



Kathleen Bennett, Chairperson of the Montclair Historic Preservation Commission, architectural historian Frank Gerard Godlewski and Teresa Fiore, Inserra Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies at Montclair State, at the Italian Architecture Tour of Montclair.

COURTESY OF FRANK GERARD GODLEWSKI

Montclair becomes 'Montechiaro' for the day

Julia Martin

North Jersey Record
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

Recently, Montclair was baptized Montechiaro for a day to honor its rich Italian history.

The moniker was bestowed for an architectural tour of the Montclair homes, commercial buildings, and churches in town with Italian-inspired architectural elements.

The event, based at the Van Vleck house and gardens, included lectures by Kathleen Bennett, historian of decorative arts and chairperson of the Montclair Historic Preservation Commission and architectural historian Frank Gerard Godlewski, and was moderated by Teresa Fiore, Inserra Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies at Montclair State University.

The tour included the working class Italian neighborhood of the Pine Street historic district, where many of the craftsmen who helped build the town's grand estates, using skills they'd bought from Italy, settled.

In addition to light refreshments, participants were treated to al fresco opera sung by Sandro Naglia, accompanied at the piano by David Witten, a professor at the Cali School of Music at Montclair State.