Mrs. Bonetto

Interviewed by Roy Susich
In our interview this is Dina ¥ Bonetto at her home in Cle Elum. For Mr. Krueger's Social Studies Class on April 27, 1979. My name is Roy Susich and I am conducting the interview. How are you doing today Mrs. Bonetto? Fine. You doing real good? Real good. Ok. I am going to interview on your Italian background heritage. O.K. We are going to start off. Now I understand That you were born in Italy? Yes. Can you tell me what part of Italy you were from? North Italy. Now we are going to start off with your family tree. Do you remember your grandparents? No. Only my grandfather. He was on my mother's side. Can you tell me what his name was? something Crantino. What can you tell me about him that you remember? My father died when I was a young girl and I went to Italy with him. My mother moved back with his father. He was a farmer. Did you know how old he was? Oh, he was 77-75. Year? Died when I was 10 years old. And his name was Antonio? Yes. Do you remember your father? No. My father died when I was 22 months old. Do you remember what his name was? Yes, Antonio the second. Did he have any brothers or sisters? He had 2 sisters. Do you know what their names are? one is a certifica and one is Esterina. Neither one of them had immigrated did they? Born in the old country. They had immigrated to this country? Nobody came to this country. My mother stayed 6 years in New York. What was your mother's name? Margarettta, She came to this country in what year? Say about 10-15 years old when she came here. Six years and came back home. New York. At the time I was staying with my aunt. Did your mother have any brothers or sisters? Yes, we had 2 girls. One died I don't remember his name. Do you remember his name? Serefin. None of these had immigrated? No. None of these had 3 had died or immigrants? No. Names of all 3 brothers that had died? one was just telling I don't remember the names Can you give me the name of the one that lived? Ya that was my Uncle Serefin. He came to this country for one year then he came back from Canada. What made him want to come back? He loved this country. The weather was cold and liked it better over there. The people. When you lived in the old country what do you remember most about the old country? What was it like? Was a nice country. What were the standards and that like? Sandarad are like over here. I don't know. Where they not modern in-
some ways? Pretty hard time. Lots of people lots of people got malaria. O.K. What did some of the people do for a living in the old country? They worked on a farm. Did they work on a farm? Yes. Some work or something. People were good. And how old were you when you immigrated to this country? 20 years old. O.K. What did you want to come to the United States? My young were here. they wanted me to come and we come. What year did you come over? 1920. How long did it take on the boat to get from Italy to America on the boat? 13 days. Where did you first land at? New York, no, Colvack, we came through Canada. Then Cle Elum. You came over on a train? Ya. What was your first impression of America? I didn't like it at first. Winter time and the bad weather. It was a pretty tough life. Now I like it. You are married over in the old country? Yes. When were you married? 1920. So you were just married and then you immigrated? Yes. What was your husband's name? Joe something. Did he have any brothers or sisters? No. Did you have any brothers or sisters? No. I got no brother or sister. Have anything else in your family tree that you could tell me about? My mother was a working woman and we worked on a farm. Did you and your husband choose this country to come to because of the work and . No. Mrs. Doneeto we want to get out of your family tree now and we are going to go into Italian gardening. Can you tell me about Italian gardening? What we raised? Yes. I want to know what you know about Italian gardening and Italian gardening styles. We are going to talk about Italian gardening styles and can you tell me if you raised your gardens the same way over in the old country as in the U.S.? Yes. Much the same. Are there any vegetables that the Italian nationality planted that other nationalities couldn't plant? The Italian peas. Was zucchini an Italian plant? Yes. But you can plant zucchini here too. Now was that an Italian custom besides other areas in nationalities? Yes. When you planted your garden in this country about 50 or 60 years ago when you first came over where did you get your seeds? We buy in the storesome and the other we raised from our plants. Lettuce, beans and peas. We let the plant in the garden get dry then we used that. And by garden produce did people plant any of their gardens by any signs? No. did they plant at a certain time? No. you plant what you want. Most in the spring time.
Was it a custom in those times to plant by the moon? Well I don't know the people something the moon?. Corn and something like that, I never did do that. You never did that? No. We are going to the old country's style of gardening and what were the marketing methods like? You bring the stuff in the market then you sell it. Like chestnuts, you bring your stuff in the market and the people there buy it. O.K. And year ago we were pests a problem in your vegetable gardens? Any pests back then that would disturb the vegetables and eat on them? Well, there was no sickness around the spot. You never had any then? No. We changed pieces of the garden year from year. When you came here did you have garden pests? Quite a bit. How did you control these pests? We would put some kind of powder, I don't know what you called it, spray them. How did the gardening differ in the old country than the Italian immigrants in this country? Over there you would do everything by hand. You got nothing to work for. You turn your ground and do everything by hand. Don't use machine. Even years and years ago? We do everything by hand. To what extent did you use the old country methods in America? Did you still take care of alot of your gardening by hand? Well, I take care of my garden by hand. I don't do nothing no more. No. My daughter and my son do it. The garden could be plowed now but in the old country we do everything by hand. Is there anything else that you had done gardening, I suppose you had raised alot of foods that you had sold?, produce? Well, we raised it for ourselves. Were going to get out of Italian gardening and go into Italian sports and recreation now.

