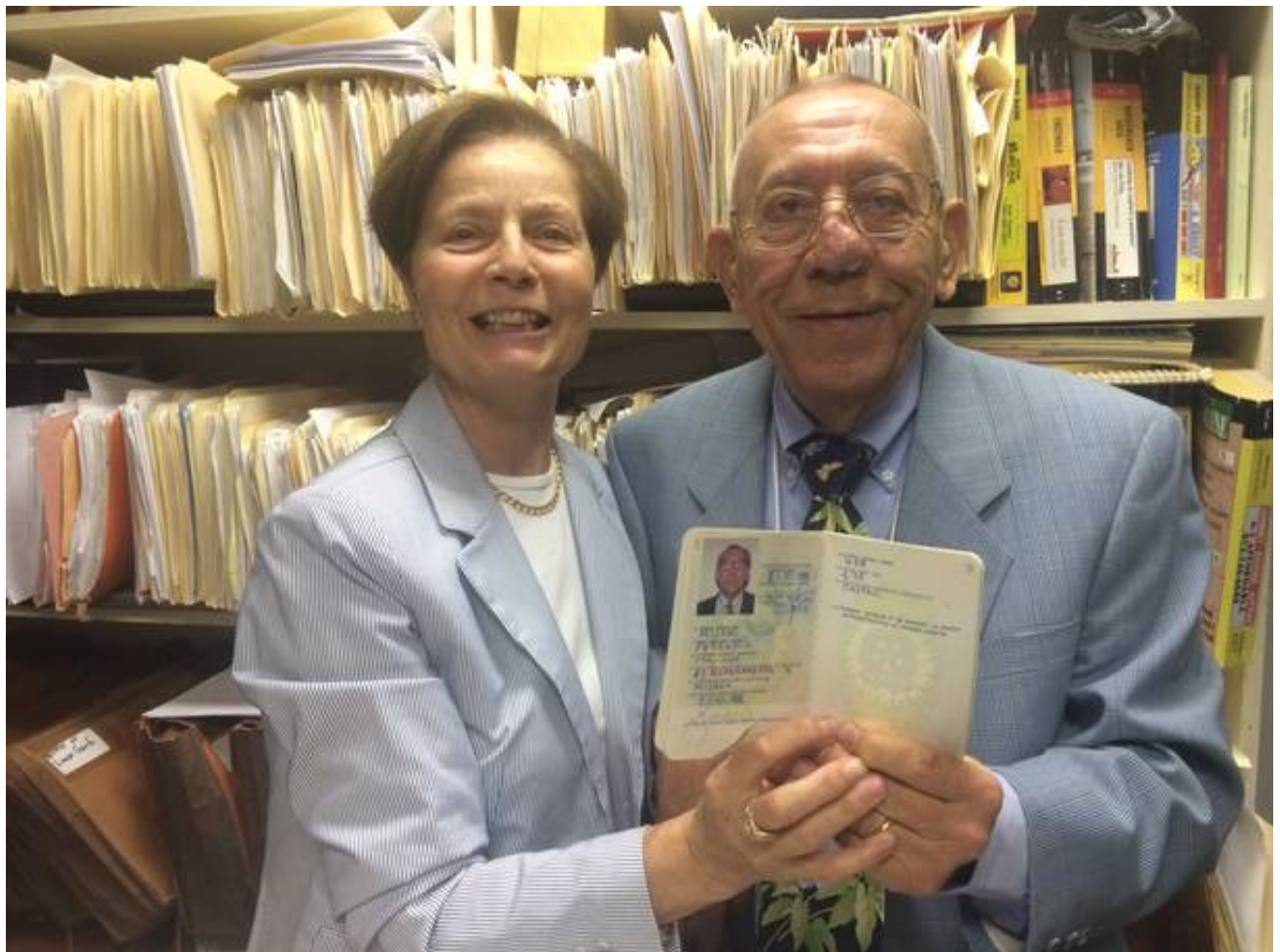


A New Passport for Spaccanapoli

Letizia Airos (September 27, 2016)



From now on Italian residents in New Jersey will not have to go to Manhattan to obtain their documents to travel abroad. A mobile fingerprint scanner was revealed and given to the Honorary Italian Consulate of Clifton. The data recorded in Clifton will be transmitted to the Italian General Consulate that will then send the passport to the user. The event was attended by Italian Consular General, Francesco Genuardi; the undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Enzo Amendola, and the CGIE, Silvana Mangione; representative of the Italian Association Ieri, Oggi, Domani, Giulio Picolli; and many other prominent figures. This is the story of Ferruccio, Francesca, and the first passport granted in Clifton.

I decided to personally write this story about that afternoon, which was very special for the Italian community in New Jersey.



In fact, I accompanied the [Consul General Francesco Genuardi](#) [2], the undersecretary of Foreign Affairs [Enzo Amendola](#) [3], the CGIE vice-secretary of non-European English Speaking Countries Silvana Mangione, the consulars Roberto Frangione and Isabella Periotto.

