

Tontitown Storia



The Newsletter of the Tontitown Historical Museum

Fall 2016, Vol. 12, No. 2

Saluti from the Board

2016 has been a banner year for the Tontitown Historical Museum. We marked our 30th year of preserving Tontitown history with a special celebration dinner and first fundraiser. Held outdoors at the beautiful Tontitown Winery venue, nearly 150 tickets were sold including 21 sponsors, raising over \$7,500. All enjoyed a fun-filled evening of camaraderie, delicious food, lovely music, and memories. Check out photos of the celebration on pages 4 and 5 of this issue.

We want to give a special shout-out and many thanks – ***Grazie Mille*** – to our generous sponsors of the 30th Anniversary Celebration:

Diamante (Diamond): Everett Chevrolet and Everett Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Springdale; Frank and Evelyn Maestri

Platino (Platinum): Tontitown Winery

Oro (Gold): Perry Roofing; Philip and Mary Ann Taldo

Argento (Silver): Arvest Bank; Casey's General Store; Core Brewing & Distilling Co.; Guido's Pizza; Jana Mayfield; L.B. Granata Inc. Bowling Centers; P&J Towing; Pianalto Construction; Ranalli Farms; Tontitown Flea Market & Antique Mall

Bronzo (Bronze): Lisa Phillips-Jahnke; Midtown Eclectic Mall; Nino's Trading Center; Norman & Carol Walker; Pretty Me.

We would again like to thank Arkansas legislators Senator Jon Woods, Representative Robin Lundstrum, and Representative Lance Eads for their support in obtaining a General Improvement Grant (GIF) for our new outdoor sign. We've had many compliments, and love the new sign's look and its placement closer to the road (see back cover). The marquee will help keep folks in-the-know about current happenings. Landscaping and Sunny Hinshaw's memorial will be coming soon.



**Tontitown Historical Museum during its first year.
Opened 8-10-1986 ~ Dedicated 9-21-1986**

Photo from the Tontitown Historical Museum Collection

The Museum Board is very fortunate to welcome two new members: Ashlee Bailey and Caroline Franco. Ashlee works at the Scott Family Amazeum in Bentonville and is pursuing a masters degree in Museum Studies. Caroline Franco is a Tontitown settler family descendant, 2008 Queen Concordia, and currently works for the Single Parent Scholarship Fund. We are thrilled to have both of these professional young women on the Museum Board!

Finally, remember to join us for the **15th Annual Tontitown Reunion and Old-fashioned Polenta Smear** on Sunday, November 6 from 1:30 to 4:00 at St. Joseph's Parish Hall. This event is a guaranteed good time!

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Collections Corner

by Rachel Bellamy, Museum Assistant

Musical enthusiasts will appreciate an item long housed by the Tontitown Historical Museum – a shiny, red accordion donated by Lidi F. Gasparotto and Rozetta Gasparotto Nelke. The box-shaped instrument, nestled in its case, is displayed atop the piano in the Everyday Life room.

Its original owner, the donors' father, Germano Gasparotto, can be seen working its bellows with sweet uninhibited emotion in the black and white photo resting alongside the accordion. Tucked away within the annals of the museum, are detailed accounts concerning Mr. Gasparotto which describe him as a lively and energetic man who took every opportunity of licking the proverbial bowl of life. Evidence of his adoration for his wife, Albina, is clearly seen in the form of a lovely terrazzo jewelry box that he made especially for her which the museum also proudly displays just steps away from his accordion.



Germano (Mano) Gasparotto's Accordion

Donated by his children Lidi F. Gasparotto and Rozetta Gasparotto Nelke

Most will associate the use of the accordion with the musical variety show *Lawrence Welk* which delighted mature audiences for over twenty years and is still aired regularly in syndication. Third-generation Tontitown descendant, Patrick Pianalto, has fond memories of his father's, Gabe Pianalto, love for the show. Pat recalls, "every Saturday night when *Lawrence Welk* came on Dad would make all of us kids sit still and be quiet."

