The odds of a sixty seven year old adoptee finding his birth mom is slim. For George Bradley, finding her alive was as wonderful as it was unlikely. In 2012 he met his mother, Santa Di Dolce Steele, for the first time. It was celebrated by both families who are now united. She lived in peace and with joy until she passed in March of 2016.

George Bradley initially contacted the Harris family in October of 2012; Santa Steele’s son-in-law took the call. George identified himself as Santa’s son and proceeded to give him details surrounding his birth. Rusty discussed the shocking revelation with his wife Debbie, cautious about how revealing the news might affect her eighty-seven year old mother. Debbie was shaking from head to toe about the news, having absolutely no idea whether any of this was true.

George explained that he had no intention of creating any disturbance in anyone’s life and that he would understand if Santa did not want to speak with him. He explained that several years earlier his children began to encourage him to try to locate his birth mother. His daughter, Stefanie, did the initial investigative work and eventually hired a private agency to complete the task. The agency took just two days to locate his mom and, miracle of miracles, she was alive. They were able track Santa to Roselle Park, New Jersey where she was living with her daughter’s family.

Photographs that George sent showed a strong resemblance to Santa and her family. With no doubts Debbie approached her mother with the news. Her mom was not surprised and sensed something was up because of a strange phone call she had received the day before asking her to confirm her identity and questioning if she had given birth on May 28, 1947 in the Home for Unwed Mothers and Wayward Women in Clinton, New Jersey.

Santa fell completely apart at the news that George, who was living in Nebraska, had contacted them and through her tears, told Debbie and Rusty that she had a good life. He grew up in Kenilworth and Woodbridge, New Jersey. He attended college in South Dakota and moved to Randolph, Nebraska where he taught high school English. It was there that he met and married his wife, Sherry, and raised their three children, Stefanie, Nick and Christopher. It was after hearing that George was a retired high school teacher that Santa looked up at Debbie and said, “I did the right thing, didn’t I? I would have never been able to give him that kind of life.”

Santa called George and it was the first time that she was able to speak with her son since the day of his birth, when, shortly afterward, he was taken from her and she would not see him again for another 67 years.

Plans were made for the entire Bradley family to come to New Jersey to meet Santa and the family. On December 2, 2012, George and Sherry made the trip from Nebraska, joined by their daughter, Stefanie and her husband and two daughters, Christopher and his wife, Laura, and son, Nick with his daughter. The next five days were a whirlwind with sisters and brother meeting, nieces and nephews meeting their newfound uncle and his family, cousins meeting one another and friends of the family meeting and welcoming George and his entire family. There were daily lunches and dinners together and the trip was celebrated with a huge gathering in Michelino's Restaurant on the night before the Bradleys were scheduled to return to Nebraska.

Since 2012, George and Sherry have visited regularly, as well as three of his sisters making the trip out to Nebraska. This was, to Santa’s family, the grandest finale for her. She was finally freed from the secret that she had kept to herself for all those years. She was able to pass away knowing that her son was fine and all the unanswered questions about him were now answered. For George, the void was filled. He had met and gotten to know his biological mother and the four sisters that he did not know he had. It filled the lives of all involved with new found love.
Dear Joe Renna, Publisher,

I got a subscription to your newspaper for a cousin of mine who is a native of Elizabeth. She is now living in Manchester, New Jersey. She is confined to a wheelchair and reading about old times and old friends is great recreation for her. She would really enjoy receiving your newspaper.

Sincerely,
Gloria Pasquale
Short Hills, NJ

Dear Joe & Tina Renna

My grandparents, Vincenzo and Carmella Navarro came to America from Ribera, Sicily. They settled in Peters town on Second Avenue where he raised my father John and his brother Gus. My parents were married in St. Anthony’s Church.

I have many memories of Peters town, Saraencos’, Sutera’s, Simonio’s, etc. I celebrated my “Sw eet 16” birthday at Spirito’s. I will now take my children and grandchildren there for my 64th birthday. Your Peters town Book helps them to know Peters town the way I knew it.

Sincerely,
Carmella (Navarro) Briscese
East Brunswick, NJ
November 17, 1925 - March 11, 2016

On March 7, 2016, Santa Di Dolce Steele passed away at Father Hudson House, Elizabeth, New Jersey, after a brief illness, at the age of 90. Santa was lucky enough to live a long and relatively healthy life and for that her family is very grateful. They are keenly aware of how fortunate there were to have had her in their lives for so very long.

