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Natali, Algea interview

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INTERVIEWER: Okay, here we go. I have some questions here. And we can go by this pretty much, okay?

ALGEA NATALI: I’ll try to answer them if I can.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, thank you. You said you got here when you were three?

NATALI: Right.

INTERVIEWER: What can you tell me about your early life, before you came to this country?

NATALI: No, I don’t remember anything. I was only three years old. I know we were very poor. That I knew. That’s about it.

INTERVIEWER: Where in Italy were you born?
NATALI: In Lucca, [Servado de ?]. That’s a little providence right out of Luca.

INTERVIEWER: Is that northern?

NATALI: It’s northern Italy, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Was this like a small town or village?

NATALI: Oh yeah. I went back about 1973 or something like that, and I went over and visited the little town where I was born. I found some cousins I had never seen. And the little place where I was born and my mother lived was still there. I was very thrilled.

INTERVIEWER: That’s interesting. Okay, I need to know your approximate birth date.

NATALI: April the 9th, 1904.

INTERVIEWER: That’s my grandfather’s birth date!

NATALI: Is that really?

INTERVIEWER: Yes!

NATALI: We’re twins! Is he fat like I am?

INTERVIEWER: He’s a large man. Very tall.

NATALI: Is this off the record?

INTERVIEWER: I think so. There really won’t be anyone listening. And you came to the United States directly? You didn’t go to any other countries?

NATALI: No. No. We came in steerage. I was so sick. I had worms as a child, and oh, I’d go into spasms. My poor mother. With two kids and not knowing the language, it was tough on her. And when I arrived in Los Angeles, they had to take me off the train. I had another spell. And I really had worms, because as a child, I went to the toilet where we lived over there on Harrison Street, and it was all worms. That was horrible.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have brothers and sisters before you arrived, or were you the oldest?

NATALI: My sister Emma was the oldest. Yeah. Just the two of us. Then my mother had twins. And then she had another girl.

INTERVIEWER: Did your whole family come over all at once?
NATALI: No. My father – first my uncle came, and then my uncle sent for my father, and then my father sent for us to come over. And my mother was gonna have myself, and she told her to name me Algea [pronounced like algae], after some friends of theirs. It’s Algia, A-L-G-I-A, really. And when they took me to school and my mother said Algia, the teacher said Algea, and that’s the way it’s been. But really, it’s A-L-G-I-A.

INTERVIEWER: And you came to Stockton right away?

NATALI: Yeah. We went and visited some cousins of ours who were over there on Lincoln Street. We stayed with them for a while, and then my mother and dad bought an old house that belonged to the boss of the old women mills on Harrison and Sonora Street.

INTERVIEWER: I think I know where that is. Did you ever go to school?

NATALI: Here? Oh yes.

INTERVIEWER: Well I guess since you were three, you didn’t go to school in the old country. You went through high school?

NATALI: No, I didn’t go to high school. I quit school when I was seven years old. I wanted to go to work. Crazy. And I got a job over at the old pencil factory. And then I worked at the paper mill. I went to College of Commerce later on. And I worked in the office of the paper mill. That’s a long time ago.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of background did your parents have? Education?

NATALI: Well, no. No education. My father couldn’t read or write. My mother could write, but my father couldn’t.

INTERVIEWER: What is your parents’ religion?

NATALI: Catholic.

INTERVIEWER: And you’re Catholic as well?

NATALI: Right. Very much so.

INTERVIEWER: Have your religious views changed since then?

NATALI: Not at all. Stronger if anything.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think they’re stronger?

NATALI: Because I’m very much Catholic. I don’t know. I just believe in my religion, and that’s all. Sometimes we get some of those people who come at the door. And I says, “No thank you. I
have my own religion. I’m not interested in yours.” They still try to pursue it. I said, “You’re wasting your time.” So they finally give up.

INTERVIEWER: Did your mother work outside the home?

NATALI: She did. She used to clean house for, I don’t know if you ever remember, there was a Dr. Prince here in town. And she cleaned house for his wife and his mother.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know if she worked when she was in Italy?

NATALI: No. Oh yes, she did. Wait a minute. She used to work for the English. They used to make thread. They used to go to work about four o’clock in the morning. She had to walk a long ways to get wherever the factory was. Made thread for the spools for England. Yeah. They got two, three cents a day. I don’t know just exactly how much it was.

INTERVIEWER: Was it pretty commonplace for you when your mother was working here? How did you feel about that?

NATALI: Oh yeah. It bothered my sister. My sister Emma, she’d mark a certain place. If the sun got past that spot, that was it. She’d get all hysterical. Because according to her, my mother should have been home at that time, when the sun was striking that certain spot. And one day she didn’t come. Oh, my sister Emma just had a fit. She was hysterical. What it was, she worked just a little bit later. That’s all it was.

INTERVIEWER: I guess you don’t remember about when you were leaving, so I can’t ask you how you felt.

NATALI: No. My mother would tell us about how my grandfather and grandmother cried and cried. Because they knew they would never see us again. Yeah. They were very upset, my grandfather and grandmother.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Some of these things don’t apply if you were young enough that you don’t remember Italy.

NATALI: No. Not at all.

INTERVIEWER: This second group of questions is about what you remember, what life was like when you first came. Things like what you expected to find. Do you remember if there were things that surprised you, or…?

NATALI: No. I was always a very happy-go-lucky kid, and we always had a lot of fun around our house. We’re all very poor. We lived in the block over there in back of the old woolen mills. And we kids used to play out in the street, and my mother and father’d be sitting out there on the
bench, talking, visiting. All the neighbors would come over. It was very pleasant. Always very pleasant.

INTERVIEWER: So where you lived, was that basically an Italian neighborhood?

NATALI: Yeah. It was Italian. Very much so.

INTERVIEWER: You said before that you settled first with some cousins of yours?

NATALI: Yeah. They lived over on Lincoln Street. Where was it? Yeah, it was Lincoln Street. Went over the bridge. Yes. Lincoln Street. They were very nice. We didn’t stay there for too long though, because [garbled]. My mother had found that house. They bought [garbled].

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember if most of the other Italians in the neighborhood had come from Italy or if they were second-generation Italians?