Think the accordion isn't hip enough for your taste? You may be a fan without realizing it. The instrument has been used to add zest to music within a variety of genres through the decades including pop. Teenagers of the 1960s surely remember the Beatles *We Can Work It Out* in which John Lennon played the harmonium a variation of the instrument. The youth of the 1980s will recall the Beach Boys' hit song '*Kokomo*' which also employed its use as did several of the works of John Cougar Mellencamp. Elvis Presley too, arguably the coolest artist ever to perform onstage, sang *Wooden Heart* to the dominant lead of the accordion.

Not to be overlooked is its use in country music. James Clark, City of Tontitown's Public Works Director, enjoys the works of Dwight Yoakam. "I am a big fan of his...I especially like the zydeco beat in his song, *Streets of Bakersfield*."

When played in German fashion, the accordion may produce a folksy sound that moves listeners to kick up their heels to a delightful polka. Just as lively is the instrument when played in the Zydeco/Cajun style while enjoying a crawfish boil. However, sweethearts everywhere will likely agree that the loveliest sounds issued by the accordion are enjoyed when it is played in the Italian style such as in Dean Martin's classic '*That's Amore*.' One's thoughts seem instantly transported to the watery streets of Venice while floating aimlessly along in a gondola. Or perhaps one imagines a candlelit table in the corner of a restaurant where a bowl of spaghetti, a glass of Chianti and a marriage proposal await.

Indeed, every descendant of the original settlers of Tontitown will likely appreciate the impact that the accordion has had on the music that is such a big part of their culture and heritage. It is evident that Mr. Gasparotto did! Visit the museum and view his accordion on display for all to see!

I Was Once Strong

I carried you strong
Many years ago.
But look at me now,
I am falling down.

Carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, too.
Men, women, children and all
Many hours were spent,
To build me strong.

My eyes saw you baptized
Over that golden basin that day.
As I watched your parents,
Hush and cradle you in that pew.

With your hands held high down the middle aisle,
You made your First Communion.
With so many more to come.
Now that day I built you strong.

You placed that crown on Mary that day,
Your church family looked.
With smiles in their eyes.
Once again I am building you strong this day.

My eyes smiled that day.
When you said "I Do"
Then you had your first child,
That was held over that same golden basin as I.

Through this structure of mine,
I have seen so many things.
You have smiled, rejoiced, and cried,
And this cycle continues through these eyes of mine.

But just look at me now
Just a keeper of supplies
I am needed no more
For I am falling down today

When you tear me down
Remember these verses
Through the years,
I have carried you strong.

St. Joseph Church

by Kathy Pianalto Miller



30th Anniversary Celebration Fundraiser - A Grand Time!!

The Tontitown Historical Museum's 30th Anniversary Celebration was a grand time for all! The beautiful outdoor patio at the Tontitown Winery was the perfect spot to share a delicious dinner catered by the Venesian Inn, drinks, music, and thirty years of memories. *The Mountain Gypsies* entertained with sweet melodies, often with an Italian flare ... and an occasionally tune with our own Loretta Brunetti. Photographer Brenda Pianalto created a slide show of photos from the early days of the museum through all the events to date, most of which she took. One dessert had an extra-special touch – grape pies made by Gooseberry Handmade Pies, with sunbelt grapes donated by Chris Ranalli. Most had never had grape pie before, and everyone love 'em! We think Chris's grapes made that special difference. We want to thank everyone who gathered to make this night truly special and who continue to support Tontitown and our history. It is indeed "So Big, This Little Place!" Enjoy these photos by Brenda Pianalto of that special night.



30th Anniversary Celebration ... cont'd



Grazie Mille, Many Thanks ... to our Sponsors!!



**Frank & Evelyn
Maestri**



Philip
&
Mary
Ann
Taldo



Tontitown Flea Market
& Antique Mall



Jana
Mayfield



Lisa Phillips-Jahnke

Found Outside Museum! Help, please.

Dear Amici,

We are always thrilled and honored to receive objects for donation to the museum's collection.

This dear little doorknob was left hanging outside the museum door, and because we have only an unsigned note, we have no way of thanking the donor or asking all the questions we have! If you have an object that you would like the museum to consider for donation, please approach a board member. That board member will take all the information we need and present the object to the THM Board for consideration. Because we have limited space and have to stay true to our mission, we cannot accept everything offered.

