water reserved for domestic purposes

and the cattle. This water overflowed into a second section. This section had the three exterior sides sloped towards the water since it was the laundry of the village where the women laundered the family’s clothes, diapers, and whatsoever. The laundering time would occur after the usual and typical domestic chores: meal preparation, house maintenance, marketing be it from a cooperative or their gardens. What was primary was the “fetching” of the domestic water for the household. This was typically done by filling two pails of water and placing them on a “brentola” that was a wooden arch where the two pails were placed and then thus balanced, transferred to one’s shoulders to bring them to the kitchen. In the kitchen, the water was stored for cooking and bathing as well as providing water for the rabbits and chickens that were situated in the stalla (stable), where these small animals as well as the large cattle were house juxtaposed to the kitchen. The fontana, all important and functional village resource was depended on and used throughout the year



My Mom, Adele on the left, my Zia Rita and my dad, Agostino.

even those bitterly cold winter periods when the warm hands of mothers scrubbed and beat the clothes in those icy waters.

The central location and vital function of the fontana was also a gathering place somewhat like the evening filò. Women gathered to attend to their laundry were joined by other women and while they performed their domestic tasks, they chatted with each other, exchanging information and enjoying the company of their neighbors. The contadino would stop by with his cattle to have them drink. A passer by or one of the vecioti..senior villagers would stop momentarily to wish them a Bon di... Good day. The draw of the fontana kept no one in isolation since everyone gathered there in some way and truly demonstrated how indeed it takes a village to be a community.

# The Privilege of Being a Cimbri

**L**userna is a village of less than three hundred souls, built with stone walls along the road that ends just past the town. Nicolussi is the most common surname, followed by Gasperi and Pedatro. The family group is unique, with few branches. Thus as the language, the Cimbri has maintained the unity of the community for almost a thousand years, enduring wars and emigrations, exodus and deportations. The Luserni have a single phonetic feature: the "r" emphasized. When expressed in their mother tongue, they only understand each other. It is the only village among the 25 villages (of the Vicenza and the Verona areas) who have a Cimbri foundation and have maintained the language and traditions of immigrants who shortly after the thousand arrived from southern Germany and colonized the highlands between Adige, Brenta and Venetian plain. The 906 inhabitants of 1921 is now reduced to 279. Four hundred other descendants of the second or third generation of the Luserni emigrated outside the province.



The sisters Nicolussi-Galeno Chiara along with Leonardo, Linda, Marco & Stefano

Already at the end of the nineteenth century, 300 people left the village each year to reach the ship yards in the German area (South Tyrol and Austria). They worked as masons and stonecutters. Around 1924, some fifty workers migrated to France, in the departments of Cambrai and Moselle where they worked as stone cutters. The Luserni experienced a seasonal emigration that engaged the workers in road works, in the construction of the massive railroads, in the arrangement of bridges along the streams. They left in the spring and returned in autumn, leaving women to attend to the home and the livestock. As it happened in the Tesino valley with the "iterant" trades, or in the Giudicarie with the wood cutters or in the valley of the Adige with that, the workers were offering their work to the merchants of the arms of the north and south of Trento. The grass was always

lacking so that "to pick up the last line of grass, the women descended the cliffs and precipices, risking slipping and a dangerous accident that could have them fall down the valley below."

They cultivated rye and barley. The water was scarce, so that until the middle of the twentieth century the supply of drinking was made to two fountains: one in the square in Luserna, the other in the town of Tezze. To water the animals, water was drawn from these three wells. The potatoes were introduced to 1810. In the hidden terraces, under the village, some cultivated tobacco; a few leaves for personal use. But it was illegal and considered contraband and some had problems with the gendarmes. From 1866, the smuggling activity of tobacco, sugar and alcohol with the Veneto was flourishing. Milk, cheese and butter was not lacking. Each family had some cows in the stable. Many also raised goats. On June 13, St. Anthony of Padua, the patron of the Luserna church, the people left the alpine pastures and returned to the village for the festival. Mayor Luca Nicolussi Paolaz says, "We do not want to be and we are not an Indian reservation. We want to belong to the people of Cimbri, to the Trentino community, to Italy, to Europe, to the world."

It seemed like the expression of Albert Einstein when he emigrated to the United States to escape the racial laws. Upon arriving to the United States and prompted to his racial affiliation he simply wrote: "race ... human". Written by Alberto Folgheraiter, journalist, author. He has written books illustrating the culture and life styles of our people. *Le Terre della Fatica*, *The Land of Difficulties*. All in Italian, it presents his frequent theme of our people's relationship to the land and challenges to their survival.



Little Linda Nicolussi-the new generation of Cimbri



Fiorenzo Nicolussi Castellan of Cimbri Institute





# Family Story: The Giongo Family

I am proud to tell about my family from the South Tyrol (Trentino). Let me begin with my Great-Grandmother Dina Giusta Bertoldi from the Giongo family and my Great-Grandfather Alfonso Fioravante Giongo, both farmers from the Lavarone. Alfonso was born on August 26, 1872 in Lavarone in the Tyrolean Principality of Tyrol (Gefürstete Grafschaft Tirol) to his father, Emanuele, and mother, Maria Longhi. Dina was born on June 17, 1878, in Lavarone too from her father, Ambrogio, and mother, Anna Bertoldi.

Alfonso and Dina always lived in simplicity and dignity. In the summer of 1914 the war arrived in South Tyrol. Alfonso, faithful to Austria's Franz Joseph, fought on the war's front line, leaving Dina and their four children: Gina, Clara, Dinota and Emanuele - all under the age of 10, behind. The pain and anguish was also felt by Dina and her children, who lived in fear that something could happen to Alfonso. At that time, Dina took charge of the family, to go ahead with the farming jobs, take care of her children and the family elders as well. There was, however, much solidarity among the families in the country (mostly women and the elderly). The hardest days for Dina and her children came when the Kingdom of Italy entered the war on May 24, 1915. On Tuesday, May 25th 1915, the first grenades from the Italian Fort of Cima Verena fell in Luserna. On May 31, Lavarone was evacuated. There were many dramatic moments and great confusion for the family. She took the bare essentials for the evacuation (always thinking of her own children more than herself), hiding her few valuables in the house. The trip she was about to embark on would be full of pitfalls and difficulties. The inhabitants of Lavarone took down the roads leading down to Caldonazzo station with destination to Trento. Between the 1st and 2nd of June, everyone, or almost everyone, left for Innsbruck. Dina and her children arrived at Braunau city where they found shelter at a large farmhouse. Fortunately, Dina soon became respected by the farm's owner for her great talent and skills in using a needle and thread; a true tailor-made teacher. That is why he made a large farm room available to store everything she needed. She soon had several affectionate customers; local people loved her and her great attitude to life. Everybody had to work hard, even Dina's Kids (apart from little Dinota, as she was the youngest and needed to stay with Dina). The daughters helped with the houseworks, while Emanuele was employed in the farming fields. One day Emanuele,



Sisinio Canestrini, Attilio Canestrini and his cousins Guide and Eugene

returning to the farm with the hay wagon, fell and broke his leg – and suffered a severe limp afterward. Fortunately, the Great War ended in November 1918, without any harm coming to Alfonso. After three years on the farm, Dina and her children (who were also able to continue their studies) were virtually considered as family members. For this reason, the owner of the farm proposed for her to stay in Austria and not to return to a land that would become the Kingdom of Italy: He would give her family all the necessities to live happily with her family. Meanwhile, Alfonso managed to return to his home in Lavarone, who found the whole place completely destroyed. Alfonso was so sorry to see all the misery. It was for this reason, and for the will to rebuild everything that had left his fathers. Alfonso then proposed for Dina to return to what he considered his land: Lavarone. On the other hand, Dina, despite the fact that the Braunau's farm had become her home, accepted the proposal of Alfonso to return to Lavarone. To thank the hospitality given to his family, by those whom he considered as Austrian brothers, Alfonso built a small fountain in the village of Braunau before returning to Lavarone. What are the origins of the Giongo Family? The "Giongo" descends from the colonization of South Tyrol in the 11th century, to Luserna (Lusérn), Lavarone (Lafraun) and Folgaria (Vielgereuth) by German-speaking people and culture. They founded the "masses", the first rural agglomerations from which the countries we know today originated. Through the centuries (from 15th onwards) the surnames of the "Cimbri" people underwent a general and widespread Italianization. In Lavarone, for example, the names of both grandparents were Italianized: from "Berthold" to "Bertoldi", from Jung (young) to variants of "Giongo": With love to my grandmother Clara, to my great-grandparents, Dina and Alfonso Fioravante and to my prowesses Gina, Dinota and Emanuele. Written by Patrizio Giongo, Arco, Trento

# Prehistoric Metal Work

**T**hroughout the late Bronze era (XIII-X BC) there is one of the most extraordinary concentrations of bronze processing sites on the Luserna and Vezzena Plateau. In particular, in the highland area (Altipiani), the primary and first casting of copper minerals were carried out. Those operations allowed the ore to be purified from waste materials and eventually to produce copper pots, forms that were 96% pure copper). Most probably the minerals were extracted in the metallic district of Upper Valsugana, where there is a considerable amount of rich copper deposits.



