

NAME OF PROJECT: *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

DATE OF INTERVIEW: August 7, 2011

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Hamilton, ON

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Fernanda Colangelo

NAME OF INTERVIEWER: Vikki Cecchetto

NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER: Nadia Mior

TRANSCRIBED BY: Melinda Richter

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PROJECT NOTE:

Please note that all interviews have been transcribed verbatim. The language in this transcript is as it was provided by the transcriptionist noted above. The project staff have not edited this transcript for errors.

ABSTRACT

In her second interview, Fernanda Colangelo talks more about her family. Her father, Francesco Paolo De Rubeis came to Canada in 1906, but returned home to marry Esterina Quaglia. Esterina and her 10 year old daughter, Irma, reunited with Francesco in Canada in 1920. Two years later, Fernanda was born. The family first lived on Beach Road, and then on Barnsdale Avenue, and then finally on Minto Avenue in Hamilton. Fernanda went to St. Anne's elementary school, then Cathedral High School and then continued on for a fifth year at Cathedral Commercial. After school she worked at International Harvest in the payroll office. She attended St. Anthony's Church.

Fernanda's husband, Berlino Colangelo, came to Canada in 1930 at the age of 16, to join his father, Urbano Colangelo. The De Rubeis and the Colangelos were paesani. Berlino worked as a tailor at Coppley Noyes and Randall for 45 years. During the Second World War, Berlino was interned at Camp Petawawa for 22 months. The couple married in 1943 after Berlino's release

from the camp and they have six children. Fernanda recalls that her husband found the Petawawa experience demoralizing. Italians in Hamilton were afraid that they would be the next to be interned if they spoke too much about it or tried to do anything. Fernanda also speaks a bit about attending after-school classes at the Casa D'Italia and attending Sunday night variety shows there.

INTERVIEW

FC: Fernanda Colangelo, interviewee

VC: Vikki Cecchetto, interviewer

NM: Nadia Mior, videographer

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:10]

VC: So we're here again—

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: —with Fernanda Colangelo. And we're going to be continuing our little talk about, uh—

FC: Sure.

VC: —1940 and those—

FC: [inhales and looks up]

VC: —nasty days in 1940.

FC: [smiles]

VC: Now, um, I, I, I don't think we talked about your family. When did your family, um, come to Canada?

FC: Well, my dad came in 19...It's either 1904 or 1906.

VC: Wow.

FC: Yeah. I think—

VC: And—

FC: —1906.

VC: Wow. And your dad's name was?

FC: Francesco Paolo...De Rubeis.

VC: D iLupus. Okay. And what about your mother? When, uh, when did, uh—

FC: My mother—My dad came here. Then he went back and got married.

VC: Okay.

FC: Then he came back again.

VC: He didn't get married again, did he?

FC: No. [Laughs]

VC: [laughs]

FC: No, I have those exact—

VC: [laughs]

FC: I have, I, I have those dates at home—

VC: Okay.

FC: —that I could give you. And, uh, my mother came over in 1920.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: My dad was here again—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —with my sister—

VC: Okay.

FC: —who was ten years old.

VC: Right. And your mom's name, uh?

FC: Esterina De Rubeis.

VC: Okay.

FC: She was a Quaglia[?].

VC: Oh. She was Quaglia[?].

FC: Yeah.

VC: Her married—Her maiden name was...

FC: —name was Quaglia[?].

VC: —was Quaglia[?].

VC: And your sister, um?

FC: Irma.

VC: Irma. So she was ten years old in 1920 when, uh, when they came to Canada?

FC: Yeah.

VC: Wow. Good Lord. An then—

FC: I—

VC: And then, and then when did you come along? [Laughs]

FC: [laughs] 1922.

VC: [laughs] Ah and can you, can you tell me a little bit about where you lived in Hamilton at that time?

FC: Well, [clears her throat] when I was first born I lived on Beach Road. My parents were renting a house.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: And then they moved to 163 Barnsdale Avenue—

VC: Okay.

FC: —North. And we lived there for quite a few years.

