



FAMILY ARTICLE

TEACHER GUIDE

THE BALDIZZIS

WHO THEY ARE

Adolfo and Rosaria Baldizzi, immigrants from Sicily, Italy, lived at 97 Orchard Street in the 1930s with their two American-born children, Josephine and Johnny. They came to the United States in the midst of the passage of the National Origins Act in 1924, which greatly reduced the number of immigrants that could enter the United States. As a result, Rosaria lived in the US as an undocumented immigrant for 22 years. With the stock market crash of 1929, the Baldizzis also had to contend with the Great Depression. Through the perspectives of Rosaria, Adolfo, and Josephine, we learn about what it takes to start a life when moving to a new country.

PRIMARY SOURCES

1 1923 Ship Passenger List (Manifest)



Adolfo is listed on the ship manifest for the SS *Suffren*, dated October 20, 1923. The manifest was created in Europe and would have been consulted at Ellis Island. Adolfo is listed as an engineer, and the closest relative from his country of origin is listed as “Wife Mutolo Rosaria at Palermo Italy.”

Questions for Student Exploration

- Where does the manifest say Adolfo is from?
- Can you find Rosaria’s name on here? Which category is she under?
- Adolfo traveled on the boat alone. Looking at the manifest, can you find people who may have traveled to the United States as a group or family? Where were there any children on the SS *Suffren*?

2 Oral History: Josephine Baldizzi Discusses her Bedroom

TRANSCRIPT

When Josephine Baldizzi was in her 60s, she recorded a number of oral histories with the museum where she recalled her childhood memories of growing up at 97 Orchard Street. In this clip, Josephine discusses interactions with her neighbors through playing in her bedroom and helping her neighbor prepare for the Jewish sabbath.

Questions for Student Exploration

- Who did Josephine play with when she was little?
- What types of games did they play?
- What can you learn about Josephine’s neighborhood from listening to her memories?



READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension Questions

- Describe Rosaria's life in Italy before coming to the United States.
- Why did the Baldizzis have a problem in 1924?
- Why didn't people in the United States want more immigrants to come to the country in 1924?
- What's the difference between the ways Adolfo and Rosaria entered the United States?
- How many children are in the Baldizzi family?
- Describe how Rosaria thought about the family's apartment on the Lower East Side.
- How did Adolfo try to make money after he lost his job?
- How did Josephine feel about her school, P.S. 42?
- How did Josephine learn about her Italian culture?

Your Turn / Thinking Questions

ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE

- Rosaria thought it was important for everyone to get very clean every morning. Why do you think that was an important to her? Make an inference.
- Why do you think Josephine's parents took them out of Italian school after the U.S. and Italy became enemies in the war?
- Why do you think Josephine wanted to share her family's story with a museum?

ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

- Do you ever hear people talking about immigrants moving to the United States today? What do you hear?
- Have you ever learned about a new religion, culture or language from people in your community?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Imagine you are Rosaria. You've just moved into 97 Orchard Street with Adolfo, Josephine and little baby Johnny. Write a letter to your parents in Italy. You can use your imagination, but make sure to include information from the story, photographs and primary sources. Make sure to answer the following questions in your article.

→ *Where is your new apartment?*

→ *How many rooms are in the apartment?*

→ *What does the apartment look like?*

→ *What types of chores do you need to do in the apartment?*

→ *What do you do for fun in the apartment?*

→ *How is the apartment different from what you remember in Italy?*



WRITING ACTIVITIES

- *How is the apartment different from what you remember in Italy?*
- *What do you enjoy about your life in the United States?*
- *What is difficult for you about your life in the United States?*

- 2 Identify a challenge to starting a life in a new country that Baldizzi family faced. How did the family deal with this challenge? Some ideas for challenges you could write about are The National Origins Act, the Great Depression, and teaching the children about Italian culture. In your answer, use evidence from the text and primary sources.

