

Tontitown Storia



The Newsletter of the Tontitown Historical Museum

Spring 2012, Vol. 8, No. 1

Saluti from the Board

The Department of Arkansas Heritage sponsors Arkansas Heritage Month each May, and this year's theme is ***Dreams and Determination: Arkansans at Work***. The Tontitown Historical Museum is celebrating in a big way. On Sunday, May 20 from 1-4 p.m. we will host Tontitown Heritage Day.

The Museum will be open for your pleasure and we will present a Mayoral Proclamation declaring ***May 2012 as National Preservation Month***. In conjunction with this, we will highlight the Bariola House which is on the Arkansas and National Register of Historic Places, along with the old St. Joseph Catholic Church and the former School of Religion. These three buildings represent the dreams our ancestors had for home, church, and education, and the determination they had to bring their dreams to fruition.

Tontitown Heritage Day will feature lots of fun in Harry Sbanotto Park as well. Come hear a great new band, Fender City Junction, with our own Clint Pianalto playing in the East Pavilion. And, there will be a Sunday bocce game to play or watch, of course. We will have cookies from Ranalli Farms and drinks furnished by PepsiCo. Plus, don't forget to get a chance to win a gift basket full of treats from Ranalli Farms.

As part of honoring Arkansas Heritage Month, Jana Mayfield and Heather Ranalli-Peachee developed our ***Dreams & Determination: "Tontitown Italians at Work"*** facebook project for the month of May. They post photos representing all types of work from the early days of Tontitown to today. Check us out on facebook. Be sure to "Like" us and tell your friends about our page.

continued next page

Dreams & Determination ARKANSANS AT WORK



Tontitown Historical Museum
May 1

Dreams & Determination: "Tontitown Italians at Work" - Mayor Tommy Granata working at Tontitown City Hall. Tommy is also a local businessman and cattle farmer.



Mayor Tommy Granata's photo kicked off our photo display project on the Tontitown Historical Museum facebook page. Visit and "Like" us on facebook!

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Curator's Choice

by Charlotte Piazza

The founding families of Tontitown came with dreams of a better life, and with the determination and perseverance to make their dreams come true.

Come visit our Wood Room to see tools similar to what the Tontitown settlers used to clear land and begin their family farms. Among our tools on display is Father Bandini's saw, which was given to Mary and Zelinda Bastianelli, and then donated by Eleanor Pianalto.

Hope to see you at the Museum on May 20, or sometime this summer!



Tools in the Wood Room

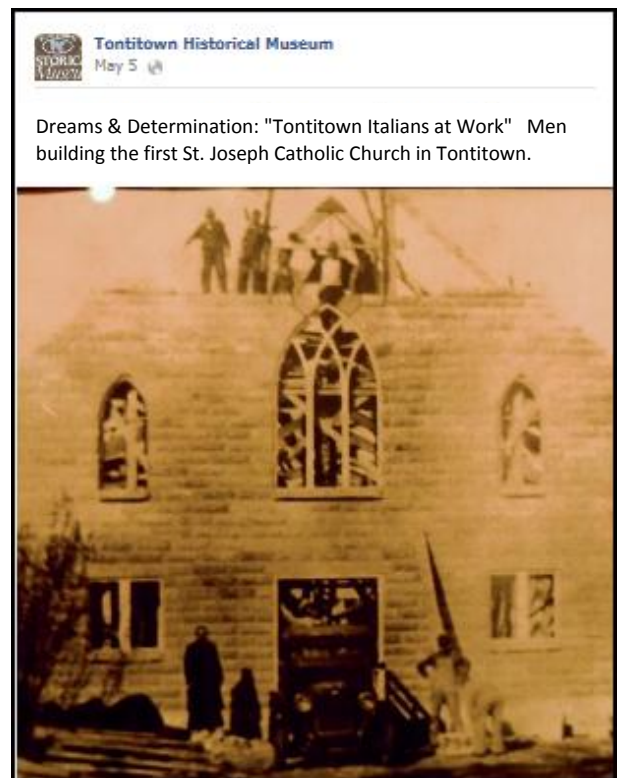
Saluti from the Board ... continued

by Denise Pellin and Bev Cortiana-McEuen

Another way the Museum is continuing to preserve the past and share it with others is to open during the summer months. The Museum is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. during June to September. We have extended hours on Thursday, Friday and Saturday during the Tontitown Grape Festival, which is August 7-11 this year.