Archeological remnants-Plätz

Once extracted, the minerals were transported to the area of the Altipiani (highlands) where there was a great deal of lumber, especially beech, which produced good quality charcoal, which is indispensable to reach the temperatures necessary for smelting processes. Always on the highlands, there could be found also the so-called fuses flint or limestone rocks that form the subsoil of the entire plateau. These materials were used to facilitate the separation of the slag from the metal.



Archeological dig at Plätz



Ancient metal furnace

On the Plateau of Luserna, Vezzena and Lavarone, the minerals underwent a first phase of production for the production of copper pots that were then traded to the inhabitants of the transalpine regions as well as the inhabitants of the Padano-Venetian plain in exchange for food and crafts items.

Of great importance was therefore the location of the territory on the border between the "Veneto" world of the plain and the alpine reticulum; This position offered the possibility of quick access to the communication channels for trade and exchange of raw materials and their derivatives. The territory of the Luserna, Lavarone and Vezzena Plants was then, as it is today, a "hinged" area border between Veneto and Trentino, between the proto-retic and the Bronze Age proto-Venetian populations, who were in constant trade relations with the supply of metal. Veneto is a region where the fields are scarce of metals.

The presence of extensive pastures also allowed the summer pasturing of the cattle that supplied the livelihood for the population to co-finance the metallurgical activity. Both activities (sheep and dairy) were, in fact, seasonal occupations and were carried out only during the summer; the livestock was also used for transportation of minerals from the bottom to the melting sites of the Altipiani.

Even today, it is possible to find out the waste arising from the copper processing processes. These remnants are the so-called "slag" that the ovens produced in large quantities and remain sufficiently visible on the surface despite the flow of time especially in Plätz von Motze di Luserna, Tezze di Luserna, Millegrobbe, Malga Rivetta, Malga Fratte and Passo Vezzena. Written by Valentina Nicolussi Castellan-Documentation Center



# Patatana Pult un Kavritz

**B** The header written in Cimbri is translated in our dialect as the polenta de patate...potato polenta. It is a polenta with a little flower but no corn meal. The altitude of the Alto Piano of Luserna did not permit the usual gardening of the lower valleys. However, potatoes were easily grown. In the style of all of our people, the latticini, the dairy products were usually sold to obtain some cash so that they were left with the staples of their poor cuisine: potatoes and corn meal. "Every family had its field of potatoes, since gardens were resistant to the altitudes of Luserna, so that families of Luserna lived on potatoes throughout year. Naturally, with potatoes, they created many different dishes and recipes that were quite diversified and delicious although genuinely simple."

Marialuisa Nicolussi Golo submitted the recipe and a tutorial of how to make this dish. The potatoes are put through a ricer and boiled in salted water with a "manciata di farina". A manciata is a handful and it reflects the often imprecise measurements of our Tyrolean cuisine. If you ever were in the kitchen of your nonna, you might have been confused about expressions...en micol, pochetin, ..a little, some! The topping or the flavoring, Kavritz, was a white sauce made simply with 30 grams of butter, flour, water and little pieces of luganica sausage often found in our supermarkets.

## Ingredients & tool

1 1/2 pounds of potatoes  
sufficient water to cover the potatoes  
add some salt(possibly a pinch of pepper)

A handful (?) or a manciata of flour.(The potatoes are my red Norlands from my garden.)

## Procedure

Boil the potatoes in salted water. When tender, squeeze through a ricer and return to the salted water.

Whisk the water and squeezed potatoes, add the "manciata" of flour, stir from time to time for 30 minutes over heat until all the water is absorbed or when a crust forms on the sides. Place the polenta onto a wooden trivet, a tabiel.

**Kavritz.** Fry two table spoons of white flower in 2 tablespoons of butter adding water to keep it liquid and smooth. Add crumbled stuffing of luganica sausage to the mixture. Place over the polenta.



# Luserna's Artist...

**L**userna, although a small border town, has given birth to several personalities who have distinguished themselves in the fields of politics, culture, economics, administration and even art. Among the many renowned artists of Luserna Rheo Martin Pedrazza has surely reached high artistic levels and vast reputation.

A restless and hard-to-find artist, very close to the Viennese cultural and artistic world of the 1950's Pedrazza was born in Luserna in 1924 and after an apprenticeship in Bolzano with a sculptor from Luserna, he attended the industrial schools in Trento.

As is the case with many other families of the place, from the small Luserna Cimbri community, the life of Rheo Martin Pedrazza was marked by one of the most dramatic events of the 20th century: the phenomenon of the "Options". In 1939, the inhabitants of German-speaking South Tyrol and the language islands were granted a choice. The population could choose whether to stay in their own country and remain Italian citizens - renouncing their mother tongue and secular traditions - or moving to Germany (that included present-day Austria at the time), acquiring German citizenship but abandoning their land.

In the illusory attempt to find a better life, even the family of Pedrazza in 1942 leaves the country, the journey includes Hallein, Linz, and finally ends in Stams, Innsbruck in the Tyrol. It is precisely the "Options" that cause Pedrazza a deep wound that would not heal: a sort of upheaval of his world and his security, a situation of emigration to the unknown that is reflected in many of his works. Despite the distance from Luserna, Rheo

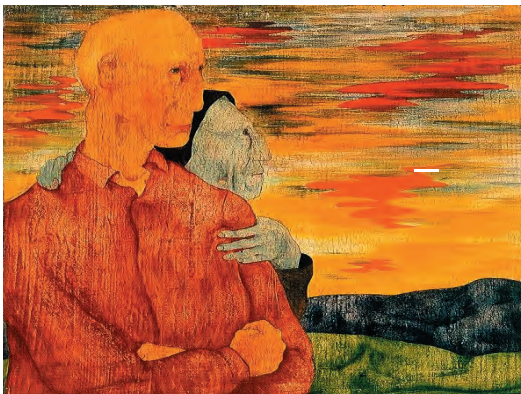


MAR - Mori-Arco-Riva Railroad

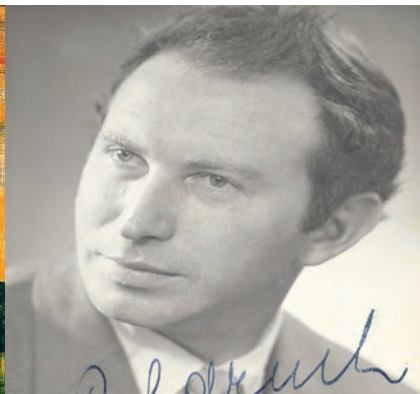
Martin Pedrazza had never disregarded the deep bond with his native land: the detachment from the birthplace is always recounted, through the paintings of the artist whose Diaspora reflect a long and tormented journey that brings the artist to always look with nostalgia and love towards the "Lost Fatherland" - the title of a very significant picture of 1950 that becomes the seal and symbol of the detachment from his own land, from that highland of his youth that Rheo Martin Pedrazza never forgot.

Reared in the Wehrmacht in 1943 and later interned in a French prison in France, Rheo Martin Pedrazza was deeply marked by war and imprisonment. At the end of the conflict he resumes studies at the Staatsgewerbeschule in Innsbruck and, then in 1948 at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. Pedrazza abandoned painting in 1982 to devote himself to writing and philosophical readings, and in Stams, Innsbruck, Tyrol in the Austrian Tyrol he transforms his home into a work of art, creating the Pedrazzeum, his home becomes a cocoon-body that acts as a refuge for his soul: the walls are completely painted with paintings, and in the garden are kaleidoscopic columns and masonry decorated with glass bottles and with the most varied recovery materials as if they were the logical extension of his own being.

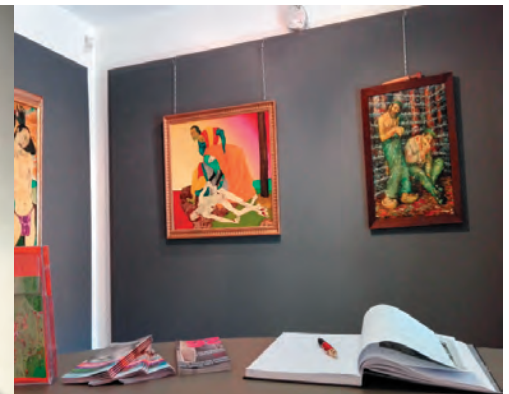
He accomplished this without forgetting his Cimbri origins. For love to his native country, he gave the Luserna Documentation Center 35 works, including paintings and drawings and his share of his father's house in Luserna. Since 2006, he restored to the pinacoteca dedicated to him. He died at Stams in 2010. Written by Valentina Nicolussi Castellan-Luserna Documentation Center