VC: Uh huh.

FC: And, and then we moved to 10 Minto Avenue.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And where, where is Minto? What area of, uh—

FC: Barton and Sanford.

VC: Okay. Barton and—

FC: [clears her throat]

VC: —Sanford.

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: Okay. And what kind of a neighbourhood was it that, that you moved into? Were they mostly all Italians or were there—

FC: No.

VC: —a mixture.

FC: No. There was, there was a mixture. On, uh...Barnsdale. No. There was a mixture.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: No.

VC: So kind of, what other ethnic groups were there?

FC: Well, there were all kinds.

VC: Mmm hmm?

FC: Yeah.

VC: Ukrainians?

FC: It was a mixture. Yeah, Ukrainian, Polish, Canadian—

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: —English. Yeah. There were a mixture.

VC: Okay. And where did you go to school then in—?

FC: I went to school at St. Annes School.

VC: Okay. And St. Annes, uh.

FC: That's—

VC: Now it's, uh, more of a Polish church, but was it a, um, uh, an Italian, uh, mainly Italian church at the time?

FC: Oh no. Church? I meant, I thought you said school.

VC: Oh. Sorry!

FC: Yeah.

VC: My—

FC: The church St. Anthony's.

VC: Oh, okay.

FC: We always went to St. Anthony's.

VC: Okay. And the school was St. Anne's then.

FC: St. Anne's.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Again, were there a lot of Italians in, um, at the school, or?

FC: It was a big mixture. Yeah, it was a mixture of Italian, Polish, Ukraine mainly.

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And what about St. Anthony's? Was St. Anthony's, um—

FC: St. Anthony's was all-Italian.

VC: All Italian.

FC: All Italian.

VC: And, um, when did St.—Do you remember when St. Anthony's was built?

FC: [quietly] Oh dear...

VC: It was already built when—

FC: Y—

VC: —when you started going there.

FC: Yeah. What a minute. They celebrated their— [looks off camera to the side]

[Unknown: What was it?]

FC: What was it last year?

[Unknown: Oh. Gosh. I have it upstairs]

FC: 75th or 100.

[Unknown: Seventy, the, the, the hundredth, wasn't it the hundredth?]

VC: Yeah.

FC: The hundredth.

VC: Oh wow!

FC: Last year they celebrated their 100th.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Alright. So that was an Italian sort of, um, congregation, more of an Italian—

FC: Oh...yeah. 99%

VC: 99% [laughs]

FC: Yeah.

VC: And then, uh, when did you, when did you meet your husband?

FC: I met my husband, believe it or not, I was just a young girl.

VC: Uh huh.

FC: He came from Italy.

VC: Uh huh.

FC: See he was, he was only...16, and—

VC: Do you remember what year he came, uh?

FC: He came to...1930.

VC: Okay. So he came to Canada in 1930 and he was 16 at that time.

FC: Yeah. Yeah.

VC: So how did you meet him? This is a nice story.

FC: Well, we were *paesan*.

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: You know, everybody would, would visit everybody else.

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: It's not like today you have to make a phone call.

VC: [laughs]

FC: You just presented yourself and you...you know, you kept in touch with all the *paesan*.

VC: Sure, sure.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And so, uh, you met him just, um, was he, uh, was he, had he come to relatives here in Hamilton?

FC: His father was already here.

VC: Oh, his father was already here.

FC: And when he came from Italy, I don't have it on now, but he brought me a chain—

VC: Right.

FC: —with a medal—

VC: Right.

FC: —from my grandparents.

VC: I think you had it on the last time.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Yes.

FC: Yeah.

VC: That's good. And so what was your, what was Berlino's father's name?

FC: Urbano.

VC: Urbano. So—

FC: Urbano Colangelo.

VC: Oh, Urbano Colangelo.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And they were here all—He was here already.

FC: The father was here.

VC: Yeah. Did, did Berlino come with his mother? Or was the mother—

FC: No. No.

VC: No.

FC: He came by himself.

VC: Okay.