NATALI: Most of them came from Italy, yes. I remember the floods we had. Oh boy, did we have floods. The boats used to come in the door and pick us up and take us across the street, because the Cini house across the street was two stories high. And the kids, of course we had a ball. My poor mother. The chickens would come floating through the house, oh what was mess. And when the water receded, all the mud was left there. Oh! My dad used to put big nails in the wall and tie the beds up over the water that way. And I had an uncle that drank quite a bit, and he would sit on an old-fashioned truck, and he fell off the truck into the water, drunk of course. My mother had to put up with all that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember pretty much other Italians, or were there other ethnic groups around?

NATALI: Well, there was black people on the corner. They were very nice, but they were lonely people. There were Mexicans too.

INTERVIEWER: Did your family encounter any problems when you got here? Do you remember there being any big problems?

NATALI: No. My dad had a job working at the woolen mills. He washed wool. They didn’t make they much, but of course, my mother was very conservative, and she could manage whatever he made. She managed to even save money on whatever he made. She was a good provider. She really was. But they just spoke Italian.

INTERVIEWER: Just Italian?

NATALI: That’s right.
INTERVIEWER: Did English ever become the main language?

NATALI: No. Not with my mother and father, no.

INTERVIEWER: I guess pretty much just Italian was spoken in the neighborhood then?

NATALI: That’s right. They’d get around together at night and sing a lot of Italian songs. It was always so much fun.

INTERVIEWER: Who all lived in your house when you were growing up? Did you have other relatives there?

NATALI: We had my uncle. And my mother tried to get him go out. She even threw his clothes out in the street, but he wouldn’t go. He would not leave. So he’d pick them up and carry them back in the house! Poor Mom.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever have any other boarders?

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: My next question was gonna be how do your parents feel about having other family members in the home. I guess your mother...

NATALI: Well, he was drunk all the time. He drove my mother nuts. So she tried to get him to go out and get a job, either go out in the ranches or work for somebody. He didn’t want to go. He liked it right there. She threw his clothes out and he picked them right up and come back in. We had to laugh about that a long time.

INTERVIEWER: Was that your mother’s brother?

NATALI: Yes, that’s right.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have regular chores, like you did the dishes and your sister did whatever?

NATALI: Oh yeah. We all helped with the housework.

INTERVIEWER: So you were pretty much expected to?

NATALI: Well, when I worked in the office at the paper mill, I gave her so much of what I made. And then every time I got paid, I’d go buy a lot of groceries and fill her groceries. I just loved that. And I remember I used to love walnuts. I’d buy walnuts, and I liked to make candy or something. I’d go to make candy, I’ll be doggone if she hadn’t eaten every one of those! Oh, I’d get so mad at her! She’d do that every time. And now I can’t eat walnuts because I’m allergic to
them or something. They give me a sore throat. I’m telling you all these crazy things. They’re all coming back. You know, when you talk about it, they do.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. I was talking to a friend of mine the other day, and we were talking about things when we were three or four years old. You stop to think and they all come back. You said there was the twins. Were they boys or girls?

NATALI: A boy and a girl. They were born so they were seven-month babies, and they were so small my mother had to put them in a shoebox with bottles of warm water. I think my brother weighed a pound and a half, and my little sister was a little bit more. She got burned when she was two years old. She got burned playing with matches.

INTERVIEWER: But your brother lived. He was that small?

NATALI: Yeah. My poor mother. She would put him in these boxes with two bottles of warm water around him. She had a midwife. She didn’t have a doctor. And he survived it.

INTERVIEWER: Was your brother expected to do different things around the house?

NATALI: Oh no. He was such a crybaby. My mother had to take him halfway to school half the time. And then she’d take him as far as the track and she’d say, “Now you go on.” Because she went to the Hazelton School, and it was right down the street on Lincoln Street. It was just a short ways from us. And she’d take her to this railroad track, and she’d say, “Now you go!” And he’d go, and he’s crying, and he turned back. “Maaa!” And she said, “Back!” She finally had to break him of that habit, but every day she had to walk him to school.

INTERVIEWER: Did he do yard work when you guys got older? Did he do the same type of chores as you?

NATALI: No. He never did too much. Unh-uh. He was Mama’s spoiled boy.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me a little bit more about when you were working? Like the people you worked for, were they Italian?

NATALI: No, no. This was the paper mill I worked for. Then it went to the fiber board. And I worked in the factory quite a while. I worked in feeding the cartons in the machines. Then later on I was catching them on the back. And boy, some of them come fast, and you have to work awful fast. And then later on, they needed somebody upstairs, and they knew I had gone to College of Commerce for a while. So they gave me a job upstairs. I was there for, oh, five years.

INTERVIEWER: It sounds like you really liked it.

NATALI: I enjoyed it very much, yes.
INTERVIEWER: Was it hard for you being supervised by an adult that wasn’t your parent?

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever have to do something you didn’t like?

NATALI: Let me think what I had to do. I was bookkeeping for a while, and then they put me on the switchboard. And I remember that Mr. Fizboy was boss of the paper mill. He would have me call, like Chicago or somewheres. And you know, I had no control over all those lines, and somebody somewheres he was disconnected. And he’s screaming at me, “Get ‘em back!” He’d make me so nervous. He’s screaming out of the office, “Get ‘em back!” And we tried. Because his secretary came in and she knew what was happened. She said, “Just take it easy.” So then I talked to the operator, and we’d finally get his party back. But he’s screaming at me, and it scares you.

INTERVIEWER: So you were only on the switchboard for a short time?

NATALI: Yeah. I worked there til I quit and I got married, but we were getting $80 a month. And I told Mr. Keller I think it was, I told him I wanted a raised, and I didn’t want no $5 either. So I got a $10 raise. I was getting $90 a month.

INTERVIEWER: What about your house when you first moved here? Like, how many rooms did you have? You said you moved to a couple of different places.

NATALI: Yeah. We moved in three houses in the same street. The first house, we had just four rooms. Two bedrooms and the kitchen and dining room. And the second house was the old Tatterson home. We had one, two, three, four, five rooms downstairs, and then there was two rooms upstairs. It was about seven-room house. Then we moved across the street to another Tatterson, the daughter’s house. Marie Tatterson’s home. We had five and then a full basement. We used to stay down there in the summer.

