

Buttacavoli/Caliva Family
1903



Vincenzo Buttacavoli was born in Roccomena Sicily in 1882. Maria Caliva was born in Contessa Entellina, Sicily in 1882. These villages are about 20 miles from each other. Maria's heritage is "Ga Ga" which means she was descendant from soldiers that settled in the region who were from Albania. Her family may have spoken a different dialect than Sicilian. Maria was trained to be a seamstress and was very good at dress making for her daughters. Vincenzo was a strong man who worked 6 days a week in factories in and around Rockford. They had come to the United States for work as there was no future in Sicily in the early twentieth century. They were married and left for the United States after a brief introduction. They migrated to the United States as a married couple in 1903.

Vincenzo build two houses in the 15th avenue area. Maria took care of their 7 children: John, Mary, Frank, Santo, Peter, Lee and Jo. John was a small business owner. Frank was a well known golfer. Santo and Peter had successful lives working in business. Lee married Edward Benesh and Jo married Zeke Giorgi. Frank lived to 100 years, Peter to 97 years and Jo and Lee are presently 95 years old. Living in the United States provided them with stable lives and good health. The children were grateful to be American citizens. Maria became an American citizen after the war.

In the photograph from left to right is the Buttacavoli Family taken in 1939, Peter, Josephine, Santo, Lena, Frank and kneeling is John.

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