

Interview with John Argeropoulos and Mary Graphos
Marquette, MI
January 18th 2011
Tape ½ Side A

Russell Magnaghi (RM): Okay well we'll get started with the interview which is going to be focusing on the Greeks and your families in Marquette and the Upper Peninsula. My first question is always your birth date, so Mary, could you give us your birth date?

Mary Graphos (MG): Yes, January 7th 1929.

RM: And John?

John Argeropoulos (JA): June 20th 1935.

RM: The first question I'd like to ask because of all of the names involved that you're going to be mentioning could you, one of you maybe put into some form the various names like the Argeropoulos-es, Graphos, Pedakis [Ed. Note: Pedakis or Papadakis], uh there were the Apostles and

MG: I'm an Apostle.

RM: You're an Apostle, maybe kind of put these, put the names together uh

MG: Get my glasses

Female voice (FV): [Inaudible]

MG: Yes, I can get my glasses

JA: That and the names of the business places. But just uh, I only made one copy of the family names.

MG: Oh you've got the billiard parlor, Paul, John too, Apostle; do you know that the Mining Journal had an article once about uh... The bible has all the Apostles but you can look in a Marquette dictionary, the Marquette telephone book and you've got, Peter and John and Mar- well I'm renamed, Paul.

RM: So the, we go down the list here then uh, the first one or the earliest one would have been the Apostle family?

MG: Well they were very early because there were older uncles of my dad's that were here. But they were here early and also [long pause] let's see, Central Café James Argeropoulos?

JA: Before the Lempesis, yes

MG: That's why there, your father and your uncle were in that picture with the Lempesis in the bar.

JA: I have to see that picture, I, I'm not remembering it

MG: Well George and Kathy have it on their wall in the kitchen and they have the one of my dad's too.

RM: So these were, so then you have the Apostles and the Argeropoulos-es

MG: Yeah but then the Laskus, not Jimmy that's here now, but an Uncle of his they were at the Bon Ton and he brought over his wife's brother who was George Roman. George Roumanis and then who else did he bring, I can't, oh and his sister and they lived here until they were married or whatever and my sister-in-law, Elaine's father was here, Collins his name was Hidiapolis and do you know that this judge, one of the old judges, was it..

JA: Rushton?

MG: No, no older

JA: Way back huh

MG: Way back. He, when, I think it was when Mr. Collins wanted to become an American citizen he said, "Well you know that name is tough, your name is Kiaquese, we'll name you Collins" 'cause I said, "Where did you get that name Elaine? That's not Greek." And she said, well it was done that way and uh.

RM: Was it done by the judge at the time of Citizenship?

MG: I think it was at the time, or he suggested that he use that anyway.

JA: There is a naturalization list for the state of Michigan. And you can access it on the internet.

MG: Oh really?

JA: I have some notes on it upstairs.

RM: So then all of these now, for instance, here I see one Pocadocus

JA: Yes

MG: Where do you see that, at the Bon Ton?

RM: At the Bon Ton, so many of these names were changed, besides the names that you use now, there might have been an earlier spelling of it that was more elaborate, Argeropoulos and Arger

MG: Well they shortened it, Nick did.

JA: Nick was a brother of, he was my uncle and he just dropped it off to Arger.

RM: I see

MG: But you didn't and your other cousins are Argeropoulos

JA: In Detroit yeah, that

MG: And we're Apostlakis

JA: That's right, so you raised a good question you want to spell your Greek name?

MG: Is that necessary, I can give it to you, a p o s t

JA: I think you're right and then o e o

MG: L a k i s apostlakis

RS: Which means Apostle?

MG: It became Apostle after that. And here you've got purchased by George and Gus Papadakis
Gus had nothing to do with it.

JA: Yeah, I know

MG: You know but my Aunt; when Nightingale burned, in... remember the, well you were too young.

JA: No, I remember the nightingale as a bar.

MG: Uh no no no, on Washington street in the Masonic building, that where I grew up, behind it, in that area. 'cause we had the Candyland in there. And what happened was, we needed an new chef and uncle Jim Apostle brought George and Gus and Mamie, you remember, and Mamie's brother who was a Swede and brought them to work for us and there were there until the fire. And then you know, we lost our business then, so they went to work because then never, at the Bon Ton, didn't have chefs and stuff, you know they already had a cook there; but they went there then to cook and then they stayed and then they bought it later.

JA: Do you know what year the Bon Ton might have started?

MG: Oh that's old

JA: Yeah and it ran through until the mid 60s at least?

MG: Probably but then

JA: 'Cause my dad used to go down there and visit Gus and George in the kitchen.

MG: Yeah, in the kitchen, you'd go around the back.

JA: Yeah, and my Dad died in 67 but he, until he got really, gravely ill he used to go down there. Every other week or so.

MG: Yeah

RM: So then all the Bon Ton and you said Candyland and these different places they lasted then into the 60s? Why did they, why did they close? You know like now, none of them are left.

MG: No, none of them are left.

JA: I think children moved elsewhere, didn't want to take over the business and as the original owners got elderly they couldn't keep it up any longer.

MG: They couldn't handle it, Oh I see, later it became the Mark when it was Apostle's restaurant but before that in the Masonic building

JA: Candyland you're saying?

MG: It was Nightingale and Candyland. My father was a candy maker and my uncle Jim. And so were the people that owned the Bon Ton, that's what they came and did. They came from Methomorphoses found in Sparta. And, but they weren't candy makers in Greece. But I don't know how they got to... 'cause when my dad came from Greece

RM: Now your dad was?

MG: Peter. Peter Apostle, his brother had already come to the Canadian Sault because they had and uncle there, an Apostle and he had a candy land type of you know restaurant with sandwiches and ice cream, fancy ice cream, and all that. Well my father left the village and went down to yeats- did you go to yeatsyo when you went to your mother's

JA: I don't recall it

MG: No?

JA: I don't think so

MG: Well your mother's village is not that far from my mother's,

JA: Kyparisi

MG: Kyparisi, that's one of the most beautiful spots

RM: Could you spell that? Kyparisi?

JA: K y p a r i s s i. Kyparisi.

RM: And your, your hometown?

MG: My folks are from, well it's Methomorphoses now but in the old days it was called
Katavothra.

JA: Oh I remember Katavothra

RM: How do you spell that?

MG: K a t a b o t h r a, Sparta, Lepneas Sparta Greece, we're Spartans.

JA: And the Palace? Mr. Palace was from that area? Or was it Julia? No, Julia was from Mes-

MG: Mesuneia

JA: I recall that, yeah Mesuneia

MG: See there was a group of people here they were either Mesin- from Mesuneia, Mesenians or they were Spartans or, we had very few islanders in this area. The islanders settled more in Florida, and you know in different parts of the country, but we didn't have any. Do you remember Vobasophle?

JA: Yes, I got him listed in here somewhere, Catsimanis, and that-

MG: Catsimanis yeah you know do you remember his nose?

JA: _____ Catsimanis huh?

MG: do you remember his nose?

JA: yeah.

MG: (laughs)

JA: Later I will tell you a story that as a little boy he used to tease me all the time and I got back at him in a way that I'm not too proud of.

MG: Oh god, you have to tell us that.

RM: So these were so the people and like the people on this list,

MG: Yeah

RM: Were all from these, from this area?

MG: The *Peloponnesos*.

RM: The Peloponnese.

MG: Yeah

JA: As opposed to the islands

MG: Most of them were from that area.

RM: Okay

JA: And when Mary talked about Messenian, Messinia, that's like a suburb of Calamata. Most people will know Calamata, but

MG: Well Calamata is a city

JA: Yeah, but isn't Messinia's right near it

MG: Yes, but they also call the state there Mussuneia, yeah

RM: So all of these people then came from that area, that are, that were in Marquette, or in the UP, the Sault here...

MG: Oh the Sault was a mixture, the Sault had uh, of course I don't remember that as well but the Catel-eses were from uh they were old-timers there the had some of them from Sparta and some of them from Messinia. And uh, it will come to me if I wait a minute now. Oh even now Sotiro Roumanis, you know,

JA: Sam's Shoe Repair

MG: Sam's Shoe Repair, he came well he came in the 50s, 60s, 60s

JA: No it was 50s

MG: 50s

JA: He did dishes at the Bon Ton when he first came and then he saved some money and he wanted to bring the rest of his family over but he didn't have enough funds yet to do it. I think my mother was influential in giving him the idea of a repair, shoe repair business.

MG: Well that's what he did in Greece.

JA: Yeah, I know, and that's how he bought this house up on the top of the hill, first they lived there and worked right out of the home.

MG: And then his wife did uh alterations for Montgomery Ward.

RM: Oh okay and then she now she...

MG: She just died a few years ago.

RM: Okay yeah I remember her. I mean she did a lot of

MG: Alterations

RM: Alterations for myself.

MG: Yeah, Uh huh and then-

RM: So that was Sam Roumanis?

MG: Sam Roumanis, who was a brother to George, from the Elite, the old Elite now that was there. I don't, I should remember, of course if I asked Elaine, she'd know but, uh, now how am I going to explain this? When the Lakes from the Bon Ton, he had two daughters, two little girls and he decided or no he became ill and his nephew was Peter Collins, that was Elaine's father, you wrote that down I think,

JA: No, no, go ahead

MG: They took him to the Mayo Clinic and they told him that he had cancer and there was nothing that they could do for him. So he decided to take his wife and family and go back to the village. And at the same time, the Apostles from the Candyland who were related to my dad, and my dad and Uncle Jim worked for them, I mean the place was huge, they decided to go all on the same ship and they all went back to Greece. To the Village, they all went back to Katavothra, and they lived there, they built homes there you know and they lived there with their families and then, now how did that, I get a little mixed up, I'm eighty-two.