INTERVIEWER: Who made most of the family decisions? Was it your father, or did your parents talk it over?

NATALI: My mother’s brethren were in the house. Yeah. And my father was very strict. We didn’t do what he said – pow, we got it! He didn’t spare the rod.

INTERVIEWER: So your mother was pretty much the...

NATALI: Yeah, she was. She was head of the house.

INTERVIEWER: And did that ever cause a few arguments between your father and your mother?
NATALI: No. No, no, no.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember them arguing at all?

NATALI: Oh yeah. My mother – if they started a little argument, it’d go on and on and on, and she’d pick up the next day. My dad never would do that. And she didn’t wake him up during the night. We could hear from our room.

INTERVIEWER: But they talked it out.

NATALI: Oh yeah. There was never anything bad about it.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever disagree with your parents about things?

NATALI: I had a little mind of my own, but my dad would never let us go out. Of course you wouldn’t remember, but there was a time when they used to take pictures with the V-necks. Everybody, all our pals had that picture taken. You think our dad would let us take, because it shows. And it didn’t have any sleeves. We had to wear sleeves. Oh, he was old-fashioned. Boy.

INTERVIEWER: When you did disagree about things, it was pretty much his word?

NATALI: Oh yeah. My dad was his way.

INTERVIEWER: You just kind of had to do what he wanted then, huh?

NATALI: I know there was one thing I disagreed with. Every day when I’d come over in school, I had to go by and see if he wanted anything to eat or drink. Every day of my life, I had to go in there in the woolen mills, and go in there where he was washing wool, and see if he wanted anything. And when it was on Saturday, he’d whistle for us outside, and boy I’d better run. Because my sister was crippled. She was handicapped. And I’d better run over there and see what he wanted.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any customs or practices from the old country, from Italy, that you practiced at your house once you came here? Religions things and foods and holidays, things like that?

NATALI: During the holiday, my mother would make what we call torte. They had a dough base, and they were filled with pine nuts and bread and eggs and everything. She’d make dozens of them, and would put people’s initials on the dough. We didn’t use the front door, so she had benches all in that room there, and that was covered with these cakes. They were delicious. We tried to do it with the same flavor. And she’d cook for days. She’d make her own raviolis and do everything, and when we come to the Christmas table, it’d be covered with food. My dad said, “Gee, I wish I had some bakala and chishi,” and he meant it! He meant it. Oh, my poor mom.
INTERVIEWER: Can you think of holidays that were celebrated differently than other people, than the custom in the United States? Pretty much all the same?

NATALI: Yeah. Pretty much the same.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have different children’s games or superstitions or anything you can think of?

NATALI: [No?]

INTERVIEWER: What groups did you belong to when you were growing up? Were you in the Girl Scouts or anything?

NATALI: No, I didn’t belong to anything like that. There was a group of us that lived in the neighborhood that would run around together, went to school together. That’s about it. No, we didn’t have any games.

INTERVIEWER: Were all your friends Italian?

NATALI: Right. They’re still friends of ours to this day.

INTERVIEWER: That’s great. Did your parents object to playing with the Mexican children?

NATALI: Oh no. Never. No problem there.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever bring your friends into your house?

NATALI: Oh sure. Anybody we wanted to. And I also raised my children the same way. I told them, “They’re all equal to you. Only by their own behavior. So you just pull up yourself by your own bootstraps, like they can do too. You’re all even.” They were! Of course, I was pretty well off, but I always made my children believe that anybody was as good as they were. I think they do the same with their children too. I think what you teach them stays with them.

INTERVIEWER: What did your parents think about dating? Did they set rules, times...?

NATALI: My dad was terrible. Oh gosh yeah. If we didn’t home a certain time, we got a beating. When was it, that night I got home late and I got an awful spanking? And I was a big girl then.

INTERVIEWER: Did he screen your dates beforehand?

NATALI: No, not really. Just had to be home at a certain time.

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents have anything to do with who you married?

NATALI: No. No. My first husband was not Italian. He was a McGuire. My mother just loved him.
INTERVIEWER: So they just took for granted that you were the one to make the decision, and they went along?

NATALI: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember any of the other children from Italy having a hard time growing up in Stockton? Was it a hard place for them to grow up?

NATALI: I don’t remember anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: Can you think of any pluses about growing up in Stockton?

NATALI: I know I’ve always loved it. Boy, I can get up on the soap box. I’m a Chamber of Commerce member, because I love Stockton. If I hear anybody talk against it, boy, I’ll fight him. I really am.

INTERVIEWER: Was it helpful to you having brothers and sisters? Or sometimes do you think they were in the way?

NATALI: No. The only thing I resented, my sister wouldn’t let me read in bed.

INTERVIEWER: I guess we’ll talk a little bit about school. Was it different from when you were playing when you were young, and then you went to school? Were there a lot of kids from different ethnic backgrounds?

NATALI: Yeah. The first school I went to was the [ ] School. Of course now it’s gone. On Sutter Street. Then I went to the old Munville School, and that’s gone. And then I ended up at the Hazleton. And they were all different types, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Did most of your classmates speak English?

NATALI: Yeah, most of them.

INTERVIEWER: Is that where you learned English?

NATALI: That’s where I learned. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: How about most of the other children? Did they speak English before they got to school?

NATALI: No, I think they spoke Italian most of them.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember if your teachers seemed to come from different backgrounds than yours?
NATALI: Oh yeah. Most of them were either English, Irish, or they were not Italian.

INTERVIEWER: So you learned to speak English when you were in school?

NATALI: That’s right. I think I started about six years old.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember your teachers ever having trouble with the different languages?

NATALI: I was very bad in deportment in school. I was a tough one. I didn’t behave very good. I was noisy. I had everybody always doing something. And they made me stay after school, and the teacher hit me with a strap on my leg. I remember that!

INTERVIEWER: Did they encourage you speaking Italian, or did they want you all to speak English?

NATALI: We just spoke English.

INTERVIEWER: Can you remember any other funny incidents when you were in school?

