

DICARLO

BUFFALO'S FIRST FAMILY OF CRIME

By Thomas Hunt and Michael A. Tona

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DICARLO BIOGRAPHY REVISES BUFFALO UNDERWORLD HISTORY

BUFFALO, New York, August 9, 2013 – The crime family of western New York was not at all a Magaddino-monolith as it is often portrayed. The Buffalo branch of that organization predated notorious Mafia boss Stefano Magaddino’s arrival in the region by decades, frequently resisted his control and eventually threw off his leadership to briefly restore the older DiCarlo-Pieri underworld dynasty, according to the local coauthor of *DiCarlo: Buffalo’s First Family of Crime*.

Michael A. Tona, a lifelong western New York resident who has dedicated more than thirty-five years to the research of the DiCarlo family and the regional underworld, believes DiCarlo’s life story is the key to understanding the history of the western New York Mafia.

“Joseph DiCarlo and the Buffalo Mob came into this world at about the same time and left it at about the same time,” says Tona. “Sharing the same father (Buffalo’s earliest known crime boss Giuseppe DiCarlo), we could consider them brothers, influenced by the same people, events and heritage, and occasionally experiencing a degree of sibling rivalry.”

Tona recalls meeting DiCarlo several times in the 1970s at Santasiero’s Restaurant, where the Buffalo Crime Family’s elder statesman held court at the table by the phone. Generally tongue-tied on those occasions, young Tona took little of value from those meetings aside from the inspiration to learn all he could about DiCarlo and the roots of Buffalo organized crime.

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DiCarlo has earned early endorsements from true crime authors. Scott Deitch, whose published books include *Rogue Mobster*, *The Silent Don* and *Cigar City Mafia*, calls it “one of the best-researched mob biographies I’ve read.” Deitch notes that the authors dig “deep into the interlocking web of crime family cooperation across the United States and show how Joe DiCarlo played a pivotal role in elevating the Mafia to the dominant organized crime group in America.” Patrick Downey, author of *Legs Diamond: Gangster, Gangster City* and *Bad Seeds in the Big Apple*, says *DiCarlo* is “an exciting and highly detailed work on the birth and evolution of organized crime in upstate New York.” Downey praises the work as “comprehensive and carefully researched,” as well as “highly readable.”

In two volumes, Tona and coauthor Thomas Hunt chronicle a century of DiCarlo family history and related developments in the American Mafia organized crime network. Their work is built upon documents from the FBI and other law enforcement agencies, including the Buffalo Police Department and the Cleveland Police Department; personal interviews; court and prison records; many hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles; family history records from the United States and Italy; dozens of published works; and documents and reports from numerous government sources. *DiCarlo’s* first volume covers a period from about 1900 through 1937. The second volume focuses on 1938 through 1984 but also includes an epilogue describing events as recent as 2012. Both volumes include photographs, extensive endnotes, bibliographies and indexes.

DiCarlo is available in hardcover, trade paperback and e-book formats for Kindle and Nook / iBooks devices. Additional information can be obtained through www.buffalomob.com.

About the authors - Michael Tona holds a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from the State University of New York College at Buffalo. Raised in a Sicilian-Italian family in the Buffalo area, he became familiar with local gangland history at an early age. His interest was fanned by stories shared by his uncle, Angelo Tona, a prosecutor in the Organized Crime Section of the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office, as well as by family friend Joe Giambra, former head of the Buffalo Police Department Intelligence Unit. Thomas Hunt, who holds a bachelor’s degree in history and journalism, is editor/publisher of the quarterly journal, *Informer: The History of American Crime and Law Enforcement*. He coauthored *Deep Water: Joseph P. Macheca and the Birth of the American Mafia* and contributed a history of the American Mafia to *Mafia: The Necessary Reference to Organized Crime*. Born in the Bronx, New York, he now lives in central Vermont with his wife and their three teenage children. He and Tona began working together on organized crime history articles late in 2006 and launched their partnership on the *DiCarlo* project a year later.