We would not exist without the generosity of our donors, so keep the donations coming, but please work with a board member. And, if you have any information about this doorknob or its donor, please get in touch. Grazie!

Best from the THM Board



Note reads: This door knob
was from the old church.



Don't these grapes look scrumptious!! Chris Ranalli donated three boxes of sunbelt beauties for our 30th Anniversary Celebration homemade grape pies. We can't thank Chris and Ranalli Farms enough! Y'all are always in our corner and the first to donate your goodies and volunteer to help! Grazie Mille for all you do for the museum and for Tontitown!

Tontitown Historical Museum 2016 Board of Directors

Heather Ranalli Peachee, President, 479-685-4793
 Jennifer DeMartino, Vice President, 479-435-6320
 Annette Pianalto Drake, Secretary, 479-422-7788
 Bev Cortiana-McEuen, Treasurer, 479-361-2609
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 Ashlee Bailey, 563-380-0792
 Caroline Franco, 479-200-9980
 Roger Pianalto, 479-361-2207
 Riley Tessaro, 479-361-2607
 Kyle Young, 479-619-8733

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 email bcortiana@cox.net.

~ Donations in Memory and in Honor ~

It is with gratitude and pride that we display Memorial and Honorarium (H) donations in the Tontitown Historical Museum.

Beato & Violet Haney Ardemagni
 Cathy Ardemagni
 Cecil Ardemagni
 Gene & Irma Taldo Ardemagni
 Gene Baker
 Leo Baudino
 Kathleen Brock
 Cel & Mary Ceola Cortiana
 Gilbert & Lucia "Shortie" Cortiana
 Gordon & Imogene Ardemagni Cortiana
 Rudy Costa
 Candida Morsani Crane
 Lynda Cross
 Albina Ranalli Dalla Rosa
 Angelo & Irene Gaiche Dalla Rosa
 James & Domenica Dalla Rosa
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 Pete & Mary Cortiana Fiori
 Joseph Angelo "Andy" Franco
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 Leo & Lucy Ceola Pianalto
 Henry Piazza (H)
 John Hugo "J.H." Pozza
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 Margaret Taldo Roso
 Gloria Mae Maestri Sallis
 Harry & Dorothy Fiori Sbanotto
 Agatha Morsani Smith
 Lillian Pianalto Smith
 Marie Tessaro
 Bruce Vaughan
 Daniel "Danny" Ray Watson
 James & Luellen Penzo Weiss
 Elizabeth Morsani Williams
 Leon & Sally Verucchi Zulp

✓ **Mark Your Calendar ...**

2016-2017 Museum Events

Date	Event
Ongoing	Tontitown Historical Museum, Regular Hours Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 1 – 4 pm For special appointment, call 479-361-9800 or 479-685-4793 Email – tontitownhistoricalmuseum@gmail.com
November 6, 2016	15th Annual Tontitown Reunion and Old-fashioned Polenta Smear St. Joseph's Parish Hall 1:30 – 4 pm
May 2017 Date to be announced	2017 Tontitown Heritage Day Celebrating Arkansas Heritage Month <i>A State of War: Arkansas Remembers World War I</i> 
August 1-5, 2017	119th Tontitown Grape Festival, It's About Tradition Tontitown Historical Museum, Special Hours Thursday, August 3 3 – 7 pm Friday, August 4 1 – 7 pm Saturday, August 5 10 am – 7 pm 



*"So Big,
This Little
Museum"*

Benefits

- Satisfaction in supporting the growth of the Tontitown Historical Museum to preserve and protect the heritage of Tontitown.
- 10% discount on Museum purchases
- Amici window cling

Mail your tax-deductible check to:

Tontitown Historical Museum
P.O. Box 144
Tontitown, AR 72770

(or give to any Museum Board member)

Annual Amici Membership Levels

- ☐ Individual – \$15
- ☐ Family – \$20
- ☐ Senior Individual – \$10
- ☐ Senior Family – \$15
- ☐ Amici – \$50 to \$249
- ☐ Concordia – \$250 to \$499
- ☐ Heritage – \$500+

**Renew
or Join
Today!**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Volunteers are the backbone of Tontitown Historical Museum. May we call on you to volunteer? ☐ **Yes!**



