

Panigiri of Profiti Ilias

By: Niko Bolis (5th grade)

My pappou Yianni is from Doliana, Evrytania where every year on July 20, the village celebrates Profiti Ilias with a big celebration. My pappou remembers the celebration as a young boy. The celebration was a very special day in Doliana and it continues to be one to this day.

On the evening of July 19, the people of Doliana would take an hour walk to the top of a small mountain called Haramata where a small church called Profiti Ilias is located. They would spend the evening in church where they would begin the preparations for the big day. After church, the people would walk back to Doliana where they would gather in the town square to eat, drink, sing and dance. Food and drink were a big part of the celebration. The men would roast lamb and kokoretsi on the spit. The women would make pitas to share. Loukoumi and tsipouro were also served and shared. People would sing and dance late into the night. Everyone would enjoy the special night in preparation for the next day.

In the morning of July 20, the church bell would ring and people of Doliana and neighboring villages would prepare to return to Profiti Ilias in Haramata for church liturgy. Men, women, and children wore their best clothes and started the walk back up the mountain. Everyone would be so happy as they were walking to and from church. There was no road leading to Profitis Ilias for cars to drive but people didn't mind all the walking. They were together with family and friends and that's all that mattered to them. It was the simple things in life that made them happy. Once church finished and people returned to Doliana, the party started again. Men were seen roasting more lamb and kokoretsi. Women had pitas, salads and drinks waiting to be shared. People were sitting at tables while others were sitting on blankets in the grass. Loukoumi and tsipouro were being passed around as everyone was talking and laughing. For many years, people would sing songs and dance---until the record player made its way to

the village and the records took over people's singing. The celebration lasted much into the night until everyone started heading back home to prepare for normal life the next day.

My Pappou Yianni is very fond of his past and present memories of this special day in Doliana. It is a day that he thinks of as very special. Two summers ago I was in Doliana at the panigiri for Profiti Ilia's. I was very happy to celebrate this day with him and my family. I know it meant a lot to my pappou too.