RM: This is very complicated

JA: And it's many years ago

MG: I know, my mother could just rattle it all off like, but anyway, uh, now what was I saying...

RM: So this whole group then went back, to stay permanently

MG: To stay permanently

FV: But then some of them came back

MG: A few came, well, Hellen Lafkas, wait a minute now, he went back thinking he was going to die right away, but in the mean time, his wife became pregnant, had another baby girl, and Helen and Via, Via stayed in Athens with her godmother, is this superfluous? You get an idea of how it happened, and Helen was living in the *chorio* in the village and she was the niece of George Rowe [Roumanis], and Mrs. Graphos from Traverse City who was a Roumanis. See she came here as a young girl too, to Marquette. Shula...

JA: Shula?

MG: Shirley they called her, so anyway, she, Helen, my father-in-law, uh yeah, this gets goofy now. My father-in-law had lost his wife quite a few years before, this is Ted's father, Ted is my husband, they were in Manistique and my father-in-law George Graphos, wrote to Gus Graphos, his brother, who was in Escanaba in those days making candies. He asked my father-in-law to get Helen and bring her back on the ship with him. But that, you know I don't know how he did it, but you know what he did. He had married my mother in law who was from Sikkal the next village over, Sick-town I called it. And so what happened then? Oh well they got on board a ship well you know they didn't have a whole lot of money for separate rooms, so they put Hellene- Helen up on the top bunk. And my Father and Father-in-law on the lower bunk I mean we make poor jokes about that, you know, but that's what happened there but she came to Escanaba then she... Uncle Gus went to Traverse City, they ended up down there and the fact is Batsakis, Jim Budsakisⁱ also from there see that, I'm getting off the mark now. They ended up getting married. But one day the teacher asked Ted's half brother, Pete, they were about the same age, this is so cute, she said, the teacher said, "Where's Helen? She didn't come to school today?" "Oh she's getting married" and so they married her off but she had a wonderful husband and she had three sons. And, but she was born in Marquette and her sister Via was born in Marquette, and Via ended up in Lake Linden, she's still there.

JA: Dia? D-i-a?

MG: V no Via Olivia, yeah and they called her Via for short and then Hellene is Helen

RM: So then what you have is a relatively small community of Greeks that stay very close together even though they might be in Manistique, Lake Linden, and Marquette and Traverse City and so on, they still maintain close relations.

MG: Yes, because many of them were related. Because they were from the same towns, the same villages. Now your father's village was Messinia so that was a little ways away from us, that's like going on a big trip.

RM: So this would have all been in an area like say Marquette County or something, I mean it wasn't that far or was it?

MG: well no but Marquette County doesn't have Traverse City in, it's not in Marquette County

RM: No, no.

JA: He means in Greece

RM: I mean in Greece, in terms of what the size was like.

MG: Oh yes, yes, yes.

RM: All of these villages were relatively close but you were walking so...

JA: They didn't have highways like we do now.

MG: Oh no

JA: Very mountainous

MG: Yeah. My grandfather, well there's a story, that's not part of this though, but he, my mother's father was living in another village nearby and he was a very bright young man and an uncle of his did not have children so he went up to my grandfather's father and said, "We would like take *Panagiote*, Peter, because he's smart and I have all this property and money and I think he could take care of my *periousía*. What, wait a minute, what is that word in English?"

JA: Estate? Estate?

MG: Yeah

JA: Close

MG: And so at first they said no, no you're not, he didn't want to go, but then later he did, and he became mayor of, no big deal, but he became Mayor of Katavothra, and he was the mayor for years and years and years and people, all the big- my mother would say now you know, all the big____... because this is a little town, would come to the town, the priests, the bishops, the political people and they would come to my mother's home and they would sleep there and they would eat there and they'd have parties for them and everything you know but that was that was a little different that's from my mother's side, you know.

RM: Now what was, you said Peter, what was his last name?

MG: Vlahakis

RM: Could you spell that?

MG: V l a h a k i s, Vlahakis.

RM: And he never came here?

MG: No, no, my mother and her sis- two sis- there were actually four sisters at one time but they didn't all stay, my other aunt went back after the depression and she, they lived in a Salisbury in Maryland. And they planned to live there, to go back and live. Well then when the war broke out, the Nazi's came over to that village and they built an airfield, that was a big deal and then they took my aunt's home because it was it was a newer home, a big home and they took their home and they put all their furniture in one room and piled it to the ceiling and locked the door so that when they returned their furniture would be there, and so that's what happened, but that airfield, I see the remains of it now, you know, it's right on the outskirts of Katavothra. There were a lot of Germans and since that time, the German people that had come, soldiers that had gone there, loved it there, down in that area and Monovassia, that means one- did you go to Monovassia?

JA: No but I've seen the pictures, it's beautiful.

MG: It's beautiful, well that's right near my mother's village, and there's one, I mean I have movies that Ted took and I mean it's gorgeous, and there is one way to get into that mountain and one way to get out, the same way. You know unless you go to climb to the top and then walk down or all because it's high up there and they one of vossia moro one way, and the doors are supposed to be the original doors that lock it. You know, you can not, you can purchase like a condo in there, but you cannot change anything on the outside. You will have, the inside you can do what you want, but the outside has to stay like it was in ancient times.

JA: Wasn't Kalliope somewhere in that area?

MG: Kalliope was from Malove (Milos?), uh, Malove I think, yeah, that's just next door, but on the other way

RM: Now what did the, what did the people before they came over here what did the immigrants do in Greece? In general, you know like you were talking about-

MG: Well they had land, from their families, or they didn't have anything and they were dirt poor, you know, you know what your dad did?

JA: Um, I know more about my mother's side, they were merchant seamen. The Menexis family.

RM: Could you spell that?

JA: M e n e x i s Menexis, they lived in Kiparissi right on the ocean

MG: Oh yeah

JA: And they did a lot of trading of you know food items, but then in later generations they went to work on the big ships that went all over the world.

RM: Oh okay

MG: Yeah, but they were right on the water.

JA: My Dad's area was born agricultural but he came over when he was sixteen, so I don't know much.

MG: My dad came at fifteen or something like that.

JA: My dad came to Marquette in 1916, but he had spent a year or longer in Milwaukee before he came up here.

MG: A lot of people from Messinia were in Milwaukee, like the Lempesis, they went to Milwaukee because they had a relative there, you know how that goes,

JA: And there were jobs, like my dad worked in a tannery for a while, he didn't like it, I think that's why he learned how to cook.

MG: Yeah?

RM: So a lot of them came, had a stopping off point, could be Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit, and then ended up in poor jobs they were not particularly happy with, working in tanneries.

MG: No, no, I often asked the Gekas boys, "How did your parents get up here? To Houghton, Hancock, Lake Linden?" they said they heard about uh, out east they were in Vermont, Rutland Vermont, and up, my father in law was up there too, they heard about the mines, now they didn't come to work in the mines, but they came to open a business. And you could open a business, on a nickel and dime, back in those days, it wasn't a big deal, try it now, you need half a million, a million, two million, just to get the doors open.

JA: Well in my dad's case before he opened an actual restaurant business, he had a popcorn wagon, a horse drawn wagon.

MG: Oh! In Munising or here?

JA: [Inaudible]_____. Here in Marquette, here's the license for it in 1920.

MG: Oh my gosh.

JA: He sold popcorn, peanuts and hotdogs...

MG: Yes

JA: All through, mostly south Marquette in the beginning, but then all through the area

RM: Oh my. You don't have a picture of it?

JA: No, I wish I did, I wish I did.

RM: Oh my

MG: That's something!

JA: So he made money from that that he saved, then he went and got a building and a restaurant

RM: And then he owned, just for the record, here, he owned what then?ⁱⁱ

JA: Well

MG: In Munising- ⁱⁱⁱ

JA: The longest time was later in life and it was a very small place, the Hillside pasty shop

RM: Hillside

MG: They made good pasties.

JA: And that later became Jim's Lunch; but see that was from 1941 to 63 basically.

RM: But then he's also up here at the Busy Bee Café...

JA: Well this is true, but there's a little confusion according to the city directory, the city directory, in 1919 and 20 says James Argeropoulos 101 West Baraga Ave. Restaurant.

MG: Yeah

JA: When he was interviewed for the Marquette centennial,

MG: Your dad?

JA: My dad, well probably lots of people but I have this article, Jim Tretheway, remember Jim?

MG: Yeah

JA: According to this article, he came here from Milwaukee in 1916, for three years operated a popcorn wagon on the city streets, seeking a more stationary line, he opened the Busy Bee lunchroom on the corner of Baraga Avenue and front street one year after World War One ended. That's what's in here. This he operated until 1925 when he moved diagonally across the street to manage the Central Café in 1926. The Lempesis family bought it.

MG: They bought it.

JA: They bought it.

MG: But the grandfather came from, was there first, and then the two brothers...

JA: Here Mary, when you talked about people going back to Greece, as a young child, and I don't have this, I don't recall it as well as I would like, apparently my father had two brothers in-

MG: In Greece?

JA: In business with him, no

MG: Oh oh yeah

JA: George

MG: George

JA: and Nick and Peter, Panos

MG: Where was he?

