

**APPLIANCE
EMPLOYEE PRICING**



**YOU PAY what OUR
EMPLOYEES PAY
on APPLIANCES**
*SOME EXCLUSIONS APPLY



Like Follow @NYDailyNews

Qbz \run Qbz v Srolwfv Vsrwv Hqwhudlphqj Rslqrq Olylrj Dxrwr

EVENTS | NYC CRIME | BRONX | BROOKLYN | QUEENS | UPTOWN | EDUCATION | WEATHER | OBITUARIES | NEW YORK PICS | DN PHOTOGRAPHERS

The Justice Story: 'The Six Italians' executed for one murder

It all ended with a group of immigrants at the electric chair

BY DAVID J. KRAJICEK / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS / Sunday, November 6, 2011, 1:04 AM

A A A

22 3 7



DAILY NEWS PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

The crime that provoked the most zealous use of capital punishment in New York history began with bunkhouse bunkum.

And it ended with a queue of six men — all Italian immigrants — at the oaken foot of the Sing Sing electric chair.

The events played out 100 years ago this week in the midst of aqueduct construction at Croton Lake in Westchester County.

Thousands of poor laborers were working at Croton for two bucks a day as the reservoir was expanded and new water tunnels to New York were dug. They lived at close quarters, stacked like salted sardines in bunk towns like Bradley's Camp, west of Yorktown Heights.

After hours, they drank and grumbled about the money they were not earning.

In the summer of 1911, bunkhouse chins wagged about the death of a local farmer, William Griffin.

He was not particularly wealthy. His daughter, Anna, and a hired

man ran a modest dairy farm near Turkey Mountain, not far from where the Taconic State Parkway now traverses the reservoir.

They rented rooms to boarders from the Croton project. John Rae, an engineer, lived on the ground floor with his wife, Gertrude, and their two toddlers. Henry Hall, a pipe fitter, lived upstairs with wife Mary.

Farmer Griffin was said to have left a \$3,000 inheritance to his daughter, and the bunkhouse boys reckoned this fortune was lying around the farmhouse.

The rumor inspired sandhog Lorenzo Cali, 27, a fresh immigrant from Italy. He took the information home to East Flatbush, Brooklyn, where he found five recruits for his Croton job.

On the night of Nov. 8, 1911, Cali and his crew set out from a Brooklyn saloon and rode the midnight train 35 miles north to the old Croton station.

WINNERS
access to success

THE CUNY VALUE PRIZES

Danny Ramos
Math for America Fellowship
Hunter College '14

CUNY gave the mathematically gifted Ramos the opportunity to study at the honors level and pursue his teaching goals.

CUNY The City University of New York

HGHWRU*SIENV

Woman, 80, killed in hit-and-run crash in Queens

An 80-year-old woman was struck and killed by a driver as she crossed a Queens street Tuesday afternoon.



NYC pre-K registration gets 22,000 students: officials

Almost 22,000 city children signed up for public prekindergarten classes on



Inexperienced teachers are common in some NYC schools

Most students in Banana Kelly High School's class of 2015 have been at the school longer than most of



NYC schools continue to struggle against student poverty

The News examined problems within the schools and challenges like poverty and homelessness that



NYC charter school defenders downplay teacher inexperience

Charter schools have a lot of teachers with little experience or teaching

They hid in the woods until the men of the Griffin house left for work, then knocked at a Dutch door where Anna Griffin sold milk and eggs.

They bought a quart of milk. As Griffin was making change, ringleader Cali announced a stickup.

Griffin gave them \$4 in milk money and \$13 from her purse. With a gun barrel at her back, she opened her safe and turned over its contents: \$55. There was no fortune.

Gertrude Rae, who overheard the robbery, fled outdoors, carrying her two children. She was chased down by Filippo DeMarco, a dwarf-sized man who menaced her with a pistol but did no harm.

Two other men, Santo Zanza and Angelo Giusto, visited the room of Mary Hall. A few minutes later, they joined the others in a sprint over the hill.

Rae returned to the farmhouse and found Mrs. Hall murdered — gagged with her apron and stabbed. She was killed for \$20 worth of jewelry: a watch, a chain and a bracelet.

THE WOMEN notified aqueduct police, who spread the news via a telephone chain and sent an automobile to prowl the lake road. Twenty minutes after the robbery, the mobile cop arrested DeMarco and another of the six, Vince Cona.