Santa was born in Peterstown, the youngest child of Sicilian immigrants, Concetta Romano Di Dolce and Giuseppe Di Dolce. She was predeceased by all of her siblings, Salvatore Di Dolce, Carmela Di Dolce Lieb, Maria Di Dolce Tracy, Giovanni Di Dolce, Paolina Di Dolce Sevinsky and Francesco Di Dolce. She remained a resident of Peterstown for most of her life where she raised her daughters, Diana Friedman, Debbie Harris, Donna Garry and Denise Konca.

Santa was a fixture on Third Avenue, having lived at 807 Third Avenue for over 37 years. Most Burg residents knew that she lived upstairs from the late Sarah and Jimmy Malta, where on the same block lived the Manetta’s, the Zampella’s, the Navarro’s and the Belmont Baio’s. Across the street were the Sacco’s, the Giuliano’s, the Esposito’s – not to mention Saraceno’s Bakery and, of course, Sacco’s Meat Market.

Like many of the women of Peterstown, Santa found employment with Manheim Manufacturing on Spring Street, where she remained for over 21 years until the place suddenly closed its doors one Friday afternoon and those women all found themselves out of a job.

It was a few years after that time that Santa moved to Roselle Park, where she resided for over 26 years with her daughter and son-in-law, Debbie and Rusty Harris, and their three children. During the time that she lived in Roselle Park, Santa made it back to Peterstown to the Retired Men’s and Women’s Club meeting whenever she could.

At age 87, Santa was blessed to be reunited with her son, George Louis Bradley, who she was forced to give up for adoption shortly after his birth. In 2012, George and his family began the search for his biological mother and were beyond ecstatic to find her alive and well. Soon after, the entire Bradley family traveled from Nebraska and California for the mother and child reunion. To say it was joyful was an understatement, and Santa’s family will be forever grateful that she was given the blessing of meeting and getting to know her only son.

Santa also was predeceased by her sons-in-law, Douglas Friedman and Russell (Rusty) Harris. She is survived by her son, George and his wife, Sherry; daughters, Diana Friedman, Deborah Harris, Donna Garry and her partner, Donald Dpecynski, and Denise Konca and husband, Andrew. She is also survived by 11 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.}

Thanks to Debbie Harris for sharing her mom’s story and writing a beautiful narrative used for the cover story and obituary above.
ADVERTISERS’ INDEX

If you like the paper, please thank an advertiser. The businesses that advertise in this paper make it possible to print. You can show your appreciation for their support by patronizing their business's. If they keep advertising, we will keep printing.

Advertising starts at $60 for a business card size ad, up to $600 for a full page. Anyone interested in placing an ad can contact Tina Renna at (908) 418-5586.

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On March 20, 2016, the Union Township Historical Society hosted a presentation given by Joe and Tina Renna about The Peterstown Book. The event was well attended and a lively discussion was had about the history of the neighborhood. The event took place at the historic Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church, on Stuyvesant Avenue in Union. Quite a few attendees had roots in Elizabeth and Peterstown and had many of their own stories to share.

Joe and Tina Renna are available to speak if any organization is interested in hosting a presentation. Call Joe at 908-447-1295.

IT’S ON!!! BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

Sons of Peterstown is hosting a BABY BOOMER PARTY
For all those Peterstown folks born post WWII but not their kids
Saturday, June 25, 2016
5:00 pm til 10:00 pm
Peterstown Community Center
Palmer Street and Fourth Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ
$40.00 per person - Pay at the door (cash only)
R.S.V.P. by June 15th.

Help us with a head count
Register on Facebook / Peterstown NJ Baby Boomer Party event page

Contact Dennis Horin
email: burg1947@aol.com
or Joe Marino
email: jagimarino@aol.com
or Tommy Carr
email: tommycarr3@yahoo.com

Food, Music & All Your Schoolyard Friends

April 16
MAKING CONNECTIONS AT UNION BOOK SIGNING

Barbara Girgus attended the presentation of The Peterstown Book hosted by The Union Township Historical Society in March 2016. She was there with her father, Michael, who is now 94 years old.

Michael Girgus grew up in the Port section of Elizabeth and he had fond memories of friends who were from the Peterstown neighborhood. He played second base for the Mattano Club softball team, a social club located at 466 Third Avenue in Peterstown. He played for three years until he left to serve his country in the Pacific during World War II.