JA: Well this is what I'm still trying to piece together, in any case they got word from Greece that their father was gravely ill and was going to die soon,

MG: Yeah

JA: So they wanted to go back to see him before he died, and there was a big discussion amongst the brothers, sell everything and don't come back, and my dad said, no, I want to come back, I don't want to sell everything, but apparently he was outvoted, so they went back, my grandfather of course passed on Panos, which was, translates more to Peter I guess

MG: Yeah *Panagioti*.

JA: Yeah, stayed in Greece, George and my dad came back and then they had Nick, who was a half brother because my grandmother passed away and then my grandfather remarried. And then she had Nick as a later child, anyways they all came back here, to Munising at that point. They had a place in Munising, again the Busy Bee first and then later it was called the Northland Café

MG: Oh it was called the Busy Bee in Munising?

JA: At first, according to every thing I've found.

MG: Okay

JA: In this little article there, it talks about it. So ok, so the Northland ran into hard times and disbanded, Nick came to Marquette and started the Tip-Top, My bro- my uncle George, went, moved to Detroit, got a job in the auto industry and stayed down there, and then my dad had some odd jobs for a while, and then in 1941 is when he started the Hillside Pasty Shop.

MG: And he stayed there till he retired

JA: 63, but he had these other places, including some in the copper country, he had a pool hall up there in Hancock, and I think the restaurant, also Busy Bee restaurant up there.

MG: Yeah, copper country uh huh. My father also and Uncle Jim had that, on Washington street, they had the restaurant, the Nightingale, the Candyland and for a while they opened up a billiard parlor and they brought somebody else to run it and it was in there like where the Washington shoe store is.

JA: No kidding

MG: Yeah

JA: Well the one that-

MG: That the Apostles on front street

JA: That stayed right? Right down on Front Street

MG: Oh yeah, that stayed,

JA: Where the viaduct went over to the loading docks

MG: Yeah, they were two old bachelors, two crabby old Greeks.

RM: Running the candy shop?

JA: No

MG: No

JA: The pool hall

MG: The billiard parlor

JA: The billiards

RM: Because the candy shop you'd want to be happy in.

MG: Yeah, that's right

JA; Same last name, but two different places

MG: Yeah they're distant cousins. My father would say, a different- what was it that he'd say, a different unit when he'd separate the cousins. Oh god this is...

RM: So all of these so as you have on the list here all, or most of the Greeks that came to Marquette and other places became involved in some kind of a restaurant business, or

MG: Candy business

RM: Candy business. And you're saying...

JA: Well,

RM: No, go ahead

JA: The Clifton hotel was Harry Petros who was my god father but he also had a restaurant on Washington Street called the Marquette café.

MG: And that's where he was most of the time

JA: Yeah, so some of them had bars, like the Green Mill was-

MG: And it's still there

JA: It became Pompos bar and now it's the uh

MG: What is it called now?

JA: Right next to the mining journal.

RM: Yeah, Portside

MG: Oh, the Portside

JA: It's Portside now, it used to be Pompos, and before Pompos it used to be the Green Mill since about the late 20s and through the 30s and 40s. Peter Grivas ran that

RM: Now what did they do, we have a problem here though, during prohibition, overall

JA: They were lunch counters,

RM: And then they went, so were they bar owners, or did they become bar owners after prohibition?

JA: After

MG: After

JA: After prohibition

RM: Because probably, by that, when prohibition when into affect, they weren't wealthy enough to open a bar, but then after they did. Okay, so they were all operate, now, where did they kind of as a group, where did they learn to cook, to-

MG: I don't know

RM: How did they focus on cooking and then you said some of them were making candy,

MG: Oh yeah, they were candy makers.

RM: That's all that was er technical skills that you have to-

MG: I don't know but they made fabulous candy. And they had these big copper kettles down in the basements, you know where the candy was made, and then my dad had the big hook where they throw the toffee and stretch it you know. They made the most wonderful English toffee. Oh god, it was, those were good days though. I mean I remember them even as a little girl. Until the fire just wiped us out.

JA: See but Russell had a good question, my guess might be that as young people not having any formal education, any technical training, that they started out as helpers and like an apprentice and they did the odd jobs, the "gopher work", and gradually learned the inside

RM: They'd watch the cook and the people working?

MG: Yeah

JA: That would be my guess

MG: Most of them cooked

RM: The interesting thing is, I'm originally from San Francisco and out in San Francisco you have the same thing. You had Greek candy owners and restaurant owners and what-not and I can't think of the name now, but there was kind of a like a well known candy shop in our neighborhood which was like a town within San Francisco, but even there, there was a Greek candy owner

MG: Oh yeah

RM: Interesting

MG: We have,

RM: So then just to repeat though, Mary what you were saying, that it was relatively easy to get into business.

MG: Oh yeah, they didn't have anything, fancy all the time you know to get started but they you know when you hear the word a ma and pa business they could get started without a lot of money like it takes now.

RM: Now, one of the restaurants there in the copper country and Lake Linden- Lindel

MG: Lindel that's the Gekas

JA: Gekas, G e k a s

RM: Okay, first name?

MG: Char- now wait a minute was that Charlie? I can find out though

JA: Well they had a daughter, that I was _____[Inaudible through laughter]

MG: She went to the Peace Corps.

JA: Yeah, she went to Africa.

MG: And she came- married an African...

JA: Army man a military person

MG: Military officer. And he came to church, the boy came with his "gra- ya-ya^{iv}," you know and he said, "Hello, my name is Demetrious"

JA: That was Peggy, Peggy Gekas

MG: Peggy

JA: But I don't remember her father's name. it's a-

MG: John

JA: John?

MG: John was his name.

RM: So then in the copper county then you have the same situation you have the different towns up there, Calumet, Lake Linden, Hancock, Houghton, all the towns there would be a Greek restaurant, candy shop, at least one in those places

MG: Yeah, in Houghton, Hancock the Gekas's had the Cloverland in Houghton they had the Hillside, the other Gekas' they were all cousins. And then that group became ill and they went to Arizona to live and they just left.

JA: One or more of the boys graduated from Tech and one from Northern I think, the Gekas boys

MG: Oh John, uh I mean Tommy graduated from Northern and he just died this past year and Ernie went to what is that Finnish Finlandia? But it wasn't finlan-

RM: Suomi College.

MG: Suomi, and Saco, Socrates we call him Saco so Socrates Kediakos Gekas

RM: Could you spell those?

MG: Socrates, S o c

JA: It's like Socrates,

MG: Yeah, it's pronounced So-krat-ie

RM: Oh okay

MG: Socrates, and Socrates, his middle name is Charles, his father's name was Charles and then he graduated from Tech, I think he was an electrical engineer.

RM: So then in terms of progression then, most of the offspring of the Greek candy owners and restaurant owners then went on to college and many of them did and then went into some midlevel profession?

MG: Or went into something else

RM: But they didn't go into as you said earlier, they didn't go into the restaurant business

MG: no, but, well I could-

JA: For a time some did, like Sam and Ted worked for a while

MG: Well they worked at, see my other cousin in- Apostles that went to Mississippi, I couldn't believe it and he ended up building Ramada Inn and had restaurants

JA: Tell more about that that's what, her brother Sam

MG: Oh my brother Sammy

JA: Became vice president of the Ramada Inn didn't he?

MG: He became president of Ramada Inns world-nation- world wide, because he went around the world on a trip and he visited all of them you know and I have some wonderful movies of his speeches, and oh gosh he was...

RM: Now his name was?

MG: Sam, Sam

JA: Sam Apostle

MG: Sam Apostle

RM: And got his start here in Marquette?

MG: Oh yeah,

JA: Tell about Jim Marks because that's another

MG: Oh Jim Marks

JA: Multimillionaire started in Marquette

MG: He was, growing up they were like on, according to what Thea, his sister said, they were on the dole, what do you call that word?

JA and RM: Welfare?

MG: Welfare, because his mother was the Stavroula from the Busy Bee. See. Well he went to the Navy, he became an officer in the Navy.

JA: Probably first yeah, wasn't he a pilot?

MG: I think so

JA: Yeah, he went to aviation school in pe- Pensacola

MG: Yes, and he bought the Teen's property which he later enlarged and had a beautiful restaurant there and then he became, he bought the franchises for Kentucky Fried Chicken for most of the southern states.

JA: He got the very first ones yeah.

MG: And I mean he was raking it in

JA: Was he not also a forestry major at the University of Michigan?

MG: He was something there

JA: And the story I heard was that Gerald Ford was his room mate. At least for a time

MG: Oh I don't know that

JA: The woman that lived to be about a 100 years old in Pensacola that just died?

MG: Oh yeah, Thea, Thea Vasielo

JA: Thea Vacielo, she told me when I was down there a story about Jim Marks fishing up on

MG: He loved Marquette, he liked the big bay

JA: I know, this is what I was going to say, he was in fishing on the Granite Loma property...

MG: Yeah he was going to buy it.

JA: And Mr. Kauffman came _____ resort before he had the money. Mr. Kauffman came in and saw this young man carrying a gunny sack and he rolled the window down, this is Thea Vasielo's story,

MG: Okay

JA: He said, young man he said can I help you and then he got embarrassed because he knew he was trespassing, he said well I kinda got lost he said I'm not sure where I'm going, and Mr. Kauffman probably knew what was in the gunny sack he said uh- any how he was a very handsome apparently outgoing young man and he got into a conversation and one thing led to another, according to Thea Vasielo he said uh, I want you he said to accompany my daughter to the opening of the Kauffman auditorium, supposedly, this is what she said, and then and Tim Marks said well I'm sorry, there's no way I could do that I come from a very poor family, I don't have any kind of clothes even to go to a function

like that. Mr. Kauffman took out a card and wrote a note on it, he says, take this down to Getz's department store,

MG: Isn't that nice

JA: And apparently they went to the opening of the Kauffman auditorium.

