**Paul:** Good afternoon this is Paul Seacrest for the National Park Service. Today is Thursday June 6th 1996. I’m at the Ellis Island recording studio with Anthony De Salvo.

Mr. De Salvo came from Italy, he thinks about 1919 and he was eight years old at that time. Running the equipment is Peter Ham and several of Mr. De Salvo’s relatives are also here in the studio. Mr. De Salvo, can we begin by you giving me your birth date please?

**Anthony:** My birthday is March 1st 1911.

**Paul:** Where in Italy were you born?

**Anthony:** A small town, the southern part of Italy by the name of Andretta.

**Paul:** Andretta?

**Anthony:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Do you know how to spell Andretta?

**Anthony:** Yes, A-N-D-R-E-T-T-A.

**Paul:** Thank you.

**Anthony:** Province of Avellino.

**Paul:** Can you describe for me what the town looked like to you when you were a kid?

**Anthony:** What this town …?

**Paul:** Yeah, what did it look like? What buildings do you remember about the town?

**Anthony:** Right up the ship I was living in that time, at the [inaudible 00:01:19] in the Bronx.

**Paul:** No, when you were a child in Italy, what do you remember about the town that you lived in?

**Anthony:** It was a very happy town. My mother used to work. She had to go to work the fields, so that we produce food like grain and corn. Most of the time I was taken care of my grandmother, she was my watchdog but after a while when I started to walk around the street, which by that time everybody used to know me. I used to [inaudible 00:01:56] into the town to the other and every person know me. I never got lost, in other words.

**Paul:** What was your name when you were in Italy?

**Anthony:** Sabota Anthonio De Salvo.

**Paul:** Were you named for anybody?

**Anthony:** Yes, Sabota was my grandfather, my mother’s father.

**Paul:** Can you spell Sabota for me?

**Anthony:** S-A-B-O-T-A, Sabota.

**Paul:** You mentioned your grandmother, was that your mother’s mother or your father’s mother?

**Anthony:** No, that was my father’s mother.

**Paul:** Tell me some of the things you remember about your grandmother.

**Anthony:** I remember I was about four, five years old, just before I came to America. My grandmother, which was my mother’s mother, she took me for a walk. Because I guess it was a small [top 00:03:04] and a lot of trees and she took me for a walk.

All of a sudden she must have got some kind of an attack and she fell. As a kid I don’t know what to do, but what I remember is that my grandmother says, “Sabotine sound like a small kid Sabota, he says, “Go and call your mother.”

I had [inaudible 00:03:40] go right home, which was maybe half a mile or so. I met some of my friends, we started to talk I forgot completely about grandmother. In the night it was suppertime, we lived in one house and my cousins that were on my wife’s side, it was a big family and my mother they use to invite her to eat every night.

We used to go there to eat, so we started to eat and then all of a sudden it was discovered that my grandmother was missing at the table. They said, “My God where is Arcangela?” her name was Arcangela in Italian.

**Paul:** Arcangela?

**Anthony:** Yeah. They asked me, “Is [inaudible 00:04:35]?” I say, “Grandma, she fell on the floor, she couldn’t get up and she told me to come and call you,” which meant my mother. I said, “I forgot all about her, I started playing with so and so and then one of my friends had other friends there. I forgot completely about her.”

Right away, my mother and my uncle there got up and went looking for her. The poor thing was still on the floor and they took her home. Then sometime later she died, but that was quite sometime after that because I was keeping her company with my wife Danielle and -What was I saying?

**Paul:** We’re talking about your grandmother.

**Anthony:** I took the [inaudible 00:05:35] of my mother and her nieces and we found my grandmother still on the floor. They picked her up, brought home, she was doing good. I was keeping company and one day I went there with my fiancée, I was still with her almost all day, but in the meantime she got to a point where she couldn’t talk but she was alive.

We stood there all day. Then all of a sudden a doctor, by the name of Dr. Cella, C-E-L-L-A, he was our family doctor. He and my father used to be very good friends when they were in Italy but then when he came to America he opened a big office at Park Avenue, he was a big doctor and that was our doctor.