After getting married in 1951 he moved to Christine Street in Peterstown, and lived there for 10 years before moving to Clark, NJ.

Mike said that he never had pizza pie until he played for Mattanos but once he tried it he was hooked. When he moved to Christine Street he regularly went to Spirito's.

(above, l-r) Lorraine and Phillip Bartone get their copy of The Peterstown Book signed by Joe Renna an event hosted by the Union Township Historical Society.

PHOTOS ALBUMS OF PETERSTOWN EVENTS

Photos of Peterstown events like the Baby Boomer Party form 2009 can be found online at www.rennamedia.com and on the PeterstownNJ Facebook page.

Feel free to Like, Tag and Share.

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PETERSTOWN BOOK SPECIAL OFFER FOR BABY BOOMER PARTYGOERS

Anyone attending the Peterstown Baby Boomer Party on Saturday, June 25, 2016 will have the opportunity to purchase The Peterstown Book for half price, that is $25 including sales tax.

The Peterstown Book is the 100 year history of an Italian-American neighborhood

• 776 Oversized Pages
• Thousands of Photos
• Hundreds of Recipes

The Peterstown Book is the 100 year history of an Italian-American neighborhood told through stories about the people and families who lived there. The book records the oral history in danger of being lost and illustrates the traditions and customs of the community through thousands of photos, hundreds of recipes, and anecdotes shared by residents past and present.

The 100 year history of an Italian-American neighborhood

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SUBSCRIPTIONS
Don’t miss an issue! Have Around About Peterstown delivered to your home or office. Fill out the form below and mail it along with a check for $15.00 for 1 year subscription (6 issues) payable to: PETERSTOWN NEWSPAPER 202 Walnut Avenue, Cranford, NJ 07016.

Name: ____________________________________
Company: ________________________________
Address: __________________________________
________________________________________
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Karen Kotas, nee Iazzetta, is modest when speaking about her success. She owns and operates Dimensions Hair Salon in Avenel, New Jersey and is celebrating her twenty-fifth year in business. She gives all the credit for her success to her loyal customers and thanks them for her accomplishments. Some may argue that the opposite is more accurate, that her customers are loyal because she is so accomplished.

(left, l-r) Dimension’s Hair Salon staff, Denise (Steele) Konca, Cindy (Iazzetta) Kowalczyk, and Michele Joseph stand behind owner Karen (Iazzetta) Kotas.

Karen started styling hair while she was still in high school. She grew up on John Street in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth and attended Edison Technical High School and started to learn the craft. At fifteen years old she started to work at Salon Coiffures by Arthur, a neighborhood salon owned by Arthur DeMai who went into the business himself just a year earlier in 1973. She became a full-fledged stylist at Arthur’s in 1983. In 1985 Arthur moved the business to Avenel and Karen joined him there. In 1990 Karen purchased the salon from Arthur. She moved it a few doors away to 1256 St. Georges Avenue and has been servicing customers there ever since.

Karen's customers reflect her way of business. They are folks who value personal service, who want a stylist who they can trust and feel comfortable with. Karen's customers are loyal because she is loyal. A trait that the other stylists at her salon also share. Denise Konca, nee Steele, Michele Joseph, and Karen's sister Cindy Kowalczyk have all been with her since the beginning in 1985. Denise, like Arthur, was also a neighbor of Karen’s in Peterstown.

A testimony to the loyalty of her customers is reflected in the number of customers she has from Peterstown. Harriet LaFolla is the oldest and longest customer. Others like Josephine and Bella Piga have been going to Karen since her days in Elizabeth.

Dimensions is full-service salon catering to men and women, keeping up with the latest techniques and trends including Ombre, a hair coloring trend that is all the rage.

Dimensions is located at 1256 St. Georges Avenue, Avenel, N.J. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 732-636-6677.

THE ST. ANTHONY’S FAMILY FEAST - JUNE 9 TO 12, 2016

CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION, ROSELLE PARK, NJ

Once again it will be four days of faith, fun, family and friends, packed full of delicious homemade cooking, an Italian style Café, food vendors, a beer & wine garden, non-stop entertainment and music (your favorite performers are returning!), amusements, and games. The events, located on the Church grounds at 113 Chicago Place, Roselle Park, will begin on Thursday, June 9 and run through Sunday, June 12. Hours: Thurs 6-11PM, Fri 6-11PM, Sat 6-11PM, Sun 2-10PM.

