

K- At her home in North Lake Kristie Perry

K- When were you born?

A- I was born in 1915, June ^a the 21st

K- Where at?

A- In Italy, town a little town of Monyogo its by Venice, about 100 miles probably from Venice

K- Um, did you live there up until you came over to America?

A- Yes, I was 11 years old when I came, and wh

K- OK, um, did you or do you have any brother's ~~all~~ ^{or} sisters?

A- Yes, at the time I had 1 brother and 1 sister, The 3 of us came here with my mother

K- Um, was your father with you?

A- No, my father came here a 5 years before that, he had to stay here 5 years to be a citizen and then he could send for us, and that's why we came

K- ~~Oh~~ Oh, Oh, O.K. Um, ^{um} How old were you when you came here?

K- O.K. A- I was eleven

K- Um, why did your family decid to leave Italy?

A - Well, the work situation there was very poor and the
men had to go out and look for work elsewhere, most of
them came to the United States here

K - Um, what grade, well did you go the school before you
came?

A - Oh ya, I was in the 5th grade when I came
here

K - Um what was the required age for starting
the school in Italy?

A - We started at 7, 7 years old.

K - And what grade did you enter?

A - First grade, there was no Kindergarten

K - Oh, when you left how did you get to
the departing town? Were you left?

A - We went by car from our town to um
where the boat was into _____

K - um, did you have to travel ^{very} far to get there?

A - About a hundred miles

K - um, was the boat big?

A - Yes, one of those ocean liners, it was huge,
to us it was ~~to~~ huge, anyway ha, ha,

K - ^{ha,} um, did any friends or relatives besides
your family come with you?

A - NO we were the only ones at the time

K - um, were they all people coming to America?

A - Yes, most of them

K - um, How many people would you say
were on the boat

A - that I wouldn't know but there...

K - (Butting in) well, approximately?

A - 500 probably or maybe more

K - How long was your journey?

A - It took us 13 days to get here

K - Where did everybody sleep?

A-^{Oh} we had a cabin, we had cabins, with bunks

K- well what did you get for meals and that?

A- We went to the dining room everyday, and I really don't recall what we ate. (laughing while saying it)

K- were there any sick people on the boat?

A- OOOOh, my sister was sick all the way, she had a a a, what you call ocean sickness or sea sickness?

K- (correcting her) yah, (background watchers all say "yah" too)

A- she was sick all the way over here, I didn't, I was alright.

K- um, how did you feel when you were nearing the port to America?

A- We were scared (Ha, Ha) we didn't know how to speak English, not a word and ah we first had to stop at Ellis Island, which is not there any longer but all incoming immigrants had to stop at Ellis Island, and you had to stay there to have a medical checkup (K+A) (talking all at once) A- Before they ~~that~~ let you go K- what did they check you for?

A- Everything they give you a physical you couldn't have any diseases, otherwise you were sent back

K- were many people sent back?

A- There was a few, there was a few that were sent back

K- um, what harbor did you come into?

A- New York

K- um, is that where most people came?

A- yah, I think so

K- um, who picked you up at the harbor when you got there?

A- When we got there? They took us to a hotel, my dad didn't come there to pick us up, they took us to a hotel and we stayed there until they took us to a train station and so we came by train from New York to Ishpeming

K- did you? where at? ^{um} where about did you live in Ishpeming?

A- We came right to Ishpeming first we ~~didn't~~ ^{we didn't} live here in North Lake here ^{at first} but we went to a ~~place~~ ^{place} called Junction

K- Oh, did you go to school right away?

A- We came in April and ^{ah} we didn't start then until September ^{we didn't} _{go} _{back}

K- um, what grade did you have to enter?

A- I had to go back to the fifth because I ^{was} didn't finish that grade there so

K- Did you learn how to talk English rightaway Or did it take long?

A- (Laughing while thinking back) I took me a whole year, really to get good English

K- were there any other Italian students there? that could speak English?

A- Here?

K- yah. A- oh, we had friends who were Italian

K- did you talk Italian with them?

A- for a little bit.

K- Could you talk Italian in the classroom

A- No (Ha, Ha,) NO, We didnt talk Italian in the classroom

K-um, what did your father work as?

A- My father was always working as a miner, in the mines

K-um, Were times hard then?

A- Yes because when we came here it was 1927 and my father was working at the time but in 1929, you don't remember that but it was depression worse than even today

K- Oh, ~~um~~ um did you graduate from school?

A- That's what I was going to say, ^{see} when the depression came I was the oldest, I went to one year of high school and so when I quit I was 16 and went to work

K- What did you work as?

A- House work

K- Oh, um How old were you when you got a job.

A- 16

K- Did you, ~~what~~ ^{when} did you get married

A- I didn't get married until I was

24
K- did you have any kids then? (children?)

A- Did I have any children? we had five children.

K- um, ~~do~~ did your family expand later, like grandchildren or

A- Oh yah, we had five children and fifteen grandchildren, that's up to now.

K- um, would you say times and people have change since you came

A- Oh ya, at that time everybody was sort of poor and lived mostly in company houses we all lived by the company there is so much difference now

K- um, ~~when~~ when did you say you came to North Lake?

A- we lived 2 years in town and then we came to North Lake my dad got a job up here at the mine here so we moved to North Lake and I've been here ever

since
K- um, did you plan on living in North Lake this long?

A- Oh I didn't plan on it but I did

K- um, is there anything else you have to say about coming here?

A- well I'll have to say that it's hard coming to a different country where you can't understand or anything but as a young person you learn fast older people don't learn as fast, but young people learn fast. (Ha, Ha) you have to! (Ha, Ha, from both of us.) So, that's about all I have to say, unless there is something that you want to know. K- no, I think that information is suffice. Thank you.

This has been an interview with Kristie Perry and Angela Bussone.