

# The Greek Community of Albany, N. Y.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

By Savas P. Mafilios

It was in the early part of the year 1922 when a movement to establish the Greek Community of Albany began. On the initiative of Mr. Peter Arbouzes a meeting was called and attended by Merrs. Evangelos Fourtoulakis, Constantinos Kokouras, Panos Lampropoulos, George D. Jeoney, John N. Pipentacos, Constantinos Couchelis, George Panagiotopoulos, Panagiotis Panagopoulos, Christos Panagopoulos, Savas P. Mafilios, and John Cobates.

In a desire to express their devotion to the traditions of their race and to Orthodoxy and to contribute to the cultural life of Albany these twelve Hellenes discussed the matter in a brotherly spirit and decided to lay the foundations of a Greek community. At a subsequent meeting held in the little fruit store of the two brothers, Merrs. Panagiotis and Christos Panagopoulos at 96 Hudson Ave., on January 22, 1922, this far-reaching step became a reality.

The objectives were three, the acquisition of a church; second, the eventual establishment of a Greek school; and third, the purchase of burial grounds for Greeks and the fulfillment of other needs.

Generally, the ecclesiastical situation was confused at the time. Clergymen, too, had been drawn into the political conflicts that were generated by the antagonism between the policies of King Constantine of Greece and of Eleftherios Venizelos. As a result there were two archbishops in this blessed and hospitable land, the distinguished Bishop of Rodostolos, His Grace Alexander, with his seat in New York City, and the equally distinguished Archbishop Vasilius with his seat in Lowell, Mass. The former was the exponent of the policies of Premier Venizelos and the latter of those of King Constantine.

The aforementioned pious and god-fearing pioneers lost no time in announcing the decision to the Greek Archdiocese in New York City seeking advice and recognition. However, the realities of the situation made them very cautious. It was felt they could not afford commitments which might have drawn them into the political antagonisms between the two ecclesiastical leaders. The rest of the Albany Hellenes felt likewise. And so, in the first general meeting which was called on the 14th of February, 1922 by the twelve pioneers, known then as the Temporary Committee, a motion was unanimously passed for the creation of an independent body to be called The Greek-American Association. The late Panos Lampropoulos was elected as the first president, and the first donation amounting to \$500 was made, the donor being Mr. George D. Jeoney.

The Association accomplished its mission in every respect. An imposing edifice, the Unitarian Society Church, at 8 Lancaster Street, was purchased on January 18, 1923, for \$27,500 and was renamed St. Sophia. The Greek school was established in the church's large hall where the "language of the Gods"—Greek—began to be taught to our children. The late Rev. John K. Chrysogelos

was the first pastor as well as the first teacher.

Because of the necessity for repairs and redecoration it was not until August 15, 1923 that the first religious services in the newly acquired church formally commenced, and a year later the adjoining 4-story structure at 10 Lancaster Street became the property of the Greek-American Association for \$5,000 to be used exclusively as a home for the pastor as well as for the sexton.

With these two objectives accomplished the Association went ahead to accomplish the third one, the purchase of a plot as burial grounds. Thus it acquired a section in the Graceland Cemetery from the Graceland Cemetery Corp., large enough for one thousand graves. By an odd twist of fate the first to be buried there was the Rev. Chrysogelos, the first teacher and first pastor, who, having passed away after a two-year illness in 1925, was reburied in the Greek Cemetery in the year 1928.

Far from feeling its mission was completed the Association continued with the same zeal its beneficial work until 1931, when the now Ecumenical Patriarch, His Holiness Athenagoras I, assumed his duties in that year as Archbishop of North and South America and plunged into the arduous task of reorganizing the Greek Orthodox communities through out the country by moulding them into a solid group functioning in accordance with the Federal and State laws on the one hand and with the holy canons and rules of the Greek Orthodox Church on the other.

In conformity then with its obligations to Orthodoxy and to our supreme ecclesiastical authority our community decided finally, following a series of meetings, to place itself under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese. Accordingly a nine-member committee was appointed composed of the Archimandrite Rev. Athenagoras Varacles, and Merrs. George D. Jeoney, Panagiotis Arbouzis, John Cobates, Vasilios Stavroudakos, Emmanuel Ermides, Evangelos Fourtoulakis, Nicholas Stathopoulos and John N. Perdaris. An attorney, Mr. Edward Scheiberling, was retained and in accordance with a petition the State of New York issued a charter in the name of the Greek Orthodox Community, Inc., St. Sophia, Albany, N. Y., on March 27, 1934.