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

***15th Annual Tontitown Reunion and Old-fashioned Polenta Smear
Sunday ~ November 6, 2016 ~ 1:30-4:00 p.m.***

The Tontitown Historical Museum Board cordially invites you to the **15th Annual Tontitown Reunion and Old-fashioned Polenta Smear**. It will be a fun afternoon of friendship, food, and history! Come join us for yummy polenta, umedo, and desserts. You can join or renew your Amici membership, and bring photos for us to scan and add to our photo collection. Loretta Brunetti will serenade with her traditional Tontitown *That's Amore*, and we will continuously run Brenda Pianalto's slide show sharing Tontitown Historical Museum happenings over the last 30 years. We look forward to seeing you!



Be sure to watch for current events on our new sign!

Tontitown Stora
Fall 2016, Vol. 12, No. 2
insert follows

You're Invited to the

15th Annual Tontitown Reunion & Old-fashioned Polenta Smear

SUNDAY – NOVEMBER 6, 2016 – 1:30 TO 4:00 P.M.

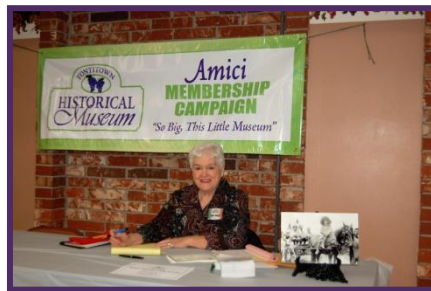
ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH PARISH HALL

1:30 – 4:00 Copy photos, Enjoy photo displays, Visit & Laugh! ☺
Enjoy Loretta Brunetti's Italian tunes ... and
Watch Tontitown Historical Museum: Celebrating 30 Years
a slide show by Brenda Pianalto
Win great door prizes and have FUN!!

2:00 – 3:15 Polenta & Umedo, Dessert served – Donations Accepted

Do you have photos of your family's accomplishments, birthdays, or holidays to help preserve Tontitown history? To save time at the photo donation table, record **Who, What, When, Where** information ahead of time ... so you'll have more time to visit. ☺

Also, you can join or renew your membership to Tontitown Historical Museum Amici (Friends) during the event, and save time and postage. Many thanks to all our members!



2015 Polenta Smear, photos by Brenda Pianalto

Sponsored by Tontitown Historical Museum



Grazie Mille to Amici (Friends) Members



Thank you to all our Amici members listed below who have joined since 2014. If it's time to renew your annual membership or if you'd like to join, the Amici membership form is on page 7. ***Grazie Mille, Amici!***

Lifetime (Level Retired in 2014)

Loyce Ardemagni
Richard & Bernadette Ardemagni
Kenneth Brock
Mary Costa Wersky-Colombero
Genevieve (Genny) Della Rosa
Deutsch
Leona Della Rosa Kasting
Allyn Lord
Paul & Dolores Maestri Stolfi Dicks
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Lawrence McGlone
Frank & Carol Morsani
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Robert Serio
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Heritage

Everett Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram

Concordia

Jeff & Kay Franco

Amici

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Shiloh Museum of Ozark History
Deborah Shouse & Ron Zoglin
Philip & Mary Ann Taldo
Phil & Linda Tessier
Raymond W. Toler
Mary Maestri Vaughan
Bill & Dolores Scarmado Wilson
Tontitown Winery

Family

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Gilbert & Geraldine Alvis
Kurt & Penny Anderson
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Jennifer Demartino & family
Mark & Annette Pinalto Drake
Clint & Kara Jo Engle
Mark Franco
Raymond & Pauline Franco
Jeff Gagne
Bill & Janet Gaiche
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Phill & Kathy Laursen
Karla McKinley & Family
Irv & Cathy Mantegani
Jim & Kathy Pinalto Miller
Michael Miller
David & Heather Ranalli Peachee
Danny & Pat Pellin
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Phillip & Margaret Piazza
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Cory Bowen
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Sandy Christophersen
Celia Cigainero-Stigall
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Liz Lester
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Christina Pinalto
Martinez
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Sarah Russell
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Nova Jean Fiori Watson

