

CHRISTMAS TOGETHER

During the month of December 2003, Pro-Loco Calitri organized the show "Christmas Together," which has reached its 8th production.

Translated from the Italian by Benjamin De Maio Montalbano

Every year in the month of December, Pro-Loco Calitri organizes the show "Christmas Together," which is now in its 8th production. It is a container, inside of which different initiatives are carried out, all of which are located in the historic center and are aimed at promoting and enhancing the historic center. The festival "Music, Art, and Tastes [Good Food]" took place on December 6, 7, and 8. It includes a fair featuring artistic mangers, antique dealing, traditional typical products, and Christmas sweets, as well as the revival of typical dishes, in particular, *sfritta*, [pieces of lung and pork fried with vinegar peppers] *baccalà alla ualanegna*, [baccala in the style of the farm laborer] or with *piccegghe* [little hot peppers]. The exhibitors presented their products in the "sottani" [small homes] of the *via Barrilli*, *via Del Re*, and *vico Tornillo*. Particularly distinctive was the "grottino del Caciocavallo," [Caciocavallo cave] in *Via Casaleni*, which was set up by the "D&D" Calitrano Farm of Di Cecca & Di Roma. The show had been carefully set up and advertised in print and on the radio. Unfortunately, it was limited by the snow that slowed the influx of visitors from the nearby villages, creating difficulties for the local inhabitants themselves, who, notwithstanding everything, had ventured out over the narrow streets of the historic center in search of old fragrances and tastes [good food]. The smell of the *sfritta*, of the *baccalà*, of the "scarpegghe" [sweets like zeppoli] is very well worth the cold of the snow.

On December 13, on the feast of St. Lucia, Pro-Loco organized the "Festa della Luce" [Feast of Light] and installed lights in the *via Costantino Frucci*, commonly called the *via di San Lucia*, [Street of St. Lucy]. After mass, there is a torchlight procession through the streets of the San Berardino district, *via De Carlo*, *via Cipresso*, bridge of San Antonio, and back. At the conclusion of the torchlight parade there was "the estrazione della vecchia"

[the turkey raffle] and then "I fuoci" [fireworks] that the Calitrani admired from that grandiose "belvedere" [view-point] that is the historic center of Calitri. After an interruption of four years, the collaboration between the

at all mean that we hope to return to a past full of hardships and hard sacrifices. On the contrary, it is necessary to propose a critical reappraisal of our history that forces us to take a fresh look at the present. The Commune of Calitri, in its turn, on the occasion of Christmas, has organized, with the collaboration of Pro-Loco, the first edition of the "Mostra del Presepe—Arte della Ceramica" [Manger Scene—Ceramic Art] at the church of the SS Annunziata from December 6, 2003 to January 6, 2004. The Assessore for the "Production Activity of the Commune of Calitri," professor Luigi DiMaio, in a passage from his presentation of the catalog suitably prepared for the occasion, writes that the Show must be—in these rather difficult times—a message of solidarity, of brotherhood, and a strong call to the values of the family, of peace, and of tolerance. It must also be a strong cultural call in order to continue to promote and to evaluate the "clay resource" and the image of Calitri as an increasingly well-known Ceramic center. In addition, the Commune has resolved to purchase five works from among those presented, works that will be kept at the Ceramic Museum in the Borgo Castello district. To delight the children, the Commune has always organized, on December 30, "Babbo Natale va in città" [Santa Claus is coming to town] and on January 5, "Arriva la Befana" [La Befana arrives.] While on January 3, the "AEDI" [Singers] presented a musical evening, consisting of a program of Neapolitan Christmas melodies.



"Aletrium" circle, Pro-Loco Calitri, the folk group "I uaglium ru' Uaffio," and the popular song group, "La Cunv'rsazione", brought back the Living Manger Scene to the narrow streets of the historic center. The Nativity Scene, as the illustrated leaflet points out, was modeled freely on the tradition of the eighteenth century Neapolitan Manger. This time, it was staged in the narrow streets of the historic center and set in the Calitri of a century ago, with its trades, its artisans, its characters, and with its simple and poor life style. All the work done to build the manger scene centered on the search for our roots, on the values of the peasant civilization, and on our cultural identity, which was attacked in these last years by models of life completely detached from our history and our memory. This does not