But this did not mean the end of the Greek-American Association. This invaluable and highly respected organization, having won the gratitude of the entire community and the Archdiocese, retained its charter and continued to function as a benevolent association. It was entrusted with the care of the Greek Cemetery which became and still is a separate administrative entirely governed by its own set of rules.

The year 1949 marked another important stage in the development and progress of the Greek Community of Albany whose president then was Mr. Savas P. Mafilios and pastor the Archimandrite Rev. Diodoros Tsekouras. They and a five-man committee composed of Merrs. George D. Jeoney, Petros Giftos, Panagiotis Strikos, Zachary D'Jimas, George Cassimeris with three of the church's trustees, Merrs. Nicholas Panagopoulos, Demetrios Karras and

Peter Karris, proceeded to launch an extensive program of repairs. The entire community rendered its splendid cooperation and gave its generous support of the project, which was carried out at a cost of \$63,000. This project was entrusted to the firm General Contractors, 403 Madison Ave., headed by Mr. Anthony Agnetta. In this connection it must be stated that the painting of the church's basement, costing well over \$3,000, was done by the Greek contractors Mr. Charles Nelson of 28 Jay St., and Mr. James Koutelis of 156 Jay St. Mr. Thomas Devane of 44 Oakwood St., was the engineer under whose direction the entire program was started and brought to a successful conclusion.

This in brief is the historical background of the Greek Community of Albany, N. Y. If we are to make predictions as this community's foreseeable future we can assume it shall be a bright one, for where there is faith, goodness and devotion to spiritual values there is progress and accomplishment.

(The above historical account was written by Mr. Savas P. Mafilios on February 14, 1951).

#### PASTORS WHO SERVED THE GREEK COMMUNITY of ALBANY, N. Y.

1. Rev. John K. Chrysogelos	1922-23
2. Archim. Sophronios Karapiperis	1924-25
3. Rev. Demosthenes Tsamardas	1926-27
4. Rev. Demetrios Messiris	1928-30
5. Archim. Athenagoras Varachas	1931-37
6. Rev. Michael Thomas	1938
7. Timotheos Pantelakos	1938
8. Rev. Nicholopoulos Sarantides	1939
9. Rev. Nicholas Spyliotis	1940
10. Archim. Diodoros Tsekouras	1940-50
11. Rev. Spyridon Economou	1950
12. Rev. Demetrios Heliopoulos	1951

#### MEMBERS WHO HELD THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE GREEK COMMUNITY OF ALBANY, N. Y.

1. Panos Lampropoulos	1922
2. Panagiotis Arbouzes	1923-24
3. George D. Jeoney	1925-26
4. John Cobates	1927
5. George Arbouzes	1928
7. Constantinos Kokouras	1929-31
7. Emanuel Ermides	1932
8. John Perdaris	1933
9. Vasilios Stavroudakis	1934
10. Demetrios Coupounas	1935
11. Constantinos Karantzou	1936
12. Petros Karris	1937
13. Evangelos Fourtoulakis	1938
14. George D. Jeoney	1939-45
15. Panagiotis Strikos	1946-47
16. Savas P. Mafilios	1948-49
17. Petros Giftos	1950-51

## ORGANIZATIONS

### GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY, Inc. SAINT SOPHIA

8 Lancaster Street — Tel. 4-0266

PASTOR

Rev. Demetrius Heliopoulos, Ph.D.

#### OFFICERS

Peter G. Giftos .....	<i>President</i>
Peter Stricos .....	<i>Vice-President</i>
Spiros Stykos .....	<i>Treasurer</i>
George Cassimeris .....	<i>Secretary</i>

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Zachary D'Jimas  
Savas P. Mafilios  
John Pipentacos  
Michael Cholakes  
George J. Pipentacos  
Theodore Bouloukos  
Nicholas Marin

### GREEK LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY (ELPIS)

8 Lancaster Street — Tels: 4-0266 — OR. 8-536

#### OFFICERS

Adronike N. Mangou .....	<i>President</i>
Elli J. Perdaris .....	<i>Secretary</i>
Helen P. Zounis .....	<i>Treasurer</i>

### GREEK AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, Inc.

2 West Erie Street — Tel. 2-3111

#### OFFICERS

Theodore Zomopoulos .....	<i>President</i>
Costis Cocouras .....	<i>Vice-President</i>
Savas P. Mafilios .....	<i>Secretary</i>
Andrew Cholakes .....	<i>Treasurer</i>

