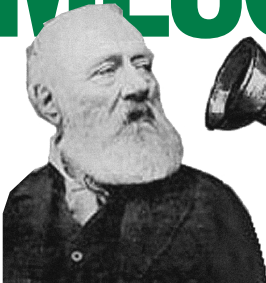


## ITALIAN HERITAGE & CULTURE MONTH • 2008



# ANTONIO MEUCCI



## 1808-2008

the **TRUE** inventor of the telephone  
Staten Island, New York

**A**ntonio Meucci (April 13, 1808 - October 18, 1889) was an Italian inventor. He developed a form of voice communication apparatus in 1857 and has long had champions arguing that he should be credited with the invention of the telephone. Meucci set up a voice communication link in his Staten Island home that connected the basement with the second floor. He was unable to raise sufficient funds to pay his way through the patent application. He filed a patent caveat in 1871, which expired in 1874. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell patented the electromagnetic transmission of vocal sound by ondulatory electric current.

There is also held a belief that the reason Bell got the idea was due to the fact that Meucci's wife sold out Meucci's documents and projects for a mere \$6 while he was suffering a fever and unable to leave bed.

The United States House of Representatives recognized that legally, "If Meucci had been able to pay the \$10 fee to maintain the caveat after 1874, no patent could have been

issued to Bell"; then Meucci would have been considered the inventor of the telephone.

On January 13th 1887 the Government of the United States moved to annul the patent issued to Bell on the grounds of fraud and misrepresentation. The prosecuting attorney was the Hon. George M. Stearns under the direction of the Solicitor General George A. Jenks.

On July 19th 1887, the judge William J. Wallace (Circuit Court, S. D. New York.) concluded: "The experiments and invention of one Antonio Meucci, relating to the transmission of speech by an electrical apparatus, for which invention a caveat was filed in the United States patent-office, December 28, 1871, renewed in December, 1882, and again in December, 1883, do not contain any such elements of an electric speaking telephone as would give the same priority over or interfere with the said Bell patent."

Meucci died before the Court reached a verdict for his own case, which was closed at the death of the prosecutor.

The United States House of Representatives in its resolutions HRES 269 IH dated October 17th 2001 and HRES 269 EH dated June 11th 2002 resolved that the life and achievements of Antonio Meucci should be recognized, and his work in the invention of the telephone should be acknowledged.

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The IHCC promotes Italian culture by focusing on schools and taking a leadership role in promoting Italy and its cultural contributions.

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**Garibaldi Meucci Museum**

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