

Frank Paul Brogno

Frank Brogno was born in the province of Cosenza in the region of Calabria in southern Italy to Maria Assunta and Pietro Maria Brogno on January 1, 1922.

At age seven, he and his mother were able to join his father who had already immigrated to America.

They settled in Gary, Indiana, where steel mill jobs were available.

Frank, who had only attended school in Italy for six months, was immediately enrolled in summer school to learn the language and become an American!

Frank's scholarship achievements were most remarkable throughout elementary and high school and were noted by the schools and community at large.

After much discussion and deliberation before being awarded the American Legion Award for outstanding Scholarship, Leadership and Citizenship his teachers felt unanimously that he was the most logical winner. Parents questioned if an immigrant should receive the award. His outstanding records throughout 12 years of school were most evident, he was the WINNER!

Frank was named Valedictorian of his High School graduating class of 1941. He then began working at the American Bridge Company where he was trained as a steel crane operator.

Came WORLD WAR II-Frank enlisted in the United States Navy and was sent to attend Officers Training School at Park University in Parkville, Missouri.

He met the love of his life, Helen, while both were attending and actively participating in an International Relations Conference and romance blossomed. After Frank served two years as a Naval Officer in the Philippines, he returned to the U.S. in March of 1946 and married Helen in 1946. Following their marriage, Frank and Helen moved to Chicago to continue their education. Frank earned his PhD. at the University of Chicago. Frank specialized in clinical psychology and client-centered therapy, under the leadership and warm council of Dr. Carl Rogers.

Daughter, Paula was born in 1948 and son, Peter was born in 1950.

The family returned to Gary where Frank established a private practice in counseling and psychotherapy.

Frank became very active in the Order of the Sons of Italy, as were his parents before him. He was elected President of the Grand Lodge of Indiana for two terms. He attended many local and supreme conventions.

Following his retirement and after many vacations in California, the family moved to Carmel. Frank immediately contacted the Italian Counsel in San Francisco and made numerous trips to his office to cement the relationship between the Counsel and the Italian community in Monterey. Through Frank's invitation and insistence, the Counsel attended a number of the Italian functions in the Monterey Lodge of the Order of the Sons of Italy.

Frank became active in the Carmel Mission. He and Helen were the "greeters" at each 9:30 am Mass. He was most involved in the I-Help program. He and Helen, after much effort, were able to be a most active part of the Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program each and every month. From the announcement in the church bulletin, many community members call and volunteer to be a meaningful part of feeding the homeless men. To this day, I-Help is a tremendous success at the Carmel Mission! In lieu of flowers at Frank's death it was stipulated in his obituary that money be sent to the I-Help Program in his name. Hundreds of dollars were sent in Frank's name.

At large meetings of all the officers of the many local Italian organizations, Frank was asked by Jerome Lucido to chair the Italian Heritage Society. The goal was to have one organization with all involved. This chairmanship, Frank assumed with dignity.

Frank's foremost goal was for the establishment of the Italian American Cultural Center to honor, remember, embrace, preserve and keep alive the traditions of the Italian families who immigrated to the Monterey Peninsula and the Central Coast more than 100 years ago. The Cultural Center, in Frank's mind, would house a library which will include a sizable collection of printed and electronic oral histories of Italian families who immigrated to the area from the mid-1800's through the first half of the 20th century.

Frank worked hard, reading all that he could get his hands on. He had dreams of a better life than his family had in Italy. He was sustained by the will to work and do all he could to make his dreams come true for him and all the Italian Community.

Frank sponsored many men and women to learn the Italian language. He sought Billy DeBarry, who was at that time an administrator in Monterey, for permission for the use of classrooms to teach Italian to all that were interested. Every Wednesday the classroom was full of many who desired to learn the language from Frank. It was a most successful program under Frank's leadership.

Frank was most active in helping to raise funds for various organizations. He led many activities to raise funds to honor and preserve the traditions of the Italian Culture he loved and knew so well.

The Order of the Sons of Italy prospered through his leadership as he involved many Italians to join the local lodge.

Frank was respected by all who knew him.

He was very proud of "being Italian", and this obviously came across to every one that he met..

Frank was a member of the Italian Catholic Federation in Pacific Grove and has given many presentations, as requested, on various areas of Italy.

Frank was called upon numerous times to translate letters from Italy and write back in Italian to the area person involved. Over and over again people sought out Frank for translation and meaning.

First of all and MOST of all, Frank was truly driven by the desire to see the Italian American Cultural Center become a reality.

On June 25th, 2007 Frank passed away. *He is missed.*