#### AHEPA

ALBANY CHAPTER No. 140

2 West Erie Street — Tel. 2-3111

#### OFFICERS

Stelios P. Stricos .....	<i>President</i>
Nicholas Sofogolis .....	<i>Vice-President</i>
Achilles S. Mafilios .....	<i>Secretary</i>
Christ P. Patcopoulos .....	<i>Treasurer</i>

SONS OF PERICLES

39 Betwood Street — Tel. 8-4285

OFFICERS

John Sp. Stycos ..... *President*  
George Bouloukos ..... *Secretary*  
John Gallas ..... *Treasurer*

DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE

522 No. Pearl Street — Tel. 6-7412

OFFICERS

Katherin or (Kay) Diamond ..... *President*  
Virginia J. Ziamandanis ..... *Vice-President*  
Olga K. Angelidis ..... *Secretary*  
Mary J. Cobates ..... *Treasurer*

MAIDS OF ATHENS

155 Western Avenue — Tel. 4-0495

OFFICERS

Tacy P. Giftos ..... *President*  
Acrive N. Panagopoulos ..... *Secretary*  
Katherine Katramanos ..... *Treasurer*

SAINT MARKOS

120 Hudson Avenue — Tel. 8-0660

OFFICERS

Costas Sofologis ..... *President*  
John Pipentacos ..... *Secretary*  
Evangelos Petsaras ..... *Treasurer*

PONTOS SOCIETY

YPSILANTES CHAPTER No. 4

162 Hudson Avenue — Tel. 4-1730

OFFICERS

Lazarus Kontis ..... *President*  
Savas P. Mafilios ..... *Secretary*  
Lazarus Moissides ..... *Treasurer*

PAN-MACEDONIAN ASSOCIATION

CAPITAL DISTRICT No. 16

120 Hudson Avenue — Tels: 8-0660 — or 4-9530

OFFICERS

Costas Sofologis ..... *President*  
Costas Karantzou ..... *Secretary*  
Evangelos Petsaras ..... *Treasurer*

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<b>ATOMIC RESTAURANT</b>	
Nicholas Philippides, Prop.	177 Hudson Ave., Tel. 62-9130
<b>BAR AND GRILL</b>	
Therese Corrick, Prop.	Broadway, Russellart
<b>BETSY ROSS LUNCH</b>	
H. Athan and	
J. Zarbis, Props.	430 Madison Ave., Tel. 3-9687
<b>CAPITAL RESTAURANT</b>	
Peter Gifto, Prop.	Capital Bldg., Tel. 5-7888
<b>CENTRAL AVE. DELICATESSEN AND RESTAURANT</b>	
Theo. Pats and Gus Beckos, Props.	76 Central Ave., Tel. 3-9452
<b>CHARLIE'S HAMBURGER PLACE</b>	
Charles Milton, Prop.	1008 Central Ave., Tel. 2-9791
<b>CHEF'S RESTAURANT</b>	
George Pavellas, Prop.	375 Broadway, Tel. 3-9421
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Peters and Marankis, Props.	Northern Blvd.
<b>DEXIE RESTAURANT</b>	
Arthur Tsangas, Prop.	174 Hudson Ave., Tel. 3-8203
<b>DUKE'S PLACE</b>	
H. Fritz	83 Hudson Ave., Tel. 3-9150
<b>HAT PLACE</b>	
George Milas, Prop.	283 Washington Ave., Tel. 3-5893
<b>ECONOMY LUNCH</b>	
Seamus Bros.	262 So. Pearl St., Tel. 3-9437
<b>EDISON RESTAURANT</b>	
Arthur Paulas, Prop.	290 Central Ave., Tel. 3-9145
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Louis Loydas, Prop.	9 Clinton Ave., Tel. 3-9786
<b>FAMOUS RESTAURANT</b>	
C. Diamond and G. Gortas, Props.	576 Broadway, Tel. 3-9192
<b>FORT ORANGE GRILL, BAR AND RESTAURANT</b>	
Charles Ziamantaris and	
Nicholas Aramulka, Props.	332 Broadway, Tel. 3-9469
<b>G. E. COFFEE SHOP</b>	
Jama Sarris, Prop.	95 Hudson Ave., Tel. 3-9206
<b>GATEWAY LUNCH</b>	
J. Mello and J. Angelides, Props.	42 So. Perry St., Tel. 62-9277
<b>GEORGE'S LUNCH</b>	
George Karas, Prop.	46 Columbia St., Tel. 3-9662
<b>GEORGE'S RESTAURANT AND COCKTAIL BAR</b>	
George Dolans, Prop.	92 N. Pearl St., Tel. 3-9384

