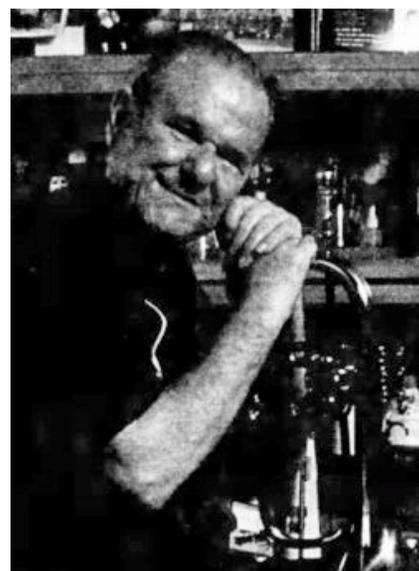


# Vincent Dell'Osa

## Philadelphia, PA

- 1895 Vincenzo Dell'Osa was born on January 10<sup>th</sup> in Torino Di Sangro, Chieti, Italy (WWI draft).
- 1913 Dell'Osa emigrates to Philadelphia (census) after taking a mechanical course in Milan but struggled to find work (Inez Dell'Osa).
- 1917 Dell'Osa was working for Eugene Damage as an instrument mechanic at #216 N. 9<sup>th</sup> St, Philadelphia. He was living at #1158 S. 13<sup>th</sup> St (draft record) (Inez confirmed that he did work for Damage at some time.).
- 1918 He enlisted in the military and served from 6/24/18 to 1/8/19 (military record). Daughter Inez told me that he was stationed in Chattanooga, TN and worked repairing instruments in a tent. The Army bought tools for him and he was kept very busy. Some musicians would break their instruments on purpose to delay being sent to the war.
- 1920 Dell'Osa married Emily Rossi, daughter of Alfonso Rossi, in Phil. and started his own instrument repair business at home while working days at RCA in Camden, NJ as a cabinet maker. Emily would take in the work while he was away (Inez).



- 1930 Musical instrument mechanic, home at #1158 S. 13<sup>th</sup> St (census).
- 1935 Vincent Jr. (photo 2) started playing the trumpet with Alfonso Rossi's orchestra (his maternal grandfather) (GG obit.).
- 1936 The store was opened on the first floor of #1158 (photo 1 and above) (Inez).
- 1940 Music store mechanic; same home (census).
- 1942 Vincent Dell'Osa Sr., self-employed at home (draft).



1946 Vincent Dell'Osa Jr. (1921-2009) (photos 1 & 2, p.1) joined his father in the business full time (statement by V. Jr. & Chieti News). He had tried to get into the war but was turned down due to flat feet and other problems. He worked in the Navy yard in NJ for a while then joined his father in the business (Inez).

1950s Vincent Jr. opened a music studio next door (RD). Inez said that Elvis killed the business due to the popularity of his style of music.

1973 Vincent Sr. died in Phil. in October (SS death index). He was still active in the business up to his death (RD).

Vincent Sr. worked on all woodwinds and brass as well as made his own brass mouthpieces. Those pictured here are for trumpet and French horn (photos supplied by RD). It is said that he had eight styles of mouthpieces (interview with Vincent Jr.).

1987 A customer says that someone in California was making a copy of one of Vincent Sr's mouthpieces (*Phil. Enqu.*).

1993 Vincent Jr. retired and the shop was closed (RD).

Vincent Jr. repaired only brass instruments and came to be one of the best in the business in that area. He said, "I didn't make the instruments, I fixed them. I removed dents and used metal rods for dents deep inside. Some of those rods were created by my father using the furnace in our basement. Other times, the instruments had holes from wear so I'd create patches to fit the spot. I tried to make it look artistic in such a fashion that it would be noticeable, but, on the other hand, you'd have to look twice to see if it was a patch."

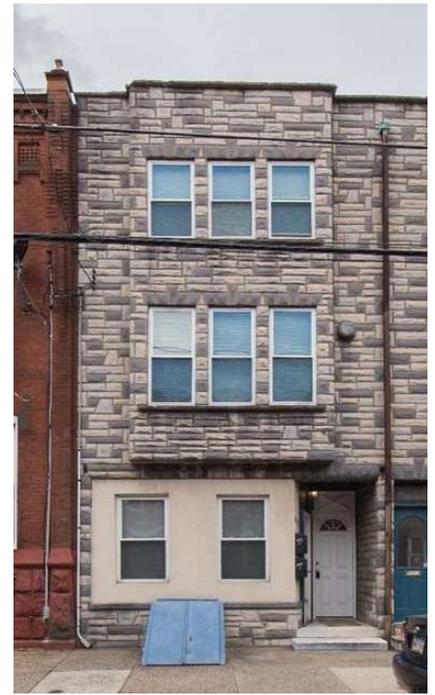
"Vince was a veritable surgeon of brass [he became known as Dr. Dell'Osa], with magic fingers and a passion for perfection that wouldn't accept indifferent work. It was as a repairman that he won fame and recognition from musicians, many from the Philadelphia Orchestra. The orchestra's entire brass section at one time relied on his expertise." (*Philadelphia Daily News*, 11-30-2009, based on quotes from a 1987 interview and article in *The Philadelphia Enquirer Magazine*)

Trumpet mouthpiece at bottom right from author's collection. This is what got me searching for who this man was.

Noah at BrassArk.com relates that Vincent was famous as a repairman and that the French horn mouthpiece is regarded as one of the best original designs of the era. It was well regarded in LA and used by Vincent De Rosa.



The two Vincents in their shop c.1950 (courtesy Dell'Osa family)



Store in 2018

Trombone mouthpiece (courtesy BrassArk.com)



Tenor trombone



Flugelhorn below



Vincent Jr. in 1987 (*The Philadelphia Enquirer Magazine*)