GLOSSARY

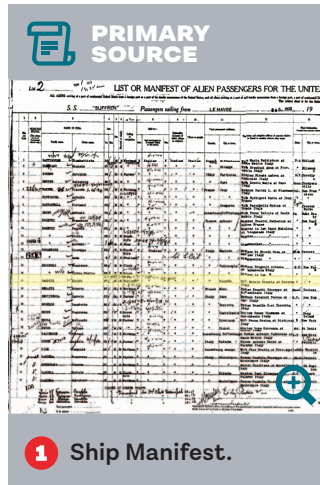
CARPENTER	(n.) a person who builds and fixes furniture and buildings with wood.
NATURAL DISASTER	(n.) an environmental or weather emergency that can lead to a lot of destruction, such as earth quakes, floods, hurricanes, fires, and more.
NATIONAL ORIGINAL ACT	(n.) a law passed in 1924 that made it very difficult for people from countries in Eastern Europe, Southern Europe (like Italy), Asia, the Middle East and Africa to immigrate to the United States.
TARGET	(n.) to pick out a specific group of people as being different.
UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT	(n.) Laws in a country tell people how they can enter the country and what paperwork they need. Someone who is undocumented moves without that paperwork.
GREAT DEPRESSION	(n.) starting in 1929 many people began to lose their jobs and many people lost a lot of money. People continued to struggle with money and work into the 1930s.
MONITOR	(n.) someone who keeps watch and makes sure that everyone is behaving.



FAMILY ARTICLE

THE STORY

THE BALDIZZIS



Leaving Home

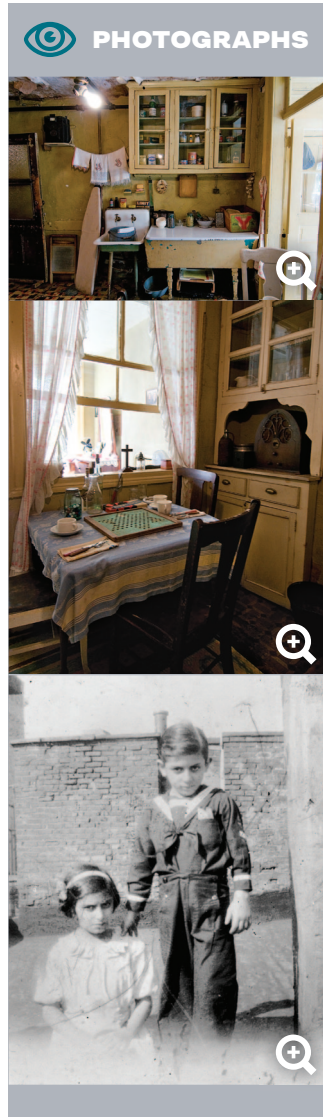
The Baldizzi family story starts in 1922 in the Italian city of Palermo, located on an island called Sicily. Rosaria was a young woman that helped her mom and dad sell eggs. Rosaria remembered that with the egg selling business and a grandfather that sold bread, she always had plenty of food. She married a man named Adolfo who worked as a **carpenter**. At this time, though, many people in Italy lost their jobs, and it was difficult to raise a family and have enough to eat. Many Italians decided to leave Italy and immigrate to the United States for better jobs and to escape **natural disasters** like earthquakes. The Baldizzis decided to come to the United States as well.

Adolfo went first. In 1923, he boarded a ship and sailed to New York, where he passed through Ellis Island before settling in the Lower East Side. Adolfo found a job, found a home, and after two years, saved up enough money to buy a ticket for Rosaria to come.

However, one year later, in 1924, The Baldizzis had a problem. In between the time when Adolfo came and when Rosaria was ready to come, the United States passed a law, the **National Origins Act**. The law lowered the numbers of immigrants that could come into the country. The government passed this law because many people at the time believed that too many immigrants were coming into the United States and that they were hurting the country. People thought immigrants were taking jobs and changing the culture in the United States. Certain groups of immigrants were targeted more than others. Italians were one of the groups that was **targeted**, and Rosaria was still in Italy. Although it was a risk, Rosaria left Italy and all that she was familiar with to come and join her husband. Rosaria made it, but the Baldizzis had to be very careful to keep the secret of how she came to the United States for a very long time. Rosaria was an **undocumented immigrant**.



YOUR TURN Do you ever hear people talking about immigrants moving to the United States today? What do you hear?



