

Mutuo Soccorso
Records, 1906-2006, bulk: 1906-1967
MSA 428 & MSB 82

Introduction

This collection contains the minute books and a financial ledger of the Societa di Mutuo Soccorso, or mutual aid society, of Barre, Vermont, for the period 1906 to 1950. The collection also includes documents pertaining to the society's 100th anniversary celebration in 2006. The collection was donated to the Vermont Historical Society on October 31, 2006, by Arthur Ristau, a prominent member of the Mutuo. It is housed in one archival flip top box and one flat box; it occupies 1.5 linear feet of shelf space.

Organizational History

The Societa di Mutuo Soccorso, or mutual aid society, was founded in Barre in 1906 as a fraternal and community support group. In a time before employer based health insurance, the society provided its members with medical care via a local doctor contracted to charge certain lower fees for services. The group also paid a death benefit to families that lost their breadwinners to the lung diseases that were prevalent in the early granite industry and other causes. The society, for example, played an important role in supporting families during the outbreak of the Spanish influenza in 1918.

Originally, the society only accepted Barre granite industry workers that spoke Italian as members. As time passed, however, the pool of eligible members dropped and the society changed their rules. First they expanded eligibility to surrounding towns, then to men married to Italian speaking women, then to men married to women of Italian decent, and ultimately the society became open to man who applied. They dropped their medical and death benefits with the coming of employer-based health packages and became a social group after World War II. The Mutuo has a building on Beckley Street in Barre.

A complete history of the organization is contained in the 100th anniversary booklet found in folder 4

Scope and Content

This collection contains four original record books of Societa di Mutuo Soccorso, or the Mutuo Soccorso, or simply "the Mutuo," of Barre, Vermont. Included are three minutes books covering the periods 1906-1919, 1933-1947, and 1957-1967, and one financial ledger covering the period of 1937 to 1950. The organization's minutes were written in Italian until July of 1963 when the entries switch to English.

The collection includes two printed by-laws booklets, one from Italy, ca. 1900, and one for the Barre organization from 1927.

This remainder of the collection contains the research gathered for a 100th anniversary booklet of the Mutuo. Researchers went back to the times of similar groups located in Italy and moved forward through the history of the Barre group. Much of the research appears in note form, both written and typed. A few documents contain interviews or memories of past members.

The collection includes one copy of the history of the Mutuo written for its 100th anniversary along with two copies of the program from the 100th anniversary dinner. The history presented in the anniversary publication includes paragraphs addressing workers' strikes, wars, and other events that have helped shape the organization. The collection also includes one copy of "A Stonecutter," a booklet about the statue of a granite stonecutter located in Barre's Dente Park at the corner of North Main Street and Maple Avenue, published by the Italian-American Memorial Committee, Inc. The collection also includes copies of the organization's 75th anniversary booklet published in 1981 (folder 5) and a copy of the 100th anniversary pamphlet for Rutland's Italian mutual aid society published in 1994 (folder 6).

The collection includes photographs of the 1996 and 2006 anniversary celebrations at the Mutuo, many of which were used in the 100th anniversary publication (folder 7). The collection also includes three 3.5 inch diskettes which probably contain the contents of the 100th anniversary booklet (folder 8) and three CDs with photographs (folder 7)

Related Collections

An oversized photograph of Barre's Italian Athletic Club baseball team has been moved to the oversized photograph drawers (F – SP – Baseball, 1908).

Inventory

- MSB 82:1 Minutes, 1906-1919.
- MSA 428:1 Minutes, 1933-1947.
Meeting minutes from July 1933, recorded in Barre, each entry signed by the recorder. Last entry made on page 500 and dated 24 November 1947, all entries written in Italian.
- :2 Minutes, 1957-1963.
Meeting minutes from January (?) 1957, recorded in Barre, each entry signed by the recorder. Last entry made on page 299 and dated 10 July 1967. Records are written in Italian through 8 July 1963, then the entries appear in English.
- MSB 82:2 Financial accounts, 1937-1950.
A ledger book, recorded in Italian, beginning in the year 1937. Entries have been made for income and expenses with a running total on the far right of the right hand page. The last entry made in February 1950.
- MSA 428:3 Historical research.

- :4 Bylaws booklets:
Statuto, Societa' di Mutuo Soccorso fra gli Operai e Agricoltori Bisuschio [Italy], belonging to Giannoni Domenico, ca. 1900.
Statuto della Societa' di Mutuo Soccorso di Barre, Vermont, 1906-1927, 1927.
- :5 Barre publications: 100th anniversary history pamphlet, 100th anniversary program, "A Stonecutter"
- :6 Miscellaneous publications: 75th anniversary booklet (1981), newspaper clippings
- :7 Rutland publication: "Italian Aid Society, 1894-1994," Rutland, 1994.
- :8 Photographs, 1990s, 2006
- :9 Three 3.5 inch computer diskettes

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