MG: Yeah, oh, I believe it well he was, he would not sit back for anybody, Jim Marks

JA: Well it-

MG: He built that home, like Michigan...

JA: Kauffman apparently gave him some advice you know again Kaf-

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A

START OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

MG: Dr. Bennent, and he always came up and they hunted and

JA: As we says he, did a lot of fishing when he lived up here and then later in Alabama he named the place Buckroe, after the Buckroe that's up here. You know on the big bay road,

MG: Oh yeah yeah

JA: there's a Buckroe, well he had a place in Alabama near Pensicola, he named it Buckroe after this place. That's in this article, well you can look at that and I don't want to interfere with your interview, oh but you'll remember

RM: Let's see and then we talked about Jimmy Marks, how do you spell that?

JA: M a r k s

FV: what was the Greek spelling of that?

JA: You say Markopolus

FV: m a r c o o r k o?

JA: K, k I think

MG: Yeah

JA: Markopolus

MG: But, I'm trying to think. Nick, his brother, his half brother was either was the Marks and he took that name but the second husband of his mother was, what did we say? Kosmas?

JA: Kosmas, yeah.

MG: Yeah

JA: That's what's in the city directory here for the Busy Bee

MG: Yes

JA: Kosmas

MG: Yes, she's buried here

RM: So John, you've done a lot of background work here, on your family and all the other families

JA: Well yeah because at the time I grew up there were a lot of children

MG: Oh yes,

JA: So it was easy to keep in touch, you wouldn't know some of these names, but that Stan Albeck was the best basket ball coach we've ever had here

MG: Yeah

JA: Some of the players from that particular year, Nick used to throw a big celebration dinner at the end of the foot ball season and the end of the basket ball season

MG: Yeah

JA: Bring all the players in.

MG: He was involved with that

JA: Yeah, you see that picture? That's little john there

MG: Oh yeah, how is Johnny doing?

JA: He's doing good, he's in Menominee

MG: Yeah

JA: Retired now

RM: Yeah, I sorta lost contact with him after Rose passed away

JA: This is neither here nor there, I had my cousin John Arger an also Mary's son George in my seventh grade science class

RM: Oh, oh my

MG: Did you really?

JA: Yeah, I did, you ask George next time you see him if he learned his meteorology-

MG: I will

JA: Meteorology from my science class

MG: I will I will remember that

FV: Probably different classes

JA: Oh I'm sure, I'm just saying that for fun

RM: No the, with the, we'll get back on track here, did the Greeks have any special celebrations that they would get together and what was those, or maybe put them in some

MG: Yes, well in our church

RM: Well I would like to, should we talk about the building of the church and then get back to

JA: Well they're related, I think they're related

MG: Yeah

JA: Because the holidays in Greece are named after

MG: Name days

JA: Saints

RM: Yeah, ok let's go with that and then we'll get into, I want to talk about the church

MG: It's very important, a name day of a saint of instance John's was the other day, on January seventh was Saint John's Day. *Ioannis* and uh

JA: Which happens to be her birthday.

MG: Yeah

RM: And that's Saint John the Baptist?

MG: Don't think I

JA: Well who else would it be?

MG: Yeah, there's John

RM: The Evangelist

MG: Yeah because then there's the Saint John that was in the, I went to his cave in Greece, you know that cave where he

RM: Ok yeah, you get a lot of yeah

MG: Oh god that, I mean I have it stored in here, but I'm getting old now and it's starting to crumble

JA: But he asked what holidays did the Greek community celebrate and they were mostly

MG: Name days

[talking over each other]

JA: Name days from the various saints, and of course Easter Sunday

MG: Oh Easter

RM: How did they celebrate the name days? Was there something special that was done? Cake or something?

MG: Oh yes

JA: It would be a family get together, it was family and friends

MG: And the community were all invited if the people wanted to have a group, and usually I remember my mother would have a leg of lamb and different, the potatoes and all that with it and I always remembered when you, now *hereis settin ere tesu* you know when you say that, how do you say, anyway my mother would serve these little whiskey glasses or uh and you pass it around you know she'd fill up a tray and then they would take the glass

JA: Little shot

MG: Little shot, mmmm

RM: And it was a shot of?

MG: Well I don't know, I didn't know what it was, but it was some kind of whiskey

RM: Whiskey or-

FV: No

JA: Metaxis was

MG: Metaxis

JA: Metaxis was always one of the highlights, but it was a very expensive one

MG: very, yeah

JA: Ouzo was the (something)

MG: Ouzo yeah,

JA: And wine, different kinds of wine, but yeah name days were a bigger deal than a birthday

MG: Oh yeah, your birthday didn't mean that much.

JA: Birthday was part of your records for saving, social security, school records, but it was name day that counted

MG: Oh Costadino and Elaine is a big one, Constantine and Helen, Saint's Constantine and Helen

FV: Did everybody have a name day?

MG: No

JA: Only special people

MG: Most I mean if you really dig far enough, I guess, as ruby kept saying, "I don't have one" well one of my cousins says "I think you do" and he was hunting for one so she wouldn't feel bad

JA: Well and one reason so many had name days is because there was a custom of naming the first male child after their grandparents

MG: Yes

JA: So

MG: You were named after your grandfather,

JA: Yeah and even my art first son James, I did the same thing, I named my first born son after my dad

MG: Yeah that's what George-

JA: Anyway a lot of them were name days, and you kept perpetuating the name days because

RM: Oh so then you'd have a big celebration because there would be several people there with the same name

MG: Oh, yes yes

RM: Within your family, and you could have others as well. Okay so that would be another way that these communities the Greek communities stayed together

MG: Yes

RM: Would be on something like that that would bring a lot of Johns together on that date.

MG: _____ was a big day, March 25th, it was also the freedom day from the Turks. But it was like _____ that's the vivlio, the bible. And the _____ had her name day that day you know, but everybody had, not everybody, but you know

JA: It was very common.

MG: Yeah

RM: Now what was, you said March 25th what was that _____.

MG: It was

RM: The importance of the day?

MG: It was the first, it was the when the Greeks were freed from the Turks

RM: That's in the 1830s

MG: Yeah

JA: The Ottoman Empire

MG: Yeah, the Ottomans

RM: So Independence Day

MG: Yeah, Independence Day

RM: Okay

MG: And I remember, I had to wear, I was a little girl then and I had to wear the blossika you know the regular costume of the old time Greeks and then we had a, we learned poems, Greek poems and we had to get up and recite the poetry and then we'd sing the Greek national anthem that's right, I remember all those things

JA: And then Mary there were these kind of get-togethers,

MG: Oh yes

JA: Greek organizations there was the Ahepa

MG: Yeah Ahepa was

RM: We saw that in the church hall

MG: Yeah

RM: Oh, okay

MG: the Ahepa chapter 294, Kawbawgam chapter 294

FV: Kawbawgam? [laughter]

JA: Good Greek name right? [laughter]

MG: Oh yeah

RM: And that was taken?

MG: At a party afterwards

JA: Well we're both in here as well

MG: Yeah, your mother's there

JA: Yeah, my mother's here, sure, Kon Lempesis, Nick Chapekis, Steve Petros,

MG: They're all gone

JA: All the business owners

RM: So everybody that's on that list practically is in the picture.

MG: Well these are the children too a lot of them

JA: Yeah, I'd say most of them

RM: What did this organization then and that's the spelling is A h e p a- Ahepa

MG: Yeah

RM: Ahepa? Hepa?

MG: Ahepa: American, Hellene-Hellenic

JA: It's a Hellenic organization

MG: It's a Hellenic organization, yeah. You know the Greeks are still, complain in Greece about using the word Greece, I think that they said where did that come from? We're Helenes _____. We're Hellenes, we're Hellenic, but I don't know who

RM: Grecia,

MG: What did?

RM: Means Greece in latin, Grecia

MG: Oh is it?

RM: And then that

MG: Oh ok and it came out Greece

JA: But Mary's right, if you study any of the maps or the literature they still talk about Hellenes with a soft h or a silent h

MG: Yes, you see that

RM: And that was about what year then?

JA: Well

MG: Oh the 30s

JA: No, it'd be either late 30s, early 40s, because I didn't come to Marquette till I was six years old. And I'm in that picture.

FV: Would you come over from Munising to go to this?

JA: I suppose it's possible, but we didn't have a car

MG: Where's Nick Marks?

JA: Which one? Okay

MG: Is Stella here? His wife

JA: You would know those people better than me

MG: Alright, there's pau- this is John Apostle, George Karabetsos,

RM: What we could do with the picture, if you could make a xerox, then we can put numbers on all the heads of the people on the xerox of it, then we can list them, go down and list all of them

JA: I would need Mary's help I don't know all the names of them

(talking over each other)

RM: No, it's be an open, you know, it would be the picture and then it'd be an open column and then as you, you know if you know them, if you don't know them you just leave it empty, but you'll probably end up naming most of them on here.

JA: I know all the young people for sure

MG: There's Mr. Cole

JA: I'm sorry, Mr. who?

