



## The Legacy of **Alberto Zoppé**

By Sandra Zoppé

*T*oday, the Fifth day of March in the year of Two Thousand and Nine,

The doors of Heaven opened, Jesus appeared, before him he saw a beautiful man, his face which before was tormented with grief and suffering, was beautiful once again. Jesus stretched out his arms to this man, then held him close to his sacred heart and welcomed him into Heaven. The man's journey was long and labored, but now he was at home in peace with God, his family and friends.

During his time on this earth, he walked in greatness. We, his family and friends, will love and celebrate his life forever.

The man, Giovanni Alberto Zoppé, age 87 was born on the fourth day of January, in the year of Nineteen Hundred and Twenty-Two to parents, Luigi and Emma Zoppé. As a child, with his mother at the reins, he traveled with his family in a horse drawn caravana over the cobblestone roads of Italy. He was one of five siblings out of sixteen who survived through two great wars.

During these times, he became Italy's premier equestrian artist, as he performed a lay out somersault from the back of one galloping horse to another.

Along with his family, they entertained Royalty and the masses of Europe, however, their greatest achievement was being invited to a private audience with Pope Pio XII

In 1948, Alberto's friend, the actor Orson Wells visited him along with John Ringling North, of Ringling Bros., Barnum and Bailey Circus, and Producer/Director, Cecil B. DeMille, who was about to begin filming his new epic movie, "The Greatest Show on Earth". Each of these Gentlemen tried to convince Alberto to come to America, not only to be featured in Mr. DeMille's movie, but to also be a center ring star with RBB&B Circus.

Not wanting to leave his family behind without a star for their show, Alberto decided that he would need a grand attraction to take his place. Since there were no elephants left after the war, he negotiated a deal with Mr. North to send one to his circus in Italy.

Alberto came to America, and enjoyed many years of stardom. He was featured in many other movie and television productions including "Thoroughly Modern Millie", Disney's Toby Tyler, ABC's "Super Circus", The Bob Hope show, The Red Skelton show, he presented the first animal act on the Ed Sullivan show, CBS's "Circus of the Stars" produced by Bob and Bunny Stivers, as well as many others.

In the year of 2007, he was also honored by being inducted into the "Ring of Fame" at St. Armand Circle, Sarasota, FL. This distinction is reserved for only the most stellar circus artists. Other achievements include the Funny face award, the Smirko award, the Flora Dora award, and he has received many proclamations for his outstanding artistic contributions.

Today, he was born once again into Heaven, where he will dwell in the home of our Lord forever.

As it has been spoken by Jesus in John 11:25-26. "I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives, and believes in me will never die."

On this day, Alberto joins his family in heaven. His Mother and Father, Emma and Luigi Zoppé, His Brothers, Rudolfo Zoppé and his wife Guerina, Guilermo Zoppé and his wife Olympia, His sister Ruggera Tosca Lauber, as well as his other siblings who passed during the wars. Also his beloved infant son Fabritzio Luigino Zoppé, and his niece Loris Garcia and her husband Carlos.

He is survived by his wife Sandra Zoppé, his Sister Zaira Visentin, His Brother-in-law Fritz Lauber, His son Tino Wallenda-Zoppé and his wife Olinka; His daughter Delilah Troffer and her husband Terry; His daughter Carla Heinen and her husband Rudolf; His son Giovanni Zoppé; His daughter Tosca Walther-Zoppé and her husband John.

His Grandchildren, Alida Cortes and her husband Robinson, Andrea Zoppé, Auralia Zoppé and Alesandro Zoppé; Nicholas Troffer and his wife Erindera, Lijana Hernandez and her husband Tony; Phillip Emerson and his wife Delilah; Chiara Zoppé-Meyers.

His Great-Grandchildren Isabella Cortes, Zaira Zoppé, Yanni, Amadeus and Evita Troffer; Tatianna and Neil Emerson.

His Nieces and Nephews , Luigino Zoppé and his wife Velma; Dolores Zoppé, Nadia Moretti and her husband Feruccio, Gabriella Zamperla and her husband Bruno; Michael Lauber and his wife Debbie, Michelle Schamming and her husband Chuck, Gary Lauber and his wife Samantha, Delilah Lauber, along with their families.

The Zoppé circus will tour this year in honor of our beloved husband and father, Giovanni Alberto Zoppé. In his words, as well as all other great artists that ever lived would say, "The show must go on".

There will be masses held at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Conway, AR on Tuesday, March 10th at 11:00 AM, St. Marthas Catholic Church in Sarasota, FL on Tuesday, May 5th at 2:00 PM, and at the Church in San Fior, Italy where he will be interred.