Stop by and browse our exhibits to learn more about Tontitown and its ancestors. These ancestors who came to America with a dream for freedom, found it here. When they arrived, they fulfilled their dreams by building a church (shown right on our facebook post) along with homes and the businesses needed to survive and serve the community. After building these, they turned their attention to making the businesses as successful as possible and gaining respect throughout the area.

The journey of the early settlers is chronicled at the Museum and we would love to have you visit!



First St. Joseph Catholic Church
posted on facebook

The Bariola Farm

on Arkansas and National Register of Historic Places

by Joyce Penzo

The year was 1907 and Guiseppi (Joseph) and Dominic Bariola left their home in Valli del Pasubio, Italy to come to America – which meant freedom and a chance to have a better future. For two years, they worked in the zinc mines in Arizona to save money to get back to Valli del Pasubio to get their other brother, Antonio, and their wives and families.

Word had reached them about Tontitown and Father Bandini, and the opportunity to own land. In 1909, the Bariola brothers – Joseph, Dominic, and Antonio – and their families came to Tontitown. In 1910, they started building their home. They hired Cesare and Alesandro Mantegani to form the stones and to help build the home. It took five years to complete.

The Bariola brothers went to Oklahoma to work in the coal mines during the winter to make money for their house and families. As soon as spring came, the brothers would come back to Tontitown to work on the house and in their fields.

The Bariola home was the first built by Italian immigrants that was designed from the beginning to house three families. It housed 27 people at one time. Each brother had his own exterior entrance, and the house was divided on the interior through a network of 8 stairways into 23 rooms and three separate dwellings. Some of the walls were 16 inches thick.

The rubble stone on the exterior of the original house was all dug about 100 yards away on the Penzo farm and chiseled by the Mantegani brothers.

In 1923, a cellar/smoke house was added to the farm. In 1925, a small shelter was built to house a bakery oven and a livestock barn was added.

In 1927, a two-story addition was built on the eastern elevation of the house. The lower story was built of cast concrete blocks from the Mantegani Masonry. In 1950, indoor plumbing was added. These were the only changes from the original structure.

During the days when all the brothers lived on the farm, they shared everything. They kept schedules as to who would use what tools, who would bake bread first, and so forth. They even alternated years for crops, such as strawberries. This was the height of cooperative living.

In 1991, the Bariola Farm was listed on the Arkansas and National Register of Historical Places. Now only the house remains standing. A great-grandson of Joseph, Joey Penzo and wife Elizabeth, built a home on the south edge of the farm.

notes from "Rural Arkansas," October 1992



The Bariola Farm - 329 Ardemagni Road - is on the Arkansas and National Register of Historic Places.

The Bariola house was built from 1910-1915 and the cellar/smokehouse in 1923. Only the house remains today.

Photos courtesy Bastianelli Collection/Tontitown Historical Museum and Joyce Penzo

Family Focus ... Memories of Cletus John "C.J." and Olivia Pianalto-Cigainero

by Celia Cigainero-Stigall, daughter
excerpts from Celia's book, *The Gift: A Tribute to Domenico and Catterina-Penzo Pianalto*
with a cross reference and lineage compiled by Joyce Pianalto-Guptill

Editor's note: Celia Cigainero-Stigall, eldest daughter of C.J. and Olivia Pianalto-Cigainero, remembers questioning her Nono Leo Pianalto when she was 6 or 7 about the life he left behind in Italy. From her Nono's storia time at the kitchen table, with inspiration from her cousin Robert I. Pianalto's family heritage book, and with years of research help from the entire family, Celia wrote their family heritage in a book entitled, "The Gift: A Tribute to Domenico and Catterina-Penzo Pianalto." Her cousin, Joyce Pianalto-Guptill, daughter of Lawrence and Lena Gaiche-Pianalto, provided a cross reference and lineage to the book, complete through December 31, 2010, which even includes photos. Joyce's effort was also aided by many kinfolks and was a labor of love.

