

March 04, 2022



Mission

Preserving, promoting, and celebrating the unique cultural heritage of Ybor City and supporting the Ybor City Museum State Park

NEWS BRIEF

This week's newsletter features two important examples of Ybor City's Italian heritage. The first is a sneak peek into L'Unione Italiana, better known as the Italian Club, one of the magnificent buildings on tour during *Buildings Alive!* The second story features A. B. Filogamo, the club's first president. You will also enjoy the recipe for capunata, a traditional Sicilian dish. Check out "Our Community" column for events in our nearby community. There are many ways to enjoy Ybor City's heritage and culture in the next few weeks.

Chantal Ruilova Hevia, President and CEO

10 Years! 10 Stops! March 10!



It's almost time to start hopping! Join us for the 10th Anniversary ***Buildings Alive!*** ***Ybor City Architecture Hop*** on March 10, 5:00-10:00 PM. This year's hop returns bigger than ever with four additional stops. "Hoppers" will enjoy a Send-Off Party in the Museum Garden, "behind-the-scene" tours of 10 historic buildings, and an array of light bites and beverages along the way. They will be transported to an evening of discovery and Ybor-style hospitality by Jolley Trolleys. Signature cocktails will be provided at the Send-Off Party by WhistlePig Rye Whiskey and El Aguila will serve some of their delicious foods.

Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors



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Sponsorships are still available for Buildings Alive! Ybor City Architecture Hop and the Buildings Alive! Commemorative Video that will be released in April. Get on board with these two high-profile opportunities.

L'Unione Italiana

This week's sneak peek into *Buildings Alive!* is L'Unione Italiana, "The Italian Club." Originally founded by a small group of visionaries in 1894, the club was dedicated to help its members overcome many of the social and economic challenges faced by the turn-of-the-century Italian immigrants.

In a three day celebration, the first Italian clubhouse opened on October 11, 1912, at 1724 7th Avenue as a mutual aid society providing medical, social, and educational services to its members. The Italian Club was the second mutual aid society to open, after the Centro Español, and quickly became the center for Tampa's Italian Community.



Destroyed by fire in 1914, a second building was built at the corner of Palm Avenue and 14th Street. Built in 1918, the second building was designed by award-winning Tampa architects, M. Leo Elliott and B. C. Bonfoey, who combined Italian, Spanish,

and Greek architecture to create an architectural gem. Among the glorious splendors the ornate build boasted was a magnificent ballroom, a cantina with dance floor, library, medical clinic, pharmacy, gym and even a bowling alley.

Today, the restored building serves as an eloquent setting for weddings, special celebrations, and corporate events. The club strives to promote the Italian culture to all through annual and other special events. It is stop #1 in Buildings Alive!

(Italian Club 1919, photo courtesy of the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library)

The First Italian Club President - A. B. Filogamo



In celebration of the Italian presence in Ybor City, this week's story highlights A. B. Filogamo, the Italian Club's first elected president. Bartolomeo Filogamo was born August 20, 1866, in Castellammare del Golfo, Sicily. When he arrived in New Orleans in 1884, Bartolomeo added the name Adolfo in order to provide the customs officers a first and middle name.

In 1889, due to the rising mistreatment of Sicilians in New Orleans, Filogamo moved to Ybor City and began working as a bookkeeper for the Pendas & Alvarez Cigar Factory. While there, he learned many skills including those of the cigar trade, and the importance of mutual aid societies. Influenced by his friend Enrique Pendas, one of the founders of El Centro Español, Bartolomeo was one of 127 members of the Italian community to unite and form the first Italian club on April 4, 1894.

In 1904, A.B. Filogamo and Y. M. Alvarez opened Filogamo & Alvarez, a cigar factory on the corner of 12th Avenue and 14th Street. Briefly partnering with Henry H. Abrams of Thomasville, GA, the company ran until 1912. Filogamo was a visionary and had a successful life in Ybor City. He served the Italian Club as president until 1900 and epitomized the heritage of Ybor City and was among many Italians that helped transform the area into a cultural melting-pot.

(Photo of A. B. Filogamo courtesy of L'Unione Italiana newsletter, July/August 2008)

COOKING CORNER

Caponata

Known as one of Sicily's most essential dishes, caponata is sure to treat your taste buds. A vegetarian dish just in time for Lent, caponata is made of eggplant, onions, celery, bell peppers, tomatoes, olives, and capers. It is a family



favorite in many households of Sicilian decent and perhaps will become one of yours.

(Photo courtesy of The Mediterranean Dish)

[Get the Recipe](#)

Membership

Join or renew your Ybor City Museum Society membership so that you can enjoy free admission to the Ybor City Museum State Park, special events, and discounts.

Membership donations support exhibits and educational programming.

[Join or renew today.](#)

The Ybor City Museum State Park

A visit to the Ybor City Museum State Park is a terrific way to share Tampa's cultural heritage with friends, family, and out-of-town guests.

You can also inquire about renting the Garden, a beautiful 10,000 sq. ft. outdoor space, by [clicking here](#). This unique venue creates its own ambience for your wedding, corporate meeting, or other special event.



New Hours of Operation : 9 am - 5 pm Wednesday - Sunday

The "Casita" is currently closed for maintenance.

Admission: \$4 per person, free for children 5 years and younger

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Our Community

[Buildings Alive! Ybor City Architecture Hop, March 10, 5pm - 10 pm.](#) This year's 10th Anniversary hop has been expanded to feature tours of 10 buildings, with light bites and drinks at at each stop. [Tickets and sponsorships](#) are still available.

[Baseball, Bourbon and Cigars, March 25, 6:30pm - 9:30 pm.](#) Join the Tampa Baseball Museum and the Florida Sports Hall of Fame for an intimate evening shared with

Tampa baseball legends and other MLB Player Alumni. The event includes Latin food, live music, drinks and cigars in historic Ybor City.

Save the date for *El Reloj's 100th birthday celebration* on March 31. Tickets to the event at J.C. Newman Cigar Company are now available. Those who attend will enjoy a fabled part of Ybor City's history.

Donate

The Ybor City Museum Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Federal Tax ID No. 59-2274494. While we do not give tax advice, donations are tax deductible to the extent the law allows.

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