

Family Treasure-The Promise

My family treasure is unique and not one that anyone would suspect. It is of much value, has survived a few generations and carries a lot of history. It has become larger than life, itself.

It all began in 1942, just before World War II, on the island of Crete with my great grandparents, Dimitri and Maria Kriarakis. Due to a family feud over family land, they were forced to abandon their beautiful home in the valley and had no option but to purchase a tiny house on the beach. In those years, properties on the beach had no tangible value. These houses were only bought by the less fortunate families.

They took all of their seven children, including their eldest son and my grandfather Joseph Kriarakis. They raised their family in this beach house and not having a regular backyard, the whole beach became their backyard.

As World War II began, my great grandmother, Maria, not only suffered the loss of her husband but, she had to raise her seven children alone with the help of her eldest son, Joseph. Joseph, a 12 year old boy without shoes and sandals, risked his life, worked night and day during the war selling peanuts and fruits for the survival of his family. They not only survived the war, but they also survived as a family.

Once arriving in Canada, my great grandmother asked my grandfather, Joseph to keep "a promise" upon her death. This promise was that he would be the only heir of their tiny house on the beach and pay off his brother's and sister's share. And so he did, in 1982.

Since then, he transformed this tiny little beach house to a hotel with a restaurant. He was working in Canada, raising his family and working in the summers at his hotel. He was keeping his promise!

A year ago, Joseph lost both his kidneys, and is currently struggling with his own health and cannot come back to Canada. He has made but only one request for his three daughters, Gina, Angie, and Christina. You can call it "the promise". He has asked them to keep his legacy and his family treasure alive.

The promise will carry through generations and one day this promise will have to be kept by my cousins and I, and all for the sake of my grandfather and the promise he had kept!

My Grandfather's Backyard

By:

Michael Guluzian
Grade 6
Gardenview Elementary