Celia recently donated "The Gift" to the Tontitown Historical Museum, and graciously agreed that we share excerpts for this article. C.J. and Olivia raised their family in Texas, making annual trips to Tontitown to visit. They moved back to Tontitown after Nono Leo passed away in 1983.

"After we were married we moved to Texas. We lived just down the street from C.J.'s father Mr. Cigainero and his son Lawrence and his wife, Lorene's home. C.J. was an Aviation Mechanic at the Municipal Airport at the time of our marriage. He also worked for the Texas and Pacific Railroad," states Olivia. *[C.J. last worked and then retired from Texas Instruments in 1984.]*

It has been said, "Blessed indeed is the man who hears many gentle voices call him father!" I don't know how gentle eighteen voices can be, but Olivia and C.J. certainly heard them. Those voices belonged to Cecilia Diane "Celia" (the author), John Leo, Dennis Eugene, Mary Ellen, Donna Catherine, Loretta Marie, Mark Edward, Dolores Ann, Mitchell Anthony, Raymond Vincent "Ray", Blanche Annette, Joseph Brian, Cynthia Christine "Cindy", Frances Karen, Celeste Germaine, Keith Allen, Justine Azelle, and Marshall Aaron.

Dad built a Gyrocopter in the very large attic of our home. He worked on it for several years. ... Once Dad finished the coptor, he and some of the older children, helped put the copter on a trailer and haul it to the largest open area Dad knew of at the time. "The Gyrocopter ... it was the first flight at what is now known as DFW Airport," recalls Mitchell. "Dad told me a police officer showed up and asked him for a permit, which Dad showed him (with pride) as the officer said,



C.J. and Olivia Pianalto-Cigainero Family ~ 1949

Olivia sings to Celia while C.J. holds John
All photos courtesy Celia Stigall

"Looks good. I'm gonna stick around, I gotta see this!" Almost anything Dad built that was mechanical worked ... so did the Gyrocopter. I will never forget the first time I saw Dad fly it, I was so amazed, and so was the police officer."

"I was a busy mom," recalls Olivia. "You know, we had a busy life everyday raising the eighteen children we had. I worked in our home almost all the time, slept when I could. ... It was a continual process with the family and that's how we lived. C.J. did his job, and I did mine," recalls Olivia.

One could not walk into our home without the aroma of food cooking on the stove, or in the oven – chicken, spaghetti, homemade bread, and Mom's wonderful apple pies, yum! She made homemade jelly from the grapes her parents, Nono Leo and Nona Lucy, would send her. I remember Mom cooking the grapes and putting the cooked mixture in a clean old pillowcase. She would hang the pillowcase from a nail so the juice could drain into a pan. With this she made the most delicious grape jelly you would ever want to taste.

Family Focus, C.J. and Olivia Pianalto-Cigainero ... cont.



The C.J. and Olivia Pianalto-Cigainero Family ~ 1974

Back row, l-r: Mary Ellen, Donna, father C.J., Mark, mother Olivia, Mitchell, John, Dennis, and Sam
Middle row, l-r: Mary Ellen's daughter Astrid on father Bruce's knee, Cynthia, Blanche, Joseph (in front of Olivia), Dolores (behind Joseph), Raymond, Loretta, and Cecilia holding her and Sam's son, Sol
Front row, l-r: Justine, Sam and Cecilia's daughter Nicole, Frances, Celeste, Keith, and Marshall

There was always someone to play with at our house. Neighborhood kids would often join us. We played *Ring Around the Roses*, *Tag Your It*, *Baseball*, and *Red Rover, Red Rover*. We played jump rope, jacks, and marbles. We played on the homemade swing-set Dad built us in the back yard. We made Indian tee-pee's out of the corn stalks Daddy and Grandpa Cigainero would have stacked after a harvest in the corn field behind our home ... hours of delightful fun.