A local grocer, George Purdy, apprehended Zanza and Giusta, the two men who had gone to Hall's room. Her jewelry was later fished from the outhouse at Purdy's store, which both men had used after their arrests.

They fingered one another as the killer, but that point would prove moot.

The two others, Sal DeMarco and ringleader Cali, slipped the Croton dragnet but were arrested in Brooklyn.

The nationality of the killing crew prompted outrage in New York.

Italian immigrants and their Black Hand crime fraternity were the subject of alarm a century ago. Many Americans demanded deportation of Italian convicts and a crackdown on the lax immigration laws that allowed them to come here.

There were said to be 500,000 Italians in New York — including a "great aggregation of assassins, blackmailers and thieves," one newspaper clucked.

In the headlines, Cali and his minions became "the six Italians."

Westchester prosecutor Francis Winslow extracted confessions and fast-tracked the cases to court.

Cona went on trial Nov. 27, just 18 days after the murder. Italians were barred from court based upon fears of Black Hand terrorism.

Cona was convicted and condemned to die after a few hours of testimony and 10 minutes of jury deliberation. Cali and Filippo DeMarco met the same fate a day later, followed by Sal DeMarco, Zanza and Giusta — all marked for death.

A paper praised DA Winslow for establishing "a new record in this state for quick action in homicide cases." Meanwhile, the Italian embassy pleaded on behalf of the four who had no hand in the murder. But appeals failed based upon the law of equal culpability.

And so the executions began. First to go was Santo Zanza, on July 12, 1912. The others got their fatal jolts on Aug. 12. Seven were killed in all that day, an electric chair record.

A cop-killer and a wife-killer from New York were followed by Filippo DeMarco. When his body was cleared away, Cona — who had fainted — was carried to the chair, wired for electrocution and executed as he sat limp. The state then put to death Giusta, Cali and Sal DeMarco.

It was another record for New York, unequaled since: six men executed for a single murder.

outside of their subject, but



SURPRISING WRITING



Old Couple Takes A Photo At The Start Of Every Season. The Last One Is A Tearjerker (Photos)
[\(LolBoom\)](#)



Did Thomas Edison Make the Inventor of Movies Disappear?
[\(OZY\)](#)



He Was Once Matt Sandusky
[\(Bleacher Report - CFB\)](#)



The Next Fire
[\(Prison Diaries\)](#)

Recommended by

HIGHLY RELEVANT

Cuomo pushes to rid NYC schools of bad apples

City's hero teachers give students their all, but Cuomo says proposal to tighten rules will make it



Harlem shooting victim near Key Food was intended target

One of the victims in a violent shooting in Harlem was the intended target all along, the Daily News has



Brooklyn lawyer wants cops investigated for Wikipedia edits

The cops who used NYPD computers to make Wikipedia edits on Eric



Sara Bronfman sues Trump Hotel condo board over repair bill

A whiskey heiress is taking a shot at her old apartment building.



Happy Land mass murderer Julio Gonzalez denied parole

The man responsible for sparking the infamous Happy Land fire in the



Mourners confront Happy Land arsonist's ex in 1990

Lydia Feliciano, Julio Gonzalez's former girlfriend, was confronted in Public School 67 while



SURPRISING WRUITHV



Why Criminals Aren't Robbing Banks Anymore
OZY



Katie Hnida's Historic Story Is No Fairy Tale
Bleacher Report - CFB



Old Romanic Couple Takes A Photo At The Start Of Every Season. The Last One Is Too Much (Photos)
Lo!Boom



Best License Plate Fails
All About Cars!



Cool Cars From The Future
All About Cars!



Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve - Puerto Rico: Ultimate Beach Getaways
Robb Report

Recommended by

PRUHRP Q\GDIO\QHZ V



Free rocker Andy Fraser dead at 62



The News launches annual Tax Hotline to help taxpayers

Recommended by

WE RECOMMEND



New Crossover SUVs



Top Online Colleges



Convertible Cars for Sale



Healthy Snack Recipes

COMMENTS (7)

[Discussion Guidelines]

POST A COMMENT
Write a comment

MAMUWALDE72
1227 days ago 1
The post I made earlier apparently got lost. But, in the eighties I visited Sing Sing with a group of others. We were escorted through the prison, then taken down the hill to the old death house. Although 'Old Smokey' (the electric chair) was taken out of the prison, we actually could still smell the horrible stench of urine, excrement and burnt flesh in the same room executions were performed. Although I'm neither proponent nor opponent of capital punishment, here's something those

4 teens charged with attacking 2 off-duty cops in Brooklyn

A group of Brooklyn teens are accused of attacking two off-duty police officers in a Brooklyn park.