NATALI: I told you my mother worked cleaning house. And these people gave her a little red jacket with a cap like Little Red Riding Hood. And they borrowed it at school to use. We made the play, “Little Red Riding Hood.” I didn’t get to wear it. I don’t know if I was a tree or wolf or something. I don’t remember. But one of the other girls got to wear it. She was the Little Red Riding Hood.

INTERVIEWER: How did your parents feel about school? Did they think it was your own decision, or think it was really important, or?

NATALI: Oh yes. They wanted us to go to school.

INTERVIEWER: I guess your attitude was a little bit different. You wanted to go out and work.

NATALI: I did. Well, I used to do a lot of reading, and I’d come home from the library just loaded with books. And one of my dear friends, her father said to her, “Look at Algie! She does a lot of studying.” “Oh, Pa,” she says. “That’s just reading! That’s not studying. She’s just reading books.” Which I did. I still go to the library and read a lot of books.

INTERVIEWER: Did that ever cause any problems with your parents?

NATALI: No. Pa never cared.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember bringing problems home from school and telling your parents about it?
NATALI: I remember that I had very long hair. I could sit on it. And one time I come home, I was full of lice. And I come home, the teacher had sent me home. So my mother washed my hair with corn oil, and I got rid of the lice that way. But we had a little girlfriend. Just a year or so ago she died, and her son was part of the Oakland Raiders, and they’re multimillionaires. And she was so full of lice, even her eyebrows. And we’d get them between our legs and kill the lice on her. And that’s the way I got them. Marie Evans. She was a multimillionaire, her children.

INTERVIEWER: Did your sister or your brothers stay in school longer? Was it maybe stressed that boys have to go through school?

NATALI: No. My sister Emma went to school more than I did. She went to College of Commerce too.

INTERVIEWER: What about your brother?

NATALI: No, my brother Harry was a dummy like me. I don’t know what grade he went to. He didn’t go very high. He didn’t graduate, I know.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think your parents expected you to get out of school, to learn from school?

NATALI: I don’t think they ever thought of that. They just wanted me to get an education so I would know what was going on. That’s about it I guess.

INTERVIEWER: That’s pretty much the same for your brothers and sisters?

NATALI: Yeah. Right.

INTERVIEWER: Did you participate in any school activities? Like you talked about the play. Any other things like that?

NATALI: Well, they used to have a playground over there. We were in plays over there at different times. Yeah. Miss Esplen was the teacher. Jessie Esplen. God, I remember yet! Oh boy.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever take classes at, like the YWCA?

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: Nothing like that?

NATALI: Carlos Sousa was also a good friend of mine, there at Hazelton School. You remember Carlo. And he had charge of bringing out the volleyballs. And that doggone guy would never give us one. Hoo, we were mad at him!
INTERVIEWER: Did you participate in church activities or things that the people in the neighborhood were doing?

NATALI: I was always very active over at old St. Mary’s. We used to have a lot of those big dinners for about 500 people. And we would wash dishes and set tables and take care of that. We did that many times.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember if there were special things for your age group? Or different groups at St. Mary’s?

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you went to school until you were seven. About what grade would that be?

NATALI: I did the seventh grade.

INTERVIEWER: Is that about as much education as you wanted?

NATALI: That’s it. I tried to get my children to go to college, but they wouldn’t go. The other day, one of them says to me, “Mom, I wish I’d gone to college.” I said, “You had the opportunity. You wouldn’t go.” He said he wish he’d gone. A redhead.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember, like high school...

NATALI: I never went to high school, so I don’t remember anything about that.

INTERVIEWER: About that age though, do you remember your parents gradually giving you more independence and allowing you to make your own decisions and things like that? Do you remember it coming gradually?

NATALI: No. My dad never let us have our own way. Not til after we got married, out of the house. Then we could.

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents ever learn to speak English?

NATALI: Oh yeah. Both of them spoke. Fairly well.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember having any dreams or ambitions?

NATALI: Oh, yeah! I wanted to a ballet dancer! I really did. Oh, I used to love it! And I still love ballet to this day. But I used to love to do the Spanish dance. We used to have records. We played records in the house. And I’d dance all around the house all the time. One of my uncles was dance master [ ], and that led me to want to be a dance teacher.
INTERVIEWER: Do you think school helped to understand life in the United States? I know you really don’t remember much, but did it set standards for you and things like that?

NATALI: [No?]

INTERVIEWER: Can you think of any differences between your life when you came to the United States and that of your children now?

NATALI: Oh gosh, yes. They’re pretty well off, and they live in beautiful homes. And we lived... I mean, a nice home. It was fair. But nothing like that. They have swimming pools. Well, one of them already has. The other lives out in Lincoln Village West, and she’s just putting in a swimming pool. They’re very well off. They’re doing terrific.

INTERVIEWER: Are there certain celebrations or the way you would celebrate a holiday or something, that your children do now?

NATALI: We try to get together. All of us. It’s getting pretty big, but generally, like first one Barbara will take Christmas, and then maybe Dianne will take New Year’s, or either way. Last year, Dianne was ill, so Barbar took... Christmas Eve is very important with us. All the babies come and open presents and all that. So Barbara had Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, because Dianne was ill. New Years? I don’t know whether anybody had New Year’s or not. I don’t think so.

INTERVIEWER: Do your daughters cook the same food that you cook?

NATALI: Oh yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Did you teach them how to cook?

NATALI: Well, I did to a certain extent, yes. Once in a while, they call and ask me for something now. But not too often.

INTERVIEWER: Do your children help each other with, like, babysitting or shopping?

NATALI: Oh yes. Surely. They’re very close, both of them.

INTERVIEWER: Was that pretty much the way your mother and maybe your aunts were?

NATALI: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So it’s kind of just carried that on. Do your children have anyone living in their house besides their husbands and wives?

NATALI: No. No.
INTERVIEWER: Do your grandchildren do the same kind of little chores that maybe you did? Like the dishes and things like that?

NATALI: The other day, now for Christmas this year, my two daughters... Well, when I had this done, you know, the house got kind of messy. I just had this put in. The fireplace. And Barb and Dianne had somebody come in here and give them a price to see how much they’d charge to clean the whole house. $450 they wanted. So Barb and Dianne talked it over, and they asked my oldest granddaughter, Leslie, the one up there in the white, if she would do it for $100, and she did. This house has never been so clean! Oh, she did such a beautiful job! She scrubbed for three days, and boy, she really did scrub. And let’s see, what else do they do? I can’t name a thing those kids do for me. I have a granddaughter that’s going to college in Hawaii.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, University of Hawaii?

