



Nicholas D Mercorella

OCT 22, 1913 - AUG 4, 2014



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THE LIFE OF NICK MERCORELLA AS RELATED BY HIS DAUGHTER, ANN GUILIANI. A legacy of family story telling is the history of a family that lives on after death. **FIRST JOB:** A lamplighter at age 7. It was lighting the gaslights at sundown. Then returning at dawn to put the lights out. Both he and his cousins had different routes. After putting out the lights, they attended grammar school by day at Elementary School No. 9 in Yonkers. This job extended until electricity supplanted gas light in 1928 in Yonkers. While still in grammar school, Nick then worked for the city of Yonkers caddying. Dunwoodie was the public golf course but later caddied at Westchester Country Club. The years that Nick went to grammar school, he read National Geographic voraciously and was a prankster with the teachers placing frogs in their desk drawers to see the reaction. His favorite sports were handball, moving up to the finals for the city of Yonkers. Bocce became another passion. He and his brother and cousins played in an abandoned lot across the street. Nick wanted to attend high school but his family needed him for work. The principal visited his home to implore the parents to make Nick stay in school. But this was a different era where family needs pre-empted an education. Phelps Dodge was a major employer where Nick lived in Yonkers. Nick's father transported coal from the barges to the coal plant owned by Phelps Dodge. Besides mining, the company focused largely on providing copper wire and cables to major industries. Nick worked for Phelps Dodge and the Habershaw Cable Company splicing cables which were rolled into reels measuring 30 miles in length. At certain intervals, the reels would be transported to the barges and Nick would go to the barges and splice the 30 mile cables joining them for 60 miles. When the war broke out, he was not drafted because he was so deft at splicing wires together, The USA needed him for the war effort at home. Ironically, many of the cables were for Russia. My mother, in her prescient moments, told my father to make a mistake in splicing the wires. When the war ended, jobs were



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scarce. Nick met a man that changed his life. Lou Platte was the owner and designer of Milinery Fashions on Fifth Ave. NY. Hats were designed and made on the premises above a store where they were showcased and sold to the wealthy. Platte became his employer, friend and advocate teaching him the business of forming hats. Fifteen workers, made hats forming them, sewing them, draping and decorating them into "one of a kind artistic pieces". It was there that he met the love of his life, Connie Volpe. Connie Volpe, born on 9th ave. (Hell's Kitchen), NY. She came to work for Platte sewing and designing. It was boring work on the sewing machine which she was so adept at that she could close her eyes and sew in circular patterns perfectly. When Nick met Connie, he was smitten. To get her attention, he threw straight pins at her. She ignored him, thinking he was a wise-guy gangster because Nick had a great relationship with Lou Platt, who also had connections with the mob. When she discovered he was really a nice Italian boy, she finally accepted his interminable attempts at dating. When Nick was courting Connie, he would have her model the hats and one time, talked her into going to the movies wearing one of the hats. In the subway going to the movie, they encountered Lou Platte who happened to come into the subway. He just smiled and complimented her on how good she looked with one of his hats. Connie and Nick worked for Lou Platte the better part of their early married lives and I remember visiting the place when they had no one to leave me with. It was an energetic atmosphere of fellow workers working hard but having many laughs and jokes as well. The job lasted until 1940 when the milinery business started to go downhill. Fashion dictated a more casual attitude and hats began to lose their importance. At about that time, Connie's father was beginning to lose his eyesight due to diabetes. He owned a small produce store selling fruits and vegetables. He needed someone to take over the business. So, Connie and Nick left Yonkers to live at a different Park Avenue in West New York, New Jersey. I was in third grade when I went to live with my grandmother and grandfather and their youngest son John, who became my big brother. The produce business met heavy competition from supermarkets that sprouted all over Weehawken, and West New York. It was so hard to make ends meet that finally Connie left my father in the store alone and went to work for a publishing house,



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Prentice Hall in Fort Lee, New Jersey. Shortly after that, Nick sold his business and worked for Shop Rite Supermarket in Fort Lee, New Jersey. Connie kept on working at Prentice Hall and landed in College Advertising, a department she loved. She had only had one year of high school, but passed a grueling test in writing to land a job in this department writing reviews for their numerous college books on all kinds of subjects. The perks to working for Prentice Hall was to join in profit-sharing where, if you chose to, you could put aside a portion of wages to invest in the company. They developed a nest egg and not until their 50's did they have enough money to buy their first house in North Vale, New Jersey. RETIREMENT: Connie and Nick sold their house in North Vale and moved to Florida finally settling in Spring Hill where life was offered all kinds of activities. Connie entered into all of what was offered from bowling, to tai Chi, to water aquatics, to tap dancing. While Nick mostly golfed and bowled, He wound up winning a bowling tournament which was a free trip to Puerto Rico. My father will always be remembered as a fun-loving sweet and generous man well remembered and cherished. Memorial Contributions may be made to Spring Hill Nursing and Rehab Center 12170 Cortez Blvd Brooksville, FL. 34613 in memory of Nicholas D. Mercorella. Memorial service will be 2PM Saturday, December 13, 2014 at Grace Memorial Funeral Home 16931 US Hwy 19 Hudson, Florida 34667. 727-863-5471



Tribute Wall

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BF

Brenda & Fraser posted:

We remember well our first Thanksgiving in Timber Pines when your family invited us to share Thanksgiving Dinner with them. Nick and Connie were their charming selves and entertained us with their stories from their past. And we can remember how foxy Nick would defeat us all at cards much to our chagrin!! He would pretend to have trouble seeing the cards only to stall for time to execute his strategy. We will remember both parents as fun loving and entertaining people. Thanks for the memories. Brenda & Fraser

September 1 at 12:08 PM



Anonymous posted:

We were sad to hear about the death of Ann's father. We first met him one New Year's Eve when he watched and critiqued bridge hands. He was clever and witty. Ann and Ed included him in their activities and he enjoyed being with them in Florida. 100 years certainly spanned a myriad of changes from gas lights to cell phones! Interesting life - good work - Ann! See you soon Rosemary and Mike Willett

August 10 at 8:00 PM

FS

Fernando & Betty Salvacion posted:

Our deepest sympathy to the Mercorella and Guiliani families for Nick's passing. He lived a good, happy and long life and He will always be remembered by us. Meeting both of your parents in the early 2000 and some of your immediate family as well was a great pleasure. We love and admire your parents and remember them as a happy, warm and kind couple. We will miss them. Both of your parents were gone physically, but their spirit will always be there and looking over you. God Bless and see you sometime next 2015 winter. Love from the Salvacions

August 8 at 8:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Nicholas by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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