PHOTOGRAPHS

Getting Started

ROSARIA

Rosaria and Adolfo had two children, Josephine and Johnny. When Johnny was just a baby and Josephine was two, they moved to 97 Orchard Street in 1930. People from different countries like Italy and Russia lived in the building, and the neighborhood was not a majority Italian. Rosaria and Adolfo worked hard to make a home for their children, but it was difficult because at this time in the United States many people were losing their jobs because of the **Great Depression**. When her husband couldn't find enough work, Rosaria took a job at a garment factory, sewing the linings into coats. Many women continued work in factories like this during the Great Depression.

The Baldizzis did not have a lot of money, and Rosaria probably thought their apartment was smaller and more crowded than her home in Italy. In the apartment, the family had a cold running water sink, but no toilet and no shower. Rosaria used to give little Josephine and Johnny baths in the small tub next to the sink, and scrubbed herself to get clean at the sink every morning. Josephine remembered that on Saturdays, as a treat, her mom would make a fried egg on a roll with butter and a little bit of ketchup.

YOUR TURN *Rosaria thought it was important for everyone to get very clean every morning. Why do you think that was important to her? Make an inference.*

ADOLFO

Adolfo lost his job as a carpenter. To try and make enough money to buy food for the family, he took his toolbox and walked around the neighborhood to see if anyone had any jobs for him. Some days, Adolfo would get some jobs, but other days he might come home after a full day with no money. When he wasn't working, he spent time with Josephine and Johnny. They would play games, and sing along to his guitar. He also made furniture for their apartment.

Adolfo and Rosaria had good relationships with their neighbors. One of the Baldizzis' neighbors from Russia, Fannie Rogarshevsky, said that Adolfo "never ever said no" when she asked him for help. They were also friends with two other Italian families in the building, the Bonafiglios and the Raspizzios.

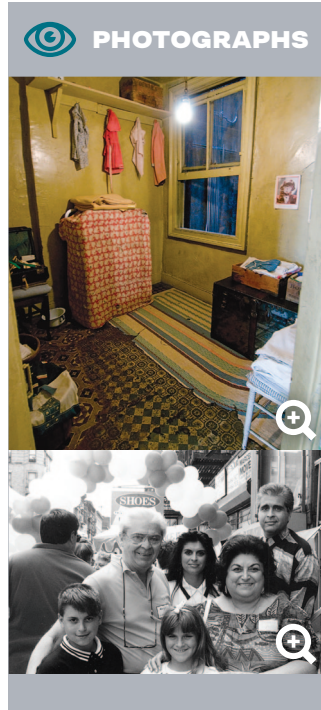
JOSEPHINE

While Josephine's parents were working hard getting started in the United States, she was working hard as a student at P.S. 42. Josephine went to P.S. 42 until she was in 6th grade. Every morning before school, Josephine said she refused to eat breakfast and would go to school with a stomach-ache. She felt nervous and was quiet and shy in school. However, Josephine also said she loved P.S. 42. She had the special job of being a **monitor** for one of her teachers, Mrs. Hunt, who she prepared lunch for every day. Josephine

PRIMARY SOURCE

TRANSCRIPT

2 Josephine's Oral History.



says she had a close relationship with her. Mrs. Hunt even gave her a Chinese Checkers game set that Josephine still talked about when she was all grown up.

Most of the students Josephine went to school with had parents who were immigrants like she did or were immigrants themselves from many different places such as Russia, Poland, Greece and China. Even though Josephine heard her parents speaking Italian at home, at school she spoke English. She always knew more English than Italian. Josephine and Johnny went to Italian school for about three weeks to learn the language. They stopped going after World War II started. The United States and Italy were enemies in that war. Josephine says that everything she knows about Italy is from her mother and singing songs.

YOUR TURN *What are some of the reasons going to Italian school after the US and Italy become enemies in the war might be more difficult?*

Have you ever learned about a new religion, culture or language from people in your community?

The Baldizzi family left 97 Orchard street, and shortly after moved to Brooklyn with their friends the Bonafiglios and the Raspizzios. Josephine and Johnny grew up in Brooklyn. When Josephine was an adult, she came back to visit her childhood home on 97 Orchard Street that is now the Tenement Museum and told the museum her memories. Here (in the sidebar) is a black-and-white photograph of Josephine with her children and grandchildren.