NATALI: Yes, she’s going over there. She goes to St. Mary’s in Moraga, and they sent a bunch of the kids up there. I don’t know what for. I really don’t. I just got a card from her. Her birthday was the 21st of March, so I sent her $21. Each kid gets a dollar for each year. When they’re 25, I quit right there. 25, that’s it. So each time they’re a certain age, I give them each a dollar a piece. Candice wrote and thanked me. She got the money, she’s, “Noni, it sure come in handy!”

INTERVIEWER: Did your children marry other Italians?

NATALI: They married Irish. Both of them.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, really? Were their husbands very different in backgrounds?

NATALI: Oh yeah. Sure they were. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Would you prefer to live with your children?

NATALI: No. I was sick a while back, and my daughter Dianne said, “Momma, move in with me.” I said, “Forget it.” I’m gonna stay right here in my own little house, and when I can’t do it, throw me in the home. I told them, “Let me holler all I want, but let me stay there.” Because it won’t make any difference to me, but it will a lot to them. “Okay Mom, whatever you want.”

INTERVIEWER: Think of the kind of lives your children are now living. Like, what are some of the best things about their lives that maybe you didn’t have.

NATALI: Is it next week when there’s that golf game over in Monterey? Is it Monterey? San Mateo? Wherever it is. Bing Crosby. Yeah, that’s where they’re going. The four of them. In fact, there’s six or eight of them going. And they’ll have a ball.

INTERVIEWER: So you think that they can get out and do things.
NATALI: That’s right. That’s right.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there’s some things about their lives that aren’t good?

NATALI: Can’t think of any.

INTERVIEWER: So you’re pretty happy.


INTERVIEWER: If there was something you could do to help them, what would that be?

NATALI: Well, if they had any debts, I’d like to pay them off. I don’t have that kind of money.

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever felt real close to Italy?

NATALI: Well yes, of course. It was my mother’s and father’s country. And I’m proud when I hear something good about it. This is my country right here. I love this United States of America. I do. I really do. Do you know that every time they play the Star-Spangled Banner, no matter where I am, I stand up and stand at attention? All by myself, here in the house, many times. I love this country, and when I hear them desecrating the flag, ooh, it kills me! I could get out and fight. If there’s somebody doing it where I can see it, I would get up and hit them. I would fight. Ooh, that makes me furious. Is that the way you young people feel about it, like I do?

INTERVIEWER: There’s not many people that feel really that strongly about it. There were a few during the whole problems in Iran and stuff. That they could take American hostages, they have no right, especially [ ]. But seems to me a lot of the people my age are real apathetic.

NATALI: Oh, I just wonder how those young people feel about it. If they feel the way I do. When I see that flag, I get all choked up and I start to cry. It really does affect me that way. I know a few years ago I went on a trip to Europe. I went to ten countries, and every time I saw the American flag some place, maybe in the ambassador’s, oh, it was just so wonderful.

INTERVIEWER: Do you ever see relatives or friends from Italy?

NATALI: No. Well, I have a niece that lives in San Francisco that came from Italy. I see her once in a while. Not too often.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel that things that happen in Italy affect you at all?

NATALI: Yes I do. If I hear anything bad, I do feel about it, yeah.
INTERVIEWER: When you first got to the United States, the first couple years you were here, do you remember thinking you were Italian or do you remember thinking you were American? When did you associate with that?

NATALI: Not until after I went to school. [ ]

[End of Tape.]

[TAPE 1, Side B]
[Begin Tape.]

INTERVIEWER: Where was I? Have your ideas and attitudes about Italy changed over a period of time?

NATALI: No. No. I can’t say it has.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me a little bit about your visit back to Italy. Didn’t you mention you went back?

NATALI: Yeah. Well, I’ll tell you, my nephew went back there with his six children and his wife, and they were in the… Oh, for goodness sake. I can’t think of the name of the town.

INTERVIEWER: A town in Italy?

NATALI: Yeah. Oh boy. I can’t think of the name of the town. Florence! Florence, Italy. And when our bus pulled up to the hotel where we were staying, Raymond was there with his wife and his six kids, and they had a great big sign up. “Welcome to Florence, Raymond and the children.” And it was such a thrill to see those crazy kids up there holding that. And then they come rush me inside the hotel, and who should be sitting there but my sister Emma? She wasn’t there, you know. I cried. She was crying. Everybody around us. We were all having a good time crying. And Raymond – my daughters had gotten together with my sister Emma, and they rushed her. Because they wanted to be there in Florence when I got there. They rushed her to San Francisco, got her papers ready, got everything ready for her, and then they sent her off. And they had people waiting for her in New York to put her in a whatchacallit chair and bring her to the other when she changed airports. And when she got to Milan, there was somebody there. Oh, my nice that lives in Milan. And she came with Emma to Florence, so she was there too. Then Raymond was staying… What’s this guy that makes those bags?

INTERVIEWER: Gucci?
NATALI: Gucci. Yeah. He was living upstairs by Raymond’s apartment where he was. They had a little elevator. You get in, go to the apartment. And the apartment had a lot of marble in it. It was very pretty. And Raymond had a big [ ]. My sister cooked and invited myself. And some other woman that I had met on the bus, her name was Jimmy. And they thought I had met some man when I said Jimmy was coming with me. And Emma kept saying, “Why is that man coming?” I says, “That wasn’t a man. That’s Jimmy!” And she was sitting there. Yeah, her name was Jimmy. Her father was disappointed she was a girl, so he named her Jimmy anyway. Isn’t that something?

INTERVIEWER: Did people from your country, from Italy, did people from pretty much the same area move to Stockton? Did they move to other places?

NATALI: It wasn’t anybody that I remember. It was just the Del Corses that lived in the same street that we did. And they were from the same neighborhood that my mother and father were.

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of things did the parents of your neighborhood friends do for a living?

NATALI: Trying to think. Nothing in particular that I can remember.

INTERVIEWER: Were there ever any things about these neighborhoods that were not so good for people living there? Like, well, you mentioned the floods.

