

PKT: Cardiff, St Nicholas Church, 22nd of March 2019, George Arakas interview. That's interview no.5, I think.

GA: (*looking at the map*) Where are we now? Here is our church, here...

KPT: (*showing maps*) So, this church...these are from two different years. This one is 1960s...

GA: No, forget that one...

KPT: OK. That's a bit older...

GA: The older one, about 1900...

KPT: That one...

GA: OK...

KPT: That one, yeah...So...

GA: So, if you show me Bute Street...show me the church...that's the church, is this the church?

KPT: That's St Mary's.

GA: St Mary's, so our church is...

KPT: That's our church there...

GA: That's our church there...so, behind the church is the canal...

KPT: Yeah, that's it, canal...

GA: So, I remember...OK? And that there is Bute Street, OK?

KPT: Exactly, yeah, Bute Street...

GA: Now, about here...the first place that I know, there was a cafe called the Global Cafe.

KPT: OK...

GA: OK? This belonged to Cypriots. So, let me turn it this way for a moment, give me this one...this is Bute Street, this is the...

KPT: That's the canal...

GA: Where's the canal? There used to be a bridge there...

KPT: Yes...

GA: Here...around here...These shops, most of these were greek...and here there were a couple of greek ones, for example, there was Lambrou's groceries...

KPT: Lambrou...is that a surname;

GA: Yes, Lambrou (is the surname)...What was he called; Spiros Lambrou.

KPT: OK...groceries...

GA: OK, next to that there was Marouko who owned a cafe...

KPT: (*keeping notes*) Marouko...cafe...

GA: Yes, which she turned into a grocery shop in the end..it was where I took my first steps (as a baby), in Marouko's cafe...so, where are we now? Here, here at the end of the block, Lambrou opened another grocery shop...these shops were selling olives...greek products, spaghetti which wasn't popular back then...the English didn't know what spaghetti was, they called it Pasgetti...so, on this block there was Sofia's cafe...here, let me tell you where it was roughly..by there...Sofia's, OK? All the seamen would gather there...also at Marouko's...and they would discuss their own stuff (business). This is Sofia's...so, all the captains usually gathered there after church, instead of coming here at church (meaning: for coffee at the church hall), they would go there...there was Sofia and Christos there, I think they were from Chios island. A bit further down the road there was a fish and chips (shop), owned by another guy from Chios, called Katsaros and after him the place was owned by a couple of guys from Corfu, I think...I can't remember their names...Now, there (*showing at the map*) there was another cafe owned by Prodromos Georgiou, all the Cypriots used to go there and play poker.

KPT: (*Laughing*) That reminds me of my father's villege...

GA: And next to that there was Michael Asprou...I don't know if you've ever heard of Asprou Travel?

KPT: Yes.

GA: So, that was the father..

KPT: What was George Asprou's relation to him?

GA: He (George) was his son, OK?

KPT: So, Michael Asprou...

GA: Yes. Michael Asprou had a small grocery shop and he was selling all sorts of things there...it was like a corner shop...and he had married my aunt, my father's cousin who's still alive...and they had this little shop for many years...since 1952, they got it around that time...All the rest were there during the war and even before the war, Sofia's and all the other ones, OK? This one, though...it was just this (originally), later on he (Michael Asprou) got the one next door and doubled the size of his shop, that shop next door was a newsagents' which he bought, OK? So, there were the cafes, there was this shop, OK? And by there there was the canal...which I remember...this is the bridge, the bridge is (still) there and I've got a picture which I can find and send to you, OK? And there was a pub by there and another pub opposite and you would go down and there was the back of the church, OK? And when we would come to church...what is this? St Mary's St? Here was...where was West Canal and East Canal Wharf?...There was water there...

KPT: Yes, yes...that's the Glamorgan Canal, yeah...

GA: So, West Canal Wharf was...you would come from here and cross here and go down to the church from here, you wouldn't come this way...so, where Critten St is, there were houses that were...the whole Greek community lived all around this area, see? And by there there were those houses I was telling you about, where they would rent rooms to seamen...see? This is it...these ones on Critten St...That was it...and the same thing would happen in Barry, there were..what do you call them? Boarding houses in Barry, because Barry was another place where the Greeks would live, there used to be (Greeks) there...That's all...

KPT: Do you remember κανένα fish and chips shop;

GA: Down here on George (St)...there was another one....another one on James St...a chips shop owned by one...Jimmy the Greek, I don't remember his (actual) name...and this one on George St was owned by Kallinicos the Ship Chandlers, he owned this on George St.

KPT: OK, I got...I found Kallinicos on the bibliography.

GA: OK. He used to be president (of the Greek community???) and honorary consul for many years. Down here, at this end of Bute St, around there...James St...

KPT: That's James St, that's West Bute and that's the actual Bute St.

