

Collection #
P 0822

**FRED AND VINCENT IOZZO PORTRAITS,
1936**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 folder of photographs

COLLECTION DATES: 1936

PROVENANCE: Gift from Kathie J. Meredith of Canandaigua, New York, 2021

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ACCESSION NUMBER: 2021.0025

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Santoro “Fred” Iozzo established Iozzo’s Garden of Italy, a popular restaurant in Indianapolis. He was born Santoro (sometimes spelled Santora) Iozzo in the Calabria region of Italy, on 8 February 1888 to Maria and Vincenzo Iozzo. In January 1909 he married Rosaria “Rosa” Socorza (1888–1977) in their hometown of Monterosso, Vibo Valentia.

Fred immigrated to the United States, arriving in Boston, Massachusetts, on 7 June 1909, on the ship *Canopic*, which had departed Italy from Naples. At first he worked on the railroads in Boston, and then in Ohio. It appears that he had made a trip to New York four years earlier, arriving from Naples on the ship *Marco Minghetti* on 6 June 1905.

Fred and Rosa had their first child, Vincent, on 5 March 1914 in Middletown, Ohio. They had four more children after moving to Indianapolis: Dominic (1915–1988), Mary (Fisher) (1917–1965), Salvator (1920–1976), and Margaret (1922–1998).

In Indianapolis, Fred started in the grocery business with a store at 604 S. East Street. He and John B. Conti had a grocery store called Iozzo & Conti at 545 S. East Street, according to the 1919 Indianapolis city directory. By 1926, Fred owned twenty-one grocery stores in the central Indianapolis area. This chain of stores was forced to close during the Great Depression.

At the time of the 1920 and 1930 censuses, the Iozzo family lived at 349 E. Merrill Street. In 1920 Fred was listed as being in the grocery business; in 1930 he was listed as proprietor of a restaurant.

In 1930 Fred opened a restaurant called the Naples Grill. After a few years, he moved his business to a new location at the corner of Illinois and Washington streets, and renamed it Iozzo’s Garden of Italy. Fred’s sons Vincent and Dominic helped him run the restaurant, and other family members worked there as well. As one of the largest restaurants in the Midwest – with two kitchens, three bars, a banquet room, and a bandstand – it became a popular destination.

After the tavern’s midnight closing hour, early on 25 October 1940, a fatal shooting occurred at Iozzo’s Garden of Italy. The victim was sixteen-year-old Virgil E. Disher, Jr., who died on the way to City Hospital. Dominic Iozzo was also wounded in the abdomen and taken to City Hospital for treatment. *The Indianapolis Star* reported that conflicting accounts were given of the incident, but in the end, Fred Iozzo was convicted of involuntary manslaughter on 13 February 1941. He was released from the Indiana State Prison at Michigan City on 11 April 1943 after serving approximately twenty-six months of a one- to ten-year sentence.

After the shooting, Iozzo’s Garden of Italy closed. Vincent Iozzo, who had been listed in the 1940 census as a nightclub manager, was listed as a “driver” in the 1942 Indianapolis city directory. At the time of the 1940 census, he and his wife Clara (1915–1988), and their daughter Clara Rose, were renting a home at 1654 Temple Street. But by 1942 they had moved into the Iozzo family home at 5301 Cornelius Avenue, where his mother and siblings lived. Vincent died in Indianapolis on 26 October 1979. He and Clara are buried in Washington Park East Cemetery.

Fred Iozzo died on 22 January 1944 in St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove. Funeral services were held at Holy Rosary Catholic Church, where he was a member. He and Rosa are buried in Holy Cross and Saint Joseph Cemetery.

In July of 2009, Fred's great-granddaughter, Katie Harris, reopened Iozzo's Garden of Italy on S. Meridian Street. She is the granddaughter of Dominic, who was bartender at the original Iozzo's and was known to serenade his customers while mixing their drinks. The menu at the new restaurant includes traditional family recipes. The restaurant has received awards and recognition from many publications, including "Best New Restaurant" and "Best Italian Restaurant in Indianapolis," and has been featured on the cover of *Indianapolis Monthly* magazine.

Sources:

Ancestry <ancestrylibrary.com>. Accessed 29 July 2021:

Find a Grave

Indiana, U.S., Death Certificates, 1899–2011

Massachusetts, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820–1963

New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820–1957

United States Federal Census, 1920, 1930, 1940

U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995

U.S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918

U.S. World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940–1947

"Fred Iozzo Charged With Murder Following Tavern Shooting Affray," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 October 1940, p. 1, 3.

"Fred Iozzo Dies; Operated Tavern," *Indianapolis Star*, 23 January 1944, p. 11.

Iozzo's Garden of Italy. "Welcome to Iozzo's" and "Signature Collections," <https://iozzos.com> Accessed 29 July 2021.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of three postcard-sized black-and-white photographic portraits taken in 1936. One is a full-length portrait of Fred Iozzo, wearing a suit and hat; another shows him from the waist up, in the same suit without the hat. The other portrait is of Vincent Iozzo, from the waist up, wearing a suit.

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Fred Iozzo, full-length, wearing suit and hat, facing to his left

Fred Iozzo, waist up, wearing suit without hat, facing to his left

Vincent Iozzo, waist up, wearing suit, facing forward

CONTAINER

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Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

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