

About the Artist Ruth Ann Buttecali (Buttacavoli) Burke

It is my pleasure to share my photographs of Poggioreale for this calendar. As a young girl, I fondly remember my mother, Rose Salvaggio Buttecali, telling me about what her mother, Mary Ippolito Salvaggio told her about living in Poggioreale. She was a young adult around the age of 20 when she arrived in America at Ellis Island with her mother, Nancy Falco Ippolito. She talked about the beauty of the countryside around Poggioreale and the abundance of fruits and vegetables. I even remember the comments of how the animals lived below them in their homes. Although, my grandmother spoke only Italian, her work ethic, her creativity in cooking, sewing, making things and even how she arranged the fruits and vegetables on my grandfather's (Frank Salvaggio) truck before he went out to sell his produce all made an impression on my young mind to explore my own creativity and heritage.

My creative instincts would follow me in school and out in the work place. I knew that if my work involved something creative, that I would like it and most likely have some success. While in college taking Interior Design classes, I selected photography as an alternate course. The first time I saw a print come to life in the darkroom, I knew I was hooked!

You might say the rest is history. In the beginning, almost any composition that included water became an attraction for me to photograph. After moving with my husband from the big city of Houston, Texas to a small sleepy fishing town on the Gulf Coast near the JSC Space Center in the 1970s, I was drawn to capture the contrast of scrubby fishing boats, abundant coastal bird wildlife and sparkling clean pleasure boats on the waterfront. Developments and disasters have played a part in making many of these images a slice of history seen only in a photograph. I have two published books with my name and many of my photos featured depicting the history of the town of Seabrook, Texas and the Clear Lake NASA Area. In the 1980s, I started to participate in many art festivals, developing a following for my images. When my third daughter was 4 in 1989, I opened a store in Seabrook called the Seaside Gallery. It served the community offering custom picture framing and printing until 2017.

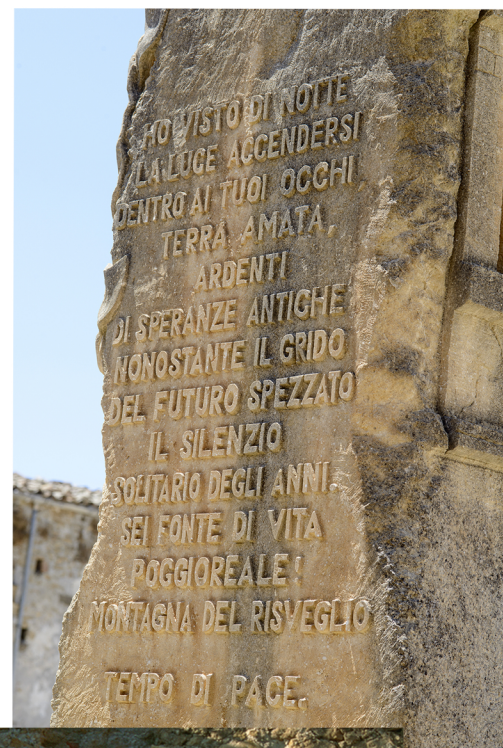
The desire to visit Poggioreale became a reality for me in 1999. My husband and I made travel an important part of raising our three daughters. When two of my daughters, Monica and Lacie were 20 and 15, along with my cousin Nancy, we set off on a memorable trip to Europe. It was in April when we arrived in Sicily and the countryside was lush and green. The visions of my grandmother's stories became real as I captured all that was unfolding in front of my eyes.

It was a joy sharing these photos with my parents and extended family of cousins, aunts and uncles in the Houston-Stafford area. The parents of my father, Lee Buttecali (Buttacavoli) were also born in Poggioreale. My Father's Mother, Grace Salvaggio Buttecali lived with us in her old age and his father, Frank Buttecali, passed away in 1921.

Twenty years later, in early September of 2019, Sicily was part of our journey in Europe. This time with more family and friends including my husband and three daughters. There always was a special connection when I visited Sicily. I can only hope to have captured a few fleeting moments of light and color as it danced on shapes, revealing centuries of history woven into our heritage. I invite you to enjoy "A Walk Back in Time" through this collection of photographs from Poggioreale, on the island of Sicily in

Available online at
RuthBurkeArtshop.com

2019



1999



2019



Spring of 1999