Painting: The Lost Homeland



Rheo Martin Pedrazza



Rheo Martin Pedrazza's house and Studio



# Family Stories: Cesare Vicenzi

Cesare Vicenzi was born in 1890 to Rocco and Fiore Vicenzi in the town of Peio in Val di Sole where the family raised cattle for a living. In 1902, his father Rocco moved to northern Michigan in an attempt to earn more money for the family, but died in a tragic mining related accident in 1904. In that same year, at the age of 14, young Cesare moved to the neighboring valley of Val di Non where he apprenticed in the trade of ornamental iron working. At the age of 20, Cesare then made the decision to follow in his father's footsteps, traveling alone to the United States in search of a better life. He left behind his mother, his twin brother Ilario, an older brother Demetrio and two sisters (Caterina, Santina). A few years later, in 1914, his twin Ilario became one of the earliest casualties of World War I. Cesare travelled to the United States on the French ship "Californie" arriving at Ellis Island on July 11, 1910, and made his way to northern Michigan, settling near the town of Iron Mountain, very close to where his father had lived. He could not find work in his iron-working trade, but found work as a miner and a lumberjack for a while. Shortly thereafter he made his way to Milwaukee where many people from Trentino lived. It was there that he met Giuseppe Micheli from the town of Dambell in the Val di Non, and they quickly became good friends. In Milwaukee, Cesare was able to find some work in ornamental iron working, but ultimately he found a good job at Allen Bradley, working in their electrical cabinet division. Cesare's new friend Giuseppe had a brother and three sisters still living in



Cesare & Maria-Wedding-July 8, 1921

Dambell, Italy, eking out a living as subsistence farmers. Giuseppe convinced his eldest sister Maria to come to Milwaukee to meet his handsome new friend Cesare Vicenzi. Maria Micheli arrived in Milwaukee in 1920, and Cesare and Maria hit it off quickly and were married in 1921, and their first child Reno was born in 1922. Their second child Ervin was born in 1924 but sadly lived only 18 months. Finally, their youngest son Elio was born in 1928 and is still living today.

Cesare and Maria stayed in Milwaukee for the remainder of their lives. Maria was a consummate homemaker and cook, and she enjoyed knitting in her spare time. Cesare worked at Allen Bradley for 39 years and played a key role in the growth of the company, developing many welding fixtures which greatly speeded production, and he ultimately became the foreman of the entire electrical cabinet department. He was also instrumental in helping many others from the Trentino obtain employment at Allen Bradley. Cesare had many interests outside of his work. He played violin and in his early days in Milwaukee he joined a group of musicians from Trentino. In addition, Cesare was quite a mechanical tinkerer and in 1919 received US patent 1331171 for the design of an automobile turn signal. Cesare also enjoyed making wine at home and he even occasionally distilled the alcohol to share with friends (which wasn't quite legal) and worried Maria to no end! The couple also often made fresh Italian sausage at home, a tradition that continues in the family to this day. Shortly after Maria's death in 1969, Cesare moved in with his son Elio along with his wife Jean and their seven children, where he continued to live until his death in 1980. Today, there are a total of 26 direct descendants of Cesare and Maria living in the United States, many of whom still enjoy making and eating Italian sausage and polenta today! In addition, the Vicenzi and Micheli families continue strong in Italy, with descendants of Cesare's brother Demetrio currently owning and operating an Inn in Peio and descendants of Maria's sisters and brothers still living in Val di Non. Written by Jeff Vicenzi (Cesare's grandson) and Elio Vicenzi (Cesare's son and Jeff's father)



Cesare Vicenzi, left with violin, Milwaukee Club-1916

# The Great War Began Here...

**L**userna and the Cimbri Highlands, these wonderful lands that inspire the visitor with a feeling of peace and serenity were, just over a hundred years ago, a stage of profound and tragic changes that caused the sacrifice of thousands of men, destroyed countries, displaced families driving them far away, in unknown places. The narrative of this border area had been always one of peaceful coexistence and collaboration, yet and also it became one of tensions and wars, their destruction and suffering, and indomitable tenacity in reacting to adversity.

What still constitutes the border between the provinces of Trento and Vicenza of the Veneto was, in fact, in 1915 the border between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Italy. Although the two states had been linked, since 1882, by the military treaty known as the "Triple Alliance", both nations continued to consider the inevitable and eventual re-invasion of hostilities. The Austrian Major General then began to rethink the whole defense of South Tyrol. He decided to capture in a capillary and modern manner the territory of the Cimbri Highlands with its military fortifications to render it capable to withstand an Italian attack and to forestall expansive action towards the south. The Cimbri Highlands, had erected seven great fortresses which were indeed state of art fortification of those times and thus the nodal point of what was the defensive belt of the Empire.

One of the most well-equipped and powerful forts on the highland front was without a doubt the Fort Lusérn, with a volumetric of over 200,000 cubic meters, two outposts and its strategic position was nicknamed "Il Padreterno"...God the Father! Its strategic position that allowed those in Fort Lusérn to control the very heart of

the Val d'Assa to guard from above the Cimbri town of Luserna whose inhabitants, on May 25, 1915, had to suddenly leave it in a few hours, under a rain of bombs.

There is a first hand eye witness of these tragic moments in the narrative of Josef Pardatscher, pastor of Luserna and then military chaplain: May 25, Tuesday of Pentecost ...Around 3:30 in the morning, the cannons begin to thunder. The forts shoot at each other: ours and those of the other side, Monte Verena and Campolongo-Haspelknott. Canon blasts become increasingly intense. The blast seem like lightening above the village of Luserna and seem to be mowed. Panic ensues. At five o'clock, I write my last wishes. At six o'clock I go to the altar to celebrate Mass. At the same moment, as I knelt at the foot of steps, there is frightening blast. The presbytery window screeched frightfully and the glass fall at my feet. Meanwhile, other bomb blasts fell throughout the area. I quickly removed the sacred vestments and before we could leave the church with the curate Franz Pichler, who was about to celebrate the Eucharist, the Sofia Nicolussi Golo arrives at the door of the church, crying with despair and shouting: "My heavenly God! There are two dead!" That's was not accurate. There are two wounded: Katharina widow of Nicolussi Galen, who was struck by splinters in her leg. Beth Nikolussi Zatta, 16 years old, sustained a serious injury to the belly. She was brought inside the canonical chamber and placed at foot of a step ladder. I gave them absolution and the anointment with holy oil.

Nonetheless, she died on May 31 in the hospital in Trento. Blood stains sustained by her injury were visible on the steps of the ladder. Under the blasts of the Italian bombings of 25 May 1915, the inhabitants of Luserna, especially women, children and the elderly, abandoned their homes to arrive at the end of a long voyage to the Aussig district in northern Bohemia. Luserna's men and boys remained missing from the country for almost a year because, like men throughout Tyrol (initially those aged 21 to 42, but during the conflict, mobilization extended to include men of the age of 18 at the age of 50) had been enlisted in the imperial army already in 1914 and sent to fight in Galicia, on the Russian front. Only in January 1919 the Luserna people were able to travel to their country, a country that was reduced to a collapse of rubble. Written by Valentina Niccolussi Castellan, Luserna Documentation Center, Luserna



The ruins of the Luserna church



# Z loch von gèlt. The Treasure Hole

There was a great commotion that afternoon, in St Mark's Square in Venice. A crowd of curious people gathered in front of the cathedral to hear some magicians who came from far away. They knew so many things, and told the



people that they had already helped some poor wretch to become rich and powerful with strange sorts. "But you do know what the merchants do when a war breaks out?" said one of the wizards, looking at people straight in their eyes. "Do you think they run away bringing cash boxes and money boxes? Oh no: Before they flee, they hide their treasures underground and then drop out of circulation. When the war is over, they return home quietly and dissipate their possessions and continue to live in peace and quiet.



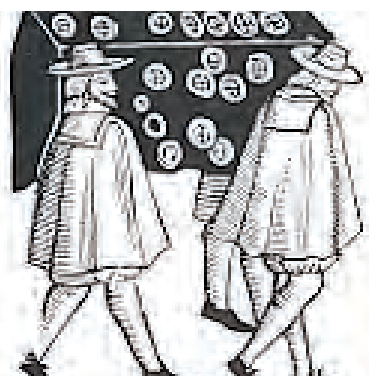
"Quickly, one of the spectators had the courage to ask... "And if they die? If they are killed? What bout their possessions?" The magician exclaimed triumphantly... "Here is what I wanted you to ask!". "In these cases only the Devil knows where the treasures are hidden. He takes possession of them, takes them far away up among the mountains, and hides them for a hundred years in a secret place. After a hundred years, on the 15th and 16th of July of each year, they bring them to the surface transformed into a salad bowl, or in a pile of shavings or still in a tree full of flowers. Those who have the chance to be there can pick up those vegetables, those pieces of wood or flowers and immediately find themselves so rich that they no longer know where to put the gold. "And where is this wonderful place?" "To those who will give me a silver coin, I will whisper the name in their ear," said the magician with sparkling eyes of avarice. Many paid

the money, and everyone was whispered to the desired name: "Millegrobbe".

"What is it? Where is it? I've never heard of it! But look how foolish it was to throw away a silver penny! "

But someone did indeed recognize that name. There were two shepherds who carried their flocks each summer to the Lavarone plateau: they knew Luserna, the Vezzena Pass and, above all, the town of Millegrobbe, so rich in sweet and tender grass. That year, the two shepherds arrived at the pre-established place at dawn on July 15th and for two days and a night they looked for the famous salad of wild radicchio, or piles of shavings or flowering trees in every single nook and cranny.

