

## The Florence Roselli Library at Casa Italia

The Florence Roselli Library at Casa Italia is committed to collecting, preserving and handing down to posterity our rich American Italian history and cultural heritage.

The library activities at Casa Italia go back to 1935, when the Scalabrini Fathers opened it as their seminary library. Later on, in the mid- 1970s, Librarian Florence Roselli built up the library collection to serve post World War II immigrants and to collect academic and popular materials on Italian American Culture. After her death the Library went into a dormant period.

In recent years, aided by a grant from the Anthony Fornelli Family, the Florence Roselli Library has started to flourish again and has seen the quantity and the quality of its collection soar. This remarkable renaissance has been possible by the passionate work and efforts of Dominic Candeloro, Library Curator, assisted by volunteers Giancarlo Cheloni, Mena DeVito, Vincenzo DeVito, Maria Scagliotta DiMarco, Domenico Fotino, Peggy Fox, Judy Kemp, Carleene Laskero, Dan Niemiec, Gemma Salerno, Donna Tagli, Jeanette Risatti Viehman, and Anna Weiss.

## We Pledge to Save and Pass on Italian American Culture and History

Italian American history and culture is at risk of being lost. Immigration to Chicago began in the 1880s and virtually ended in the 1980s. The passage of time, the dispersal of Italian neighborhoods, the demise of Italian Catholic Churches, intermarriage, and the loss of language usage, have squelched the basics of the Italian American Experience from the awareness of

younger generations. Our mission focuses on the imperative that our ancestors' cultural treasures and rich history be recognized, gathered and sheltered for the inspiration and education of our posterity.

## We have built the most comprehensive archive of Chicago Italian Americana...

We at the Casa Italia Roselli Library have built what we believe to be the most comprehensive archive of Chicago Italian Americana. The wealth of our collection includes 8000+ published volumes and 10,000+ archival items. It boasts the Midwest's most comprehensive collection of scholarly and popular materials, in both English and Italian, on the history and culture of Italian immigrants in the United States.

The library supports the spiritual, cultural, educational and social mission of Casa Italia and provides source material for its ongoing public programs. It also acts as a resource center for researchers, teachers and educational institutions wishing to present materials relating to Italy, Italian culture and Italian American history.

The Casa Italia Library offers materials in a variety of formats in both English and Italian. In addition to books, the collection includes the 59 years of the *Fra Noi* newspaper both hardcopy and on microfilm, journals, newsletters, church histories, proceedings, magazines, DVDs, music, road maps and travel guides, large format art books, as well as volumes donated by Italian governmental entities. Our online catalog <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/ItalCulturalCenter>, texts on genealogy, free Wi-Fi, subscriptions to [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), and Masterpieces of Italian Cinema, offer valuable data for the study and enjoyment of the Italian American past.

Our major archival focus is Italians in the Chicago area. It includes audio tapes and transcripts of 110 oral histories done as part of the Italians in Chicago Project; 60 videotapes and transcripts done for the documentary "And They came to Chicago;" file drawers filled with research material accumulated by historians over 30 years. Through our Library and the Italian American Veterans Museum and Library, our sister institution at Casa Italia, we have a totality of 10,000 historic photos to offer the public. We are creating searchable digital collections of authentic, unique materials that will allow scholars and genealogists to piece together Italian American history.

Altogether, library provides easy access to our unpublished holdings, both onsite and online, shared oral histories, parish and neighborhood materials, information on towns of origin, 30 years of videos of scholarly presentations, 50 years of our monthly community newspaper, (now on microfilm.) Our available resources, in addition to our volumes, include:

- Online library catalog
- Files of *Fra Noi* dating from 1960
- Neighborhood and Parish Sources
- 200 interviews on audio and video tape and searchable transcriptions
- 10,000 images of Italians in Chicago and IA Veterans Museum holdings
- Towns of Origin sources/photos
- Professional journals
- Free WI-FI and digital camera use
- Research travel subsidies
- Expert reference consultation



*“Our aim is to seek out, identify and physically and digitally preserve every scrap of evidence that pertains to the lives and times of Italian Americans in Chicago!”*  
Dominic Candeloro, Curator

You can help us reach that goal by becoming a Friend of the Roselli Casa Italia Library. Donate/share your photos, documents, books, and memorabilia with the Casa Italia Library and support us financially.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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- \_\_\_\_\_ *Contributor of Books for the Library or Book Sales*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Library Researcher*

Please respond to Roselli Library,  
3800 Division St., Stone Park, IL 60165  
708-345-5933.

**Florence Roselli Library**  
1621 N. 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Stone Park, IL 60165



## *The Florence Roselli Library at Casa Italia*



<http://www.librarything.com/catalog/ItalCulturalCenter>

**The Most Comprehensive Italian American Library and Archive in the Chicago Area**

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