NATALI: And there was no street. No. There was mud. Lots of mud.

INTERVIEWER: Did they ever maybe get together and talk to someone about getting the roads paved?

NATALI: No. They weren’t that way, no.

INTERVIEWER: What things about Italy and the culture of Italy do you think your children still retain?

NATALI: Both my daughters could speak Italian, which is very surprising. And when Barbara went over to Italy not too long ago, she could speak to all her people that she met. And she met some cousins of ours that lived in Viavigio[?], which is a coastal beach town. And she went there and she could talk to them and she did very well. Surprising my little redhead could talk Italian. And when my niece come over here from San Francisco and Dianne was talking to her in Italian, and some kid that was visiting said, “What are you talking Dianne?” She says, “I’m talking Italian!” “You can talk Italian?” She says, “Sure I can!” They couldn’t believe it. She could speak her language. I mean that language.
INTERVIEWER: Do you think that you were ever discriminated against because you were Italian? When you were looking for a job, or...?

NATALI: Oh, somebody probably called me a Dirty Dago or something, but that’s about there is.

INTERVIEWER: But you can’t think of anyone...

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: ...maybe look for a job and not getting it...


INTERVIEWER: You said you read a lot. What kind of recreational things do you usually do?

NATALI: I have a friend, Irene, that comes down and we do a lot of walking. I like that. And I belong to a lot of clubs. I belong to the Garden Club and I belong to the Altar Guild. We’re having a card party this Wednesday. Not Wednesday. The 29th. And I’ll be busy with them helping over there, and I’m gonna make an Italian torta. It’s supposed to be a salad, but I’m gonna make a torta. Everyone seems to like them. And let’s see, what else? Oh, when I was over at old St. Mary’s, I used to help arrange the flowers on the altars over there.

INTERVIEWER: So you’re still pretty active in your church.

NATALI: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Have you always been that way?

NATALI: Yes. Very much so.

INTERVIEWER: They also have a section about jobs, and you’ve answered a lot of these. So how old did you say you were when you first started working?

NATALI: I was 14, I believe. Over at the old pencil factory. Freeze to death! Oh, it was cold in there. In fact, it was kind of open. They didn’t have any closed in. And we had a hot pip running underneath where you put your feet on. Kind of warm. It was freezing!

INTERVIEWER: When you got married, did you keep working?

NATALI: No. Well, my first husband, I got married in October and he died in May. I went back to work at the paper mill. But he had Hodgkin’s Disease. And he died in May. We had hardly a honeymoon, you might say.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, that’s terrible. So when you remarried, in between the time of your first and second husband, you worked again.
NATALI: Yeah, I worked in the paper mill. Most of my working time was at the paper mill. And then I married my husband, and I worked there until I was gonna have Barbara.

INTERVIEWER: You said you liked working. You liked being able to bring home those groceries for your mom and stuff.

NATALI: Yeah. I enjoyed it.

INTERVIEWER: Would you have liked to have kept working for longer than you did?

NATALI: Not really. Because I did enjoy the gang. I hated to leave. I tell you this. We were very close. We are to this day, some of them that worked over there. I still see Gertrude Cassidy. She worked there a long time. And I see a number of them that worked at the paper mill.

INTERVIEWER: So was that pretty much the best thing about working?


INTERVIEWER: What was the worst thing about working?

NATALI: And they had a baseball team, and a bunch of us were called Raspberry Yellers. I was the leader of the Yellers. Rah! Rah! Rah! Oh boy.

INTERVIEWER: What did you dislike about working? What was the worst part?

NATALI: What did I dislike about working? Oh, I can’t remember really. The only thing is, there was some fella that asked me to go out with him, and I wouldn’t go out with him. And I worked on his press. He’d put the speed up as far as he could. So I thumbed my nose at him and I kept up with the machine anyway. Yeah, he would. He’d put that machine up as fast as it would go. Dirty skunk.

INTERVIEWER: If you would have stayed in Italy, do you think you would have worked there?

NATALI: Oh, probably so. You know, I gotta tell you this. My husband was very well off, and in Italy, they had a three-story house, which they call a palazzo in Italy. They came from South America. His father was a bridge-builder in South America. Then they moved back to Italy. I think two of the boys were born in South America, and he was born in Italy. My husband was. And they were pretty well off. And when we were here in Stockton, he said, “Would you like to Italy? You’d have servant, you’d have...” I said, “You go if you want to go. Not me. The kids and I are stayin’ here! I’m living in good old USA. I would never go. No way will I go.”

INTERVIEWER: But if you would have, let’s say, stayed in Italy, you probably wouldn’t have had a chance to work in a factory.
NATALI: Oh, probably the same one my mother went to. That's about it.

INTERVIEWER: After you’d had your children, did you ever go back to work?

NATALI: No. I had them pretty close together. I didn’t even really have a chance.

INTERVIEWER: When you were working, were there only certain jobs because you were a woman that you could work? Do you feel that there was a limited amount of jobs for you?

NATALI: Well, I was skinny, would you believe it, when I worked in the paper mill. And they told me they wouldn’t take me the first time I applied for a job, because I was too skinny. Could be now!

INTERVIEWER: But you don’t think you ever had any trouble.

NATALI: No. Unh-uh.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever notice at all that Italians worked, like at the pencil mill? There were certain jobs that maybe because they were Italian they couldn’t have?

NATALI: No. I never noticed that.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever join a union?

NATALI: Union? No.

INTERVIEWER: You just never had the opportunity?

NATALI: No. I never had a need to join any union.

INTERVIEWER: So you married in this country.

NATALI: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Was it difficult for you setting up a home here once you were married?

NATALI: Well, we rented a house over in Baldwin’s Tract, my husband did. And he had it all furnished. It was just a little doll house. It was darling.

INTERVIEWER: Where did you meet him?