On the evening of July 16, a furious thunderstorm broke out, and the shepherds had to shelter under a large spruce, and there, with great joy, they saw a fine patch of wild radicchio. They looked into each others eyes for a moment, then grabbed the miraculous vegetables and ran home. Here they came to realize that the leaves of radicchio in the meantime had turned into gold coins: they counted so many, that although divided into two, the treasure allowed them to live as wealthy men for the years that remained and leave to their children a substantial inheritance. Written by Verena dePaoli, Assessore di Cultura, Terlago, Trentino



# Well done, Gene....

**A**s the majority of our emigrants left the Tyrol, Italy got busy with a pervasive nationalism combined with Irredentism to obscure all the memory of the Tyrol, ethnically cleansing the German speaking populations and embracing Fascism. Fascism made them partners and collaborators of the Third Reich and as an Axis Power, Italy became our “enemy” that led to World War II and its economic and social aftermath. Our emigrant community in USA was indeed the last thing on their minds or in their concerns. The Bishops and Don Guetti even discouraged their departures from the “safe” and traditional haven of the Tyrol. Nonetheless, they came and in absence of such support, they supported themselves typically settling in what could be called “colonies” of their paesani. They not only settled so much with their fellow Tirolesi but pursued the very same work and livelihoods to their disadvantage. The Province had no resources or possibly no imagination of what and how to possibly help their emigrants. And so, I sa rangiadi...they took



Gene and Patty Pellegrini

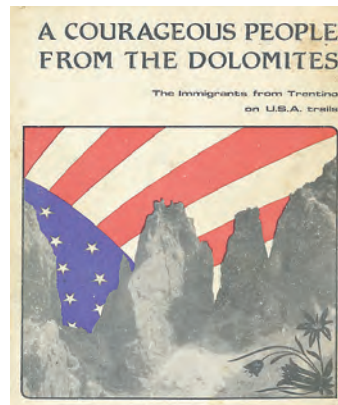
Risveglio that reached out with 60 issues to our Tyrolean peasant. At the same time, there arrived from the Province, a humble Franciscan friar, Fr. Bonifacio Bolognani from Cavedine. For 22 years, “Fr. Bonny” became our apostle and our chronicler traveling to all the Tyrolean “colonies” throughout the USA observing us and taking notes...To these two very special advocates, there came a third champion to form a Tyrolean triumvirate...Gene Pellegrini of Chicago.

Unlike his fellow two paesani, Gene was neither a scholar, a writer nor a historian. He could speak neither Italian nor dialect. He had neither experience managing people nor directing them. He was a mason, a tile setter busy providing for his wife Patty and three children... Eugene, Tina and Keith. But Providence brought Fr. Bonny and Gene together to reach out to our community. Fr. Bonny was a frequent guest at Gene’s house in Chicago and it was at his kitchen table where Gene and his family gave Fr. Bonny a title for the manuscript that he had been writing in his travels. The title was...The Courageous People from the Dolomites.

Serving as an officer in the Alpine Club of Chicago, Gene with his determined in your face style got up in 1980 Convention in Toronto in the presence of officials



Fr. Bonifacio Bolognani, the Apostle to our emigrants, author of the Courageous People from the Dolomites (link on filo.tiroles.com)



care of themselves. There is a long history of Tyrolean clubs that sprang up in different parts of our country whose role and function was to serve their immediate communities with no affiliation with the Province. They were social clubs where fellow paesani could find themselves and enjoy each other’s company e.g. the Tyrol Club-1909 in Solvay composed of young men from Prezzo. One of the first advocates that reached out to our community in some formal way was a Giovanni Amistadi, a teacher and emigrant from Arco. He sought to bring together the social groups in the form of a confederation. He created a wonderful magazine, the



Gene, President of ITTONA addressing the Conventioneers in the Duomo of Trento



instinctual and usually quite accurate, Paul Magagnotti, Fr. Bonny's traveling companion and co-author for years, shared his first impression: "I met Eugene Pellegrini the first time in Chicago at the beginning of August 1980 after attending the 4th ITTONA Convention in Sainte-Adèle, near Montreal with the president of the Trentino-South Tyrol region. We were having dinner with many members of the Chicago club and I saw a "volcanic" man taking the floor: it was Eugene." Volcanic?" Indeed..He erupted with his usual and typical determination, conviction and passion...that was indeed Gene! Without preparation or scholarship, Gene was imbued with an intense love and attachment "dei nostri"...for our people

In 1982, there arrived an 18 wheel truck in front of his house with 5280 copies of *Courageous People*...It was a transformative moment. Gene now had his Tyrolean "gospel"...his scholarship was now all detailed in "the book" of Fr. Bonny, the first comprehensive definition who we are with the details of who we were...in English...He set about distributing the book to individuals throughout the USA, creating an enthusiasm for the book, collecting funds for the postage, managing all the details of distribution. He was unstoppable. Paolo Magagnotti wrote to me the following... "He had always and continually the Tyrol on his mind and in his heart and when he was elected president of ITTONA, he became a "Tyrolean-hunter" in North America, a "tirolerjaeger". If something came to his attention suggesting that in some place there was a Tyrolean family, he immediately contacted them and then called me with great joy to inform me about the discovery. He was an unbelievable networker and his wife Patricia was for him his right hand to promote relationships and implement ITTONA initiatives. On the occasion of the conventions he became restless in contacting the organizing clubs and Trento; he was never satisfied with what was done two years before and wanted always something new". In fact, Gene with no cell phone nor computer brought *Courageous People* through 5 editions with not one copy to spare. While Fr. Bonny had the literary creativity to write *Courageous People*, Gene had the Tyroleanchutzpah and determination to do the leg work to move it to thousands of our people. He served 22 consecutive years as the President of ITTONA and single handedly with an amazing persistence and dedication personally estab-



The Dynamic Tyrolean team of Gene & Father Bonny

lished 17 new clubs. But he not only established them but monitored them making sure that they were functional and productive...and even observing whether they were following parliamentary procedures.

Gene and I speak often..like brothers... sharing our concerns about our community. He shared with me some precious moments. He reminisces of a time when he spoke at a convention from the pulpit of the Duomo in Trento, full of enthusiastic energy. He recalls with tenderness the

occasion in Cavedine, the hometown of Fr. Bonny, on August 31, 2015 when we rededicated the bust of Fr. Bonny's statue and he spoke in an adorable mixture of English and Italian to an audience of 400 of the paesani of Fr Bonny in Cavedine...They applauded and cheered him more than they did for the Bishop of Trento.

It was said how people observed the early Christians and a said...see how they love each other..In Cavedine in similar way, they had said of us see how much they loved Fr Bonny...can we say how much we indeed appreciate all Gene had done for us.? Let's conclude in the words of Paolo... "Eugene Pellegrini and all his entire family deserve immeasurable gratitude for what they did to help and support Fr. Bonifacio Bolognani in his "mission" to visit Tyrolean emigrants all over the United States and do the extensive research about us in writing the monumental work "A Courageous People from the Dolomites", which made the Tyroleans of America feel especially proud of their heritage. He was not skilled in diplomacy, but was a great doer and shaker, motivated by his great passionate ambition for his Tyrolean origins. Eugene Pellegrini deserves to go down in the history of ITTONA and the Tyrolean emigration in North America." In the space for the title of this commentary, I wanted to write Bravo Gene. or preferably revert to Scripture...Well done, good and faithful servant...Space would not allow it...With space and with affection, let us all say... Well done good and faithful Gene!



Gene along side of the Bust of Fr Bonny in Cavedine-

# *Altopiani Luserna*





# *Folgaria and Lavarone*



# Genealogy Corner # 4

**W**elcome back to “Genealogy Corner”. So far in this series, we’ve looked at Trentini names, surnames and soprannomi, as well as tips on finding your female ancestors. Today, I’m going to talk about an online resource many people use when starting to build their Trentini family tree: **the Nati in Trentino website**.

**Nati in Trentino** is a free, searchable website located at <https://secure.natitrentino.mondotrentino.net>. This site contains a database of information taken from **ALL baptismal records registered in the Archdiocese of Trento between the years of 1815 and 1923**. This site is a real asset for those seeking information about the families of their Trentino-born ancestors who were born within that period. As this database is owned by the Archdiocese of Trento, it is NOT accessible via other, commercial sites like Ancestry or Family Search.

## Advantages of Using Nati in Trentino

There are several advantages to using Nati in Trentino for genealogical research:

**It was made by EXPERTS.** The database was created by experienced researchers at archdiocese, all of whom are native to Trentino, familiar with the language, local parishes and surnames. They have been trained to read old handwriting. Furthermore, these people CARE about preserving this history.

**It is extremely ACCURATE.** Unlike many other genealogy databases on the Internet, Nati in Trentino is clear and accurate. You’ll appreciate this if you’ve ever found yourself pulling out your hair trying to make sense of your ancestors’ names and villages in US census records or Ellis Island documents.

**It has an English language option.** Lack of knowledge of Italian is often the biggest barrier for those trying to research their ancestors online or read the parish records. Nati in Trentino eliminates that barrier with its English language option.

