

## TZIRITA, ELENI ( HELEN) - DALE AMLIN

Siripidiana is a small village a few kilometers inland from the Northern coast of Crete between the Bali Bay resorts and the beaches of Chondros Kavos in the prefecture of Rethymnon. Eleni was one of five surviving sisters born to Efstratios Tzirita and Chrisai Kounopa Tzirita there. The church of Agia Paraskevi is in a nearby where the girls were baptized and where they participated in Orthodox Christian services. Eleni was born during WW II after the Italians' unsuccessful invasion of Northern Greece and during the last days of the reign of John Metaxas, the prime minister of Greece. She was a baby when the first WW II German paratroopers were surprised at the unexpected pitchfork reception from the Cretans whose defensive efforts had a definite impact on German invasion plans elsewhere much to the relief and advantage of the allied forces in Europe.

Suffering from a bleeding ulcer, Efstratios Tzirita died in 1949 at age 38 leaving his young widow to rear and see to the marriage of their five daughters after the war. Two of the daughters married American servicemen who had been stationed on the island. One of Eleni's sisters lives in Khania, the next prefecture to the West, and three sisters today live elsewhere on Crete. Land mines and other ordnance planted during the war were still to be found in many areas along the coast in the 1960s.

While taking English classes, Eleni met Dale Amlin, an American Air Force enlistee and satellite cartographer, who was stationed in Iraklion from 1962 to 1964. After a courtship, they married on the island at the church of St. Titus in Iraklion. Eleni continued her educational efforts, passed the naturalization test and became a naturalized citizen of the United States in Hawaii on May 1, 1968. One child, a daughter Christine, was born as issue of the marriage in Riverside, California. She now resides with her husband, Brian Wall in Seattle, Washington. Eleni and Dale have lived in many cities during his Air Force days before retiring in Omaha where Dale served at the United States Postal Service until retiring again. Eleni's talents include the ability to plan and execute mass meal preparations. She works at a large grocery deli. Her experience is put to good use in planning and substantially doing all the cooking for the fish fry at St. John's during lent and for other events. Dale received the sacrament of chrismation and became an Orthodox Christian at St. John's. Eleni's work ethic and instant smile along with Dale's support have made them popular and faithful parishioners at St. John's and they have won many friends.