YOUR TURN *Why do you think Josephine wanted to share her family's story with a museum?*



Form No. 1
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
List 2 NOV 1 1923 1/2 34 am

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED STATES

ALL ALIENS arriving at a port of continental United States from a foreign port or a port of the insular possessions of the United States, and all aliens arriving at a port of said insular possessions from a foreign port, a port of continental United States (this sheet is for the listing of)

S. S. "SUFFREN" Passengers sailing from LE HAVRE, 1923, 19

No. on List	HEAD-TAX STATUS (This column for use of Collector (which only))	NAME IN FULL		Age	Sex	Married or Single	Calling or occupation	Able to		Nationality (Country of which citizen or subject)	Race or people	Last permanent residence		The name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came.	Final destination (stated here permanent address)	
		Family name	Given name					Tr.	Na.			Land	Sea		Country	City or town
1		BATTISTONE	Giambattista	38	M		Workman	Y		Italian	Italian	Luxembourg	Differdange	Wife Maria Battistone at Sante Metrio Italy	P.A. Midland	
2	*	BRANDANI	Michele	27	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Ottange		Wife Brandani Anna at Prov. Aquila Italy	Ellsworth	
3		BIONDO	Antonio	24	M		Farmer			Italian	Italian	Partinico		Brother Biondo Andrea at Partinico Italy	N.Y. Brooklyn	
4		BRUTTO	Salvatore	26	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Naro		Wife Brutto Maria at Naro Italy	Conn. Thompsonville	
5	33670	BATTEL	Giacomo	28	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Jouy		Moether Battel L. at Piansano Italy	Cal. San Francisco	
6		BUTTIQUOL	Antonio	28	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Jouy		Wife Buttiqual Maria at Jouy France		
7		BAZZANELLA	Giovanni	40	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Longuyon		Wife Bazzabella Rosina at Trento Italy	Pa. Crested Butte	
8		BRUNO	Antonio	24	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Luxembourg	Differdange	Wife Bruno Felicia at Sante Metrio Italy	Pa. East Brady	
9		BONETTI	Francesco	26	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Aubone		Moether Bonetti Catherine at Aubone France	Red Bank	
10		BONETTI	Daniela	30	M		Workman			Italian	Italian			Moether in law Zanni Madalena at Piombino Italy		
11			Giulia	25	F		Housewife			Italian	Italian			Moether.....		
12	UNDER 10		Antonio	7	M		None			Italian	Italian			Grandmoether.....		
13		BONARRIGO	Giuseppa	36	F		Housewife			Italian	Italian	Marinee		Moether Di Nicoli Rosa at Marinee Italy	Mich. Detroit	
14			Anna	9	F		Student			Italian	Italian			Grandmoether		
15		BRUGNOLI	Francesco	34	M		Clerk			Italian	Italian	Valinoplia		Moether Brugnoli Antonia at Valinoplia Italy	N.Y. New York	
16			Giuseppa Rosina	24	F		Housewife			Italian	Italian			Moether in law		
17		BALDIZI	Adolfo	27	M		Engineer			Italian	Italian	Palermo		Wife Mutolo Rosaria at Palermo Italy		
18		BENATTI	Roberto	27	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Meru		Father Benatti Giuseppe at S. Possidonio Italy	Mass. Chelsea	
19		BENTIVEGNA	Carlo	31	M		Farmer			Italian	Italian	Naro		Moether Cavaleri Teresa at Naro Italy	N.Y. New York	
20		BONELLO	Benedetto	26	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Torretta		Father Bonello G. at Torretta Italy		
21		BRUNO	Francesca	20	F		Housewife			Italian	Italian	Casteldaccia		Brother Bruno Vincenzo at Casteldaccia Italy	Long Island	
22		BRIGA	Bortunato	28	M		Farmer			Italian	Italian	Rizziconi		Wife Penna Rosina at Rizziconi Italy	N.Y. New York	
23		BOZZO	Philippo	28	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Cinisi		Moether Lupa Giovanna at Cinisi Italy	Me. St. Louis	
24	994195	CALDERONE	Giovanni	22	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Luxembourg	Differdange	Father Antonio Calderone at Sante Metrio Italy	N.Y. New York	
25	710152	CONTE	Amelio	28	M		Farmer			Italian	Italian	Palermo		Father Antonio Conte at Palermo Italy	Pa. Pechskill	
26		CIOE	Vasquale	46	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Luxembourg	Amange	Wife Cioe Gratia at Prov. Aquila Italy	Ohio Woodville	
27		CANDELA	Francesca	22	F		Taylor			Italian	Italian	Montelepre		Father Candela Giuseppe at Montelepre Italy	Mich. Detroit	
28		CUCCHIARA	Giuseppa	32	F		Workman			Italian	Italian			Father Cucchiara at Montelepre Italy	Pa. Gd. Rapids	
29		CANDELA	Michele	23	M		Blacksmith			Italian	Italian	Palermo		Moether Caci Giuseppa at Palermo Italy	N.Y. Newark	
30		CANDELA	Salvatore	28	M		Workman			Italian	Italian	Montelepre		Father Candela Giuseppe at Montelepre Italy	Mich. Detroit	