FC: With some other *paesan*.

VC: Okay.

FC: [clears throat]

VC: And did Berlino's mother stay in Italy at this time?

FC: She stayed in Italy.

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: Now, she was supposed to come after in 1939 but the war broke out.

VC: Yeah.

FC: So she couldn't come.

VC: Yeah.

FC: And she came in 1948.

VC: Okay.

FC: And she came with her son and daughter-in-law.

VC: Okay. And what was, uh, uh, what was Berlino's mother's name?

FC: Uh, Coccetta[?]. Maria Coccetta[?].

VC: Maria Coccetta[?].

FC: Coccetta[?]. Yeah.

VC: What was his brother and, um—

FC: The brother was Fernando.

VC: Okay.

FC: And the daughter-in-law was Aurora.

VC: Aurora. That's a beautiful name.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Yeah.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So they, uh, um, uh, the brother and, uh, sister-in-law and the mother came in 194—

FC: 48.

VC: 48.

FC: Right—

VC: after the war.

FC: —after the war.

VC: Okay.

FC: The first—They landed [laughs]—They came here the first of July.

VC: Okay! [laughs]

FC: Canada Day.

VC: Canada Day. Why did, um, why did your father-in-law decide to, um, to call his son to Canada, uh, when he did in 19, uh...?

FC: Well, I think in those days, they brought over the sons first.

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: Rather than the whole family.

VC: Okay.

FC: You know, to kind of get somebody adjusted.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So and did, um, and did Berlino find work, uh—

FC: After?

VC: —he came—

FC: Yeah!

VC: —to Canada?

FC: Yeah.

VC: What was he working at?

FC: He worked at Copley Noyes and Randall.

VC: So he was a tailor?

FC: Yeah. He learned—He wasn't a ta, a tailor but, uh, the job they gave him, like a tailor in the factory there.

VC: Okay.

FC: Each one had their own, own specific, like cutting—

VC: Uh huh.

FC: —or putting buttons on. You know, the usual thing to make a suit.

VC: Yeah.

FC: [clears her throat]

VC: So when, uh—

FC: And he worked there 45 years.

VC: Wow. So he, he worked there even after he came out of the—

FC: Camps. Yeah.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah. They accepted him back.

VC: Yeah. And, um, when he was in the camp, did, did he do any of the work that he—

FC: Yeah!

VC: As a tailor?

FC: Yeah.

VC: What did he do?

FC: You know, fixing paints, shortening pants.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: A little bit of tailoring stuff.

VC: Oh, well that's good.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Okay. So you said, um, you went to St. Anne's School, elementary school.

FC: I, yeah, I did.

VC: Did you then go on to high school?

FC: Yeah. I went, I went to Cathe—Cathedral High School.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And what did you do there? Was it a, was it, um, uh, general—?

FC: General course.

VC: A general course.

FC: Yeah.

VC: That's good.

FC: Yeah. And then I went to, like that was the four year course.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: And then, I, in my days, not too many went to university.

VC: Oh, okay.

[00:10:02]

FC: You know. But, uh, I went on to, like a fifth year—

VC: Okay.

FC: —which was Cathedral Commercial.

VC: Oh, alright. And so then what did you do after, after you finished the, the—

FC: I—

VC: —the fifth year?

FC: I worked [clears throat] in the International Harvest.

VC: Oh, wow.

FC: The, the payroll office.

VC: Wow. And was that when you married too? Uh.

FC: Then we got married.

VC: Yes. And what, what year did you get married?

FC: 1943.

VC: 1943. So it was after the war.

FC: Yeah. I'm going to have a drink. [Reaches for a water bottle]

VC: Yeah. That's fine.

FC: [clears throat and takes a drink of water] Okay [clears throat]

VC: Um, when, um, when you were, um...when June the 10th happened—

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: Um, I know that Berlino was, was taken—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —and, and arrested that day. Do you know of any others in the neighbourhood, um, that were also taken? In your neighbourhood, you said you lived, uh, in the, in the Barton and Sandford area.