MG: Colitis, Cole

FV: Cormedies?

MG: Huh?

JA: Oh okay

FV: I would have said, *Cormedies*

MG: *Cormedies*, yeah Kenny you know what a *Cormedie* is, is an onion

JA: Onion

MG: So we'd laugh and we'd call her Mrs. Onions

JA: This is Baba Youri right?'

MG: Baba Youri, Bertha's father

JA: Did one of the owners of the Bon Ton café had diabetes and went blind. And he lived upstairs of the restaurant he had to go up this really steep staircase where they lived above it. And we would go to visit once in a while, my mom or dad would take me and he would always say, "*Yianni, Yianni, elela*" then say "Johnny come over here," then he'd put his hand out, he wanted to know how tall I was getting.

MG: He was blind

JA: But he's in here.

MG: Yeah?

JA: Somehow they got him in here.

MG: He might have been ba- too bad then

JA: This is probably the odd fellow's hall don't you think?

MG: It is

JA: You know where that is?

MG: But it's not there no

JA: Ringside fitness is up there now

MG: No

JA: Over on Bluff Street

MG: No,

JA: Yeah, wasn't it?

MG: Well wait a minute, it used to be, that one was down on South Front Street.

JA: Well that's why I wanted you here, because

MG: That one was on south front and we had Greek school there. You know I went to school regular school

RM: Okay wait a minute now, we'll get to that, that's another important one. So you, so this a very, this was the one and only Greek organization in

MG: Ahepa

JA: At least in our town

RM: Yeah here, and it involved most of the people, most of the Greek population

MG: Yeah

RM: And just kind of for the record this picture is probably the most impressive one in terms of the large number of people in the organization

MG: Yeah

RM: And this is probably not everyone

MG: Oh no, there's some missing

JA: Some were at work

MG: Yeah

JA: Like my dad was working, he's not in there

RM: He's not in there, okay then lets see, now wait a minute, we were going through, the, but we got off on the clubs and that was the major club

JA: You asked, get-togethers, the celebrations, special times

RM: And the celebrations around that

JA: And then

RM: The other big celebration was Easter?

JA: Well,

MG: Easter

JA: That was the biggest part of the church

MG: And *Panagias*, August 15th

RM: Okay, well wait, let's go back to Easter, how was that celebrated?

MG: Well

RM: What would be a typical way to celebrate it?

MG: Well we didn't always have a priest you know, or a church and as you recall

RM: So what did you do, lets talk about what you did before the church was built a-

MG: Well sometimes we just had our own private dinner and

JA: Well what I remember growing up in terms of church there was a priest from the Sault named papa Lucas, he would come one Sunday a month, at the most, only four or five times a year I would say

MG: Yeah

JA: Alright so when he was here we had a rented building that he'd hold services at

MG: Yeah

JA: When he wasn't here; which was most of the time

MG: Most of the time

JA: The majority of us went to Saint Paul's Episcopal Church

MG: Mhmm

JA: And I have

MG: I did

JA: Richardson, John Richardson, no was it John?

MG: No the

JA: The other one the older brother, he wrote a story about the history of Saint Paul's Episcopal Church and there's a paragraph in there about the Greeks attending that service.

MG: Yeah, we all

JA: I thought I brought it down, but it's upstairs, so the-

MG: But we also had Greek school, so after I got through with the with school we would go down to this building down on south front, which is no longer there,

FV: Where was it located?

MG: Upstairs

FV: But on which block on south front?

MG: Right at the very end

JA: Near the Bon Ton area?

MG: Yeah right in there, before you arrived

JA: There's Doc's Corner and then the Red Owl

MG: The Red Owl

JA: And Campbell's used furniture store

MG: Yeah

RM: Which is now where? Where social security is? That's that block?

JA: Yeah

MG: Yeah, that's it that block we had a lady from Kalamata- well from Nice, I think, from where your dad is from, and she was a teacher I think in Greece and she I think she's in here, she was our teacher you know it was good that's how we learned to write and read and write, I've gotten away from it now

JA: By the time I was of that age, that had started to dwindle, I remember going a few times and that was it. It was

MG: But it was, it was very good, she was

[talking over each other]

MG: Mrs. Caravice

JA: Even though we didn't have formal schooling on a regular basis, we grew up with Greek as our first language

MG: Oh yeah

JA: I can remember going to first grade, coming home and saying to my mother, "I don't understand what they're talking about"

MG: No, I hardly spoke either, in kindergarten but you know we was George

JA: You pick it up quickly

MG: With my son George, we wanted him to learn Greek and so we said, the best thing to do is not speak English to him which was not so good, because he learned, he was playing on Arch Street there with those kids the Redmans and

JA: Oh yeah,

MG: Yeah and he came home crying one day and he said, "Mom you made me wrong." He said it in Greek "They don't know what I'm saying" but anyway now he loves Greek, George loves Greece and he had, we have fun when we go, and my son and all of us went together, had a good time

JA: Knowing Greek before I knew English helped me so much in school,

MG: Oh sure

JA: I gravitated towards the sciences and became a chemistry major, undergrad, and of course in high school I had four years of Latin I rarely had to study, between the Greek language and the four years of high school Latin

MG: well you were naturally a good student.

JA: I could just look at the terms and know what they meant. All the nomenclature

RM: Yeah, yeah, so when you talk about this Greek school just again for the record, it was important because, I mean it was such an important part of the growing up because of the immigrants wanted the kids to learn the Greek language and culture and so on

MG: And we learned to write beautifully in prose, I mean I used to I could write letters to Greece and everything

JA: See I never got that far

MG: Yeah, but I've gotten away from it now you know, but it was, there were good times there too

JA: When I went to Greece, Mary and I went to Greece and we went to visit the villages where our parents were from, every once in a while they would laugh, and I'd say "What's so funny?" and they'd say, "You speak Greek beautifully, except you use certain phrases that we haven't heard since we were little kids."

MG: I know it, that's right, because they

JA: "I haven't heard that for thirty years" they'd say

MG: No, they'd laugh at Ruby, because Ruby gets her words mixed up and she'd say some things that were hilarious, not wanting to but she did.

JA: Well I think the ones that they told me about were more like colloquialisms

MG: Yeah they were

JA: Things that had become out dated, but it was still in their memory bank, they would chuckle when they'd hear it

RM: Now how did they, getting back to celebrating how would they then celebrate Easter? You know were there special foods that, that

JA: Well you mentioned

MG: Roast lamb

RM: The roast lamb

MG: And what, my father would get a farmer or they'd go out to the farm and get lamb you know, fresh lamb, or baby lamb and sometimes, well once, my father in Greece, when he was a young kid, slaughtered a little lamb, a baby lamb. So what did he do, he got a lamb and he brought it home there on Arch Street, son of a gun put the lamb in the basement. Ruby was crying all the time because she thought it was a pet and then they were gonna, she didn't want to eat it. But my father did his duty and killed it or whatever they call it and we ate it and it was, and then later, Sam Roumanis and my dad would go out to the farm and they'd get a goat or a lamb and they'd split one

JA: Yeah

MG: You know

JA: Peter Pallas and my dad did some of that too, but back to the other foods they made a lot of special pastries, Greek pastries,

MG: Oh yeah

JA: The same kind you buy now at the holiday sales at the church, all of those items would be there and they would make these big round breads with a bright red

MG: Egg

JA: A hard cooked egg dyed red would be in the middle

MG: Always

JA: Always, and then they would you have a custom where they would have contests, everybody would get a hard cooked egg, a colored egg and see who could break, who's egg would stand up the longest go around where you tap the two ends together,

MG: Yeah at the table you could do that

JA: You know the one round side against the other person's round side, the sharp side their sharp side

MG: And you say "*Christos aneste*," Christ is risen. That's what you have to say when you

RM: When the egg is hit

JA: Yes

MG: Yes

JA: That's good I'm glad you pointed that out

MG: *Christos Aneste*

JA: Then I don't know how common this was but my god-mother Mrs. Petros, she would always get a silver dollar

MG: Oh yes

JA: And wrap it in

MG: But that was new years

JA: In newspaper and that would be mixed in with the dough so you didn't know who, when you sliced the bread, you didn't know who was going to get the silver dollar

MG: I've got one now, that my mom made, the last one that she made before she died and I got it that year

JA: That's wonderful

MG: So that was good luck

RM: Now and

JA: And there was lots of dancing

MG: Oh yeah Greek dancing, you

JA: With the – [talked over]

MG: Don't need a partner, you don't need a partner

RM: Now what did they do for musicians?

MG: Records

JA: Records it was all records, old 78s

MG: Yeah and then those great big ones that we used to get from Chicago

JA: Well when were those? They [Mary coughed over his talking] Once the church was built, down in the basement they'd have celebrations and they would end up with

MG: We always had dancing

JA: Dancing

RM: So this was done though, be- So the community was kind of on it's own without the church and hall and Greece then for, until...

JA: 1950 or so

MG: 19, yeah

RM: For quite a while

MG: Oh yeah

JA: 1950

RM: And sort of er.. almost 50 years then

MG: Oh yeah

RM: So in the, so when the immigrants were active and soon they didn't have a church

MG: No

RM: Anything else that was done at Easter time? Celebrations?

JA: Well the service

MG: Well we had service every single night all week

JA: Every day of the week and they were long services where you sit up for long periods of time

MG: The twelve gospel days (something in Greek) on Thursday night 12 gospels, then of course Good Friday and they take the *Epitaphio*, what is that in English?