These four days will be packed full of fun for everyone. Returning entertainment will be Thurs 6/9 from 8-10pm Nikki Beaur and the Sweet Bruer Band, Fri 6/10 from 8-10pm the Baron-Montemuro Duo, Sat 6/11 from 6-10pm The Jersey Four (Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons Tribute), Sun 6/12 from 7-9pm Dave DeLuca (Rat Pack Flashback). Also on Fri 6/10 from 6:00 – 6:30pm there will, once again, be a poetry program presented by Leona M Seufert. NJ 101.5 Big Yellow Prize Van will return on Sat. 6/11 from 6-9pm.

Karen thanks customers for 25 years of loyalty to Dimensions Hair Salon.

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The recent passing of my Uncle Rocco DePaola, on February 13, 2016, a World War II veteran and attorney who practiced law for 35 years in Elizabeth, whom also served as counsel for the Vallatese Club has offered up many shared memories of the legendary Peterstown.

As with the passing of any loved one, friends and family always reminisce and share memories. As the youngest of the seventeen grandchildren of Silvano and Nicoletta DePaola, from whom the roots of this family tree were planted, I always enjoy hearing these recollections which prompted me to share our story.

The DePaola Family’s seventy plus year history in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth began in 1913 when Patriarch, Silvano DePaola, immigrated to America from Vallata, Italy at the age of 22. Silvano settled in Peterstown where he met his wife, Nicoletta Magaletta and they married in 1919. Shortly after, Silvano and Nicoletta started their family of three girls Carmella, Annmarie and Lucille and four boys, Rocco, Anthony, Salvatore and Vito, all of which served in the military.

Silvano and Nicoletta raised their seven children in a small house at 409 Nile Street. Silvano passed away in 1955. Nicoletta resided in this house until her time of death in 1980. Thereafter, the DePaola family kept this residence in the family for a total of seventy years.

The eldest, Carmella born September 10, 1922, married Robert Farley and had a son, Robert Farley, Jr. and resided in Elizabeth until her time of death on May 8, 2005.

Annmarie, born May 13, 1925, married Vito Ternasano and had six children, John, Peter, Vito, Annmarie, Sally Ann and Patricia; she also resided in Elizabeth until her time of death on September 22, 1997.

Rocco, born November 22, 1926, served in the US Navy during World War II from 1943 to 1947, then attended and graduated Rutgers Law School in Newark. After passing the Bar he practiced law in Elizabeth for 35 years and also served as counsel for the Vallatese Club. Rocco married Joanne Damiano and remained married for over thirty years until the recent time of his death on February 13, 2016.

Anthony, born February 1, 1929, served in the US Army from 1943-1947. Anthony married Carmella and had two children, Deborah and Gregory. He was employed at Budweiser and could also be seen working at the fruit stand at the Elizabeth First Ave Market. Anthony resided in Elizabeth until the time of his death on November 9, 1994.

Salvatore, born October 15, 1930, served in the US Army from 1950-1952. Salvatore married Grace and had three daughters, Linda, Karen and Annette. He worked at the US Postal service and lived in Roselle Park until the time of his death on February 1, 2009.

Vito, born October 8, 1932, served in the US Army during the Korean War from 1953-1955. Vito married Bernadine and had two children, Mark and Cathy. He worked at the US Postal service, he is now retired and living in Colonia.

Lucille was born August 6, 1935. She was married to Roy Deloy and had three children, Douglas, Cheryl and Frank. She is retired and currently resides in San Francisco.

Over 70 years of roots in Peterstown’s tightknit community offers up many shared memories of feasts, First Avenue Market and family gatherings.

(above, l-r) Rocco, Lucielle, Salvatore, Bernadine, Vito, Nicoletta, Carmela, Anthony and AnnMarie.
Aldo Tripicchio and Mike Corbosiero have been working together in the insurance industry since 1977. They ventured out on their own and in 1986, moved their business to 33 Westfield Avenue in Clark, NJ. In 2003, they purchased a building at 95 Westfield Avenue where they still have their business. For Aldo and Mike, a big part of being in business is giving back to the community.