**It can save you time.** Records that might otherwise take you hours to find if trawling through reels of microfilm can often be found (but not always!) within minutes on Nati in Trentino. Another advantage is that you don’t need to know your ancestors’ parish to do a search (although knowing the parish can help, especially when

there is more than one person with the same name, born around the same time).

## What the Site CAN and CANNOT Tell You

It is important to bear in mind is that Nati in Trentino does NOT contain images of the baptismal records, nor does it provide you with the FULL transcription of what a record might contain.

If Nati in Trentino finds a person matching your search parameters, it will tell you their full name, date of birth, gender and parish, as well as their father’s first name, and mother’s first AND maiden surname. While that might sound like a lot of information, the actual baptismal record is likely to contain a great deal more, like the frazione (hamlet/village) of your ancestor, the names and occupations of the godparents, the names of all four grandparents, and many other interesting things.

**The site does have a few technical limitations.** For one, the father’s surname is a required field, which means you cannot search to find out who married your great-grandfather’s sister (as an example). It also does not permit ‘wild card’ searches, meaning the surname MUST be spelled completely and exactly as it is in the record (which may be different from what you expect). There are a few other limitations, but as I’m almost out of space, I will direct you to a more detailed article I wrote called “Searching Online for 19th and 20th Century Trentini Ancestors”, which you will find on my website at [TrentinoGenealogy.com](http://TrentinoGenealogy.com). In that article, I also share some tricks you can use to get the most out of the Nati in Trentino website.

**That’s all for this edition.** I hope you found this article useful and informative in your search for your Trentini ancestors. I’m leaving for Trento in a few days to do more research for myself and clients, so I’m sure I’ll have plenty of stories and discoveries to share in the next issue of Filò. Until then, if you’d like to read more genealogy articles, or ask me any questions, I cordially invite you to visit my blog at [www.TrentinoGenealogy.com](http://www.TrentinoGenealogy.com), and to join our Trentino Genealogy group on Facebook.

**LYNN SERAFINN** is an author, marketing consultant and genealogist specializing in the families of the Giudicarie, where her father was born in 1919.





# The Mountains of Luserna...

**C**he territory of Luserna lies on the south-eastern edge of Trentino, bordering the Veneto region. The main center is Luserna, 1333 meters high, with less than three hundred inhabitants who speak the Cimbri language. The language is of German derivation, a legacy of the northern populations that populated the plateau seemingly as far back as in Roman times. The other inhabited center of a certain size is Tezze. The territory is basically a plateau - at the edge of the largest plateau of the Seven Communes (or Asiago) - about eight square km. The heights of the mountains are between 1200 and 1500 meters. One passes through the Vezzena Pass to connect



Luserna, the Altopiano and peaks of the Brenta Dolomites

with the Lavarone Plateau. The mountains are therefore not very high and the landscape reminds us of the action of the Quaternary glaciers that leveled the reliefs and dug deep grooves. Much of the mountain and road trails were transformed during the First World War.

Passing through these places, we can still clearly see the traces of war: forts, outposts, trenches. On the peak of Cima Campo (1549 m) there are the ruins of the Fort Luserna (Werk Luserna), built by the Austro-Hungarian army between 1908 and 1912; the place is easily reached by a walk or even by mountain bike. Not far away you can also visit the outpost Oberwiese (1517 m), an impor-



The Village of Luserna located in the Altopiano-Highlands



Trail indicators for the various wood and mountain trails

tant military observatory on the Astic Valley. Other hiking paths are the Malgas, such as Malga Campo, Malga Millegrobbe and other smaller ones.

Since 1977, at the Malga (mountain dairy) Millegrobbe there is an important international cross country race where the best athletes in the world participate. The main attractions for the involved tourists are hiking, cross-country skiing and mountain .Mountaineering is missing since these summits are too low and too easily accessed. Since the beginning of 1800 these mountains attracted numerous botanists like Pietro Cristofori (1817) and Ciro Pollini (in 1821). Pietro Cristofori provides us with an interesting commentary on the wild character of these places: "While I was collecting herbs, I suddenly realized that a very large quadruped was facing me. At first glance I thought it was a big dog, but I noticed immediately after that it was a wolf. "

Today there are numerous family walking routes, such as the "Imaginary Cymbal Trail" (Nà in Tritt von Sambinélo), which starts from Luserna and reaches Malga Campo, 200 meters high, and taking about 2 hours and half. Along the path you will find wood carvings and signs relating some traditional legends of the area

To discover the history of these places, there is an interesting thematic itinerary "Path of the Great War: From Stories to History"; The difficulty, 200 meters and two hours of walking, is similar to the previous path, which can be traversed by everyone, The path starts from the square of Luserna and leads to panoramic views, through a trail on which twenty-eight metallic figures depicting and relating the story of the Luserna population during the war. Among the figures, we find shepherds, women and teenagers who brought food to the workers who were building the fortifications and many other personal stories that might better tell the deeper reality of the war. Written by Ricardo di Carli, Biblioteca della Montagna, Trento

# Il Tombolo-The Art of Lacemaking

The art of bobbin lace making has a long history at Luserna. Here, in 1883, the Viennese Ministry of Instruction founded a professional School of Lace Making with a three year curriculum. It did so in response to a campaign waged by the curate of the town, Francesco Zuchristian and Franz Xavier Mitteter, the pastor of Proves, one of the four communities in the High Val of Non. This ambitious project was an effort to better the living conditions of many families, giving them a source of income selling the laces made at the school.

The teachers were chosen from among the better students, who perfected their skills at the Center for Lace at Vienna. This Center provided designs, samples and materials and also saw to the sale of the laces produced. The courses at the school in Luserna were taught in German. The number of students increased over the years to 60, requiring a second teacher. Despite many difficulties, the school continued for more than forty years. In 1911, the town, including the school building, was almost completely destroyed, but classes were relocated to an undamaged building.

With the start of the First World War, Luserna found itself on the border between Austria and Italy and the population was evacuated, with most refugees transferred to northern Bohemia. Fortunately, in this area, lace was very popular, so that the lace makers among the refugees could continue working and selling their product, thus improving their financial condition.

It was not until 1919 that the refugees could return to Luserna. What they found was a bombed out community. The returning inhabitants, male and female alike, had



Lacemaking is a happy task!



to dedicate themselves to the slow and difficult process of reconstruction. In this period, the Italian government stepped in to reorganize the administration of the previously Austrian towns. The schools were reopened, including many of the lace making schools that had been established in the region. But, despite the appeal of the mayor, the school at Luserna was not revived. Perhaps this was because the community was not fast enough in rebuilding a schoolhouse, or perhaps because the schoolteacher had been hurriedly



pensioned because of her prewar anti-Italian stance. These difficulties in producing and marketing the laces meant that the women of Luserna were forced to leave their town to work abroad, or in the cities and tourist centers of Italy. They worked as governesses, cooks, and waitresses. Little by little, lace production became a strictly family activity - for the adornment of a bride's dowry, for instance. Only a few women, mostly widows and the elderly - were able to earn a modest living making lace. Some works were even displayed in Austria,



Lacemaking samples





Luserna's Lace Makers

thanks to the collaboration of the Verein Klappeln und Textile Spitenkunst of Austria.

In February of 2013, a group called the Cultural Association of Lace Making in Luserna was organized with the aim of safeguarding, promoting and spreading the art of making lace, throughout Italy and abroad. It sponsors cultural events such as fairs and organizes practical demonstrations and tours of the schools. In 2015, Luserna inaugurated a museum exhibiting the bobbin laces and the history of the schools of the pre-World War I era.

Established in 1996, the Cimbri Institute of Luserna has organized courses in bobbin lace making, with the hope



Samples of Luserna's lacemaking

of reviving this traditional work, which was about to disappear because only a few elderly women remained engaged in it. Until now, the course has been completed by about twenty women of various ages. The instruction starts with the basic stitches and proceeds through various skill levels until the students are capable of executing the traditional designs of the Central Course of Vienna. In the last few years, the local lace makers have been invited to display their laces in local and regional exhibitions and even at some major centers such as the Civic Museum of Arts in Modena, the International Forum of Textile Arts in Parma, the State Library of Gorizia and the Civic Museum of Slovenia.

## Dokumentationszentrum Lusérn

**W** The Documentation Center of Luserna – The Center begun in 1996 conducts research to better understand and appreciate the history and significance of the Cimbrian experience. To this end, it collects and preserves historical documents that focus on Luserna and its highlands highlighting the ancient settlements of their people, their experience of wars, the displacement of its people, their forced evacuations and emigration, the historical cruel “ozioni” options imposed on them by the Italian government, and the development of their settlements. For many years, the Center has organized large annual exhibitions that feature themes such as the Cimbri Community, the fortifications of the highlands, the “Great War” (World War I), pre-historic metal working, the fauna of the highlands, the art of lace making, the classic Cimbri houses of Haus von Prukk and the house studio of the artist Martin Pedrazza. Thanks to its exhibitions and guided tours, the Luserna



Documentation Center of Luserna

Documentation Center enhances the visitor's cultural knowledge and enrichment and engenders an appreciation of the linguistic minorities. With over 12,000 yearly visits, the Cimbri museum is considered one of the cultural treasures in the Province. Written by Valentina Nicolussi Castellan, Documentation Center

# Scholars Examine Cimbri...

**A** Despite its relatively small size, the Trentino, once the Tyrol includes an incredible variety of linguistic traditions many of which are still alive today. Few people, however, know that some sixty kilometers south of Trento, in the mountains beyond Valsugana, on the border with the Veneto, an entire location named Luserna (Lusérn) speaks a Germanic language that originates directly from medieval German, and of its many of the original characteristics. The Trentino is today the last bastion where this ancient language still resounds...alive in the streets and in the mouths of children.

