

THE MONTALBANO FAMILY

Andrea Montalbano

1876-1933

Mary (Montalbano) DiGiovanni

1910-1996

Maria (Palmeri) Montalbano

1882-1971



My name is Joan (Diestelmeier) Tunnell and I am writing about my grandparents, Andrea and Maria Montalbano.

Andrea (Andrew) Montalbano was born in Sambuca, Sicily to Girolamo Montalbano and his wife Maria Audenzia Mangiaracina on February 13, 1876. His wife, Maria Antonia Palmeri was born to Guisepepe and Calogera Palmeri on August 28, 1882 also in Sambuca. Andrea and Maria married there on January 16, 1904.

After immigrating to America in 1905 through Ellis Island, they lived at 1214 Morgan Street in Rockford. There was always a garden at the home, and hungry strangers were never turned away. Their first child, Mary (DiGiovanni) was born in 1910 followed by Lillian (Buttice) in 1917 and Antoniette (Diestelmeier) on July 4, 1920. In about 1908, Andrea was the president of the St. Mary Society, a Sicilian fraternal and social club located on South Main Street. He worked at Mechanic Machine Company and died on September 5, 1933 at the age of 57. Maria was a homemaker and loved to crochet and embroider pillowcases and sheets. She passed away on December 25, 1971 at the age of 89.

Their youngest child, Antoniette (Toni) Diestelmeier, worked in retail for many years, retiring from Marshall Field & Company. She married Willard (Jack) Diestelmeier on June 9, 1940, and they raised their family in southeast Rockford. Jack retired from National Lock Company where he was an accountant. Both were very active in Masonic organizations. They both passed away in 2010.

Jack and Toni had two daughters, Joan (Diestelmeier) Tunnell and Jody (Diestelmeier) Perrecone. Jody married Frank Perrecone in 1992 at Holy Family Church in Rockford, and is the Area Developer for the Coronary Health Improvement Program (CHIP). The Perrecone lineage is documented under Samuel and Marie Perrecone's profile. Joan married Stan Tunnell on June 23, 1972 at Court Street United Methodist Church. Joan was a teacher in the Rockford Public School District and a SSOS Coach through the Regional Office of Education. Stan was a computer programmer for Barber Colman Company and for the City of Rockford. They had one daughter, Melissa (Tunnell) DeLeon, who is a Resident Assistant at Morning Star Village. Melissa married Filomeno DeLeon III on September 27, 2008 at Court Street United Methodist Church. Fil owns FD3Powersports. Melissa and Fil have four children, Michaela, Malachi, Tashiana, and Kaiden.

Submitted on July 2, 2013 by Joan Tunnell for the Genealogy Project - Culture and Education Committee of GRIAA- **“Immigration Histories of Rockford Italian Families”**.