NATALI: Where did I meet him? Oh, I took him away from somebody else! Some beautiful, beautiful girl. Let’s see, this friend of mine I used to run around with, Argenia. She was Italian too. She and I’d run around together, and they were having this party. I don’t know. It was I think this girl’s birthday party or something. And she wanted to go by there, and she was going
on. And I says okay. I don’t know who took us though. Because we went home with my
husband, that was later on to be my husband. Anyway, we went to this party. I don’t know
what happened. He asked to take us home. I said I’d go home with him if he took Argenia home
first. I mean, he took me home first and then Argenia. Because I know these Italian guys with
their long hands! So anyway, we did. He took us home. And he put in money for this other girl’s
hope chest. And she wouldn’t even talk to my sister after we were going together. Gonna get
married.

INTERVIEWER: He was Italian too?

NATALI: Yeah. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Was he from Italy itself?

NATALI: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So he came over too. Let’s see. So how old were you when you were married?

NATALI: I didn’t want to get married very young. I got married I guess about 24, 25 the first
time. And then I got married around 29 the second time.

INTERVIEWER: Did your family influence your decision?

NATALI: Well, my sister was kind of worried because my husband was 14 years older than I am.
She thought I was marrying him for his money. But I didn’t have sense enough to think about
his money. She even talked to the doctor about it. And he talked to me. Doctor Hammond, I
think. And he says, “Algea, are you marrying this man for his money?” I said, “No! I don’t even
know he’s got any money.” And that was the only one. She didn’t approve of it.

INTERVIEWER: What did he do for a living?

NATALI: He had a bar there on Skid Row, on Center Street. My Place it was called. He had a bar
there.

INTERVIEWER: Does he still have that, or has he changed jobs?

NATALI: No, no. He had the bar, but he also had a ranch out on Robert’s Island. Then later on
we moved out there and I lived there. We had a beautiful home built there. It was a two-story
house, and it was lovely.

INTERVIEWER: How did you feel about the bar? Did that bother you?

NATALI: No, it didn’t. It didn’t bother me.
INTERVIEWER: How did your husband’s jobs compare with other things other men from your country did in their work? I mean, were there many other Italians that maybe had a bar?

NATALI: Oh, he had a bar and ranches. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: After you were married, did the two of you make decisions together?

NATALI: No, he was quite the boss. He didn’t want me going anywhere.

INTERVIEWER: How did you resolve your differences? Just what he said went, huh?

NATALI: Oh, we fought a lot.

INTERVIEWER: How did your husband and you divide responsibilities? Was it like you took care of the house and he brought home the bacon?

NATALI: Oh yeah. I took care of the house and he gave me the money to run the house on.

INTERVIEWER: Who made most of the decisions concerning your children?

NATALI: They were quite little when he died. They weren’t that big. So there wasn’t that many decisions to make. I know he’d never let them go out like I’d let them go out. And have the parties that I have at the house all the time. Every weekend there was a big party. For any reason or other, it was at the house. Because I had a full basement. A beautiful basement where the kids could dance. And they had a lot of lights, but all the lights were pulled out because they just wanted... [laughing]

INTERVIEWER: So you just had the two girls?

NATALI: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you raised your children differently from how your mother raised you?

NATALI: No. I was rather strict with them. I always made them do their housework. You know, they went to St. Mary’s High School for a while, and the nuns thought they had time. They says, “Oh no, we can’t come, sister! We gotta do this today. We gotta do...” I made them. Every Saturday they had to change their bed and clean their room. And if I didn’t feel good, they had to do my room too, and do the rest of the house. So no, they weren’t trained boy. They really weren’t. I remember when my husband went to San Francisco for the examination, I had my niece come. I went with him. My niece came and stayed with the children. She says, “They didn’t need me at all! They knew everything to do. They could do everything that needed to be done.” Oh yeah, I was strict with them. I was.
INTERVIEWER: Were your children demanding on you? Did they want a lot of your time or expect you to do a lot of things for them?

NATALI: No. I was always there for them.

INTERVIEWER: But they were pretty independent?

NATALI: Yeah. I never when anywheres after my husband died. When the children came, I was there. Always.

INTERVIEWER: So you were there when they had trouble at school. And they’d tell you about things like that.

NATALI: Well, the only thing is, they went to the independent school there on Roberts Island, which is a very old one-room school. And then Barbara went over to the high school. And my Barbara, for a redhead, she’s very timid. And when we’d go to pick her up, she’d come out and her red hair’d be up. I said, “What’s the matter Barb?” She says, “Mom, I’m always fighting them to go up the stairs.” You know, she was trying to get to her room in a hurry, and the other kids were going the other way. And she was fighting them to get to the top of the stairs. She was worn out!

INTERVIEWER: What was your greatest satisfaction as a mother?

NATALI: Just having two girls that I love dearly, and I hope they love me. And that was it.

INTERVIEWER: What were your biggest concerns?

NATALI: That they’d get somebody that would appreciate them. And I think they both did.

INTERVIEWER: What were you especially proud of in running your home? Like some people are really proud of their cooking. It’s their specialty. Or maybe it’s their gardening.

NATALI: Oh, I had a beautiful garden. I was very proud of my garden. And I was very proud of my house. And my cooking... It’s not too bad. But anyway, I started to say something. I forgot. The kids could always bring people home. They could always stay all night. I loved them for breakfast. Yeah. This is what I enjoyed. And they came and stayed all night. I was a sponsor at St. Mary’s, and the kids would go to Santa Cruz, and I would go with them. And there was supposed to be another mother with them. And I’d tell them they could go out, but they had to be home at a certain hour. And they were pretty good about it. Except one girl. I know who she is. I just don’t want to mention the name. But she would leave, after I checked in their bedroom. She would leave and go out. I have no idea what she did, but anyway, she would leave. Of course, the other kids told on her. I did that too. I loved it.
INTERVIEWER: At what ages did your children start being independent?

NATALI: Well, my Dianne, I told them they could not go out with boys until they were 18. But she started to go around with Kenneth Solari. And one day Kenneth come over, and he said, “Oh” – he called me Ma – “Ma, can’t Dianne go out with me tonight?” And he had such a sweet way about it. I said, “Sure.” Yep. She used to go all over with him. And my Barbara never went anywheres. And it just about killed me. Because she was very timid. And when the guys would ask her if she could go out, she’d say, “Just a minute Ma.” She’d go stand out on the porch, and I’d have to tell them she was out. Which she was. I had to make a lie. Isn’t that something? That’s the way she is, my redhead.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think, if you hadn’t got married, your interests would have been different?