The Village Insurance owners make sure they support the other local businesses. “Shopping Small” and keeping business in town helps other business owners like themselves. Supporting local community service organizations is also a key component to Aldo and Mike’s generosity.

Helping the youth of the community was a special focus for the two partners. They supported youth baseball, basketball, softball, and boy and girl scouts. They also helped with Project Graduation. As an active UNICO member, Aldo is also involved in the club’s annual Feast.

Aldo combines his love of soccer with his volunteerism. The year after he moved to Clark, Aldo began coaching youth soccer, serving as the president of the Soccer League. He was able to coach a generation of young players, including his own two sons and daughter. His office is peppered with photos of teams he coached and others that were sponsored by Village Insurance.

Aldo coached until 2010, and has fond memories of the years that he coached. He saw so many of his players mature into young men and women, some even going on to college soccer careers.

Village Insurance is a fine example of how a business could be a good neighbor. Local businesses supporting each other and helping the community is a formula for success, for the business and the community.
CRAZY ABOUT SOCCER

Aldo Tripicchio has been involved with a fan club rooting for Inter Milan, a professional Italian football club based in Milan, Italy. The group, Interclub Facchetti New Jersey, has about 110 members and follows the Serie A team. As the joy of soccer brings the members together they are able to put the group to good use by raising funds for good causes like the Special Olympics and Juvenile Diabetes Foundation.

Inter Milan and Interclub both support Inter Campus, an international organization that helps thousands of needy children around the world, using the values of sport and the game of soccer as an educational tool.

Inter Campus contributes to the development of the local communities, supporting educational, social and sanitary protection programs carried out by local partners. Moreover, Inter Campus promotes social integration among differing ethnic groups and cultures. Aldo travels with the team on fundraising tours.

Information about the organization can be found online at www.interclubnj.com.

(above) The Tripicchio family, Gloria, Anthony, Kristen, Gianfranco, and Aldo celebrating Kristen’s graduation from Notre Dame in 2015.
Carmela Cusumano passed away on November 19, 2015 at the age of 93. Her legacy includes ten children, twenty-five grandchildren and thirty-five great-grandchildren. Her biography can now include published author. Her children published a book that Carmela wrote posthumously.

The book was a labor of love, a gift from Carmela to her descendants. The book titled “La Cucina di Carmela, A Sicilian American Cookbook” features memories of their mother by each of her children. Backstories about the recipes appear throughout the book along with family photos.

Recipes

The recipes in Carmela Cusumano’s book, “La Cucina di Carmela”, reflect her Sicilian heritage and the time and place (New Jersey) where she raised her family. Thus the recipes weave Carmela’s simple fare that she had to stretch to feed her large family with her passion later in life for collecting new recipes from everyone, from her Hungarian sister-in-law to a Texas chef.

You will find recipes for homemade pasta, sausage, and eggplant appetizer, for Hungarian cakes and cookies, and that Texan chef’s crab claw appetizer. There are recipes for classics, like Wedding Soup and Sicilian cannoli and pizza and Carmela’s treasured discoveries like strawberry cream cake and pineapple pie.

Stuffed Eggplant with Tomato Sauce

INGREDIENTS

IN G R ED IEN T S

1) Peel eggplant, slice and salt lightly and layer in colander for about 30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry on paper toweling.
2) Fry, broil, or grill the eggplant. Whichever way you choose, first brush the eggplant slices on both sides with some olive oil, using a pastry brush. When brown or soft, remove eggplant and put aside. Eggplant does not have to be thoroughly cooked, as it will cook more when you bake it with the stuffing and sauce.
3) Pour a little olive oil in a sauce pot. Sauté onion and garlic, be sure not to let burn. Add tomatoes and seasoning and cook slowly for about 30 to 40 minutes.
4) Mix the ricotta, grated cheese, egg, parsley, and salt and pepper. Assemble
1) In a baking pan layer sauce, then eggplant, all ingredients are used.
2) Cover and bake for 40 minutes at 350 degrees.
3) Serve with crusty Italian bread.

OTHER RECIPIES

Veal Piccata

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Thank you,
Angelo Strazzella
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Firsthand accounts of World War II are much more intense than journalistic reports. Readers can put themselves in the place of the author and the effect can be chilling. Knowing the author makes the experience even more intense. Verbal discussions with veterans steps the intensity up a notch.

