

Irene Ursano
Italian Immigrant
Vulcania
December 29, 1952



My mother (29 years of age) and my brother (9 years of age) arrived at Pier 21 in late December of 1952 from Italy. They were met at Pier 21 by nuns with gifts as Christmas had just passed. My father and his brother arrived one year earlier. My father worked very hard on a farm in Ontario saving what little money he made to bring his wife and son over to Canada to join him. My brother recalls a rather rough few months in Canada as learning English came slowly and was difficult. However, he persevered and became an elementary school teacher...and probably speaks better English than many of the "Canadians" who taunted him back then as a fresh, new immigrant.

As was the case with other immigrants of the time, my parents worked very hard to make a life for themselves and their family in this new country. My father has never returned to Italy since he left in 1951 (although cold, snowy days in January are enough to make anyone long for warmer climates!) and my mother returned for the first time last year (1997) for a short visit. My parents actually had the chance to emigrate to either the US or Canada but ended up in Canada. I thank them every chance I get for choosing this wonderful country of ours!