RM: Shroud?

MG: Well yeah but shroud is in the

JA: Big icons

MG: Yeah and they carry it outside they take it down the steps of the church and they walk around the church with it and you know when I lived in Phoenix the church was huge it's a cathedral, it took almost two hours to get everything walking around that but you know, that was basically what we did

RM: What was the other you said August 15th

MG: The Assumption of the Virgin Mary

JA: Virgin Mary

RM: And that was just general or because the church was named

MG: No, that was always a big

RM: An important holiday

MG: Yes, yeah and then the church was named that

RM: And then did they do anything special for that? With a picnics or food

MG: Well yeah we used to have picnics in the old days too when I was really little though, he wasn't even born

RM: Were they going on when you were growing up?

JA: Some

MG: Oh yeah, we had some

FV: And where did you have the picnics?

MG: Oh some at the island and then there was someplace they used to call that *Nouno*^{vi} had out on the highway

JA: Yeah

MG: And they called it the Casino because they played poker there

JA: It was somewhere out beyond Scandia wasn't it

RM: Oh

MG: And they partied

JA: On the east side

MG: But even when we got together in the homes for the name day, we had dancing in the home, it wasn't just in a hall

RM: Uh huh

JA: Particularly the Chapekis family, they were so good at dancing

MG: Ted and Bessy, Bessy was a wonderful dan- and her mother was a good dancer. Very good

RM: So in the, with- and oh lets see and then there was Christmas

MG: Oh we celebrated, yeah

JA: But I didn't think of it as a big a deal as Easter

MG: No, it was celebrated, but not like Easter

RM: And which when you were growing up, which calendar were they using?

MG: The new- the oneo- not the old one.

RM: Not the old one

MG: Now the Serbs I think still use it

RM: Yeah, yeah

MG: Is your wife Serbian?

RM: Serbian yep

MG: Does she go according to that calendar?

RM: Yeah, pretty much, we celebrated, Christmas with dinner at Elizabeth and it was the seventh of January

MG: That's my birthday

RM: Yeah

MG: And his name day

RM: Yeah, and the Serb's Christmas and then... or she will mention it not that we do anything, I guess we had a toast or something for new years which was just a few days ago.

MG: Yeah

JA: But the Greek Easter used to be different, almost, one year out of four

MG: Yeah but now this year and last year it was

RM: This year it's on the same day

MG: The same, very unusual

RM: It has to be after it has to come after Passover

MG: After Passover

JA: Yep

RM: And that be it then

MG: And many times the other have it before Passover but whatever

RM: This year I think Passover's on Tuesday and so then

MG: Of that week? Of Easter week?

RM: Yeah

MG: Ah, did your now, did your wife's parents come from Serbia?

RM: No, wait a minute, no, they were all born here and they were...I'm going to turn this off

Tape stops, tape continues

MG: My voice is hoarse, but it has been

RM: So we got done with the various activated during the year we talked about the organization, now what prompted the development, the physical development of the church? How did that, how did that proceeded or who were the people that you know,

MG: Well the first president of the church was Pete Grivas

JA: Is that right? I didn't know that.

MG: Yeah

JA: I can remember, I thought it was Mike Merkle, and his son

MG: Yeah he was involved and my God-Father Jim and

JA: Harry Petros?

MG: Not so much Harry

FV: What year was this?

MG: 50?

JA: 1950 I think.

MG: When I got married we didn't have a church I got married in the Episcopal Church, with our priest.

RM: The one from Sault Saint Marie?

Unidentified Female Voice: Mhmm wonderful cake Mary

JA: That priest was a good priest but as a little child I can remember him being rather stern

MG: Yeah

JA: We had those Greek classes, he would teach the Greek classes too

MG: Yeah he started

JA: You had to be very attentive you had to respond with the right answer

MG: Oh boy. Father Lucas

RM: So he would come over for a few days then and have the liturgy and then have the class.

MG: Mhmm

RM: So then this group of men then got the thing going, raised the, started the process to raise the money.

MG: Mhmm

RM: Now who were the various then did you after the church was built in 1950 church of the assumption did the priest come from Sault Sainte Marie or did you have a permanent...

MG: That was another

JA: Father Reneris I think was the first one

MG: Who was

JA: I liked him though

MG: Yeah but he was, he drank, was drunk

JA: Well when you have to finish the communion every Sunday, it sets you up for that

RM: What was his first name and then spell his last name

MG: Father what was his n-

JA: We'd have to look it up I think

MG: Yeah, I forgot him

JA: He came from Chicago I think

MG: Uh huh

JA: Father Reneris, he was very distinguished looking

MG: Very good looking man

JA: Oh big white hair and a big full white beard and he had a certain aura about him he just... wherever he went he commanded attention. Just because of his presence

MG: Oh yeah and then we had father, what was his name

JA: The one that came from Fond du Lac?

MG: Oh yeah, he married Ruby

JA: I don't remember his name, he was a very quiet guy, almost reclusive

MG: Now why are we forgetting his name?

JA: It will come, but probably because he was so quiet, so passive, the opposite of Reneris

MG: You know, Father Napoleon, Father Karampelas? God rest his soul

FV: He came in the late 60s?

JA: 63 I think

FV: Oh okay

MG: He loved it here

JA: Was I right? Am I right 63? He was here until 1995, he retired in 95

MG: Yeah and then he, his son took him to San Francisco and he was in a home there but..

RM: Now, what, Father Napoleon, what was his last name?

FV and JA: Karampelas

MG: He was the one we had the longest

RM: Now how do you spell that?

JA: K A R A M P is it P-E or P-A? L-A-S is the end

MG: Yeah, P E L A S

JA: P E L A S Karampelas

RM: I remember him you used to see, he would always be walking

MG: Walking all over

RM: In his black clerical suit

JA: He was rather portly

RM: But friendly, visited

MG: Friendly, oh

RM: Up and down third street there

MG: And you know what he would do, especially after Presvetera^{vii} died, after his wife died, he didn't know if it was night or day sometime he would call my mother at three o'clock in the morning four o'clock, he didn't know what time it was, and my mother would get furious with him but you could do that with father. *Páo gia ýpn*, "Go to sleep" she'd say. And then he would do things like, if he thought somebody was attending church that might have been a relative of somebody or was important or had a big job or something you know well my mother was her last, at the end of her life, my cousin John came from uh, came up to see her, and he was on staff at M.D. Anderson cancer clinic in Houston, he was chief of staff there and he was, he's been all over the world he's written books and he's brilliant, he really is but he's retired now and he's not well, but anyway he grew up in Petoskey they had very little they had maybe two Greek families and a few old bachelors, so John didn't really get involved in the Greek community you know, but his sister who was a twin sister, she was more active you know, she spoke Greek all the time and everything but John did when we were kids he spoke Greek but he got away from it and he went down to Ann Arbor, went to school there, became a doctor, well anyway my mother knew that, well, John was going to, I think he was married in the Methodist, no no not the Methodist, the Presbyterian church, that's where his wife went. And now this was really different, cause we went down to the wedding down in Carrol, Michigan and all of us laughed because, my uncle George his dad, didn't you know how Greek weddings are; they have food and all that stuff and there were some little mints on the table and some peanuts so my uncle came up to me and he says "Have a peanut Mary" and snickered. We weren't used to that we weren't used to that, but anyway, what did I want to tell you about him?

JA: Father Karampelas

MG: Yeah, Father Karampelas, my mother told him that *Ioni stophie*, John is coming, now he claims that he is going to come to church but don't he was very private and didn't like any fuss made over him at all and she said "Don't say anything when you see him in church, don't say anything." She said he will not appreciate it.

JA: That's like putting a red flag in front of the bull

MG: Oh so anyway John and I went to church, Ted had already died, John and I went to church and it was after the sermon he said "oh (some phrase in Greek)" you know we the famous doctor here. John's face started getting red, beat red and I thought he'll get up and walk out I was afraid that he would do that and so he said, and then he went on to talk about his parents and other good you know complimentary things so then he said Ioni come here. And he brought him up to the altar. Well then I thought, John will never do it, but he did, I mean he had not been in a Greek church for a long, because he just didn't go to church and he went up to the altar and Pater said some blessing on him hand on his head, you know how father was and then he handed him a bible, or was it either a bible or some other religious book and he had written in it "to Dr. Petackus" in the blo-

JA: Well

MG: Whatever. Then well John was still red faced but any way, he I think he appreciated it and so we left shortly after and John said "Always a nice service Mary" and if he didn't I would have kicked him. So then, that night, he would usually walk over from the church to my mother's house on Arch Street and you know he had those big feet, with those big shoes I'd help him and his smug would you know he had a cane, now he didn't call and say he was coming and my mother didn't want to really because he was at the house all the time anyway you know he just came and so she didn't want to push that invitation too much because she thought John might be uncomfortable, well he came (knocking sound) walked in the house, sat down started talking, started with John, and John paid attention to him and liked him and was very not that he was

JA: Surprised weren't you

MG: I was shocked, I was shocked, we were, well we had our coffee and you know but Father K was just in heaven because John paid attention to him. And then he

JA: Well he was well read

MG: What?

JA: Father Napoleon was very well read

MG: Oh absolutely

JA: He wrote letters to the editor not just to the local papers but to the big city papers, to the church hierarchy,

MG: And to the church in Greece but I said, "Father, you don't you didn't shouldn't have been a priest you should have been politician!" *Oh ne ne* you know, excuse me when I throw Greek words at you

FV: I interrupted you, did you cover the sequence of priests? Did you get all the priests in?