FC: Well that, but then [clears throat] we got, when we got, my father-in-law was living with us too.

VC: Oh! I see. Oh, I didn't know that.

FC: Yeah. Yeah.

VC: Okay.

FC: So like and Berlino was living with us.

VC: Oh, alright.

FC: But then when we got married—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —we moved to my father-in-law's house—

VC: Okay.

FC: —which was 20 Ruth Street.

VC: Okay.

FC: Right at the corner of Ruth and Case.

VC: Right, right.

FC: Yeah. And that area was all Italian—

VC: Okay.

FC: —Polish, Ukrainian.

VC: Right.

FC: There was very few English people.

VC: Right.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So when Berlino was, uh, taken and arrested, you weren't married yet.

FC: No.

VC: No. Uh, do you, do you know of any other, uh, *pisani* or, or anyone else from your neighbourhood that was also arrested that day?

FC: [thinking]

VC: On the 10th of, uh, uh, June.

FC: Mmmhmm. Trying to think. [Clears throat]...Not in the immediate area.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah. Because, because some of them weren't involved with the Casa D'Italia.

VC: Okay.

FC: And stuff like that, you know?

VC: Okay.

FC: But, uh, but the, the others were. Like, different districts.

VC: Mmmhmm. Yeah. Were any of your relatives, um, uh, taken or, um, arrested, uh, uh, that day?

FC: No.

VC: Oh. Okay.

FC: No.

VC: So then Berlino went off. He went to the, uh, camp. He was in the camp for how long?

FC: Twenty...22 months I think.

VC: 22 months? Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So—

FC: Around that time.

[Water sound in background]

VC: —he came in, it was probably 1942 when he came back?

FC: Yeah.

VC: Okay. And so then you got married in 1943.

FC: 43. Yeah.

VC: What was your wedding like then? [Laughs]

FC: [laughs] Our wedding was a house wedding.

VC: Oh very good!

FC: In those days they didn't go to halls. You know, because the commu—the Italian community was small.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: And the people you invited were mostly your relatives—

VC: Relatives.

FC: —and your *pisani*.

VC: Yeah.

FC: And, uh, so, uh...we, we had a house wedding.

VC: Oh that's nice!

FC: Yeah.

VC: And but where, but you were married at St., uh, St. Anthony's.

FC: St. Anthony's.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: Yeah. And we were living on Minto Avenue—

VC: Okay.

FC: —at the time.

VC: Alright.

FC: Yeah [clears throat]

VC: And, and, um, so you got married in 1943, um, [water sound in background] and, uh, obviously you had children.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So how many children did you actually have?

FC: Six.

VC: Six. And, uh, can you give us their names?

FC: Yeah. Alright. Did you want their birth dates?

VC: Oh well, at least the year. [Laughs]

FC: [laughs] Yeah. Well, the first one is Florence.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: Then we had Peter.

VC: Uh huh.

FC: Then Joseph.

VC: Uh huh.

FC: And then M, uh, Mary.

VC: Right.

FC: Then Irma.

VC: Right.

FC: And then Anne.

VC: And Anne is the little one. [Laughs]

FC: [laughs]

VC: Anne is the little one. [Laughs]

FC: Yeah.

VC: Um, and J, and Joe, um, is also very much connected with, uh—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —the, the, problems of the internment—

FC: Yes.

VC: —afterwards.

FC: Yes. Yes.

VC: Uh—

FC: Yeah.

VC: Can you tell us a little bit about his work?

FC: He's a lawyer.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: And he lives in Richmond Hill.

VC: Right.

FC: But practices mostly in Toronto.

VC: Right.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And, I, I believe he was also, um, he was also helping, uh, one of the other—

FC: Yes.

VC: —internees, um—

FC: Yes. He was helping Osvaldo Giacomelli.

VC: Mmm hmm.

FC: And they did have a court case.

VC: Right.

FC: But, uh, it, uh...[background noise] in the meantime Osvaldo di, died.

VC: Died.

FC: Passed away.

VC: That's right.

