

Giuseppe Manera  
and Maria DaMaren  
Italian Immigrants  
Conte Biancamano  
September 10, 1953  
and February 12,  
1959



Immigrating to Canada  
By: Giuseppe Manera

I arrived at Halifax with the boat Conte Biancamano on September 10, 1953 from Genova, Italy at the age of 20 years. My home town was Brusaporco now called Castelminio in the province of Treviso.



Here is a photo of a few of us on the boat during our crossing.

My mother's father came to Canada in the late 1800s, but went back to Italy after working for a few years. A few years later

he came back to Canada with his oldest son. Who remained in Canada and assisted others to follow.

I come from a family of 10 children; 5 boys and 5 girls. I am the sixth child. In Italy we had no possibility of work, so I immigrated to Canada to meet my three brothers who were already here with their families. In Canada I found lots of prosperity in my work. Besides my brother's in Guelph, Ontario I met lots of Italian families and young boys of my age that helped me to feel at home in this new land.

Then in early 1959 I met the girl of my dreams Maria DaMaren. The next year on October 29, 1960 we got married and had three children. We

now have seven grandchildren and in this land of opportunity I saw my dreams come to reality.

After 52 years of being in Canada I had the opportunity through my daughter Sandra to visit Pier 21. My daughter had visited Pier 21 before and she liked it so much that she promised to take me there to visit.

I was very impressed with all the memories I saw in there, reminding me of my first visit when I arrived in Canada. The special film shown there was so real to me. One can not help not to cry for the emotions you experience. I have to share with you a story of my luggage. After seeing all the old trucks and cases on display it reminded me of mine. My only suitcase was made of cardboard and unfortunately it broke. The only way to fix it until I reached my new home was to take off my belt from my pants to hold it together. It still brings tears and laughter thinking about it.

This is a wonderful country, Canada: I call a promised land. We have so many different cultures and nationalities that live here peacefully. I thank God for a beautiful place to live and raise my family.

### My Experience

By: Maria DaMaren

I come from Italy, Casacorba, in the province of Treviso. I come from a family of 13 children; 4 boys and 9 girls. My mom and dad found it difficult to live in Italy. They were both 50 years of age, and they made a wise decision. Seeing their children struggle to find work and having to go to different cities, they decide to immigrate to Canada for keeping us all together.

Here is a photo of my brothers and sisters in order of age in front of our home before we started to immigrate. I am second from the left.

Now we are all married and we expand to 132 people



and each year we grow. It is wonderful when we all get together. It is joy!

Canada for me was a land of prosperity. I had four uncles with their families already living in Ontario before I arrived. Our first relative immigrated to Canada early in the 1900s when he was only 17 years old. Others arrived in the mid 1900s. My family came to Canada separately, first the three oldest children separately, me being one of them. I arrived on February 12, 1959 with the boat Augustus at the age of 20 years. The rest of the family arrived in 1960.

In Italy I did not travel much, so to me this trip it was a new discovery. Being winter the water was very rough during our crossing, but we made it to the Halifax port pier 21 safely.

Here is a picture of a few people in church on the ship during our voyage to Canada from Italy.



I remember we had two long days on the train before we finally arrived in Toronto. It was good to see familiar faces to come pick me up after such a distant trip.

I viewed the land of Canada during my train ride as being so vast. I saw so many little houses all neat in a line in streets and all with TV

antennas, and many cars, with everything covered with so much snow. So cold, I never experienced this before.

Slowly I got used to this cold Canada with short summers. I was very happy to find work, then meet a wonderful boy by the name of Giuseppe Manera. After a year and 8 months in Canada I got married to him. We had three children and now have 7 grandchildren.

Now I call this beautiful land home. From time to time my heart goes out to think of my native land . . . many dear memories.

Our second child, a daughter named Sandra went to visit Pier 21 before us while on business. She discovered the place where her parents arrived many years before and wanted to bring us both back. She brought home the pictures of the boats that my husband and I arrived in from Italy, and many pictures of the museum at Pier 21. She promised to take us back there for a visit.

Four years went by before she fulfilled that promise. May 2005 we arrived back at Pier 21. For me it was 46 year later. I discovered without knowing it the emotion of that time when I first arrived in this country. Pier 21 sure is a wonderful place to visit. This is where I started a new life in this generous country we call Canada.

Now I would like to pass on the poem written when I was 50 years old. It is in Italian, and I'm sure other Italian immigrants will enjoy and understand my words.

### 50 Anni di Ricordi

Partii un mattino presto  
lasciando dietro di me la mia casa  
l'amore dei miei cari e il ricordo del paesello.  
Il cuore piangeva dal dolore  
nel dare l'addio al mio casolare.  
Con una mano asciugai le lacrime  
e, guardando avanti con coraggio,  
sognavo un futuro migliore.

In una terra sconosciuta dovevo pur andare  
per il bene dei miei cari  
non importa il sacrificio per me  
poiche per loro volevo un destino migliore.

Terra amata, che mi hai visto nascere e crescere,  
che, come un fiore, mi hai portato all'eta piu bella,

rimarrai sempre in me  
con il ricordo del felice casolare  
dove le ore passavano liete  
lavorando all'aria fresca dei campi  
baciati dal piacevole sole italiano.

Quanti ricordi ancora!!  
Il rintoccare della campana del mezzogiorno  
segnava finalmente dai campi l'ora del ritorno.  
Il ritrovarsi tutti uniti attorno il tavolo  
e sempre con la solita minestra, polenta e pastasciuta;  
ci accontentava e godevamo con allegria.

Le vecchiette sempre premorose  
nell'aiutare nelle piccole cose.  
E I vecchietti seduti sotto I portaci delle case,  
guardando lontano, fumavano beati la pipa.  
Sulle labbra avevano un sorriso sereno  
per l'amorevole presenza dei loro cari.  
Morivano nella Santa Pace del Signore.

O terra amata, ti baciai ne lasciarti!  
O aria di casa mia, perche mi hai deluso?  
Perche, come una fiamma, mi bruci il cuore di nostalgia?  
Fai troppo male e vorrei dimenticare.

Ma, credemi, anche in questo paese lontano  
Manteniamo quell'usanza familiare  
che sa mettere un sorriso sulle labbra  
e una lacrima negli occhi  
come le abitudini dei nostri tempi  
sapevano cantare alle gioventu piu bella.  
dolce paesello, il tuo ricordo morira con noi.

Abbiamo 50 anni e il sogno si e realizzato.  
Ora guardiamo avanti un'altra volta.  
A questa cordiale terra promessa  
che ora abbiamo fatto casa nostra  
portando tutti I costumi dei nostri paesi.

Diciamo: sei bella pure tu  
ed abbiamo imparato ad amarti,  
perche sei stata generosa con noi!  
Ora e nostro dovere chiamarti Patria  
e ringraziarti, O terra dei nostri figli!  
Ti benediciamo e il Signore benedica noi,

tutti figli suoi, su tutta la terra creata,  
Sia lodato il Suo nome.

Classe 39