
The Times of Campello

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Casa Pierina Update

It was hoped that the old roof of "piode" (flat stones that used to cover most roofs in the local mountain villages) would have been replaced prior to the winter of 2003-4 to prevent the further deterioration of Casa Pierina but this was not possible. So we are hoping this will happen during the better weather of 2004. The Museum fund, which will be used solely for the equipping and maintenance of the proposed Museum and conservation of documents is now standing at Sfr 4600 (£2000+) thanks to some very generous donations and sales of the Reunion DVD. Thank you Xavier Brentini and family for organising this. The fundraising will still continue and any ideas for events etc that can generate an interest in the museum as well as raise funds will be gratefully received.



E- Mail?

Over a third of you reading this newsletter will be doing so electronically (e-mail) instead of receiving enveloped and posted copies. The logistics of photocopying and mailing "paper" newsletters all over Europe, twice yearly, is no mean feat and I must thank Milena for her valued assistance with the Swiss copies. If you have e-mail and currently receive a paper newsletter you too could help by letting me know your e-mail address so that future issues could be sent to you via e-mail.

Many of you have told me how much you look forward to receiving the newsletters and that you enjoy reading about the families and I hope to continue to produce future issues that are both informative and enjoyable to read. However as I mentioned earlier, production is not easy and up to now I have absorbed the costs of paper, envelopes and (more expensively) postage of 120 copies for each mailshot. If you enjoy receiving postal copies of this newsletter and want to ensure you receive further issues please consider making a small contribution of 4 stamps (UK, Swiss or International Reply Coupons) towards the next 4 issues. Thank you.

Who was Pierina?

Casa Pierina was named after its last inhabitant, Pierina Brentini, who sadly died in 1994.

Pierina was born 31 January 1906 the youngest of four daughters of Aquilino Brentini (Lümäia) and his wife Paolina Diviani (Vebal). Like her sisters she was christened within a few days of her birth in the parish church of St Margherita in Campello. Her godparents were Pietro Diviani and Carolina Pedimina. In time she attended the school in Campello that is now part of the Casa Comunale building and next door to Casa Pierina where she and her family lived. Two of her elder sisters Maria (born 1895) and Giacomina (born 1899) died in childhood both in 1909 leaving just Pierina and her elder sister Adelina (born 1896). Neither Pierina nor Adelina chose to marry and spent most of their life in Campello. When their parents died in 1945 and 1939 respectively Pierina and Adelina continued to live together in the family home until they died. They rest in the cemetery in Campello just a few metres away from Casa Pierina.

Casa Pierina was generously left to the people of Campello by the family of Teresa Barenco who realising the importance of one of the oldest houses in the village thought it should be preserved for posterity.



From "The Times"

A fellow family historian, Dave Smith, who is also married to a descendant of the Diviani (Sebastiani) family kindly informed me of a website listing articles printed in the London Times and suggested I should visit the site as there were Divianis mentioned. Not only were there Divianis but also Brentinis were listed.

I found an entry for 1880 in which F & E Brentini and Domenico Diviani, all listed as restaurant proprietors of Fleet Street and the Strand, London dissolved their partnership. Brentini and Taddei of High Holborn, London as well as F & C Brentini and L Taddei who traded

as Brentini & Co in Oxford Street were mentioned in 1892 also ceasing their partnerships.

In 1892 The Times reported that Calimero Diviani (Vebal) appeared before Magistrates at The Guildhall, London to give evidence regarding an Italian who had entered his property and had stolen £140 in gold and silver, the thief was committed for a further hearing.

In the same year there are details of a contract between the Lessive Soap Company Ltd (Brentini's patent) and Pietro Brentini.

Mr William Gay was sued in 1901 for £10 15s 0d by Diviani Bros of Fenchurch Street. He had been unfortunate to damage the Diviani shop blind and pull down part of the shop fascia when one of his wagons drove past the premises. The Court agreed with the claim and also awarded costs.

1906 saw Calimero Diviani appearing at The Mansion House in London under the Food and Drugs Act accused of watering down milk by adding 8% water. He pleaded “not guilty” but was fined £10 with 20 shillings (£1) costs.

To be continued.....