FC: Passed away.

VC: Yeah.

FC: And they tried to continue on with like his estate—

VC: Right.

FC: —but, uh, the, the government did not come across with any money,—

VC: Right.

FC: —with any compensation.

VC: Yeah.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Right. Um, were—I had asked you whether any of your family or any of your relatives were, um, were interned.

FC: No.

VC: Were any of them picked up and designated as enemy aliens, that they had to go and check in with the police?

FC: The ones that, that were not picked up.

VC: Okay. All of the other ones had to go and check in with the police?

FC: Well, a lot of them did.

VC: Okay.

FC: My father didn't.

VC: No.

FC: No.

VC: He didn't?

FC: No.

VC: Okay.

FC: But my father-in-law, I think, did.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So he had to—What did he have to do?

FC: Well, he'd have to cert—They were specific certain days that he would have to go—

VC: I see.

FC: —and report—

VC: Okay. And—

FC: —to the mounted police.

VC: To the mounted police—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —in Hamilton?

FC: Yeah.

VC: And where was the mounted police, uh, um, central, uh, office located?

FC: I th—

VC: Do you remember?

FC: I think they were on Main Street—

VC: Okay.

FC: —someplace.

VC: Okay. Now, I know that Berlino was there for 22 months.

FC: [nods]

VC: 22 months in, in—

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: —Petawawa, I believe.

FC: Yeah.

VC: He didn't go—It was only in Petawawa.

FC: No. Just Petawawa.

VC: And did, um, did the experience that, that he had at, uh, Camp Petawawa, did that influence his life after he came back home, do you think? Did he—

FC: In the—

VC: Was he angry? Was he—

FC: In a way, yes.

VC: Okay.

FC: He was angry that he was picked up. But also...like you're proud. You're a proud person and something, to have something like that happen to you is demoralizing.

VC: Absolutely. Absolutely.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And so that was, he, he really felt—

FC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

VC: —that he had been—

FC: Yeah. He felt very bad.

VC: Right. And, and did that, uh, did that make him change in any way, do you think?

FC: No, I don't think so. No. He just kept on going the way he always did.

VC: Right. And, um, when, when he came back did he often talk about other people that he had met in the camp?

FC: Oh yeah!

VC: Who were, who were also from Hamilton?

FC: Yeah!

VC: Do you remember some of the people that he said he had met there?

[Camera zooms in]

FC: Oh yeah. Mr. Zaffiro.

VC: Okay.

FC: Mr. Del Piero.

VC: Okay.

FC: Uh, uh, Rocco Celeste.

VC: Okay.

FC: The Ferri brothers.

VC: Oh yes, yes, yes.

FC: Yeah. [Laughing] I'm just trying to think—

VC: Yeah. [Laughing] Just trying to think of the other ones.

FC: —so far back.

VC: It's true!

FC: Well, of course Phyllis' father.

VC: Right.

FC: Luigi Mascia.

VC: Luigi Mascia, right.

FC: Yeah. And then there was Antonio LeFery[?]

VC: Yes.

FC: —which was who was picked up but released...quite suddenly.

VC: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And do you remember at the time when, when people were picked up, what were people saying? Uh...

FC: Well, first of all, they were upset.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: That it shouldn't have happened.

VC: Right.

FC: And why did it happen?

VC: Right.

FC: But they...it hurt them.

VC: Yes.

FC: It hurt them.

VC: And did it make people—

FC: Morally and also kind of...What could I say? Uh...it made them bitter.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: You know.

VC: Mmmhmm. Did it make them change the way they, they treated other Italians, other people in the community, do you think?

FC: While the, the men were interned?

VC: Yes.

FC: Well, sometimes, yeah. Because like, the Canadian people, the English, as they called them, they, they felt, 'Oh my goodness. They're bad people.'

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: 'That's why they were picked up.'

[00:20:09]

VC: Okay. And it, and maybe it wasn't true.

FC: No.

VC: No.

FC: No.

VC: It wasn't true.

FC: No.

VC: Okay.

FC: No.