Frank Gionataiso and his friends regularly share stories of their wartime experiences with locals who frequented Sacco's Butcher Shop in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ for breakfast or lunch. One account of the war that Frank shared came in the form of a letter he received from a Peterstown friend who was in the jungles of Guadalcanal in 1942.

Gionataiso, who was in Albany at the time, corresponded with his buddy Frank Merlo. Frank served as a medic and was in the thick of the battle of the Matanikau River. He wrote about his experience in a letter to Frank who would like to share it through the Peterstown newspaper.

The letter starts off a bit light talking about a particularly shapely nurse and a shipment with his clothes delayed and not having shoes to wear for a weekend leave.

The letter turned serious in an instant when Frank started to talk about a battle that he just participated in. The action that he described was horrific yet his writing did not reflect the extreme emotions that he was feeling. His letter seemed almost calm, even when he wrote about how close he was to being killed. He wrote in a steady tone about treating the wounded and at one point burying the dead. He wrote about extreme fatigue, and lack of water all the while dutifully doing his job as a hospital corpsman.

There is a sadness to the two Merlo letters in reading about the soldiers who were killed. They are not statistics but someone's son, brother, father, husband and uncle. That person could have easily been related to anyone reading the letter. In the same vein, Frank Merlo saved the life of someone who was a son, brother, father, husband and uncle.

Frank's letter showed a glimpse of one small skirmish in four years of fighting. Sixteen million Americans served in the effort. Each with their individual experiences yet all were affected in some way. They may have been childhood friends who enlisted together or they may have met by chance in a fox hole. The idea that no man is an island was expressed in a poem by John Donne. Hemingway used the last line of that poem to title his book "For Whom The Bell Tolls."

The actions of these soldiers resonates in the generations that follow, those who saved lives, those whose lives were saved, and those who lost their lives. Frank Merlo was responsible for the lives of countless children, granddaughters, great and great-great grandchildren of those lives he saved. As for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, the answer to the query is "It tolls for thee."

THE BATTLE OF THE RIVER

The Third Battle of the Matanikau River was a laboratory sample of the thousands of skirmishes our men are going to have to fight before the war is won. In terms of Sinalograd or Changsha or El Alamein, it was not a great clash. It flatters the action a little even to call it a battle. But it affords an example of how battle feels to men everywhere.

The action that he described was horrific yet his writing did not reflect the extreme emotions that he was feeling. His letter seemed almost calm, even when he wrote about how close he was to being killed. He wrote in a steady tone about treating the wounded and at one point burying the dead. He wrote about extreme fatigue, and lack of water all the while dutifully doing his job as a hospital corpsman.

Although it was a small and yet barely light day, the medic was permitted to move the men in lot. After Lt. Schal's camp surgery, medical staff organized the wounded to go back to their units. They removed clothing and added bandages and other treatments necessary to heal.

CLASS IS IN SESSION AT THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

I've been spending time with my father and his friends lately. We have been meeting at Sacco's Meat Market for breakfast and stay a few hours shooting the breeze. The experience is rewarding on so many levels, their stories are fascinating.

The get togethers started when one of the crew had a car accident. He joined the growing number of friends who lost their means to drive, by accident or by mandate. For most seniors this was like being sentenced to home confinement. Immobility is a scourge for senior citizens. I started picking a few guys up, including my dad, once a week and meeting a few others at Sacco's. It's the highlight of the week for the eight life long friends, all between the ages of 88 to 93.

The education that I get is beyond what could be learned in the class room. They pass along their street smarts, lessons in being a stand up guy. Their message is not direct but in the form of story telling, anecdotes about life during the depression, World War II, growing up in poverty and rising out of it. Author Tom Brokow correctly pegged them as The Greatest Generation. Their memories are intact and what they talk about, history from a personal perspective, all delivered with humor, raiment and unfettered. It is impossible to record all the information or to transcribe the nuances in their words and gestures. The most intriguing stories are those about the war.

I have a whole different meaning for pop quiz.

by John HERSEY

The Third Battle of the Matanikau River on Guadalcanal was a laboratory sample of the thousands of skirmishes our men are going to have to fight before the war is won. In terms of Sinalograd or Changsha or El Alamein, it was not a great clash. It flatters the action a little even to call it a battle. But it affords an example of how battle feels to men everywhere.

