

Kasomenos /Marinos

Demetra Marinos came to America in 1918 with her Mother Maria, sister Melissa and brother John. Demetra's father, Theodore Marinos had arrived in Omaha in 1914.

The Marinos family were Greeks living in Smyrna, Turkey. Prior to and during the Balkan Wars, all young men, married or unmarried and including ethnic Greek living in Turkey and the city of Smyrna where the Marinos family lived, were required to serve in the Turkish Army. Theodore Marinos and his brothers were determined to leave Turkey and did so overland through the mountains to Greece. They traveled to America approximately a year later. When he arrived in America, he worked a short time in Texas and then came to Omaha to become a butcher at the South Omaha slaughterhouse.

With Theodore in Greece and then America, Maria Marinos became very worried for herself and her children. Smyrna was very heavily populated with ethnic Greeks in the WWI years and the era prior to 1922 when Kemal Ataturk determined to break previous treaties and to begin a genocide of Greeks in Asia Minor. Before the holocaust, Maria Marinos and her children left Smyrna with the help of a Greek business woman who arranged passage from Turkey to Greece for them. They remained in Athens for three years before it was possible to sail for America to join her husband, Theodore, in Omaha. The trip from Pireaus to New York consumed 35 grueling days sometimes dodging German U-boats. They entered the United States through Ellis Island and then by train crossed half of the country to Omaha. In Omaha Theodore Marinos and his family had a long awaited reunion. Melissa (Mia) Marinos married Michael Manolis in Omaha. Their children were Aphrodite and Artene. Michael Manolis was active in the church as was Melissa. Michael served as President of the Board of Directors of St. John's deep in the difficult depression years of 1936 and 1937 when it was nearly impossible to raise enough funds to pay the priest and keep the church open for liturgy. Demetra married Anton Kasomenos and they raised a family in Omaha, Nebraska.

Anton Kasomenos was born in Kalamata, Greece and came to America in the early 1900's. He enlisted in the United States Army during World War 1, probably being rewarded with citizenship as were many other Greek American Army volunteers. He arrived in Omaha in 1918 and obtained employment at the South Omaha packing House where he would work 52 continuous years in a hide cellar. He married Demetra Marinos and they lived their lives in the South Omaha section of town. The marriage produced six children, namely; Ethel, Theodora, Mary, JoAnn, Irene and Demetrius. Demetra and Anton were active in the early days of St. John's and a voice in establishing the church. Theodora Kasomenos married George Barelos in 1944.

Barelos/Chrystophoros

Elias Gouloupoulos (Louis Barelos) came to America from Messina Greece in 1918. He gave his name as Barelos when he reached Ellis Island. After staying in New York for a short time, he traveled by train to Omaha, Nebraska to work at the Union Pacific. He became a section foreman and retired from the Union Pacific after 52 years. His future wife, Ourania Chrystophoros, traveled to America to be with him when she was 18 years old. The long boat ride was difficult with people getting sick and everyone speaking different languages. Her father owned a small grocery store in Messina, Greece and gathered together the money needed to send her to America. After a three week trip she entered Ellis Island and then traveled to Omaha where she joined Louis. They were married in Omaha and started a family which included Nick, John, Annabelle and George. Nick died at the age of 15 after a coal accident left him with a deadly infection. Louis, Ourania and their family lived in Lane, Nebr for a period of time. Lane, Nebr is now 156th and Center where the "Lane" marker still stands. Louis was the backbone/spirit of his family and a notable figure in the early days of St. John's and the Greek community. He was an avid hunter and fisherman spending many weekends with his family at their cabin on the Elkhorn River. Ourania was devoted to her family and was a very caring loving person. Louis and Orania left many wonderful memories.

John Barelos moved to Detroit, Michigan and then Fort Worth, Texas where he and his wife, Eva Heras had three children: John, Kathy and Dorothy. Annabelle had three children in Omaha, Tom, Leonora and Marilyn. Later she moved to California.

George Barelos married Theodora Kasomenos in 1944. They were married in Albuquerque, New Mexico while he was serving in the United States Army during World War II. Both served St. John's in active participation for many years. George was an AHEPA member and served on St. John's parish council. Theodora has served Sunday school, several church clubs and continues to participate in church activities. She is a weekend long festival worker to this day.

George and Theodora's children, Louise and George with their families continue the tradition and are celebrating the centennial. Their families include:

Louise's children, Jay Mulkey, Niki Mulkey and Jay's wife Dina (married, May, 2008), Louise's husband Sheldon Turkel; George's children Stacey Barelos, Alex Barelos, Nicholas Barelos and George's wife, Debbie Barelos.