But there was an time not very long when Luserna was but one of the many places in a very extensive Cimbri world spread throughout the areas between the Adige and Brenta rivers. Today this world is distributed in three provinces: Trento, Vicenza and Verona. There are two other linguistic Cimbri islands in addition to Luserna documented in history, where the language and toponymastics survived. These islands are the Altopiano d'Asiago (Vicenza) and the country of Giazza (Verona), both located in Veneto. In Bavarian monastery of Benediktbeuern, one finds the first documented events dating back to the beginning of the 11th century. Following a famine, a group of colonists are sent to the Veronese mountains by virtue an agreement between ecclesiastical authorities who were the territorial authorities as well. The analysis of historical/linguistic features of the Cimbri fully confirms its high-medieval origins, a thousand years ago, as well as its predominantly Bavarian dialectal matrix. In the centuries following the first settlements, the German-speaking communities quickly expanded on the vast mountainous territories of the Venetian and Venetian and Tyrol Pre-Alps straddling the Vicentine plain. A 14th-century Vicenza scholar, Ferretto dei Ferretti, poetically defined his city as "Cymbria". In those centuries the Cimbri were a well-known ethno-linguistic reality in northeastern Italy. Foresters and shepherds provided the timber needed to build the famous naval navy fleet of Venice and provided the wool that, sold on the Vicenza market, giving a start and an impetus to the first textile industry in the Venetian city. The Cimbri had formed themselves in communities with a form of self-government, which even the mighty Republic of Venice always had to respect. The Church also understood the cultural specificity of the Cimbrian territories, so that in 1602 the bishop of Padua, Marco



Cimbri in festive folk clothes

Cornaro printed the Catechism not in the literary German already in use for some time in Germany and Austria but in the Cimbrian language for the faithful of the Plateau of Asiago. Nor was it published in Italian; since, as he himself stated, "they speak in German, so that women, children and many people still have no cognition of speaking Italian." The Cimbri maintains characteristics of the German language of the "preindustrial" period while Mocheno has been most affected by the Tyrolean influence and the development of the German language. Fundamentally, Luserna's population has always been aware of speaking an ancient German, but it has never been termed "Cimbri" until recently. The Province of Trento has officially adopted this nomenclature derived Institute, the Cimbri Institute - Kulturinstitut Lusérn (1987). The three surviving linguistic islands have developed rather marked differences over time, yet they do not compromise mutual intelligibility of the language among them. It is widely argued that the variety of the Asiago plateau (Seven Communes) maintains more faithfully the characteristics of the German of the Upper Middle Ages. In this sense it can simply be said, that the spelling of the Seven Communes is a bit the matrix or the mother of the other two varieties. One simple way of verifying the statement just made is to measure the state of preserving of the final syllables in the three varieties cimbri, in relation to German one thousand years ago

Ancient	7 Communi	Giazza	Luserna	Meaning
sunna	sunna	sunde	sun	sun
garta	garto	garte	gart	garden
erda	erda	earde	earde	earth
namo	namo	name	Nam	name

\* High German-VIII-XII centuries

Written by Luca Panieri, Professor of Germanic languages,  
University of Milan



# Luserna: An Ode...A Love Story

**I** *Editor's note: Yet another song that reveals the intimate connection our people with their villages and community life and the pain of inevitable separations to find work and support their families.*



Cimbri Polyphonic Chorale of Luserna

The song is dedicated to our country of Luserna; a picture of the magnificent landscape surrounding it (the plateau, the woods and meadows, many hours of sunshine) with the description of life and work done by our people. But the most striking is the sense of belonging to the country (da ista moi Luserna - here is my country with that "mine" particularly emphasized) and its people who speak the Cimbri, (da biar ren di zimbar zung - qui noi parliamo il Cimbri. Unfortunately for reasons of work we must leave the country and then the fear of not being able to see it again saddens us determined to believe not to forget it but to remember it everywhere wheresoever the necessities of life should bring us. Text and music are from our own companion: Nicolussi Zatta Adolfo

An hoachan baitn perge  
bisan, etzan un balt  
groas di sunn in hümbel  
hat ditza klumma länt  
is vintze gänz vort bait vo alln  
un hat no a zung vor üs  
da biar ren di zimbar zung  
da steata moi Lusern

I grüaste moine huamat  
i grüaste liabes moi Lusern  
haüt moche bidar gian vort  
bartede bidar seng?  
ma i gedenkte herta  
bobrall bo de bart gian  
ia s'is nindart schümma  
schümma as be ka diar

Di männen machan haüsar  
un gian vort von länt  
di baibar no in bisan, in ekhar un in holz  
di kindar vür pin khüa  
bal sa net gian ka schual  
un bal da kint dar summar  
alle gian no in sbem

I grüaste moine huamat .....

An elevated and vast highland  
Meadows, pastures and woods  
This tiny village has  
A great sun in the sky  
It finds itself far from everything  
It conserves for ever a language for us  
Here we speak Cimbri  
Here lies my Lusern

I salute of my country  
I salute my dear Lusern  
Today I must leave again  
Will I see you again?  
Wherever I will go  
Yes! No other place is as beautiful  
Beautiful as you are!

The men construct house  
And leave the village  
The women work the meadows  
They work the fields and gather wood  
The children lead the cattle to graze  
When they are not at school  
And when summer arrives  
Everyone go searching for mushrooms

I salute you my country....

The Cimbri Polyphonic Chorale of Luserna began in 1992 offering not only mountain songs and popular songs but also with Cimbri songs with the cultural and linguistic reality of Luserna and its evident German origin. It is the smallest of the three recognized linguistic minorities of the Province of Trento. Thus Chorale is therefore characterized by its cultural specificity both from an aesthetic point of view and for the songs in the Cimbri language recovered from the oral tradition or elaborated ex novo. The Chorale's uniform is reminiscent of the typical celebratory and festive costume. In its 25 years, it has been featured in many concerts and exhibitions both at regional and national level as well as abroad. The Chorale is led by Maestro Nadia Nicolussi Paolaz and consists of 18 elements including colleagues and colleagues of other Choirs of the plateau. The Chorale has produced several CD's of their repertoire.

# La Malga-The Alpine Dairy...

**A**griculture in the mountains is not the agriculture of the plains. First of all, only about a quarter of mountain land can be cultivated. The rest is either infertile ( rocks, torrents and lakes) or it is covered in forests or alpine meadows. These meadows are found above the timberline where trees cannot grow and grass springs up late in the year and has little time to mature, with snow returning as early as August. This grass can not be cut down and stored for the winter, but it is grass that animals can graze on throughout the summer.

And so the mountain people learned how to take advantage of those meadows, because their fields alone would not yield enough food for all. Every year, in May or June, shepherds gathered all the cows, sheep and goats and lead them up into the meadows. And there they remained until August – or even later if it did not snow. During that time, in the valley, the peasants, relieved of the care of their animals, can 'make hay' cutting down the grasses in their fields two or three times and thoroughly dry the bales of hay for the winter.

The alpine meadows, the shelters for the shepherds and the animals, along with the sheds used for processing the milk, were called a 'malga'. The malga was community property – it belonged to all the people of the village which brought its animals there. Some villages had several malga's; others had no malga of its own and was forced to rent that of another village. At any rate, there were many malgas; at the end of the nineteenth century, there were 584 such stations in the Trentino and they covered about 440,000 acres. In those years, 34,000 heads of cattle, 76,000 sheep, 14,000 goats and 4000 pigs were led to that high pasture. Occasionally, some oxen

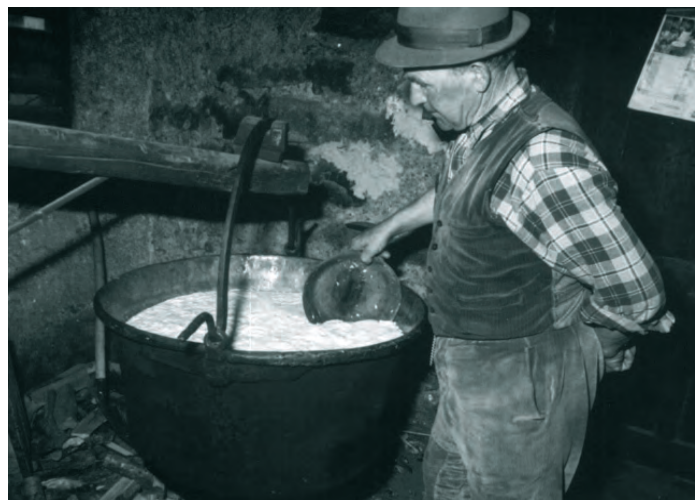


Cows pasturing in the Alpine pastures of Val di Sole and horses might join them.