What types of sports do you remember in this area years ago? Well, there wasn't much of sport. The people would go hunting, There were no sports in Italy much? No. O.K. we will come to the U.S Where you first came over. What other sport do you remember other than bocce ball. Was there alot? Bocce ball is all I remember. When they came here something sports. What can you tell me about Bocce Ball? I don't know. Don't ask me. As I understand it around the Roslyn area there is alot of bocce ball games going on for the Italians in the local area. Yes I know my husband was working through that. I never paid attention to that. Did you ever go with him? No. Do you know where the Italians have held their bocce ball games around here and paysets around here?
Oh, Ya. You now Dominic Crest8? I interviewed him. I was going to say that do you know yourself of any of the places around town and Cle Elum, Roslyn of where the Italians had gone to play bocci ball at? I don't know exactly where. I don't know much about that because we were living uptown and we never go much to that. So you never? No. Can you tell me if the famous bocci ball players that were around here? I don't know much about that. You ask somebody else. We never go out much. So you aren't up on it? No. O.K. Mrs. Bonetto we are going to get out of the Italina sports and go into the Italina wine making. First of all, what can you tell me about homemade winemaking Italina style? Take the bread and squeeze it than you put it into a big pan then you start the concometry something down it and leave it for a week or so then pull them wine? How could you tell the difference between a good and a poor wine? Well, he had a taste the sugar. See squeeze the wine one glass juice and then you put something in and you know how much sugar is in it. What do you need to do to make good wine? Have good grapes. Could you explain the process step by step of making wine to me please? From scratch. We would buy the grapes, squeeze them, that's all you do for that wine. Now I want to go into details in how you make it from grapes into wine. You squeeze your grapes then you take out the juice and there is your wine.

O.K. In your past remembrance What were the best wine makings you can remember? something pale. It was the best kind. What were the best years? September. What were the best years, like the 1920's or early 30's? Well, if it was the nice weather it was pretty all the same. We never buy many different wines. Were all of the years pretty good though? How long does wine need to age before it is considered pretty good wine? At least one year. At least? Yes. If you drink it before one year it isn't clear like it suppose to/. Never drink a young wine. What we bring wine this year we bring into the wine next year. If you left your wine in a barrel or bottle like that your wine would sour and turn to vinegar wouldn't it? No. If you got a good berry it wouldn't turn sour. When you open it then you have to put it in a bottle or gallon. You don't drink it all at one time. Then it lasts longer. O.K.

Now we are going to go back years and years ago and I want you to tell me what were the prices on grapes like years ago when you and your husband had first immigrated here and first started making wine here? About 50-60 dollars a pound.
How have the prices changed from there to now? The last time we buy it 150-200 more now. It went up every year and it was highed priced. 20 years and I haven't made wine and I don't know nothin about it. Do you think that the fact that the price of grapes has gone way up in price has effected wine making in many people in this area? I don't about that because with this price you can't do it. The price has stop it? Stuff it too heavy, too spoesorous. What are some the names given to different types of wines? Well Chipendale wine, white wine we make it. Did you have some names like Paketa or something? I don't remember. Where did wine makers get their grapes from years and years ago? California. That was one of the only places ever? Ya. Doen in the valley from Yakima. How did they sit them up on railroad boxcars? Something boxcar. How much did you and your husband order? One time a year. What did you need to know about selecting grapes for wine? How did you know which ones to select? We knew the place and something it was mumbled. You had always bought the same brand? Same brand was the best. O.k. How did you make real good white wine? You would do the same thing. Could you explain that to me one more time please? Well you would put squeezed grapes in a barrel and then you let them ferment and once a day mixed together and then when they don't come up (juice) you let them then come up and then you pull out your wine. The white wine you have to change them hit the barrel two - 3 times. You have to change them because some are on the bottom. During the 1920's when the depression hit the U.S. and many were out of work and jobs and money were scarce what happened to the wine industry when people couldn't afford to buy their grapes? You didn't buy it. You didn't? You didn't buy it when you couldn't afford it. We buy all the time. But lots of people didn't buy it that's all there it stuck it. Didn't have money. Is there some misgiving about wine making that the Italinas said that certain things were superstitions about certain things not making your wine turn out and stuff like that? No. We take it the way it come. If it came out alright it came out alright. Lots of people were making second wine. We never make it though. You put water and sugar in and it would come out white wine. Is it always typical for all of the Italina immigrants and first generation in this area to keep up with the wine making? We have it every year. Is it a custom like if you would go to see another Italina party or family that they would have wine? Ya. Most Italians families. If you have comey-