MG: No

RM: We got to Father Napoleon

JA: Well before, well I don't know if it was the very, after re-

MG: Very few

JA: We had Reneris and then I thought the next one was from Fond du Lac, the quiet reclusive fellow

MG: He lived at the Clifton

JA: Yeah, and then was there one more after that before we got to Karampelas? But I don't remember that name

MG: He went to Texas a little short guy

JA: The church must have records right?

MG: Oh yeah, I know I've got a mental block

JA: But I mean if Russell wanted to look at church records would he have access to some of that?

MG: I suppose

RM: They should have it they would keep the way you usually find who the priest is, is the baptismal record because he has to sign.

MG: Oh yeah

RM: Some sacramental record

MG: Oh yeah

RM: And so you'd find the first time he signed well there wouldn't be that many

MG: A baptism and a wedding

RM: You'd have his name for sure and then the other thing would be once you have the name then you could look in the city directory to see when they

MG: I probably could ask somebody and they'd know right away. I should know.

RM: Well you see that's why once we get the tape transcribed then you can see the gaps or a line, you know something missing and then well we have to get this name and the asking a few people, you know somebody will remember, it shouldn't be a problem, it's getting this, you know getting it down for the first time.

MG: Well

RM: Let's see, I'm trying to think, we hit all the main points that I usually talk about and ask

MG: We'll probably think of something John

RM: There's something I've missed, you know, like you had Greek school

MG: And then on those on the vonhilesmoo _____ [Greek word, guessed at spelling] what did we say it was in English? Uh, when the Greeks were freed

JA: Independence

RM: Yeah

MG: No no,

JA: No?

MG: In March, March 25th

JA: March

MG: We had to wear our costumes and sing and dance, it was fun, you know the kids liked it

RM: Or did you call them, declamations that you had to give?

MG: No cause I gave a declamation in school

JA: In high school?

MG: Yeah it was a, they called it *pemata*, *pe pois*, *punt* and he had to learn them in Greek and stand up in front of everyone in class you know and as a little kid or even I was maybe sixth, seventh grade yet.

RM: So then a lot of this the Greek language and a lot of these customs and so on then, two things happened the immigrants got old and passed away and then the younger people moved on so just a few people have stayed so then the population has declined

MG: It's declined

RM: And so you didn't have then or there was no demand or need for the Greek school or

MG: No

RM: And then the dancing that used to go on all that very ethnic activity

MG: Ethnic very ethnic

RM: Is gone

MG: Now we had for a short while Dr. Phesopholus

JA: Oh yeah, he just left right, a year, in the last year

MG: He left last year at Easter, he was with Dr. Welsh

RM: Oh yeah the gastroenterologist

MG: Yes, you met him though didn't you?

JA: Yeah oh he was a very nice fellow

MG: Very

JA: Very friendly

MG: Now his wife is so religious, I swear to you, I have never in all my life, well I mean I don't know that much about everything you know in the church but everybody felt that way she was so religious, she was fasting all the time.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

Interview with John Argeropoulos and Mary Graphos

START OF TAPE 2 SIDE A

RM: okay want to get back to talking a little bit about the food I guess. One of the problems with talking about the food to the Greeks, they were all involved in food, that was their business

MG: Mhmm

RM: But you were talking about even here in Marquette your mother making Greek coffee

MG: Oh yeah twice a day

RM: How was that made? You know

MG: You had this little copper vessel with a little handle on it and you put water in it and the amount of coffee that you know and they ask you in Greece when you order it they say, "Metseo" or you know, light, dark or very dark cause some people want it like mud. So anyway and then you start to bring it to a boil and when it starts to come up you move it away from the burner and let it kinda simmer down just for a minute and then you put it back you kinda go back and forth because you don't want a lo- they call it *timikie* that's those bubbles and you don't want to loose that because if you over boil it, it will just collapse. But my mother never had that happen, but every once in a while when I'd make it, it would. But that was a staple for her and then she'd have *coulouria* and she'd dip them and I said, now I don't dip them, I don't put stuff in my coffee

JA: Oh I used to love doing that, even the Greek style bread that grandmother would make, that was so good dipped in coffee.

MG: I know, most people love it, but I'm not a dipper.

JA: My Sister Joyce who doesn't drink coffee, when she had the Greek style homemade bread she would dip it in coffee.

MG: See?

JA: But other than that she wouldn't touch coffee.

MG: Well she's better off I guess

RM: Were there any now what was the, we might have had it on Sunday, the large, what they were commemorating someone who had passed away...

MG: Memorial

RM: Memorial

[talking over each other]

RM: Was that cake or bread? I think bread, was that the one you were talking about they would have at Easter with the red egg?

FV: No

JA: I don't think so

MG: Well then they call that *Vassilopika* the New Year's that's what they put the money in.

RM: Yeah, this had money.

MG: This one did, well see cause he had, we didn't have a service that's why and he came latter.
Have you met him? The new priest?

JA: Yes, yes, he's originally from Fort Myers, Florida he said

RM: Yeah

MG: Yeah I guess so

RM: Then is he now stationed at Church of the Assumption in St. Clair Shores?

MG: Mhmm

RM: No, okay, cause that's just down the, it's interesting it's just it's a big church just down the street from my sister-in-law's

MG: Oh

RM: As a matter of fact, I run, as a part of my four mile run's along the church property

MG: Now are you Catholic?

RM: Yeah

MG: You go to church every Sunday?

[hard to tell what is actually said here, some talking over each other]

MG: good

RM: Put up with the Bishop

MG: Well, that's the way it goes in churches

FV: Now there's something made with almonds and grains for the 40th day

RM: Yes we had that, that was served

MG: Wheat...

RM: What was in that then?

MG: Wheat and maybe almonds and raisins and then they put powdered sugar on it. Did they have that, a plate of that?

FV: They did for Mrs. Feckus

MG: No it was Mrs. Fekus's mother

FV: Oh yeah, her mother

MG: Mrs. Sitaris

RM: This on Sunday, the- seemed like there were rice in it? ^{viii}

MG: Ice?

RM: White rice

MG: Oh

RM: I was crunching something so I didn't know what was in there, so it I knew there were some nuts but then it was like it got pru- were there walnuts or almonds

MG: Or almonds

JA: It's usually almonds

MG: Almonds

RM: There seemed to be pistachio in there

MG: There could have been, they might, they probably brought it from Escanaba

JA: That's the other thing we didn't touch on. Part of the Greek community was beyond the city of Marquette there were several families in Munising, Escanaba, Negaunee and Ishpeming

MG: Mhmm

JA: Who would all come here.

RM: Oh okay so they would go out to about- 40 50 miles that would bring

JA: Well as far as Escanaba which is closer to 80

RM: But then you wouldn't get people from Manistique coming here

MG: Manistique used to belong to the Sault

RM: To the Sault okay

MG: But in later years we got them to come to Marquette

JA: Well Babledelis wasn't he the one that owned the Chalet restaurant?

MG: Mhmm

JA: He was originally from Manistique

MG: Oh yeah, Ted was Manistique

RM: Who then came and live up here

MG: he had his business here

RM: Yeah, okay and then what about the Greeks in Iron Mountain?

MG: They have a church there, it isn't a Greek orthodox but it's orthodox.

RM: Yeah, it's Antiochean, so Syrian

MG: Uh huh and then they had uh

RM: But that was all- no that was what the 19, I think that was established in the 1930s, the mid 1930s church there, that was made up of Greeks and Lebanese

MG: Lebanese

RM: Probably primarily Greeks and Lebanese

MG: Yes it was

RM: There was maybe a Russian or two and then there's Saint Simon's Antiochean Orthodox church

MG: Where's that at?

RM: Iron wood

MG: Oh, oh yes

RM: In Iron wood and then I think there's a newly opened orthodox church in Painsdale in southern Houghton County

MG: Oh

JA: That's interesting

MG: Well do you remember about Father Karampalas was still alive, but Ruby was president of the church for quite a few years and she got this call from a man who said that he was a Russian Orthodox priest and that he had been called, he had joined the Russian Church but he was called by the hierarchy of the church to come to north of Houghton some place, a little church a Catholic Church that was...

JA: Oh that's the Jam Pot people.

MG: Oh

RM: Yeah the Society of Saint John, it's a monastery and what they did was they started out as regular Catholic monks...

MG: Yes

RM: And then they decided to affiliate with the Ukrainian church which is in union with Rome but their all their ceremonies and what not are orthodox.

JA: Absolutely, I went to one of those

RM: Yeah and it's there's no-

JA: Stepping back in time it's just a magical experience

RM: Yeah and see they're not under the Bishop here in Marquette, they're Bishop is out of Pittsburg I think, someplace. So that's I don't know do you include that with the orthodox? It's eastern I guess eastern

MG: It's the Eastern Right

RM: Eastern Right yeah

JA: But I'll share a funny story that involved a Greek priest. When Mary and I were spending the winter in Arizona there's a monastery

MG: Oh yeah

JA: A very well to do place down there and we wanted to take a tour of the facilities the church and the other grounds that are there, any how we're in the parking lot and a Greek, I thought he was a Greek priest he was a Greek orthodox priest in full regalia

MG: Mhmm

JA: Steps out and so I wanted to have fun so I started talking in Greek to him and he looks at me and he said, "I don't understand a word you're saying"

MG: Oh,

JA: I says "Are you not a Greek orthodox priest?" "Yes" he says, "But I'm from Ireland!"