For centuries, all decisions regarding management of the malga were made by the villagers in a general meeting. This assembly ruled on all matters concerning the construction or repair of the shelters and the maintenance of the access route. It determined when the meadows needed to be purged of random weeds. It also named the individuals who would hire the shepherds and supervise their work. Lastly, it established the date on which the animals were to be led up to the malga. On that day, all the villagers were required to turn their animals over to the shepherds. Failure to do so incurred a fine. This was because the funds to pay the shepherds were collected from the villagers. So, if everyone participated, the sum each villager paid was lower. And, when the animals were up in the malga, there was no danger of them entering and damaging the fields or the gardens planted below. The assembly also decided the day on which the animals could return to the village and no one villager could retrieve his animals earlier without permission from the assembly. After milking, the cows were led out to pasture and their stalls were cleaned.



Milking time in a mountain Malga



Cheese production at the Malga



The cows could not graze wherever they liked; they were watched and herded to various parts of the meadow, so that all the grass was evenly grazed. While the cows ate, the shepherds had breakfast – usually a slice of cold polenta with an egg, or some cheese. Then the butter and cheese were made. The butter was made with the cream skimmed from the top of the milk collected the previous evening. The remaining skim milk was added to the whole milk collected that morning and turned into cheese and ricotta.

At noon, the shepherds ate their main meal and then rested. In the late afternoon, the cows were herded to their stalls and milked. Then there was firewood to be cut and the other animals to attend to. The day ended with supper, a little chit-chat and finally bed!



Cows pasturing above Luserna

At the end of August, the shepherds closed the malga, leading all the animals down to town and handing each back to its owner. Now it was time for accounting. The shepherds were paid the agreed-upon sum, either in currency or in butter and cheese. The remaining products from the malga were divided among the villagers.

However, the malga was not important because of the milk and cheese

produced there. Rather it was important because it allowed the peasants to produce enough hay during the summer and stock it for winter use. Without this hay one simply could not sustain the animals during the winter. And without cows, there would be no milk for the people and no manure for the fields. Without the malga, life in the mountains would have been much more difficult. Written by Luca Faoro, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina



The Malga cheeses being prepared

### The Festa del Disontegar

When the season of the alpine pasturing concludes, the cattle descend with a wonderful community rite referred to as the “desmontegada” which literally means..” the coming down from the mountain”. The pride of the “contadini” is still celebrated with a great parade, a long and colorful procession that is very much in evidence in the historic centers of Primiero and Canazei. The processing animals, cows, goats, horses are adorned with flowers and ornaments and are accompanied by their breeders often in folk costumes to the delight of the area people and visitors. At the conclusion, there are area dishes and treats to conclude the festivity..



Cows returning during the Feast of the Desmontegada in Primiero and Bleggio of the Val delle Giudicarie

# Nos Dialet . . . Our Dialect # 16

**W**ith this issue focusing on Luserna, we will have visited with the trinity of our linguistic minorities having presented the Ladini of the Val di Fassa, the Mocheni of the Val dei Mocheni...and now the Cimbri of Luserna. Of course, there is the German speaking population of the South Tyrol or the Alto Adige. Their annexation to an Italian state was indeed a difficult and painful one due to the concerted nationalism of the Italian government and subsequently it's Fascism. The differences and diversity of these minorities as well as the South Tyrolean were not respected. In fact, German was prohibited and Italian imposed in the South Tyrol. During the 22 years of Fascism, history curricula were changed or simply distorted to conform to the hyperbolic grandiosity of Fascism diminishing or simply eliminating the factual 1000 years of Tyrolean history. In a parallel way, the rest of the Province there was an active process of Italianization. One of the results was an ignoring or simply a denigration of the dialect as a legitimate form of communication. However, this was not the case with our emigrants who left prior to the annexation like my dad and the dialect was their parlance to stay connected to their paesani, I nossi, our people as well as to comfortably remain separated from the Italians. The Filò does not presume that it actually can teach the dialect but it presents its words, expressions since it was very form and logic of their essential and vital dialogue with family and paesani, hence it links us to them..our people.

Please make the effort to go the website to hear the sounds and nuances of how our people communicated. Website: <http://www.museosanmichele.it/alfabeto-delle-cose/> where you can hear different sounds of the dialect

## COMPARISONS

The importance of comparisons (Beautiful as...; Sleep like... Ugly as... have been from time immemorial the significant way that a linguistic community interprets their realities

Bon come il pan	Good as bread
Furebo come na volp	Smart as a fox
Cattif come l'ai	Bad as garlic
Strach come n asan	Tired as a mule
Scur come boca del lof	Dark as the mouth of a wolf
Nar d'accordo come en can e gat	Get along like a cat and a dog
Fumar come en camin	Smoke like a chimney
Poret en sas	Poor as a rock



## DIALECT SHOW & TELL La Casa

Houses throughout the Tyrol had come features or nomenclatures..Let's look to the illustrations on the opposite page, observe their labels of the items. Starting from the top and going left to right...We will cite the dialectal word in the illustration and translate literally it into English.

### TOP

Finestra-window	Casa-house	Ala del quert-Wing of the roof
Barcon, balcon, scur-Shutter	Faciada-facade	Scaiera-attic drying rack
Trapasin, trepasin-latch	Camin-chimney	Stagia ferma bacon-Shutter lock
Portafior-flower box	Quert, coert-roof	Pontera-ramp
Gronda-gutter	Sparangola-railing	Palacar, paracar-Austrian granite pillars
Mur-Wall	Fenada, enfenada-grating	

### BOTTOM

Forn-bread oven	Volt-Vault	Piat della luce-light reflector
Lampion-Lantern	Arcada, arch, volc-arcade	Porta-door
Pont da era-bridge upper floor	Remenat-Cross beam	Colondel-Supporting door columns
Bus della ciaf-key hole	Snol-lock handle	Cesera, ciasera-
Campanel-bell	Il fil della luce-light wire	Menarola-lock





The illustrations opposite are those of Helen Lageder; they appear in the *Dizionario del Dialetto di Montagne di Trento* by Corrado Grassi, produced and distributed by the Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, San Michele all'Adige



# Chini-Explorer Extraordinaire

**T**he title of this article could have been...Chini the Cartographer. But how can one separate Chini's cartography from his exploring. In fact, you cannot but there would be even a greater separation by trying to separate both his exploring and cartography from his apostolic mission to extend the "rim of Christendom". They were tools to accomplish his apostolate, his missionary work for his people and his Jesuit order. What made this extraordinary man tick? Simply..his faith!



Fr. Eusebio Chini traveled 20,000 miles on horseback spreading Christianity and charting the territory

sularity of California, specifically the Baja. His 1710 map, conclusively proved that California was not an island as well as proving the shape and position of the Baja. While these two findings were exceptional, he scientifically illustrated the relative position of the main Colorado and Gila rivers; the correct location of the upper Sonora and lower Arizona streams, valleys and mountains; the rediscovery of the insular nature of Tiburon; the pioneer discovery of the Angel de la Guarda Island; a far more exact location of the Rio

He established eight missions, fifteen mission visiting stations, each with an agricultural infrastructure, constituting 23 human settlements. He made scientifically accurate maps traversing 20,000 miles. He personally met and became friendly with the Indian chiefs of the North West asking permission to enter their territories and inviting them to see the advantages that he was offering them. The sequence of his missionary activities was quite difference than other missionaries...and explorers. His missionary method was essentially to accept the indigenous people as they are and not as we dreamed they should be. He first believed that there has to be an antecedent of friendship prior to conversion. He would say that his Indians must eat and live well before becoming a Christian. It was a strategy of respect and Christian patience to understand who they were and what they could become.

While still in Europe, Chini had studied mathematics and cartography at the universities of Inghostadt and Fribourg opening the doors to Imperial China as did his relative Martino Martini from Mori, a Jesuit who became the Father of Chinese Geography. Arriving in 1697, this "padre on horseback", explored and chartered the Northwestern Spanish America and the Southwestern United States that included lower California, New Mexico and Arizona. He traveled thousands of miles through these vast territories. He wrote extensively about what he saw and accurately observed creating scientific maps that were sent to Europe for reproduction. For centuries, from legends and presumptions, California was presumed to be the largest island in the world situated west of the mainland. Nor was it known of the penin-

Grande del Norte flowing from New Mexico and emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. Most important, Kino prepares the way to rid Spanish American geography and its expression in world-wide cartography of the endless designations of non-existent, vague and shifting features and elements. The chart [Kino's 1710 Map] was reproduced with great accuracy by the world's outstanding map-makers, geographers and historians, with the result that for over a century and a half it was the standard cartographical representation of northwestern Spanish America and southwestern United States.