'Airtight case' against Happy Land arsonist in 1990

Julio Gonzalez, held without bail on suicide watch, was charged with 87 counts of murder for the Happy Land fire.



Driver charged under city's new right-of-way law in BK crash

Alexander Smotrisky, 39, struck Xiali Yue, 61, Monday morning at 21st Ave. and Cropsey Ave.,



Fire kills 87 people at the Happy Land Social Club in 1990

Julio Gonzalez set an illegal Bronx social club on fire killing 87 people in the deadliest fire since the



QHZ \RUNYIGHR



More videos:



Put your BIG idea online. AdChoices
DOMAIN + HOSTING
STARTING AT \$1* PER MONTH
GoDaddy GET ONLINE

P.RVMSRSXODU

MOST READ MOST SHARED

- 1 Again! Video shows another girl brawl in Brooklyn
- 2 Victim of Brooklyn McDonald's attack brags about fame online
- 3 Brute arrested in McDonald's beating has long rap sheet
- 4 Girl beaten at McDonald's caught on video (Warning: Graphic)
- 5 Poll: Parents may share too much about tots on social media
- 6

hollering for blood need to know: there have been at least twelve or more people in this state (though New York State wouldn't readily volunteer such information to the public) who have been put to death and later discovered to be totally innocent. Yes, innocent! This just makes me wonder how those screaming for someone's head would feel if they discovered that a good friend or relative who's been executed was actually innocent. Through the years, many states have been either careless or racist, ignoring facts which could exonerated the condemned whenever it came to imposing the death penalty. This I do have a problem with. So, if we're going to cry for blood, be decent enough to make sure it's the right person before doing so.

Like [REPLY](#)

[SHARE](#)

VANILLAGORILLA
1224 days ago

0

Everyone loves to dump on the Italians. Here we have a hundred year old story DREDGED up for who knows what reason, that paints "the 6 Italians" as criminals. What happened? You couldn't find any current Italian criminals and need to hit the archives? Italians built this nation when they arrived, they fought for this nation, and they have succeeded where other immigrant groups have struggled. God Bless the Italian-Americans who are the backbone of this wonderful nation!!

Like [REPLY](#)

[SHARE](#)

[SHOW MORE COMMENTS](#)

Fifth teen suspect from McDonald's beating turns herself in

- 7** De Blasio on McDonald's beatdown: 'It is deeply disturbing'
- 8** Four out of six suspects held in Brooklyn McDonald's beating
- 9** 1 building, 2 schools: Inside NYC's unequal education system
- 10** 2 million expected at St. Patrick's Day parade in NYC

**PREPARE YOURSELF TODAY
FOR THE FIELDS OF TOMORROW**



STEM

[CLICK HERE](#)

SPONSORED BY **CUNY** The City University of New York

Gd1b| Qhz vSl{ Pdqkdwda



From 1939 Times Square to the Towers in the 90's, the Daily News has the legendary photos of NYC.

[BUY A PRINT](#)



	
LG 60" Class Plasma HDTV	Sony 40" Class LED 1080p HDTV with Built-In WiFi
	
Sony 48" Class LED 1080p HDTV with Built-In WiFi	LG 32" Class LED HDTV

KiphCholyhu | Riiku\$

DAILY NEWS
PC. RICHARD & SON

Sign up for 52-week, 7-day home delivery of the Daily News at \$2.25 a week and receive a \$50 P.C. Richard & Son gift certificate!

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#)

[Media Kit](#) [Home Delivery](#) [Newsletters](#) [Businesses](#) [Place an Ad](#) [About our Ads](#) [Contact Us](#) [Careers](#) [FAQ's](#) [Feeds](#) [Site Map](#)

Use of this website signifies your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).
© Copyright 2015 NYDailyNews.com. All rights reserved.