Destination: [Honorary Consulate](#) [4] of Clifton.

Occasion: The delivery of the mobile biometric scanning station to obtain an Italian passport.

The news: Italians will no longer need to go to Manhattan to obtain their documents to travel abroad. The data will be transmitted directly to the General Consulate that will send the passport to the user.

This is an important institutional response after the closing of the Newark Consulate two years ago, a closing that was protested by the community. There are, in fact, 19,000 people registered with AIRE in New Jersey, many of these people (primarily the elderly) have difficulty traveling to Manhattan.

As the honorary consular who has only been in charge for only 8 months, [Dominic Caruso](#) [4] certainly has a challenging task. He greeted us in his office in the Honorary Consulate.

In front of a computer, the undersecretary Amendola put the scanning station into action and collected the fingerprints of the first compatriot. Amendola came to the event with a promise: "This is only the beginning. We need to build services for Italian Citizens that are here. This is only the first step. We'll be back soon."

The parliamentary representative of Italian Citizens in North America, [Senator Turano](#) [5], expressed the same sentiments in a broadcast immediately after the event. The mobile station in Clifton is a great first response from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I hope the same solution is adopted as soon as possible for the other honorary consulates.

Dominic Caruso, visibly excited, exclaimed, "With this small suitcase, the Italian community in New Jersey is on its way to have the consular services that it deserves. I'm very happy that we have the Consular General here, and he's very on top of things. I would also like to thank the Consular Generals Isabella and Roberto. I hope that I warrant the trust they have given to me."

The first fingerprints were made by Mr. Ferruccio Milani. As many Italians who relocated elsewhere in the world, he has a long and fascinating story of emigration. I happily paused to talk with him and his wife, Francesca, in front of Mr. Di Piazza's a tray of extremely Sicilian pastries.

We too often forget that in the passports granted in all of the consulates in the world, there are certain photographs, dates, and stamps - today biometric prints are necessary to release the documents - but, above all, there are people with stories that cross oceans and lives.

They're a very sweet couple. She's from a town called Fossano in the province of Cuneo, and he's from Milan. We began to talk, and I entered in their world, a world comprised of struggles and challenges, but also of success.



She met her husband when she was 28 years old. Until then he worked at the Necchi Sewing Machine Corporation as the executive vice-president. He began by selling them door-to-door with the hopes of becoming a director that would travel the world. France, Belgium, Mexico and New York. But at a certain point in 1973 he decided to return to Italy. He changed jobs and became the executive vice-president of the Omega Orologi in Turin. This is where he worked with Francesca. "We worked together for two years, three, at Omega Orologi in Turin." But destiny was bringing him abroad once again. "Then we left for Canada. It was December 31st 1976. He was going to work for an Italian factory in Montreal called Bontempi."

He was in Canada, but he was also representing the United States: "We were dividing our time between the factory, the office in Montreal, the office in Turin, and the office in New York. We were living our lives with a suitcase constantly in hand. Then after a couple of years, given that we are the type of people always looking for a new challenge, we asked the company "What are you doing in Central and South America? Nothing? Then we'll go and develop it! And we left. We took a 45-day trip in Latin America, Central and South America. We decided to put our base in Panama, the offices and...we were always traveling. After four years in Panama we moved to the United States..." It's a difficult life to summarize, but I want to convey the energy in these lines to whoever reads this.

"We arrived in the United States in January or February of 1983. We decided to stay here in New Jersey because Bontempi's office was in Edison.

Life seems to have taken its own course for this couple, but it did hold a surprise for them as well.

"My husband had a stroke. The factory fired us. He wanted to go back to Italy, and I said 'No. I want to stay here.' So I then created a new business, Interbusiness USA Food, a broker for twelve big Italian companies. We created a market for them. We've been doing this work for thirty years."

"We built our house in Warren, and we've been living there for 31 years, with the exception of one year when we went to live in the city."

There was some nostalgia for Italy but... "Yes, I left Italy in 1976, and I do have some nostalgia for it. But I experienced other realities, other cultures, other things. I realized that Italy was not enough for me. I needed big spaces. My husband reached the incredible heights of Necchi, of Bontempi, and of Omega; he was looking for other things... to experience the world, to experience other cultures..."

Francesca has a new special energy. She continues to speak, and he listens, fascinated. Her husband has her new passport. The question came naturally to me. What's the first place you'll go in Italy?

"Naples!" "Where in Naples?"

Ferruccio answers: "[Spaccanapoli](#) [6]."

"Why Spaccanapoli (Street)?"

"Because one morning at 7:30 I found myself walking behind the Spaccanapoli when I saw a beautiful girl!"

Francesca, for the first time seems to lose her sense of self-assurance. She blushes and gifts me a great moment of love.

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