You offer them a glass of wine. Is it true that kids used to drink it too? Yes. If the big then they drink wine. It isn't hurt. It's probably as natural as offering them coffee. Probably is how the Italina people make coffee. We're going to get out of the wine making and could you tell me of any people in the Cle Elum area that owned saloons? The name of Italina people? Well there is Toni Valoney. He had a saloon. Cavallini probably had a saloon. How many saloons were in Cle Elum at one time? Do you know? I never go into a saloon. D I don't know. Maybe five or six, I don't know. There was quite a few. And you said you and your husband had never made homemade beer? No. We are going to go into a little bit of prohibition(?) . You said that your husband had never made his own homemade whiskey? No. D Can you tell me what prohibition was like. Were there a lot of Italina people in this area that made their own homemade whiskey? I don't know. I can't say the name. I heard of somebody but I don't know. Did they go out and bootleg and sell it? Ya, Ya, lots at a time. Quite a bit? Yes. Did you remember the Ronald explosion and fire of 1928? When Ronald blew up. No. 1928. When Ronald had still had blown up under alcohol. Oh I remember the time. Can you tell me a little bit about that? Oh well I don't know much about it. I don't know the people. Somebody made something in the cellar and it blew up. I don't know. Can you tell me when Prohibition had ended? Was it after the depression? I should remember but I don't remember what year. Were going to go out of this now and we are going to go into the Italina mushroom hunting and it is as we all know it is quite said that Italian people were the mushroom hunter. Well lots of people go out hunting but not me. I never went mushroom hunting. Did your husband? Sometimes. He found some kind of a mushroom. Was it the Bole'? Ya, it could of been but I don't remember. There was quite a few Italinas that had gone out and were there any other types of mushrooms they hunted besides Bole'? There was one kind in the spring called benime. cone mushroom. pinecone mushrooms. They nore or less came out in the spring time? Yes. the spring time. Was there ever any case in the area that people had mistaken thier mushrooms for being bad ones insted of good ones? I don't know about that because I know I eat one kind. That's all I eat. The Bole'. Now we're going to talk about other things. When you first came to this country what did you find anything unusual about Cle Elum? I don't know.
it was something time when I came to this countr. My husband decided to work then. It was hard times. Did you dind anything unusual about the area? Oh yes. Cold at times, bad weather. We never had bad weather over there like that. In W.W.I. you had already in the old country — had fighting when Italy was fighting. Due to the fact of W.W.II. with lated from 1941-1945 Ita Italian government forces allied to Nazi faces and they were fighting the United States at the time. Now do you believe that many people might have turned against the Italian immigrants and the first generation Italians in this area might stating that they might be traitors to the United States? Lots of people like this country and they don't want to go back. But what I was saying here was did you think the fact that the Italian army was allied to Hillers army in Germany that was fighting against the United States did you think that anybody might condemn the Italian immigrants in this country stating that they might be traitors to the United States? Oh I don't know about that. Had anybody ever said word? No. Were any immigrants ever harassed or anything like that? No. They never said anything about that. Did any immigrants to first generations of Italians serve in the United States army during the war? Yes. All summer they serve Italians they serve Americans all the time. Was the Italian people but the something for America. What were the popular places to go for the Italian immigrants? in the Cle Elum area years ago? Places that most of the Italian immigrants went? You mean over there? No. When you had come to Cle Elum. Where were the popular places the first generations and immigrants had gone to. Like was there a particular meeting hall or places they went to that were popular to immigrants? No. Lots of people go to taverns and one family go see another family I don't know much about that because I don't go no place. I stay home. In what ways do you think Cle Elum has changed over the years? Here? Yes. From when you had come here to today. Was a big change. It was no reason to keep it grow now when the weather ain't come it was a pretty heard time. You think it's a much easier way to live now? Yes. Do you think Cle Elum Has gotten smaller? No. It's bigger then when I come here. Much bigger? Ya, much bigger. Course thier were lots of people come here for lots money then but you know. More people working here when I came. Do you think their were more people then or now? I think that more people more people then. Som many people move out you know. What invention have you seen in your life Changed your life when you came here.