MG: Now that's funny

JA: It was funny to me, in fact I just couldn't stop laughing

MG: Well but this call that Ruby received, this man said "I would like to come down and meet your priest, your Father Karampalas and maybe have a service, but I can't have it on Sunday because I have to be here." Well Ruby said "Well I'll have to talk to the board" or whatever and they said, "Well tell him to come if he wants to come" well then they said, well the girls, we had a meeting and they said "Ruby and Mary you take this priest, because Ruby's already talked to him and she was the president so, take him to eat dinner." Well, oh this is such (inaudible whisper) we went to the church at a certain time to pick him up to take him to Helen's place the Shores and it was starting to blow hard and we were in the middle of big blizzard all of a sudden. Well but we went to the church to pick him up and now Father Karampalas I have to interject this. That bish- that priest from up there said that if you want to go to communion or if you-uh, not communion, uh confession. Go to your if you feel better about going to Father K now Father Karampalas was a little jealous when we saw that other priest!

JA: Really?

MG: Mhmm, sorta like somebody infringing on his territory, so I went next door and I said "Pater you've been a _____ [something in Greek]" you know so he says que que esa pistola (?) [more Greek] and I said "Oh I don't know, I haven't been to confession _____ [something said while laughing] and I said " I didn't do anything wrong. He said eh _____ [something in Greek] and he puts his hand onto my head and he said a prayer "ega tore" you go now.

JA: *Ega* is go

MG: You can go now. So I did and we, I said well it's time for us to pick up that other priest, he was in the church, the big giant of a man. Well I, Ruby and I came out in front of the church. This woman comes down the steps and she had on a coat that was made in some furry, like angora or I don't know, it was probably from a goat, because they were living and she was French and then they lived in Texas and they had goats and she had a wheel you know where she did the

RM: A spinning wheel?

MG: The yarn, the spinning. And she had on her head, a big babushka with big roses in it. I thought who the heck is that? So as she came down the steps I said "Are you with the Papa?" "Oh, yes" she said, "He is my husband" "Oh well are we going out to eat?" she said "He will be down in a few minutes" Out he comes and he had a long beard, he was not old though, and he had a black toque on his head and a long black coat and he said, "Well is Father Karampalas coming with us?" well Father K at first said he wasn't going, but we sent, Maria Papadakis was still here, so we said, "Maria, you go over and pick up Father and get him down to Helen's" well by the time we got to Helen's it was blowing up a storm. So Ruby and I and a couple of others were sitting there, the door opens and in walks Pater. No hat on his head, his hair, what he had was blowing all over and he had a little short, like a navy blue jacket and you could tell he was cold because it was terribly cold he sat down and he took his jacket off and he had long red underwear on. We laughed Pater_____ to wear your red underwear!

RM: Now this was Father Napoleon?

MG: Yeah, oh he didn't care you know, he didn't care and then he stayed though and he ate, and he was okay but people were staring at us. And I said "You know what's going to happen Ruby, they're going to say those crazy Apostle girls they're out there" they asked Helen what was going on and Helen didn't tell them the truth. You know but it was quite a night then we went to the church. Well I never saw a man kneel as much as that one did, up and down, and up and down, and kiss the floor, and kiss- and I said to him afterward, "Now what church did you come from? What church did you belong to?" "Well" he said, "I'm uh Methodist."

JA: Really?

MG: Yeah

JA: I've never seen a Methodist do that

MG: "I was a Methodist"- no no he said, "I left the church and I became an orthodox." And I said, "Oh my god, were your parents upset?" His father was a doctor. "Were your parents upset when you did that?" "No, I think they were happy that I found a calling," because I think he was a hippie at one time. I could tell by the way the wife was and you know? It was really funny though.

JA: So he had to redeem himself then?

MG: Yeah then father's ...Ruby's got to write a book about the problems that the little escapades we had with *presvetera* (not sure on Greek word) you know when father would talk too long in the church at the service, if he saw quite a few people he was happy because he had somebody to talk to, somebody to preach to 'cause Vegera would get angry 'cause Vegera was priest's wife and she had her purse and she held it like Queen Elizabeth you

know? Like here and she'd stand up during the service and she'd say "*Stamata tora Pater.*" Stop now Pater you've said enough!

JA: She was very head strong that's for sure!

MG: So she's anyway we went through that part then the other time she went, when the service was over she went to, she took the candles that were— and went up to the two big brass candelabras there in front of the altar there and was douse, could- er you know, what's the word?

FV: Putting them out

JA: Putting them out

MG: Putting them out, yeah, anyway, this is terrible, I can't stand it when I can't remember a word. Well anyway she suddenly fainted. Well Ruby said, Ruby took those ladies out every Sunday and they went to the Big Boy the other Big Boy up in the mall and had their coffee and whatever and she said "Well I can't wait!" Ruby said "Ma, you have to!" "I can't wait, I have to leave because I have to get back to the shop eventually." And so she said, cause *Presvetera*'s lying there like a dead person when she heard them, Ruby say that I'm not, I can't leave, guess what cause, she just she got up and she said, (Greek phrase) "Don't leave" (more Greek) then she gets into the car with Ruby driving and this is your Mama and all of them were there and she said, "oh (more Greek)" and she put her arms up to God "Take me God, I am ready, I am ready" Ruby said, "Mom, tell her not to die in my car!" I mean they've had, then we go a call from the not police the fire station, they called Ruby first, and Pater called her and said, "Oh Ruby Ruby I'm choking I'm choking there's something wrong in here!" He didn't connect where the where the smell was coming from but he had a coffee pot and he had a stack of papers and had that hot coffee pot plugged in, and they started to smoke, you know. So Ruby says "Pater, we'll be right there." So Ruby gets Harry and they got over there and they said "Get out Pater get out before we have a fire and you can't get out because you move slowly." So they took him out of the car I mean out of the house and then the fire department said, oh this is dangerous, you've got to do something here you know and they did, they fixed something so that he didn't have to have that coffee pot there but he, he's had some stories, I'll tell you, between the two of them, this, it's not like a regular priest you know.

RM: What's interesting is the, see now in the Catholic Church you can't, a priest can't just come in and hold any kind of service, you can't, you know he could come to Marquette, and be here but he couldn't say mass. And unless he gets permission from the Bishop they might not even allow that, but you can see why because the local priest, if they started migrating around, the local priest would get quite upset.

MG: Uh huh

RM: You know, what are you doing here? You know you're intruding on my territory.

MG: That's right and that happens

RM: Yeah

MG: That happens

RM: You sort of you're gonna say, no that wouldn't happen, a priest wouldn't do that, it's their congregation and their church and so on and all of a sudden somebody's coming in

MG: Somebody's in their territory

RM: How's this happen yeah, yeah

MG: But it's fun to look over those things that happened with him and his wife because they were funny

RM: Well my, just a story kind of connected with what you're saying, we went to Easter service one time, this was a long time ago, and so we're there and Diane knows that the that women do not go up on the altar and so on from her church .

MG: Mhmm

RM: You know, they don't even think of it.

MG: To clean or...

RM: Yeah and all of a sudden the priest is up there and she's in one door and out the other and so on and Diane is mortified by the whole, how can this be? You know but uh

MG: Well when we

RM: It's the person ...

MG: Yeah but when we had to clean the church to get it ready for that anniversary when we had the Bishop coming. I went behind the altar and I had to take things apart and clean them and polish them with Kalliopie, with Mrs. Roumanis and but we said, there's nobody here to see to see us only God, and I don't think he would be offended. There are a lot of stories.

RM: How many in terms of the Greek community is can you put any number on say at the high point, maybe like probably be in the 1950s when you know.

MG: I wish I knew.

RM: The old immigrants were still around and the families were there, their children were there how many would have been probably that picture that you have.

MG: That's about the best.

RM: Is a good example would be a good.

MG: I think that's a good example.

RM: A good base number.

MG: We've got new people now.

JA: But at that time there were a lot of big families.

MG: Yeah

JA: The Grivas family,

MG: the Grivas, the Lempesis

JA: Lempesis

MG: We all, my mother only and dad only had four so

JA: Lempesis

MG: Pallas had two

RM: Have you been on the 1920 census though Northern?

JA: No I haven't looked at that.

RM: Well go into the Northern thing and you can get the 1920 census and... final comment okay is there anything that you want to add at the end, something I missed, I didn't ask? The other thing is to be thinking about the fact that we'll get a transcription of it and then get a copy to the two of you

MG: And some other things might come up

RM: And you can go over it. Other things might come up

JA: And you wanted a Xerox of the photograph too in the hall?

RM: Yeah, and then anything, any other material you know like you have some stuff there that's be sort of good to go into a Greek Marquette County file.

MG: Mhmm that will be interesting John.

RM: Keep that keep it together

JA: Ok

RM: Alright thank you

JA: You did a good job

MG: yes, you did.

End of Tape

ⁱ John Argeropoulos noted during editing that “Messini the city, & Messinia more like region of Greece.”

ⁱⁱ J. Argeropoulos “Busy Bee (Corner of Baraga and Front)” in editor’s notes

ⁱⁱⁱ J. Argeropoulos “Busy Bee, later Northland Café.”

^{iv} Or “*Yia-yia*”

^v *Baba Youri*-Uncle George in English

^{vi} *Nouno*- is Godfather in Greek

^{vii} *Presvetera*-Title for wife of a Greek Priest

^{viii} J. Argeropoulos noted “Wheat” in revision