In brief summary, for twenty four years, Chini traveled 20,000 miles on horseback, diving into the waterholes and measuring the height of the sun with his astrolabe. In fifteen years, he wrote ten reports that demonstrate his strategy as missionary and the vast natural and human resources of northwestern Mexico (now the southwestern part of the United States). He illustrated his reports with thirty-one maps of the highest scientific quality, to convince Madrid and Rome of the enormous size of the Terra Incognita and its unlimited and natural and limited resources and to get more missionaries. Herbert Bolton, his biographer writes: "Eusebio Francisco Chini was the most picturesque missionary pioneer of North American-explorer, astronomer, cartographer, mission builder, ranchman, cattle king, and defender of the frontier. His biography is not merely the life story of a remarkable individual; it illuminates the culture of a large part of the Western Hemisphere in its pioneer stages." He was indeed a messenger of God, a man with a big heart and a true scientist...and truly our very own Tyrolean brother!!!!



# Where Saints Abide...

**Y**ou might think that this title is hyperbole or an inaccurate narrative...but it is certainly biblical. The early Christians expressed a sense of being a holy community and used this very vocabulary. They called everyone "saints", *hagioi* in Greek, a term that appears sixty times in the New Testament. Paul's letter gives witness to the widespread use of this term. "To all God's beloved in Rome who are called to be Saints", he writes, and "Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you."

Readers of the *Filò* should take notice of the on-going narrative of Fr. Eusebio Chini, a fellow *polentone*, who was truly our brother and a product of the Tyrol, that had been a feudal state of Prince Bishops for 800 consecutive years unlike the turmoil and blood shed of the papal feuds of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines throughout Italy. Chini, the prototype of our very first USA Tyrolean emigrant, arrived to our shores at the turn of 1700's and while the white Anglo Saxon Protestants in New England were burning witches, Eusebio, the world renown cartographer and astronomer, the agronomists, was evangelizing Mexico, Southern California, New Mexico and Arizona, traveling thousands of miles on horse back, preaching the gospel, championing the rights of his Indians, protecting them from the fierce Apaches and the potential European oppressors that would abuse and enslave them. Eusebio Chini's cause for canonization is being pursued while the USA declared him the Father of Arizona.

In a recent issue of the *Filò*, Margaret Rogel of Chicago brought to our attention her saintly relative, Don Bernardo Antonini, the Apostle to Russia. Don Bernardo originated from Cimego of the Val delle Giudicarie Inferiori or now called Val del Chiese. A diocesan priest whose pious and saintly life brought him to distant Russia where he re-established the Catholic community in the face of the resistance and obstruction of a Communist irreligious regime. He too like Chini is

being seriously considered by the church for canonization.

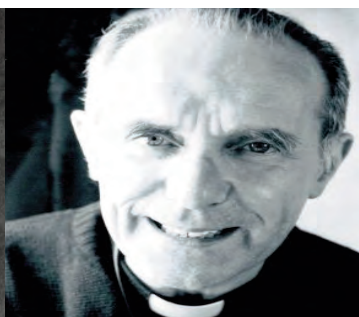
Yet another Tyrolean, Amabile Lucia Visintainer, born in Vigolo Vattaro of the Valsugana whose holy life was spent in Brazil has been already beatified. Beata Visintainer. She became the very first Brazilian to be canonized. Her immediate relatives abide in the United States...and are *Filò* subscribers. We will get back to her in future editions.

Mario Tarolli of Solvay, New York, brought to our attention the holy and saintly life of Don Domenico Tarolli who like Don Bernardo, originated from the same Val delle Giudicarie Inferiori...from the village of Castel Condino. A diocesan priest of the Trento diocese, left with the encouragement of the pope for distant Burma where he preached the gospel, made converts, established churches leaving an example of holiness and service. He, too, has joined the ranks of our people being considered for canonization. Mario's brother Vittorino from Bono in the Val delle Giudicarie accompanied Bishop Bressan to explore the work Don Tarolli in Burma. We will indeed return to Don Tarolli's life, ministry and service.

With both objectivity and with biblical assurance, let me ask...how about the Tyrolean woman? Consider this... Our people were so poor that their men folk had to leave their households and travel through Europe and here to the USA to find work for their families...Left behind was *la mamma*...who had to take care of the household, the noni, the children, the fields, the animals, the laundry, the cooking...and the spiritual guidance of those left to her care. How did they ever do it...yet they did. I am hoping to find among us persons that provide us with definitions, expositions of these marvelous persons, the heart and bed rock of our families. Truly our sisters... truly our saints!



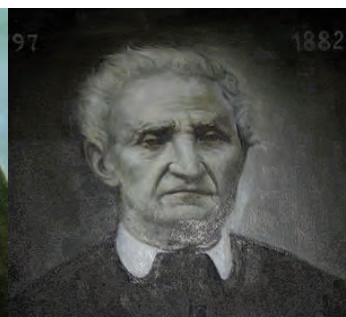
Fr. Eusebio Chini



Don Bernardo Antonini



Beata Visintainer



Don Domenico Tarolli

# I Proverbi:Cimbri Wisdom Stories

**T** Like our people in all our valleys, the proverb was often the coin of communication, the exchange of their insights as they met whether it was at the fontana, in the fields or the osteria. They were sent to me by Valentina Nicolussi of Luserna along with their Italian translation. Should I include the Italian? Mmmm? Let's display the Cimbri of our brother and sisters...and demonstrate how different and exceptional our people were!!!! These proverbs were gathered from the Volume "Lusérn in an stroach ista gest...", from the volume "Die deutsche Sprachinsel Lusern" published in Innsbruck in 1905 by the Pastor Josef Bacher who was the pastor of Lusern from 1893 to 1899. Pastor Bacher besides being a diligent clergyman was keenly interested in the study of Cimbri language, to their history and culture. In that volume, he gathered 47 stories typical of Lusern.



Pastor Josef Bacher

"Boinichtn in schnea, Oastarn in khlea." – Christmas with snow; spring with glover.

"Dar vinkh vinkht, dar schnea iz da." - Il fringuello "fringuella ", la neve è qua.

"Sant'Andrea augemischtt pitt schnea." - Sant'Andrea "mescolato" con la neve.

"A Santa Kataròin boazpar nèt bidarda bart soinn, ma a Sant'Andrea saibar sichar augemischtt pitt schnea." – On St. Catherine's day we do not know what we will have, but on St. Andrew's day we are sure that it will snow.

"Beda dar mà hatt an groazan kroas, 'z bèttar gitt um." – When the moon has a great halo, the weather worsens.

"Z izta di sunn und renk, dar täüvl hatt geschlakh soi baibe." – It is raining and the Devil beats his wife.

"San Paul konvers, kheart di burtz zuar dar khèrsch." - San Paolo convertito, la radice si volge alla ciliegia.

"Balda krakn di kre khint dar bint." – When the crows crow, the wind arrives.

"Bi 'z tondart in aprile soinda no hintar nönn tage bintar." – When it thunders in April, there are still nine days of winter.

"Balda schèrtzan di khüa, barnensa a schaüla bèttar." – When the cows jump, they see bad weather.

"A khnott boda rodlt bart nia machan rakh." – A rock that rolls does not gather moss. "Balda di khatz velt di maüs tantzan. Azpe di altn hām gesunk, asò visplnda di djungen." – When the cat is missing, the mice dance. Such sang our elders. Such whistle young people.

"Du mochst sparn pan lukh, ombrómm atn pon iz karza spet." – You should save when are still at the lid because when reach the bottom (of the pot), it is too late.

"Z baibe boda nèt straitet, dar hunt boda nèt pèlt, di khatz boda nèt vānk maüs, mochtmase nèt haltn in haus." – The woman that does not complain, the done that does not bark, the cat that does not catch mice, should not be kept in the house.

"Rümbl rümbl berda eppaz gitt geat in hümb!; räubl räubl berda nicht gitt geat kan täüvl." – Heaven, heaven, he who gives something, goes to heaven, cabbage, cabbage, he who gives nothing goes to the devil.

"Vil töala, khlummane öarla." – Many parts mean small ears (there are many mouths to feed)

"Z èstle berdaz vinnt un di vögela berdase nimmt." – Who finds the nest, takes the birds as well.

## ATTENTION: MOMS & DAD...AUNTS & UNCLES.....!!!!

If you cherish and embrace your heritage...if you understand the link and significance of being culturally literate to become culturally aware to become culturally identified, then consider registering your children, nieces and nephews for the Filò. There is no charge but the information is priceless... Prompt your children, nieces and nephews, and Tyrolean friends to register either by mail - Filò, PO Box 90, Crompond, NY 10517 Fax: 914-734-9644; Phone: 914-739-2313 or on-line at the website: [www.filo.tiroles.com](http://www.filo.tiroles.com)...Remember who we are is *who we were!*





## Our Partners are . . .

Alberto Chini, President of Father Eusebio Chini Museum, Segno Italy  
 Alberto Folgheraiter- Author, journalist and specialist in Trentino culture, Trento  
 Christian Brunelli. Teacher & Technical Consultant, Peekskill, NY  
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My climbing companions, my Maria and Joseph  
 somewhere between Rifugi Tuckett-Brentei

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## Some Images...

When space needs to be filled, permit me to share some glimpses of “cose mie” regarding my heritage...



1968-That's my boy! My mom Adele and I on Monte Spinale with the Brenta Dolomites.



My very proud Tyrolean Father Agostino hoisting a just found Stella Alpina...Edelweiss



A picnic with several of my children enjoying the Dolomitic paradise of the Brenta



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