



ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE CLUB OF HUNTERDON COUNTY

• POST OFFICE BOX 2466 • FLEMINGTON NEW JERSEY 08822

Program Notes for November: Our Own Sal Megna

Our own Sal Megna will discuss the role of Italian immigrants at the beginning jazz and tango in America.

Sal has been a member of the Italian American Heritage Club of Hunterdon County since 1998. We know him from the *Italian Moments* he's shared with us during our monthly dinners. This time however, Sal will share three of his primary interests—jazz, tango, and the Italian migration.

The Italian immigrant connection to the 20th century popular art forms of jazz and tango are little known to many Americans. Both jazz and the tango had origins in the emerging port cities at the end of the 19th century. Vibrant cities like New Orleans and Buenos Aires, with their large ethnic diversity, were the creative milieu from which



these "street" musical forms were born. And Italian immigrants were a part of that from the beginning.

Sal is originally from the Bronx. He grew up near Pelham Bay Park. He served two stints in the U.S. Army. After attending Fordham College, the University of Rome in Italy, and subsequently earning a

doctorate in chemistry at NYU, he joined American Cyanamid Company in Bound Brook, NJ. Later he worked for Enichem, the state owned Italian Company. He moved to Hunterdon County in 1972, where he and his wife, Ivette, raised their three children. Sal has other interests besides his life's work, chemistry, and among these is a fascination for jazz and tango.

Even though there seems to be no connection between these two art forms, Sal will explore with us at the meeting how they intersect. He will explain the Italian immigrants' role from the viewpoint of jazz and tango despite the 6,000 miles of separation. It promises to be an interesting and educational topic adding to our knowledge of our ethnic background.