VC: And, um, when, um, when these men were picked up, the ones who were married, um, how did the families, um, live? How, how—

FC: Well,

VC: —were they—

FC: Well, they had, they had their own families help them.

VC: Okay.

FC: Help them out. You know. And some of them, I guess, had to go on welfare.

VC: Right.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And do you know of any, um, any people here in Hamilton where all of their, uh, property was confiscated and it was taken away? Do you know of anyone that...

FC: [Sighs]

VC: Maybe your, any of your family that, uh...

FC: Nothing.

VC: Nothing.

FC: Nothing in our family. No.

VC: So had you heard of anyone else where, uh, maybe the, the government took away what they had?

FC: Well, I did hear of that, but I can't remember specifically who it was.

VC: That's, that's fine. And, and how did you feel, um, uh, when this was happening to Berlino?

FC: Well, as a young person I was, because of the families, you were afraid—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —you know, of what was going to happen to your own family.

VC: Mmmhmm. And so did that make people sort of become—

FC: [motions with her hands, begins to speak]

VC: —more silent, more close?

FC: Oh yeah. They, you know, you couldn't congregate on the street and talk. No way.

VC: Why?

FC: No. They, they, they [camera zooms out] they were afraid—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —that somebody, that the police would come across and take them too.

VC: Okay.

FC: You know, that sort of thing.

VC: Wow. Um, and, um, did you experience at the time when you were saying that, that some of the Canadians, some of the English people were saying that, “Well the, the Italians maybe were bad people if this was being done to them.” Did you experience any, um, any discrimination? Did you experience anyone who was saying bad things to you or—?

FC: Not to me personally.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: No. But I know there was a girl in high school and she didn't like the Italians.

VC: She didn't?

FC: No.

VC: And so what would she do? What would she say?

FC: Well, she was, "Oh, those people." You know.

VC: Not even giving us a name. [Laughs]

FC: No. Yeah.

VC: Wow. Anything else that, that you wanted to tell us about, uh, what it was like in those days?

FC: Well it was, it was very scary.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: You know, even our, our own parish priest at the time thought it was scary.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: He was very upset—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —about what had happened.

VC: Right.

FC: And he tried to help the families.

VC: And how would he help, um, how would he try to help them?

FC: Well I think he, he helped some of them financially.

VC: Mmmhmm. Mmmhmm.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Do you know whether he also helped them maybe by writing letters or, um—

FC: I really don't know.

VC: Okay. But there was also, but the, the, um, the church would try to help them—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —financially.

FC: Yeah, yeah.

VC: Um, was there any other groups of, of Italian or, uh, Italian organizations that was trying to help the families at the time, do you know?

FC: [sighs]...I'm not too sure—

VC: Mmmhmm. Mmmhmm.

FC: —because even if, if there was—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —people were afraid of doing anything—

VC: Okay.

FC: —for fear that they would be reported.

VC: Okay.

FC: You know.

VC: So this was all kept very quiet—

FC: Yeah, yeah.

VC: —and everything was very sort of—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —secretive.

FC: It was mostly family help.

VC: Right.

FC: People helped the families.

VC: Mmmhmm. So in this period of time, in 1940, 1941, 1942, you were still going to school.

FC: Yeah!

VC: Yes. So, um, and your, your father was still working?

FC: My father was working.

VC: Yeah and where was he working at the time?

FC: He worked at Dominion Glass.

VC: Oh, okay.

FC: Yeah. [Reaches for water bottle]

VC: So he was still working. Your mom was at home?

FC: My mother never worked.

VC: Okay.

FC: [drinks some water]

VC: And what about your future father-in-law, um, Urbano, was he also working at that time?

FC: He was a cement finisher.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah. He was working.

VC: He was still working.

FC: Yeah.

VC: So but he still had to go and check in with the, uh, the—

FC: Yeah.

VC: RCMP, um—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —whatever. And then when Berlino came back from the, from the camps—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —um, did he go back to Copley Noyes?

FC: Yeah.

VC: Mmmhmm?