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## RESTAURANTS (continued)

### GREEK RESTAURANT AND COFFEE HOUSE

H. Amanatides and G. Zavou, Props. 96 Hudson Ave., Tel. 3-9111

### HENRY'S RESTAURANT

G. Kangas, Prop. N. Pearl and Loudville Rd., Albany, Tel. 3-9094

### HOT-DOG PLACE

Arthur Vavouras, Prop. 11½ Central Ave., Tel. 6-8355

### INTERSTATE LUNCHEONETTE

Thomas or Tom Pappas, Prop. 428 Broadway, Tel. 5-7572

### J. P. LUNCH

John Pipentacos, Prop. 16 Lark St., Tel. 4-4466

### K. R. RESTAURANT

Vasilatos Bros. 292 So. Pearl St.

### MANHATTAN LUNCH

Thomas Kerazes, Prop. 64½ Hudson Ave., Tel. 5-9232

### MAJESTIC LUNCH

Leo Booth and Th. Cholakis, Props. 71 Eagle St., Tel. 3-9567

### MANGUS FOOD SHOP

Nicholas Mangus, Prop. 67 Bertha St.

### NEW DE LUX RESTAURANT

George Peterson, Prop. 412 Madison Ave., Tel. 5-9218

### NEW ELECTRIC RESTAURANT

Andy Ralles, Prop. 67 So. Pearl St., Tel. 5-9480

### NEW ERA CAFETERIA

George Hantzakes, Prop. 398 Broadway, Tel. 3-9051

### NEW MANHATTAN

Th. Kerazes, Koutelis, Vlados, Props. 94 Hudson Ave., Tel. 3-9203

### PALACE CAFETERIA

Th. Tarcis and J. Ziamantanis, Props. 13 Clinton Ave., Tel. 3-9160

### PETER'S RESTAURANT, Inc.

Peter Strikos & Sons 54 No. Pearl St., Tel. 5-9024

### PETER'S SANDWICH AND ICE CREAM BAR

P. Demetsas and Stelios Strikos, Props. 137 Central Ave., Tel. 3-9237

### RALLIS INN

Harry Rallis, Prop. Schodack Center, Tel. 3-9776

### RENO RESTAURANT

Nicholas Marin, Prop. 141 No. Pearl St., Tel. 5-9010

### RYAL DINER

G. Venas and G. Bouras, Props. 36 Broadway, Menands, Tel. 62-9344

## OUT-OF-TOWN RESTAURANTS

### APOLO LUNCH AND RESTAURANT

Ch. Tsigas, Prop. Catskill, N. Y., 334 Main St., Ctskl 796

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## RESTAURANTS (continued)

### CENTRAL RESTAURANT

J. Kotzias or Koulos ..... Hudson, N. Y., 552 Warren St., Huds. 8-9024

### CONFECTIONERS

Vasilow Bros. .... Hudson, N. Y., 505 Warren St., Huds. 8-0137

### DEMOS RESTAURANT

N. Demos, Prop. .... 33 Main St., Chatham, N. Y.

### RESTAURANT AND CONFECTIONERS

Stratis Pittas, Prop. .... 355 Main St., Catskill, N. Y., Ctskd 790

### NEW YORK RESTAURANT

H. Paulson, Prop. .... 353 Main St., Catskill, N. Y., Ctskd 59

MAKRIS BROS RESTAURANT .... 359 Main St., Catskill, N. Y., Ctskd 539

### RESTAURANT

N. Deligiannis and A. Markesinis, Props. .... 407 Warren St., Hudson, N. Y.

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Gus Mertides, Prop. .... 111 State St., H. Tel. 3-0346

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James Ermides, Prop. .... 94 No. Lark St., Tel. 6-9806

### CRIST SHOE REPAIRING

Chris Douloudes, Prop. .... 232 Washington Ave., Tel. 62-2216

### HARRY'S SHOE REPAIRING

Harry Amanat, Prop. .... 92 Hudson Ave.

### HARRY'S SHOE REPAIRING

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Lazarus Kontis, Prop. .... 162 Hudson Ave., H. Tel. 4-1730

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