

## *Bella Vista Buildings We Love*

### **Building of the Month – DiGiorgio and Tumolillo**

**927- 929 S. 8th Street**

**Built 1903**



*The DiGiorgio & Tumolillo Bank Today*

The neighborhood of Bella Vista draws so many of us due to its sense of community, the beauty of our many parks and gardens and the amazing location within the city but I also believe it's due to the fact that we have so many historical buildings and homes within the neighborhood that not only offer us their architectural elegance but the intrigue in the stories they hold.

One such historical building (now a triplex) is the DiGiorgio & Tumolillo Building located on South 8th St. Recently the family

reached out to our preservation committee to share some of the history of the home, building and family with us.

Gerlondo Tumolillo moved to Philadelphia from Abruzzi, Italy prior to the Great Depression. He started off his career in Philadelphia as a tailor as many immigrants did during that time.

However, he saved the money that he made as a tailor and purchased multiple properties in South Philadelphia and ended up owning an entire city block of row homes near 8<sup>th</sup> &

Washington. These row homes came to be known as “Tumolillo Place” and was marked with

this name on the cornerstone. Tumolillo did so well with these rental properties that he

accumulated such an enormous wealth that he commissioned a three story building to be built as

his own bank at 927-929 S 8<sup>th</sup> St by architect John Flynn. The building was marked with the

names “DiGiorgio & Tumolillo” on it. Many people may think that DiGiorgio was Tumolillo's

business partner; however, the true case is DiGiorgio was his partner in life and he included the name in honor of his wife's maiden name.

When the Great Depression hit, none of Tumolillo's tenants could afford to pay rent so he did what he felt was right and let them live in their homes rent free. This caused him to go bankrupt and (this is where our story gets really sad) commit suicide the day before the Banker's Holiday of 1933. Sadly, none of his relatives inherited any of his money; however, they still have the legacy that he left behind in the city for being such an honorable man.



*The DiGiorgio & Tumolillo Bank Today*

***Interested in learning more about Bella Vista's historical buildings? We are currently on a hiatus due to the pandemic; however, the BVNA Preservation Committee normally meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Palumbo Recreation Center. Follow BVNA on FaceBook to find out when we will be scheduling our next meet and join us!***