FC: Yeah. They accepted him back right away.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Um, and, and then you said he, he stayed there for another 45 years.

FC: Well, altogether.

VC: Oh, altogether.

FC: Yeah. It was 45 years.

VC: Okay. Well that's good.

FC: Mmm.

VC: And, and again, were there other people from Copley Noyes who ended up, uh, in the camps and they saw each other when they came back?

FC: Yeah! Mr Borsalino[?].

VC: Oh!

FC: Yeah. I think he used to work at Copley's.

VC: Okay. And, uh, Borsalino's[?]. There's a, there's a, they, did they, were they the ones—Did his family have the—

FC: Music store.

VC: The music store.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Oh. Okay. Because there's also a Borsalino[?] grocery.

FC: No, I think that was a different family.

VC: Oh, that was a different family.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Same name but different, um—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —different family.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And was Mr. Borsalino[?] also part of the, uh, uh, the music group at the Casa D'Italia?

FC: Yeah. They were all at the Casa D'Italia.

VC: Right.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And did you ever go as a, as a young girl to the Casa D'Italia?

FC: Yeah, we used to. They used to have Sunday night shows.

VC: Oh nice!

FC: Variety shows.

VC: Oh nice!

FC: Yeah and the families used to go.

VC: Oh good. And what kind of things would they do and the variety shows?

FC: Oh, they would sing. The band, you know, would play.

VC: Uh, were they all Italians?

FC: Yeah.

VC: The band?

FC: Yeah. And they'd, uh, put on skits.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: And were the skits, were they done in Italian?

FC: Italian.

VC: Oh good.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Oh good.

FC: Oh sure.

VC: And did they also have, um, activities for children at the Casa D'Italia?

FC: [thinks]

VC: Do you remember whether they had, uh, any lessons or stuff like that?

FC: Yeah, because I went.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: We used to call it the *Fascita*[?] School. [laughs]

VC: Okay! [laughs] So what kind of, [laughs] so what kind of things did you do at the *Fascita*[?]
School?

FC: No. The Italian government—

VC: Uh huh.

FC: —sent over a whole pile of books—

VC: Uh huh.

FC: —in all subjects.

VC: Okay.

FC: And it was a school.

VC: Okay.

FC: Like, it was after hours.

VC: Oh, okay.

FC: Yeah. And the teacher was a Mr. Mari[?].

VC: Oh! Okay. I heard of that name before.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Wow.

FC: Yeah. I went.

VC: Oh, good for you!

FC: Yeah. We wore uniforms.

VC: Oh! And what colour was the uniform?

FC: Well, it was like a, a white blouse and a navy skirt.

VC: Well that's very smart. That's very smart. [Laughs]

FC: Yeah.

VC: So did, did you learn, did you learn, uh, Italian? Were these lang, uh—

FC: Yeah!

VC: —language courses and—?

FC: Yeah!

VC: And did you also learn about culture and—?

FC: Yeah!

VC: What kinds of things?

FC: Because they had geography books, literature books, all kinds of books. Schoolbooks.

VC: Okay.

FC: Yeah.

VC: Hmm. Well that sounds, that sounds really interesting. And did you ever take part in these variety shows?

FC: No. [laughs]

VC: [laughs]

FC: No.

VC: How about some of the other people? Who were some of the other people who were, uh, part of the variety shows, do you remember?

FC: Oh my goodness.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: If I'm not mistaken I think Phyllis was there too.

VC: Oh, was she?

FC: [thinks]

VC: That's Phyllis Morreale, right?.

FC: Yeah, Phyllis Moreale.

VC: Hmm.

FC: [thinks]

VC: That's okay. Not a problem.

FC: It's so long ago.

VC: Hmm.

FC: You forget who people were. [Laughs]

VC: So on the whole, do you remember this as a, as a positive time or was it a very frightening time?

FC: It was a very frightening time.

VC: Um.

FC: Yeah. E, even the men that weren't picked up—

VC: Yeah.

