



# LEGACY ON BROAD STREET

by JOHN NACCHIO

## *Pennsylvania Burial Company Victor L. Baldi Funeral Home*

photo by  
ANDREW ANDREOZZI

**O**ne hundred years of service is a fast approaching accomplishment for this family-owned funeral home. The iconic property spans both sides along South Broad at Reed Street where some of the city's most prestigious residential mansions and opulent row homes have been located for more than a century. This was an important reason why

Pennsylvania Burial Company and Baldi Funeral Home relocated there more than 77 years ago. Although there are two names, the business is currently owned and operated by fourth generation funeral directors Peter J. Jacovini Jr. and his cousin Victor L. Baldi III.

The historical roots reflect

the deep commitment to generations of the community it serves. Pietro Jacovini Sr. originally founded the Pennsylvania Burial Company as The Italian Burial Casket Company in 1921. Originally located at 9th and Hall Streets, it was exclusively a casket manufacturer that added funeral services around 1933. A few blocks

away, Alfonso Baldi, founder, owner and operator of Baldi Funeral Home, 9th and Wharton Streets, was also a full service funeral home. Alfonso's sister Gracia married Pietro Jacovini Sr., had three sons, William, Joseph & Pietro, Jr. And so the legacy began.

After Pietro Sr.'s passing in 1936, William, Joseph and Pietro Jr. were eager to expand the business to South Broad Street. Together with their Uncle Alfonso Baldi and his son Victor Baldi Sr., Italian Burial and Baldi Funeral Home moved to 1327-1331 South Broad Street in 1943. The name Pennsylvania Burial Co., Inc. was established in the relocation. Baldi Funeral Home, as a sister office, operated essentially as one business. The prestigious Broad Street address where the firm still operates today was once a three-story music conservatory renovated for use as a funeral home. Over the years, three-story brownstones were purchased next to and across the street from the building to supply parking for services held at the establishment. These parking lots hold more than 100 vehicles for multiple services. The funeral home consists of four chapels - three on the first level and one on the second level with elevator access.

In the early 1900s, Pietro Jacovini Sr. was an inventive and enterprising young man. He claims to be the first Italian American in Philadelphia to own and operate a printing press and initiated publication of *Il Popolo Italiano*, Philadelphia's first Italian-American newspaper. Pietro was also a co-founder of the prestigious Peirce Business School, which was located at Broad and Pine Streets.

Today, Victor L. Baldi III is the proud President of the Sons of Italy St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi Lodge #2787 (the first Italian Catholic Church in the country). The lodge works to inspire and preserve Italian American Culture in the area. He has been in the business most of his life and has built a solid relationship with many families and religious leaders during the emotional time of

arranging funerals for loved ones.

Recently, Baldi and Jacovini offered a seminar on pre-planning a funeral. It's something you should plan for - if not for your own peace of mind, then for the wellbeing of those you'll leave behind. Currently, more individuals and families are making the decision to prearrange their funerals than ever before. The factors considered are inflation, fewer extended family members living close by and other changes in our society. Planning your own funeral can make a lot of sense and was discussed at the seminar. Pennsylvania Burial Company / Victor L. Baldi Funeral Home can assist you if this is something you are interested in doing.

Although there has been a long-standing Italian-American loyalty and connection to the surrounding community, it clearly is a new era. This funeral home is embracing the changing population and moving forward with the times. The pre-planning recognizes the younger generations that are less connected to extended families and still require burial or cremation services. A parlor specifically devoted to handling funerals for the Asian Buddhist community is located on the second floor.

"Times change. That you can be certain of. You have to move with the times. Funeral service is not any different," Victor Baldi III says. "As a proud Catholic and service provider, we are devoted to servicing and honoring all types of religious and ethnic backgrounds."

"Saying goodbye to a relative or a friend is never pleasant so we're all about comfort and accommodation," Peter Jacovini says. "We take pride in helping people through tough times and feel honored that they come back to us on the unfortunate occasion of other losses because they respect how we try to honor someone's memory."

A legacy embraced for generations. **PRH**

*Pennsylvania Burial Company / Victor L. Baldi Funeral Home are members of the Philadelphia Row-Home (PRH) Business Network.*