Somebody else would take him. There would lots of rides to work. I don't know exactly what he do but I know lots of people who had a car would pick him up. And you said that most peole had car pools and that. Ya. When you were a (something?) certain part of the immigrant was there ever particularly that you can remember one particular party or people of Italina people that other peole had looked on as being kind of strange any particular family or that people would think kind of strange or unusual? I never find any strange because we never go any place. People wer nice. Where was the first place that you had come in Cle Blum when you had immigrated? I live here in the first street. On the 0 N first street by where? right there across from Safeway that building on the other side there. By the Fairway Grocery? No straight up. By the bowling alley? Yes. There was a big house there belonged to your aunt first place that I had come to in this county. And you had stayed there? Ya. What was it like inside your home during the time? What did the inside of your home look like? Like our kitchen, bathroom, how was it like in the early Italina earlier times? It was a pretty good house. Did you have inside running water? Ya. Hot water? No hot water. Just cold. Our hot water was warmed on the stove. Did you have bathtubs and that? Yes. But no hot running water? No. It was a washtub. Like a tub is now. And did you have a sink with running cold water? Ya. Hot water? No hot. You did not have a sanitary facilities to use the lavatories in the house did you? No. Now how did that work out? Was there one downstairs? something stairs. You did have an upstairs? Yes. You did have your bedroom? Yes. But no sanitary facilities for using a lavatory in the house? No. Did you have your bathrooms downstairs? No, upstairs. Everybody had an upstairs where I come from. My aunt had a boardinghouse. It was the place we eat, cook and everything. Ya but did people go to the bathroom inside or outside the other place? Was outside. But here it was inside. Was running water. Running water? Yes. Ok. then that wasn't right now you know. It was a lavatory inside. Did you have electricity when you lived up there? Oh, ya. Did you have telephones? No 41 telephones. I don't remember maybe then but I don't remember. How did, if there was an emergency back then how would people get their message from from like if you had to get a message real quik-
When you moved into your house your probably didn't have electricity yet and things like radio yet did you? No. What were some of the things that had changed your lifestyle very much? When you have to buy something in the house, electric stove, and everything like that you change everybody's life from what is was. It was now something was when I came to this country. Cold not understand. When did you get your first telephone? You had moved to the farm and you didn't have a telephone did you? There was no electricity when I moved to the farm. No electricity? No. I something? 22 years ago. 1927 isn't it? Telephones? Yes. You got your telephone? Yes. When did you get your electricity on the farm? I don't remember it. 1941. Can you tell me what the dress styles were like when you first immigrated to this country? Women would wear dress no pants at all. The women would never wear pants? No. What were the styles like for the men? What did the men usually wear? It's no different from now than then. Of course they probably have better types of clothing now than then. Better clothes now than at that time but everyday life like that for every day. What was the dress style of the kids like? What did the kids wear to school? Boy wear pants and the girl wear dress that's all. We never put pants on a girl. What was the medical care like in the Cle Elum area years ago when you had first come over comparable to the times? Pretty good. You had your doctors here? Ya. Where Italian immigrants Religious people? Oh ya. Catholic and we are Catholic. And were most of the Italian immigrants Catholic? Most all of them yes. You wouldn't see any Protestant? No. Always a Catholic. Course that's were they were simply based too. There were quite a few that had gone to church and did quite a few keep up their religion? Oh ya. Lots of people kept up their religion. Everybody kept up their religion. The people that went to church kept up their religion and the ones that didn't kept it up just the same. Where their a lot of Italian people that went into logging? I don't know much about the logging. Some Italian people go logging but I don't know much. Now when we had miners in this area here mainly miners that lived in Cle Elum had trouble getting to Roslyn because that is probably where alot of the coal mines were at. Now years ago when people didn't have cars how did they get to Cle from Cle Elum to Roslyn to work in the mines? You said that your husband worked in #5. Well, that's quite a ways off. Did he start walking early in the morning? You didn't have a car? No.
like to somebody from Roslyn how did they get it to them real quick? Telegram?

One would tell somebody then another I don't know. We have just about completed our interview today and I would like to ask you one thing and I would like to ask you one thing personally as a final closing question for today this tape interview during the time that you had lived in this community I would like you to tell me this: What advice would you give a future person that is just being born now when he is to grow up in this world, what advice would you give him to set him straight from what you have observed in your past experience of life? Well I don't know what you are going have good effort and you are good to everybody they will be good to you. I'm looking into hard times and how you would tell them what would be wise to go through if they were to go through it again. I don't know what your going to tell them. Well, the people that are good to you, you have to treat everybody good you know. You get along pretty good like that. But is there anything like through hard times? Of course like when you were going through your time you probably never have an energy crisis or anything like that? No. Nothing like that. Can you tell me what the depression was like? It was pretty hard. What was it like? Could you tell me in detail? Well, you had to watch what you were doing and if you want to eat you have to work hard and do all you can. Hard time for everybody. Did you the depression hit your town pretty hard? Well, if you worked on a farm it wasn't so bad. You had plenty to eat all the time. You can't buy anything you want all the time. We didn't suffer. Place to stay and everything? Yes. Plenty to eat too. I guess that's what really counted because you had enough to eat and you were on a farm. We never suffer. We eat and sleep. No money when ti was a hard time but we make it. I want to thank you for the interview. Yes.