When he came he saw my grandmother there, she still had her eyes open. I remember his hand going over her eyes, they don’t close the eyelids. Then he come and tell me, he says, “Sabota, go away, grandma is dead.” That was it. It was heartbreaking now right after when she passed away.

**Paul:** When you think back …

**Anthony:** The thought, it still gets me.

**Paul:** Let’s talk about the house that you lived in in Italy. Can you describe when you were a child, the house that you lived in in Italy?

**Anthony:** Yes. The house was built for two families, one long house. We only had one big room, then there was a partition and neighbors of ours, went by the name of Occoclas.

**Paul:** Occoclas?

**Anthony:** Occocla, O-C-C-O-C-L-A, Occocla.

**Paul:** You shared this family?

**Anthony:** My father had bought half of that house, there was our room. Downstairs we had an old woman living. The floors they weren’t, over here is carpet or dirt. In other words, our apartment was built on a slope of a mountain and they dug in there. They made our apartment and they made apartment for an old woman.

**Paul:** She had a dirt floor?

**Anthony:** A dirt floor.

**Paul:** What were the walls made out of?

**Anthony:** The walls were made of stone.

**Paul:** Do you remember what the roof was made out of?

**Anthony:** The roof yes, tiles, but they were red, they were that long.

**Paul:** It’s about a foot and a half long, you’re gesturing?

**Anthony:** Yeah about a foot and a half long. There were like a half a circle -You take a round pipe like this and cut them in half, at that side they were made. When they put them on the roof, they put some kind of installation on the bottom. What it was, I don’t know, but we never got a leak. Then they used to lay this, they start from the roof roll down to the end and they would place them this way cupped up.

**Paul:** Facing cupped?

**Anthony:** Yeah. Then the other one was facing down. The one after that was faced up, in other words when it rained, it didn’t hold water, they used to drain right out. Very simple but …

**Paul:** Did you have windows in the house?

**Anthony:** No. We had one big door because the apartment, maybe I would call my apartment a room and a half. Because it was very large on the top and on the bottom we had a tenant, an old woman.

**Paul:** Is there any furniture that you remember from that house? What kind of furniture did you have back when you were a child?

**Anthony:** We had two chairs because we had a carpenter that was in on the family and he’d provide us with chairs and a table. Outside of that, nothing fancy, no china closets or something.

**Paul:** Where did you sleep?

**Anthony:** I slept in the bed with my mother, big bed. My mother never slept alone because my father -I don’t know if I was born or about to be born and he carries passport to leave Italy to come to America. Naturally, he couldn’t hold on to that so he came there, but before he came here the first thing he did is he bought me a little dog. It was brown and white, it was beautiful and we grew up together.

When I got to the walking stage, four, five years old, I used to walk in the whole town and never got lost because everybody used to know me, small town. That’s how I passed by my time.

**Paul:** Do you remember the name of the dog?

**Anthony:** [Inaudible 00:11:22].

**Paul:** Can you spell that?

**Anthony:** It was a black and white. When I was about five, six years old, they came out with a law, anybody that had a dog had to get a license for it, otherwise they would destroy the dog. We never looked into it because at that time we wouldn’t have understood things like that.

Number one, the money was scarce in Italy so we never bothered getting a license. Within a few days I was looking for my dog one time and I roam the whole town calling his name, I couldn’t find him.

Then I had from grownups, they were talking, that there was a bunch of kids that they took it upon themselves to gather all these dogs that had no collar or a license, whatever they might call it.

They used to take them at the end of the town, which the road was at an angle. By the time it reached our town that they couldn’t go any lower. That was the end of the town.

The next land was about 200 feet below there. It was like the side of a mountain. That the younger boys, they are teenagers, they sharpened a path on the face of the said mountain. They used to go hunt there for crows, they had black crows. That I remember vividly.

When my dog disappeared, I knew that somebody had grabbed it. I go at the end of this road, which was the lowest. Then from my house the road went up like that right to the top of this mountain. There was a chapel. God knows how many years it was there, that was deserted. There was no roof on it, but the walls were up there. It was about 10 feet from the end of this mountain.

I looked down there and I saw all of the guys there, the way they were handling the dogs. One of the dogs they had put a rope around his neck and then threw the rope over a limb of a tree. Way down there, and I recognized my dog.