"We had it tough, you have to go one day to the next, you have to just keep right on going, then back up, raise up your shoulders and do the best that you can, and that is what C.J. and I did," states Olivia.

If I (Celia) spoke to Dad about life's unfairness, he would always reply, "If you can't ride the donkey the way you would like to daughter, you better learn to ride it the way it is."

C.J. was happy when he could do just what he wanted to do. That's the reason he built those beautiful instruments after we moved to Tontitown.

He did such beautiful work, and made many, many beautiful violins and mandolins.

"C.J. and I had many happy times, too. We had happiness coming and going all throughout our married life – birthday celebrations, baptisms, first communions, our children's graduations, the marriages of our children, the births of our grandchildren, and all the celebrations for those little ones. There was always something going on," recalls Olivia.

Stop by the Museum to read more about this remarkable family and all the families in "The Gift."
Thanks to Celia and family for sharing their stories!



C.J. and Olivia ~ 2005
C.J. passed away in 2006,
Olivia resides in Tontitown

~ Donations in Memory and in Honor ~

It is with gratitude and pride that we display memorial and honorarium donations in the Tontitown Historical Museum.

Beato & Violet Haney Ardemagni
Cathy Ardemagni
Cecil Ardemagni
Gene & Irma Taldo Ardemagni
Leo Baudino
Kathleen Brock
Cel & Mary Ceola Cortiana
Gordon & Imogene Ardemagni Cortiana
Rudy Costa
Candida Morsani Crane
Lillian Cortiana Granata
Albina Ranalli Dalla Rosa
Pete & Mary Cortiana Fiori
Joseph Angelo "Andy" Franco
Chuck & Mary Fucci
Rita Taldo Gilliss
Russell Greenlee
Clementine Morsani Haney
Lee Wana Bariola Keck
Anna Morsani Kitchell

Dawn Latham & Michael Latham Family
Amerigo Morsani
Frank & Carol Morsani
Helen Crane Morsani
Arthur Penzo
Ed & Adele Bariola Penzo
Frank & Clara Fiori Pianalto
Gabriel & Elsie Mae Fiori Pianalto
George (Giacinto) & Clara Pianalto
Leo & Lucy Ceola Pianalto
Henry Piazza
Harry & Dorothy Fiori Sbanotto
Agatha Morsani Smith
Lillian Pianalto Smith
John Hugo "J.H." Pozza
Marie Tessaro
Daniel "Danny" Ray Watson
Elizabeth Morsani Williams
Leon & Sally Verucchi Zulpo

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Tontitown Storia is published by the Tontitown Historical Museum Board, usually in the Spring and Fall. Please submit story ideas or other comments to Bev Cortiana-McEuen at 479-361-2609, or at email bcortiana@cox.net.

COUPON

Bring this coupon to the **Tontitown Historical Museum** during the 2012 regular weekend hours and receive a **\$5.00 discount** on our book.