GA: Right, there...here, it was this part here...I don't know the exact place, but around '50 with the war, because at the time of the war there were many Greeks here...and they left afterwards, when Greece was free...here were the ship chandlers, I don't know how you call them in greek...

KPT: Ναυλομεσίτες...

GA: There was Bistis, Maiandros, Fafalios...the shipowners, if you look at the plaque...(also) Embiricos...

KPT: I have spoken to Fafalios, his office is in London now...

GA: Yes, they moved the offices from here, when the port (business) started going down they went to...(London)

KPT: I have talked with Fafalios, we talked in February and he had told me back then that (he was too busy) because they finalised all the charter parties during February he said he could have a chat with me about his office after Easter.

GA: Ah! Good, OK...

KPT: I have also talked with Vergiotis, who sent me some information, he sent some photos, as well. He's also from Chios, he no longer has an office...

GA: I've never heard of this name...

KPT: He's a well known shipowner, I knew the name from before because he still owns ships in Greece.

GA: There was also Kalamotoussis, he was also a shipowner...

KPT: His family is still (in the business).

GA: The other day...his son donated 15.000 pounds to the church.

KPT: Yes. Do we have a contact with Kalamotoussis?, If he can give us any information?

GA: No, the priest knows...Stelios.

KPT: If they still have any old photos of their office...

GA: , They must do...They used to...they lived in Barry, that was the site (of the business).

KPT: So, they probably didn't have an office here (in Cardiff)...

GA: I don't know, I don't think so...I (know) Pygmalion who is on the plaque (with names of the church's benefactors), he was a shipowner and a member of the church committee.

KPT: This Lourandos who (whose name) is on the plaque?

GA: He was a captain.

KPT: ...Because I think he is from Kythera, my home island.

GA: Look here, the ones who started with (the ship business) were from Kassos, Andros, Chios. The Cypriots came after the war.

KPT: Thank you very much!

GA: No, I don't know (if I was of any help).

KPT: No, that's exactly what I was looking for.

GA: I wish I knew more. If my father was still alive he would tell you...he would spend hours and hours telling you all those (stories).

GA: ...There was one George Andreadis (back then), who was...do you remember when I told you about the Cypriots who owned the cafe? I think before buying it and turning it into a cafe, George Andreadis used to be there who was a tailor and sold (his stock) at the ships, whenever a ship would come, he would go there with his suitcase and sold shoes...because (the Greek sailors) they didn't speak (English), he would go to the ship and talk to them. I remembered another thing. A bit further down the road from here...where are we on Bute St, show me Bute St again...

KPT: So, the upper part is here...

GA: Talking about Lambros...where is that? About Lambros and Marouko...here...There used to be a pub called The White...I think it was (called) The White Heart. This pub was owned by Kallinicos' father...his father was married to a lady from Yugoslavia, because this Kallinicos who lived here was half Yugoslavian and half Greek, but he was Greek, I mean he studied in Greece...and they owned this pub, I think it's been demolished...

KPT: It's been demolished, but not the one by the corner that is on some photos...

GA: Not this one...If you go at the beginning of Bute Street where the hotel is...and you start walking...I don't know if this pub is still there, but it was owned by a Yugoslavian and his daughter was married to Kallinicos the ship chandler... Mary was his daughter who married Kallinicos and his son, Antonis, this one became...he went to study in Greece and later on he became consul from '64 till '85, around that time...

KPT: When the consulate was closed.

GA: Yes, it was closed...because by then all the ports had fallen (into disuse), they (the consulates) were over...Once there used to be a greek port authority, there was a port captain, ο λιμενάρχης as we say it (in Greek) who was (called) Yannis...I can't remember now (the last name) ...there used to be an office with Greeks as staff working for the greek state, taking care of the (greek) ships that came here...Yannis Kinigos was the port master's name. There was also one Argyros, I don't know what his job was but he was also (involved) with the port authority...later on they left, they closed (the consulate) around '60, Kallinicos stayed with the ship chandler, the consulate of that time died...it's on the plaque (his name), he was (called) Logothetis. Dimitrios Logothetis, he was consulate from '15 up to '64...because back in '17 when there was trouble between the supporters of Venizelos and the supporters of the King he found himself in the middle of that (situation). It was chaos here in Cardiff...

KPT: Did you have troubles here, as well?

GA: Yes, sure, a lot...people were one step away from shooting each other...

KPT: So, the national division reached Cardiff...

GA: Yes, yes, big troubles...This Logothetis was, you will find that on ??? book, too...he was also in the pictures. You will find lots of information, because there are documents, there is a book, the

priest has got it upstairs, with all the baptisms, the funerals, all that...the weddings...This will be very useful if you can look at it sometime

GA: I just...I found a picture, a priest who had come here became a widower and then became archbishop but before all that, when he was married he had 4-5 daughters, I don't know if you've seen this picture, it must be on the church's facebook page.

KPT: End of George Arakas recording.