

Dina D'Alto was born in Canosa di Puglia on March 29, 1900, the daughter of Andrea D'Alto and Eusapia Forina. She emigrated to the United States in 1921, settling in Boston. She began to work with Italian immigrants in the mid twenties teaching them English, helping them to assimilate, and eventually helping them to become naturalized American citizens.

She moved to Chicago in 1928 and continued her work with immigrants in settlement house such as the Off-The-Street Club and other agencies which were also working with immigrants, such as Moody Mission and the Salvation Army. Her work was mainly with Italian adults, young adults and children. many of whom performed in plays, poems, songs she wrote and directed for the many public celebrations held throughout the city as Chicago celebrated its 100th anniversary with its "Century of Progress" World's Fair in 1933-1934.

In late 1934 she returned to Boston and once again began to work with the immigrant communities. In 1935 she founded a women's group "Circolo Religione e Patria" which met weekly in the St. Leonard Church School Hall. courtesy of Fr. Valerian Pianigiani. O.F.M., Pastor. Fr. Valerian had been assisting the largely immigrant members of his congregation and he was well aware of their needs. He and D'alto worked together on making families aware of resources, government and Social which could supply the help they needed.

The Circolo, which functioned from 1935 to 1945 helped many Italian women of that era to assimilate, and to gain American citizenship. In addition to the educational offerings, there were many recreational ones, plays, lectures, musical programs, and walking tours of Boston's historical sites, giving participants a 'living' American history lesson.

D'Alto was involved in community activities holding office in many organizations, The March of Dimes, Boston Tuberculosis Association. etc. and worked as a liaison with organizations such as the International Institute, the Guild for the Blind, and with government agencies, Juvenile Court. The City Health Department North End District Field Workers (WPA) and others.

In 1958 she was hired as Director of the Golden Age Drama Club at the Michelangelo School as one of the many programs offered by the Boston Public Schools. She served until 1981 when all the evening schools were closed due to budget cuts.

In retirement she devoted her time to her many other interests, particularly painting, writing and poetry which she continued until her death in 1990.

Dina D'alto Malgeri - Biographical Jottings

1919 - 1928

Mrs. Malgeri was a kindergarten teacher and part-time pharmacists' assistant in her hometown Canosa di Puglia, province of Bari. She migrated to the United States in 1921 and was employed by the Gubitosi Italian Bank in Boston's North End for several years. She also taught Italian at the East Boston Center in the evenings.

1928 - 1934 (Chicago)

Mrs. Malgeri taught English, Italian, and Citizenship classes to adults at the North Side Settlement House. She also taught Italian at the Garibaldi Institute on West Taylor Street. At the South Side Settlement House, she worked as a Visitor/Interpreter at its clinic on Wednesdays and taught Italian and citizenship on other days.

For the Moody Mission, she was a Visitor for a number of sick people, homebound or in hospitals. She taught Italian to young adults and was president of the charitable group, Women's Christian Endeavor. She also taught Italian to young adults at St. John's Church, with Pastor Pasquale Scorzu.

She was employed by the National Recovery Administration (NRA), working at the Off-the-Street Club on the West Side. Working as an organizer and leader, she organized the Blue Eagle Women's Club and the Sunbeams Children's Club (ages 5 - 10). One of the most memorable outings with the children was a day spent at the Chicago World's Fair ("A Century of Progress", 1933 - 1934). The Blue Eagle Women's Club was one of the groups invited to participate in "An Evening of

Nations”, one of the many special events held throughout Chicago during the World’s Fair years.

1935 - 1955

Working as a social worker for St. Leonard’s Church in the North End, Mrs. Malgeri organized and led the Circolo Religione e Patria, where she taught U.S. History, English, and Citizenship. Hundreds of Italian immigrant women became naturalized citizens through her teachings. She also guided members of the Circolo to the many historical Boston sites, and taught through various lectures and dramas which she wrote, and the members performed. She lectured at many social venues throughout Boston and volunteered in various fundraising campaigns for organizations such as the Red Cross.

1958 - 1981

Mrs. Malgeri was employed by the Boston Public School’s evening classes program where she organized and directed its Golden Age Drama Club from 1958 to 1981. The students performed in musicals and dramas which she wrote. The club was disbanded in 1981 when the Boston Public Schools ended its evening school classes due to budget cuts after the passage of Proposition 2½.

In retirement, Mrs. Malgeri concentrated on a bit of traveling, as well as her painting and poetry. Two books of her poems were published in Italy.

In my translations I have
tried to condense my
mother's autobiographical
jottings. I have many
more notes which I will
try to collate given time.
Much of her work in Boston
is included in the newspaper
and the scrapbook.

Mrs. Dina D'Alto Malgeri ex School Teacher and Assistant Pharmacist of Italy, is widely known as Educator, Lecturer, etc. was employed with Jubitori Italian Bank and taught Italian, English and Citizenship in C. B. Center. For seven years in Chicago, Ill. did social work and Interpreter work for Clinics, Hospitals, Institutions, Settlement Houses, ~~etc.~~ ~~Back in Boston~~. Organized and Leader of various Clubs for Young and Adults.

In Boston, Organizer and Director for The Education with The Adult Educational program - Lecture Project - Organizer and Leader.

Did twenty years of volunteer work with St. Leonard's Franciscan Church, as Visitor, taught Religion, History, Italian, English and Citizenship. Hundreds and hundreds became good American Citizens through her teaching. Leader of the "Circolo Religione e Patria" Women's Club, gave it lectures and lectured on tours, helped the American Red Cross with sewing by the Club.

Mrs. Malgeri is also a Poet - Author of two books - playwright and song writer and author of 1 she is in "The Who's Who of Italians in America", also in the "Ladies of Italy in Art, Science and Letters". An Artist painter with her Art Studio at 220 Hanover St. Boston.

The school is proud to have Mrs. Malgeri - Instructor and Leader. The Christmas Play as well as The Valentine Play given in the school, was much praised by the Directors of The School Committee for the noble and powerful work of Mrs. Dina D'Alto Malgeri.
Manager of the Center is Mr. Ralph Di Matti

with Italian songs & dances — after which — Senator Lunt called me on platform to say a few words — after he said "To Mr. Falger" we ought the success of this evening — The park was filled with thousands of people as audience — & representatives from various States. —

What I said, holding hand with Senator, was, pointing to him the hundreds of children barefooted etc. sitting on the grass around the band stand.

I said: Senator: Last year you promised you would take care of the poor children. Now! Look at them! These are orphans of their parents who thought themselves to death from the "flap house" because of starvation. — "When you return to Washington Mr. Senator remember these children and do that they'll have homes, and enough food & clothes etc.

Representing the North Side Settlement

— Miss Little formerly of Boston,
Head Resident —

at The Chicago Commons, the largest
& great Settlement House of the then
42 institutions —

at Lunch with Eleanor Roosevelt
or for Lawrence, Economist - Miss Allen
Social Worker - Dr Taylor Executive
his daughter Miss Taylor,
Secretary — discussed about
problems of the welfare — the poor —
etc. — etc., etc. —

It was a year after when Mrs Roosevelt
from Washington ^{arrived} sent to me Senator
Lowe — to discuss at Cent
problem of the time & people —
Senator Lowe, present with other
Officials from Washington D.C.,
when (through my ideas approved by all heads,
we had the 42 institutions put
each exhibit their work, held with
"Chicago on Parade", an evening
on an open air with ^{in a large park} band stand
& music — & all the institutions representing
something — on stage ^{my} represented a group