

Nick and Anastacia (Anne) Tsiros

Side 1:

Son - George Tsiros

Son - Thomas Tsiros (no signature)

Mother-in-law - Choysanthy P. Hanzas

Father-in-law - Thomas C. Hanzas

[1/1] Introduction. I saw a photo of a Black family with President and Mrs. Bush while interviewing Thelma Caldwell. She told me about her neighbors, the Harris family. Later I heard about the catered lunch and asked Nick for an interview. During the interview their two sons (students at UNCA) and his in-laws came in - a bit confusing but a gold mine of information (see enclosures). [Thelma Caldwell, Diatha Harris, Roy Harris, President and Mrs. Bush]

[1/43] Nick was a lab technician, Anne's father had a restaurant. Nick came to the US in 1952 and met Anne at the Acropolis (now Greenery) Restaurant. She was not allowed to date. [Nick Tsiros, Anne Tsiros]

[1/76] Mother-in-law enters and talks about traditional family life. She married a month after she met father-in-law through a match maker.

[1/90] Anne tells about being chaperoned by her grandfather. She learned Greek at home and taught the language and dancing for years in the Greek Community Center as well as teaching in the public school system.

[1/151] Nick visited his mother in Greece.

[1/157] Son George tells about his visit to Greece and his ability to converse.

[1/170] Father-in-law has never been to Greece but has stayed in the strong Greek colony. He was raised in Wilmington, Delaware (the only other place I know to have the true submarine sandwich) and came to Asheville to meet his wife.

[1/181] Mother-in-law has been here since 1936. Her father worked with her brother after bankruptcy in Norfolk.

[1/186] Greeks teach each other (language, dancing, cooking). The restaurant is doing well and Saturday is the day for spinach pie!

[1/239] Thomas enters. He graduates from UNCA in May with a degree in communications. He goes to the phone (3 in house), falls asleep and doesn't return.

[1/259] A priest from Spartanburg came to the colony every month but now, with their established church, they have their own priest.

[1/267] Anne says that the identity of the group keeps it together. There is no "melting pot," but a "beef stew" of peoples with separate flavors.

Mother-in-law says they are not as close as they once were.

[1/289] Anne: Greeks work with various groups, i.e. League of Women Voters, Asheville Art Museum, Shriners, Democratic Party, etc. But still keep their own customs.

[1/340] Ladies group raises money for the poor and needy here and abroad.

Nick: Greeks are patriotic. 98% vote in elections.

[1/399] George doesn't know of any anti-black incidents. Anne tells about one in his early school years.

[1/450] George used to work with youth groups going to conventions and retreats. Younger boys are doing this. Wherever Greeks go they can join a community.

[1/479] Anne felt prejudice while growing up as a foreigner - and because home rules were so strict.

Side 2:

[2/3] The development of the meeting places is discussed - from members' homes to a store (1st floor for recreation, 2nd floor for services) and purchase of property on Cumberland Ave [the M. V. Moore estate] for \$8,300. The house was remodeled and banquets could seat 200 people (see consecration 1987, Nick was President of the Parish Council - the church history faces his picture). [Mr. Batchelor [Fletcher R.?], M. V. Moore]

[2/48] Nick was born in Greece so his problem is with the English language - his wife, children and in-laws speak Greek fluently although until recently they had never been to Greece.

[2/51] Icons in the church are discussed. People bring them back from visits to Greece. Mother-in-law and father-in-law donated a stained glass window in honor of a brother.

[2/70] The naming of Greek children is discussed. [Virginia Tsiros, Thomas Tsiros, George Tsiros]

[2/81] The church was consecrated Oct. 4, 1987 (see enclosure) and the honor of being "godfather" is auctioned. Peterson donated \$6,000 and was given the key to open the door as part of an elaborate ceremony. [Jimmy Peterson]

[2/127] Sacraments in the Greek church are similar to the Roman Catholic and, should a Greek be in a community where there is no Greek church, they would attend the Roman Catholic. The differences and similarities are discussed - more differences emerge with discussion.

[2/195] During Holy Week a bus is chartered to go to other Greek churches, e.g. Greenville, Spartanburg, Knoxville, Winston-Salem and Raleigh.

[2/210] Intermarriage causes concern. Anne never considered any other than a Greek husband. Women who marry Greek husbands learn the language and cooking skills.

[2/283] Nick is active with Council and was president at time of consecration. Describes board.

[2/305] Women were not on council until 5 years ago. One woman was a chairman. People from the old country fought the change.

[2/345] Mother-in-law can't get used to people living together without marriage (it must be very hard on these people but she is still very much of a power).

[2/388] Tommy told his father, "Don't serve 'fast food' but good food fast."

[2/397] The first Greeks to come to the US started with enthusiasm and worked hard. Ninety-nine percent of the children today are as good Greeks as their forefathers. When there is need, everyone comes to help. To preserve the solidarity today takes constant work. The family is the root of the community and the Priest is the spiritual counselor.

[2/479] Beliefs and morals are validated by the grandparents who also reinforce the parents. Children donate time in church activities.