Five Americans have ever heard of the Matanikau River battle, except for the fighting in the Third Battle. The river is a little brown stream winding through the jungle, a few yards above five acres of Herdenson Field. Where we found Guadalcanal, one of the world's most shapely nurses was out to the Matanikau. The Japs were moving up in some strange formation, and we were in an eyepiece to establish their height and direction of movement. The Japs were not our type. We shook the river line and the enemy back toward us, or we lost it.

The first two battles of the Matanikau River had been attempts to do just that. In the first one, the Marines went in to do the job Kosciusko, but their force was too small. In the second, they tried a different maneuver, but it was not on enough men were present in the action. The second battle, with the enemy coming in from the other direction, had a much smaller number of casualties.

The battle that we fought on October 11 was the first large-scale engagement. We were in a fox hole and the enemy were in a fox hole. It was a pitched battle, not a battle of movement, but a battle of attrition.

Although it was a small and yet barely light day, the medic was permitted to move the men in lot. After Lt. Schal's camp surgery, medical staff organized the wounded to go back to their units. They removed clothing and added bandages and other treatments necessary to heal.

Not for Nothing But...
LETTER FROM FRANK MERLO FROM THE BATTLE FIELDS OF GUADALCANAL

Dear Frank,

I am writing you while stationed for the old man to come through the army for the regular discharging of his pension to veterans. Since then I have heard from you in the past few days, here in the camp, where I have been for the last two months. I am in the 21st, 2nd Cavalry, 4th Division, and I am well, the best I can be. The food is terrible, the quarters are poor, and the work is hard. However, I am doing the best I can.

I have been thinking a lot about you and your family. I hope everything is well with you. Please give my regards to everyone.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

(above) Letter sent from Frank “Fishy” Merlo PhM 3/C (Pharmacists Mate 3rd Class) U.S. Naval Hospital, Oakland, California to Frank Gianataiso PhM 3/C U.S. Navy Recruiting Station, Albany NY in November, 1942.
DON SMITH REMEMBERS TUssel FAMILY FARM

It was by chance that the old Tussel dairy farm was mentioned in an article about Joe Aprilie in the February 2016 issue of the Peterstown newspaper at about the same time that Anne Tussel passed away at the age of 102. The Tussel dairy farm was located on the corner of Fourth Avenue and Redcliff Street. The farm was long gone by the time the Aprilie family moved in. The article stirred memories in the readers about the Tussel family farm, including Anne’s son Donald Smith Jr.

Michael Tussel was the family patriarch. His wife was Magdalena. They had four children in this order; Mary (born in Europe) Jacob, Michael, and Anna. Michael Tussel passed in 1938 and Magdalena in 1950. Mary married Mike Lassel. They had two children; Arthur and Evelyn. Both have passed. Mary Tussel Lassel passed in 1987 and Mike Lassel in 1956.

Jacob married Blanche. They had four children; Jean, Robert, Jacob Jr. and Connie. Of the four only Connie survives. Jacob Tussel passed in 1969 and Blanche in 1997.

Michael (aka Mickey) married Helen. They had two children; Ronnie and Richie. Both have passed. Mickey Tussel passed in 1994 and Helen in 2003. Anna married Donald Smith. They had one child, Donald Smith Jr. Anna passed in 2016 and Donald Sr. in 1991. Anna was good friends with Ann Peters, nee Stocker. The Stocker family also operated a dairy farm adjacent to the Tussel dairy farm.

Don remembers playing in the house in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The inside was magnificent, with large rooms and a majestic staircase. At that time his family lived in a second floor apartment.

(above) Anna Tussel sitting to left with bow in her hair. (below) Anna Tussel

(above, l-r) Family and friends on Tussel farm in Peterstown identified Donald Smith Jr. as the best he can. Jacob Tussel kneeling next to the cow, next to Jacob is Magdalina Tussel (my grandmother), perhaps the woman standing to the left of Magdalina is Mary Tussel, the dapper man kneeling next to Magdalina is her husband Michael Tussel (my grandfather), the little girl sitting on the ground in front of Michael is my mom Anna Smith, further to the left in the dark suit is I believe Michael Tussel Jr. I suspect the Stocker family is in the photo as well. I believe the other girl sitting on the ground with a bow in her hair is Ann Stocker Peters.

(above) Blanche with Jean, Jake, Connie and Bob. (above, l-r) Tussel homestead and Dairy farm's storage shed, chicken coop and cow barn.
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