CLOSED AT NUMBER THIRTY

Transferred to 2nd Class Manifest 10-11 10-13 10-10 10-12

Total passengers U. S. Citizens

*Permanent residence within the meaning of this manifest shall be actual or intended residence on one year or more. *List of names will be found on the back of this sheet.

This document contains the names of the people traveling to the United States on the ship, the SS Suffren. It's called a ship manifest. Adolfo Baldizzi is listed here with his job and other important information. The manifest was created in Europe and the officers at Ellis Island would look at it in New York.



Adolfo Baldizzi Ship Manifest (part I)

Name in Full		Age		Sex	Married or Single	Calling or Occupation	Able to:		
Family Name	Given Name	Yrs	Mon				Read	Read what language (or, if exemption claimed, on what ground)	Write
Battistone	Giambattista	33		M	M	Workman	Y	Italian	Y
Br--dani	Michele	27		M	M	"	"	"	"
Biondo	Antonino	24		M	S	Farmer	"	"	"
Brutto	Salvatore	26		M	M	"	"	"	"
Battel	Giacomo	25		M	S	Workman	"	"	"
Buttiguol	Antonio	32		M	M	"	"	"	"
Bazzanella	Giovanni	49		M	M	"	"	"	"
Bruno	Antonio	24		M	M	"	"	"	"
Bonetti	Francesco	16		M	S	"	"	"	"
Bonetti	Daniele	30		M	M	"	"	"	"
"	Giulia	25		F	M	Housewife	"	"	"
"	Antonio	/	6	M	S	None	N	N	N
Bonarrigo	Giuseppa	36		F	M	Housewife	Y	Italian	Y
"	Anna	9		F	S	Student	"	"	"
Brugnoli	Francesco	34		M	M	Clerk	"	"	"
"	Chiesa Rosina	24		F	M	Housewife	"	"	"
Baldizi	Adolfo	27		M	M	Engineer	"	"	"
Benatti	Roberto	27		M	S	Workman	"	"	"
Bentivegna	Carmelo	31		M	S	Farmer	"	"	"
Bonello	Benedetto	26		M	S	"	"	"	"
Bruno	Francesca	20		F	S	Housewife	"	"	"
Briga	Fortunato	28		M	M	Farmer	"	"	"
Bozzo	Filippo	25		M	M	"	"	"	"

Adolfo is seen on the SS Suffren on 10/20/23. His occupation is "Engineer" and his closest relative from his country of origin is listed as "Wife Mutolo Rosaria at Palermo Italy."



Adolfo Baldizzi Ship Manifest (part II)