FC: —they were really, [clears throat] they were really afraid. And they, the whole family, everybody, they were all afraid—

VC: Mmmhmm. Mmmhmm.

FC: —that they would be picked up.

VC: Uh, because they just didn't know.

FC: They didn't know. They would just pick and choose.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: But evidently, supposedly there was a list—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —people. They had a list of who they were going to pick up.

VC: This is the police, is that the police—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —that had the list?

FC: Yeah.

VC: Okay. And did anyone ever, um, did anyone ever, uh [camera zooms in] say how they got this list?

FC: Well, supposedly there was a Dr. Agro—

[00:30:00]

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —and, uh...oh my. There was another man involved...I think his last name was Yalcon[?].

VC: Mmmhmm. Mmmhmm.

FC: And they were sort of in cahoots with the mounted police.

VC: Mmm.

FC: And that's what happened.

VC: Okay. Okay. Alright. Anything else you want to tell us about that time? [Laughs]

FC: [laughs] Oh geez.

VC: Good, bad, or...

FC: Well...you know, I was too young to realize the whole situation.

VC: Right.

FC: You know, even though I knew that wasn't good.

[Camera zooms in]

VC: But you, you, you knew that something was going on—

FC: Yeah.

[Camera zooms in]

VC: —but you didn't know exactly—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —what was...

FC: [nods]

VC: Okay.

FC: Yep.

VC: Alright.

FC: Because we found out all about this afterwards.

VC: Yes.

FC: You know, nobody would, nobody knew too much during that period that they were arrested.

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: It was after they came out.

VC: Right. Okay. And did, did people talk about this a lot after—

FC: Afterwards.

VC: —after the war?

FC: Yeah. Afterwards. Afterwards they would talk about it.

VC: Right.

FC: You know, sometimes the men, you know, they were all friends. They were, some of them, uh, worked together or were *pisani*. They would, if they ever, you know, got to somebody's house for a little get together they would always talk about this.

VC: Mmmhmm. And again, were they still—

FC: Oh, they were bitter.

VC: They were bitter.

FC: Very bitter.

VC: Because they had been picked up.

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: And they felt, uh, they felt ashamed or..?

FC: They were ashamed. They, you know, like an, an Italian person's a very proud person. And to have something like that happen to them, it was, it was very demoralizing.

VC: Right.

FC: Yeah...they weren't happy about it.

VC: Okay. And did any, any of them do anything about it afterwards when they came out, uh, after the war? Uh, did any of them try and, um, I don't know, sue the government—

FC: Well, initially there were—

VC: —try and get—

FC: There were groups in—

VC: Mmmhmm.

FC: —I think mostly in Toronto. And some of the people here too but nothing became of it.

VC: Yeah.

FC: They, they expected to be compensated.

VC: They did expect to be compensated.

FC: Yes. The same way the Japanese.

VC: Right.

FC: But no, not the case my son for Mr. Giacomelli. There was nothing came out of that.

VC: Right.

FC: And my son, like, he did the work all on his own.

VC: Right.

FC: He didn't expect to be paid.

VC: Right, right. Um, and so no compensation, no anything.

FC: No.

VC: Okay.

FC: Have you ever spoken to my son?

VC: Um, I haven't spoken to him, um, just because [camera zooms out] I didn't want to put him in a situation where he couldn't speak—

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC:—because of the fact that—

FC: That's a case.

VC: —he would have, because of the case.

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: Uh, but that's, uh.

FC: But I'm sure he'll talk to you.

VC: I'm sure. We'll, uh, I have given his name to the, the people in Toronto so I'm sure that they will get in touch with him. And, and if he can tell us anything—

FC: Mmmhmm.

VC: —I'm sure that he'll be able to—

FC: Yeah.

VC: —he'll be able to.

FC: Yeah. He would know more, more about it because he was right in there.

VC: Right. Yeah. Good. Alright. Very good. That's very good!

[Unknown: Thank you very much]

VC: Thank you very much again!

FC: Thank you. [Laughs]

[Fades out at 00:34:06]

[End of Interview]