

UNCLE PETE 193

Uncle Pete was a man of quiet strength, the kind that didn't need to announce itself to be known. Born on Oct 20th in Italy around 1898, he was the eldest of three children when the family embarked on their journey to America in 1910. At just 12 years old, he was already accustomed to the responsibilities that came with being the oldest. His parents, Pasquale and Angelina, looked to him to help guide his younger sisters, Pauline and Anna, through the uncertain voyage across the ocean.

The ship that carried them to Ellis Island was teeming with families like theirs—people with hopes of a better life, though unsure of what lay ahead. Uncle Pete, even at such a young age, was a steadying force. He held Anna's hand as they walked through the crowded halls of Ellis Island, reassuring her with a squeeze whenever she grew frightened by the throngs of people speaking languages she didn't understand.

When Anna got lost on Ellis Island, the family was thrown into a panic. For three days, they searched the bustling halls and endless lines of immigrants, desperately hoping to find her. Uncle Pete felt the weight of his family's fear more than anyone else. As the oldest, he blamed himself for not keeping a closer eye on his little sister, even though it wasn't his fault.

On the third day, they found her—frightened but unharmed. Uncle Pete hugged her tightly, tears welling up in his eyes, though he tried to hide them. He promised her then that he would always look out for her, no matter what. It was a promise he kept all his life.

Settling in Stamford, Connecticut, the Vescio family began to build their new life. Pasquale set up his shoe cobbler shop in a three story brick building about a mile away from their home on Cove Road and Uncle Pete, despite being just a boy, worked to help pay the bills.

As the years passed, Uncle Pete grew into a man of few words but many actions. He was the first one in his family to go to college to study Journalism. Uncle Pete was the kind of person who would show up at a neighbor's house to fix a broken fence or help carry in the harvest, all without being asked. His quiet demeanor belied the strength of his character, and in a community of immigrants striving to make their way, Uncle Pete became a pillar of support.

He never sought recognition for his work; it simply wasn't in his nature. When his father passed away, Uncle Pete took over the cobbler shop without fanfare, continuing the legacy his father had started. The shop became a cornerstone of the community, a place where people not only came to get their shoes fixed but also to seek advice or share a story. Uncle Pete listened more than he spoke, but his few words always carried weight.

He was a man who believed in the importance of family faith in God and tradition. Every Sunday, the Vescio family gathered around the table for a meal, and Uncle Pete was always there, presiding over the family with love. He was the one who taught the younger generations about the importance of hard work and integrity, not through lectures but by living those values every day.

Uncle Pete was the founder of LaTribuna Newspaper a biweekly local newspaper that was published in English and Italian, and he started Stamford Real Estate Company through which Uncle Pete cornered the Italian American market in Stamford Conn and the surrounding areas. If you were Italian and wanted to advertise or buy or sell real estate you came to Uncle Pete to do business and because Uncle Pete owned his own newspaper he did not have to pay for advertising for Stamford Real Estate Company.

As the years went on, Uncle Pete's hair turned gray, always helping people in need and his spirit never wavered. He remained very much loved by his family, a living link to the old country and the sacrifices their ancestors had made to give them a better life.

When Uncle Pete passed away, the entire community felt the loss. His funeral was attended by people from all walks of life—customers, neighbors, Italian Center members and family members, all of whom had been touched by his kindness and strength. Though he had never sought to be a leader, Uncle Pete had become one simply by being who he was.

Uncle Pete's legacy lived on in the stories told around the family table, in the values he had instilled in those who knew him, and in the Italian Center that continued to serve the community long after he was gone. He was a man who had quietly shaped the lives of those around him, leaving behind a legacy of love, strong faith and unwavering integrity.



Dad Mom Aunt Tanny Uncle Al Aunt Gloria Aunt Yolonda Uncle Pete