"So Big, This Little Place"
The Founding of Tontitown, Arkansas
1898-1917

by Susan Young
with Genealogy by Jan McQuade-Sturm

Tontitown Historical Museum
Open June – September
Saturdays and Sundays
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

\$5.00 OFF

✓ **Mark Your Calendar ...**

2012 Museum Events

Date	Event
May 20, 2012	2012 Arkansas Heritage Month Celebration Theme: <i>"Dreams and Determination: Arkansans at Work"</i> Tontitown Heritage Day at Harry Sbanotto Park, 1-4 p.m. Music by Fender City Junction with Clint Pianalto
June – September 2012	Tontitown Historical Museum, Regular Season Hours Open Saturdays and Sundays, 1 – 4 p.m. or by special appointment, call 479-361-2498 or 479-361-2607
August 7-11, 2012	114th Tontitown Grape Festival, It's About Tradition Tontitown Historical Museum, Special Hours Thursday, August 9, 2012 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. Friday, August 10, 2012 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday, August 11, 2012 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.
November 4, 2012	11th Annual Tontitown Reunion and Old-fashioned Polenta Smear Co-sponsored by the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History St. Joseph's Parish Hall, 1:30 – 4 p.m.



Tontitown Historical Museum Amici (Friends)

☒ **Yes, I want to be a member of Tontitown Historical Museum Amici!**

Benefits:

- ✓ Satisfaction in supporting the growth of the Tontitown Historical Museum to preserve and protect the heritage of Tontitown.
- ✓ Receive annual membership card.
- ✓ Receive 10% discount on the museum book: *"So Big, This Little Place" The Founding of Tontitown, Arkansas 1898-1917.*

Mail your tax-deductible check to:
 Tontitown Historical Museum
 P.O. Box 144
 Tontitown, AR 72770
 (or give it to any Museum Board member)

Annual Membership Levels

- ☐ Individual – \$10
- ☐ Family – \$20
- ☐ Senior Individual – \$8
- ☐ Senior Family – \$15
- ☐ Sponsor – \$50 to \$249
- ☐ Lifetime – \$250+

**Renew or
join today!**

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone _____
 E-mail _____



257 E. Henri de Tonti Boulevard
P.O. Box 144
Tontitown, Arkansas 72770

***Visit the Tontitown Historical Museum this summer!
Open Saturdays & Sundays ~ 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
June - September***



Photo by Brenda Pianalto

257 E. Henri de Tonti Blvd ~ next to City Hall

Tontitown Storia
Spring 2012, Vol. 8, No. 1
insert follows

*Tontitown Historical Museum Board
cordially invites you to a fun, free afternoon!*

Tontitown Heritage Day

Sunday - May 20, 2012

1:00 - 4:00 pm

Harry Sbanotto Park & Museum

Museum Open ~ Mayoral Proclamation

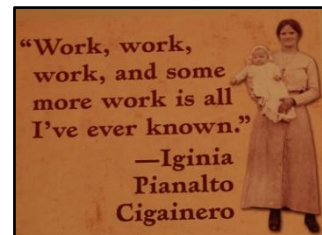
Hear "Fender City Junction" Band, with Clint Pianalto

Visit with old friends ~ Make new friends

Play or watch Bocce

Enjoy Ranalli's Cookies & PepsiCo Beverages

An Arkansas Heritage Month Event



Sponsored by Tontitown Historical Museum

Bring lawn chairs or blankets if you like

~ Cancelled if raining; No rain date ~

Proclamation

Office of the Mayor City of Tontitown

WHEREAS, historic preservation is an effective tool for managing growth, revitalizing neighborhoods, fostering local pride and maintaining community character while enhancing livability; and

WHEREAS, historic preservation is relevant for communities across the nation, both urban and rural, and for Americans of all ages, all walks of life and all ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, it is important to celebrate the role of history in our lives and the contributions made by dedicated individuals in helping to preserve the tangible aspects of the heritage that has shaped us as a people, and

WHEREAS, "*Discover America's Hidden Gems*" is the theme for National Preservation Month 2012, cosponsored by the Tontitown Historical Museum, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, the Department of Arkansas Heritage, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that I, Tommy Granata, Mayor of the City of Tontitown, do proclaim

May 2012 as National Preservation Month

and call upon the people of Tontitown to join their fellow citizens across the United States in recognizing and participating in this special observance.



Established in 1898

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto
set my hand and affixed the great seal of the
City of Tontitown on this 20th day of April 2012.

Mayor Tommy Granata