NATALI: Oh, I’d have been very unhappy if I didn’t get married. Because I love them whole. The children. Well, I had another proposal of marriage from some other fella.

INTERVIEWER: You don’t think you missed anything by getting married?

NATALI: Oh, no. No way. No way.

INTERVIEWER: Your children, now that they’re married and on their own, do they still get together a lot?

NATALI: Oh yeah. Very, very close.

INTERVIEWER: Are you still in touch with your sister?

NATALI: My two sisters are dead.

INTERVIEWER: Your brother?

NATALI: My brother, he lives here. I talk to him every other day or so.

INTERVIEWER: Thinking of your family overall, how did it compare with other families from Italy? Was it pretty much the same?

NATALI: Well, we were better off than most of them. It made a little difference, of course.

INTERVIEWER: How did your life change after your husband passed away?

NATALI: I was in charge of the moneys then. I would have to pay all the bills and take care of all of that. And I could buy anything I wanted. I didn’t have my husband holding me back. But I never was much for that. I’m rather conservative myself.
INTERVIEWER: Taking everything together, would you say you were pretty happy, happy, or not very happy at all with the way your marriage and life turned out?

NATALI: Well no, of course not. I was very upset that I lost him.

INTERVIEWER: I mean when you had each other. Was that very happy?

NATALI: Yeah, it was happy.

INTERVIEWER: Think about right after you first got married. What did you expect out of life at that point? A family?

NATALI: Just my family I guess. I can’t think of anything else.

INTERVIEWER: Were the goals you had for your family different from those of your parents?

NATALI: I think so, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did your husband pretty much share the same goals? [phone rings, tape cuts] So many questions on here! Let’s see, just half a page left. What things that happened in Stockton affected you and your family the most?

NATALI: Well, when it was during the World War, they made all the enemy aliens move. My mother and father were not naturalized, and they had to move in some house over on the railroad track. Way up on the second floor. It was horrible. And they were moved away from all their friends.

INTERVIEWER: I didn’t know that was like — I knew during World War II, they made the Japanese relocate into centers, but I didn’t realize they made the Italians. Did they make the Germans?

NATALI: Yep. All of them. Uh huh.

INTERVIEWER: Oh. I didn’t realize that. When did you become a U.S. citizen?

NATALI: Well that hasn’t been that long. I remember during the war — my husband was naturalized. I wasn’t. And some people invited us up to Lake Tahoe one time. And I told him, “You know, if they stop us, you can’t speak American. I speak good American. You’ll be the one that’s going to jail, not me!” But that wasn’t so, was it?

INTERVIEWER: Considering your own life, what is the best age to be?

NATALI: Best age to be. Ooh, I don’t know. Probably 40?

INTERVIEWER: Why 40?
NATALI: I don’t know. I’m trying to think. Why was 40 good? I don’t know. One of the things happened in there along somewheres. I don’t remember. 40 just come to mind.

INTERVIEWER: What was the worst age?

NATALI: Worst days? When I lost my husband.

INTERVIEWER: No, not days. I’m sorry. What was the worst age.

NATALI: The worst age. I don’t remember how old I was when I lost Ray. Probably around 26. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Looking back on your life, can you think of some times when great changes happened that really changed your life or gave it new direction?

NATALI: I can’t think of any.

INTERVIEWER: How did the Depression affect your family?

NATALI: We did very well. Because my mother and father raised their own chickens. And they had rabbits and a vegetable garden. So we did fine. No problem at all.

INTERVIEWER: And World War II? Besides having to move, was there anything else?

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: This is a strange question. Did any purchase made by your family change your life in any major way.

NATALI: I can’t think of anything.

INTERVIEWER: Are there any government programs that you particularly enjoy having, or you think are very important to you?

NATALI: Can’t think of anything right off hand.

INTERVIEWER: Can you think of any that you dislike?

NATALI: What do I dislike? Well, I can’t think of anything.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you’re pleased. That’s good. Have you ever heard of the women’s liberation movement?

NATALI: I’ve heard of it. I don’t think much of it. How about you?
INTERVIEWER: I’m still just learning about it. I’m not gonna draw any conclusions. I think there’s a lot of people that get too carried away. And it seems to me that they’re the ones that don’t really know much about it.

NATALI: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Have any other Stockton events affected you and your family? Things that are particular to Stockton?

NATALI: No.

INTERVIEWER: Well, that’s the end!

NATALI: Thank goodness!

INTERVIEWER: Do you know [ ]?

NATALI: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: She came and spoke to our class.

NATALI: She’s a wonderful person.

INTERVIEWER: I really like her a lot. She’s directed this Central California School of Italian Culture. And I won’t be able to start until September, but I’m gonna go and learn. Because I’ve always wanted to learn to speak Italian. Because my grandparents spoke Italian. And I always wanted to know what they were saying.

NATALI: Maybe you’d like to take a trip back to Italy some time.

INTERVIEWER: That’s the other thing. My grandfather lives in Canada, and he’s going this spring. I won’t be able to go because of school, but there’s a possibility I might be able to get a scholarship for the Summer of 1982 to go to the University of Siena in Tuscany.

NATALI: Oh, wouldn’t that be wonderful?

INTERVIEWER: Oh, I’d love to go.

NATALI: You must go up on that wall outside of Luca. Do you know that thing is so wide that all of us can ride on it, and that’s all been done by hand? Oh! It gives me chills when I think about it. That was such a thrill to ride around on that wall in Luca. Wonderful.

INTERVIEWER: You’ll see everything.
NATALI: Venice! You mustn’t miss Venice. Oh, that’s beautiful. Oh, that’s gorgeous. Oh, I love it. We went all around the lake, and I was singing. You know, I like to sing. I’m Italian. And I’m singing my heart out. And one of the people in our party says, “We heard you last night. You were singing.” I says, “I sure was, boy. I was giving it my all.” And it’s so beautiful! Oh, it’s lovely. Rome? I enjoyed Rome. I enjoyed Rome.

INTERVIEWER: Is Rome pretty touristy?

NATALI: Yeah. I enjoyed it. I bought some pretty gold pieces for my daughters. They weren’t too expensive.

INTERVIEWER: Can I use your phone?

NATALI: Sure.

[End of Tape.]