



Explore our colorful past

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:

Barbara Bishop, Marketing & Communications Director

BBishop@greenwichhistory.org

203-869-6899, Ext. 12

Public Programs Complement Historical Society exhibition *From Italy to America*

Cos Cob, CT, February 11, 2013—*From Italy to America*, an exhibition that opens at the Greenwich Historical Society on March 1, combines an installation celebrating the rich cultural heritage of the Italian American community in Greenwich, Connecticut, with a complementary exhibition of photographs from the show *From Italy to America: The Photographs of Anthony Riccio*, organized by the Bellarmine Museum of Art, Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut. The exhibition takes place at the Historical Society's Storehouse Gallery from March 1 to June 30, 2013.

A series of public programs, supported in part by a grant from Connecticut Humanities, will complement the exhibition and include pasta making, story reading, a gallery talk, operatic highlights and a made-from-scratch Italian luncheon. *Brief information follows below.*

For the exhibition, residents of Italian heritage from all over town unearthed material from closets, attics, trunks and family coffers and shared recollections of the individuals, institutions, events and traditions that shaped the Italian American community and the town. The Historical Society's Discovery Team volunteers, led by community ambassador Bea Crumbine, guest curator Kathleen Motes Bennewitz and Historical Society board member Pat Dillon, were aided by the St. Lawrence Society, St. Roch's Parish, the Greenwich Library and its Oral History Project. Historical Society archivist Christopher Shields documented more than 800 objects—letters, immigration papers, recipes, cooking tools, vintage clothing, postcards, scrapbooks, photographs and videos of family and community events.

In addition to the images and objects in this exhibition, 45 participants' stories were recorded on video. These interviews were edited into clips, which will be on view in the exhibition and on the Greenwich Historical Society website (www.greenwichhistory.org). The interview segments were produced by TimeStories, a video biography production company founded by Emmy Award-winning creative director Peter Savigny.

Anthony Riccio's compelling portraits of Italian Americans from his hometown in New Haven, of Boston's North End and of village life in Italy, complement the Greenwich Historical Society's presentation of Greenwich's Italian American community and its close affiliation with ancestral homes in southern Italy. "This exhibition and the related public programs respond to our mission and goals to focus on Greenwich neighborhoods, provide opportunities for meaningful intergenerational experiences and encourage broader community involvement in our exhibition development process," said executive director Debra Mecky.

Another happy occasion related to *From Italy to America* is a ceremony that will take place on opening day, March 1, at 5:00 pm, that will designate two towns in southern Italy, Morra De Sanctis in Campania and Rose in Calabria, as Greenwich sister cities. Many of Greenwich's Italian American residents emigrated from these two small towns. At

the ceremony, First Selectman Peter Tesei will present official documents to the mayors of both towns, who will have traveled to the United States especially for this event.

The exhibition was funded by the Historical Society's annual fund and by TimeStories and Connecticut Humanities.

Exhibition information:

March 1 to June 30, 2013

Wednesday-Sunday, noon to 4 pm

Greenwich Historical Society Storehouse Gallery

39 Strickland Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807

Members (and children 6 and under): free

Nonmembers: \$10 for adults; \$8 for seniors and students

Private group tours are available by appointment.

203-869-6899; www.greenwichhistory.org

Public program information in brief. Additional information to follow and available online at www.greenwichhistory.org.

Famiglia Italia! March 10: This second Sunday family program includes a tour of Bush-Holley House and the exhibition, pasta making and story reading of the Italian children's tale *Strega Nona*.

Anthony Riccio Gallery Talk. March 21: Mr. Riccio will describe the inspiration for his black and white photographs that are on view in the complementary exhibit.

Bella Notte. May 16: Juilliard-trained opera singers will present highlights from the baroque to the beloved bel canto period in an evening of Italian wine, music and mingling.

Recipes from the Rectory Kitchen. June 8: A three-course luncheon on June 8, taken from Father Matthew Mauriello's cookbook, will demonstrate mouth-watering Italian favorites.

This photograph comes from the family collection of Christina Bartomioli, who believes the photo was taken in her backyard on Harold Street in Cos Cob. The subject is her uncle's baptism.