Nationality (country of which citizen or subject)	Race or People	Last Permanent Residence		The Name and Complete Address of Nearest Relative or Friend in Country Whence Alien Came	Final Destination	
		Country	City or Town		State	City or Town
Italian	Italian	Luxembourg	Differdange	Wife Maria Battistone at Sante Metrio Italy	P.A.	Midland
"	"	"	Ottange	Wife Braudani Anna at Prov. Aquila Italy	"	Ellsworth
"	"	Italy	Partinico	Brother Biondo Andrea at Partinico Italy	N.Y.	Brooklyn
"	"	"	Naro	Wife Brutto Maria at Naro Italy	Conn.	Thompsonville
"	"	France	Jouy	Moether Battel L. at Piansano Italy	Cal.	San Francisco
"	"	"	"	Wife Buttiguol Maria at Jouy France	"	"
"	"	"	Longuyon	Wife Bazzahella Rosina at Trento Italy	Colo.	Crested Butte
"	"	Luxembourg	Differdange	Wife Bruno Felicia at Sante Metrio Italy	PA	East Brady
"	"	France	Anboner	Moether Bonetti Catherine at Aubone France	"	Red Banc
"	"	"	"	Moether in law Zanni Madalena at Piongaiano Italy	"	"
"	"	"	"	Moether ... " ...	"	"
"	"	"	"	Grandmoether ... " ...	"	"
"	"	Italy	Marineo	Moether Di Niceli Rosa at Marineo Italy	Mich	Detroit
"	"	"	"	Grandmother "	"	"
"	"	"	Valinospla	Moether Brugnoli Antonia at Valmassola Italy	N.Y.	New York
"	"	"	"	Moether in law "	"	"
"	"	"	Palermo	Wife Mutolo Rosaria at Palermo Italy	"	"
"	"	France	Meru	Father Benatti Giuseppe at S. Possidonio Italy	Mass.	Chelsea
"	"	Italy	Naro	Moether Cavaleri Teresa at Naro Italy	N.Y.	New York
"	"	"	Torretta	Father Bonello G.at Torretta Italy	"	"
"	"	"	Casteldacia	Brother Bruno Vincanso at Casteldacia Italy	"	Long Island
"	"	"	Rizziconi	Wife Penna Rosina at Rizziconi Italy	"	New York
"	"	"	Cinisi	Moether Lupa Giovanna at Cinisi Italy	Ms.	St Louis



TRANSCRIPT

When Josephine Baldizzi was in her 60s, she recorded a number of oral histories with the museum where she recalled her childhood memories of growing up at 97 Orchard Street. In this clip, Josephine discusses interactions with her neighbors through playing in her bedroom and helping her neighbor prepare for the Jewish Sabbath.

Interview with Josephine Baldizzi

In the back room, my brother and I slept on a folding bed, and every night, my mother would open it up, or my father. My brother would sleep at one end, I slept at another end. Every morning we'd have to fold it up, cover it very nicely, put it back against the wall.

The other thing in that bedroom was a trunk that my brother and I enjoyed playing with. When I say playing, I mean standing on top of it, and that was our stage. I became Claudette Colbert, he became somebody else. Whatever movie that was out, we were acting. We would do a song and dance, or something, whatever was amusing to us. And sometimes, in the trunk, must've been my mother's clothing, and hats, and whatever. We would take it out, wear it, put them on — high heels, you know [laughs] — and have a lot of fun. And Rita Bonafiglio, who lived upstairs in the tenement, she used to come down and play with us too, and we'd be three of us. And we would fight. I wanted to be Claudette Colbert, she wanted to be Claudette Colbert, and we had a ball. We just enjoyed that, doing that.

In the back room there was a shaft, a window facing a shaft, and there was, across the way, was another window. And back there was the Rosenthals, the Rosenthals lived there. I can still see Mrs. Rosenthal in the airshaft window, waiving to me, motioning for me to come in and to turn on the lights, because it was the Sabbath, a Jewish holiday, and they weren't allowed to touch the electricity. And it made me very proud to have to do that. I used to feel good that she chose me to do that job for her. And I can still see her 'til today, the vision of her in that window, it has never left my memory.



Rosaria and Adolfo Baldizzi sailed across the Atlantic Ocean from Italy to immigrate to the United States.



The Baldizzi kitchen. Josephine remembers having a fried egg on a roll with butter and a little bit of ketchup here as a treat on Saturdays.



The Baldizzi's kitchen. Josephine remembers playing games with her father at the kitchen table.



Josephine (9) and Johnny (7) Baldizzi in 1935 on the roof of 97 Orchard Street.



The Baldizzi's bedroom. Josephine and Johnny slept here at night and played here during the day.



Josephine and her husband, George, in 1991. Their daughter, Maria, and her husband are in the back. Josephine's grandchildren are in front.