

Mastichari's founding story



The first that had the idea in inhabiting Mastichari, was Antonakis Pogiakis. Early 20th century he bought settlement's seaside, in a trip he made in Turkey. (Turkish were the first and main owners of the entire area in Mastichari as well as the majority of Kos island). He did not accomplish his idea unfortunately, due to personal psychological reasons.

Charitos and Gkikas, unlike Pogiakis having managed to purchase 60 acres of mainland (where currently the village is located) from their Turkish owners, were working with the same idea among the locals in Antimachia but also among the Italian rulers. They took advantage of Liamis Gamvrelis shanty that had been turned into a coffeehouse at the beginning and later of Manolis Gkikas' self made mastic refinery. (Mastichari = Masticha's village)

When on February the 8th 1926, the houses in Antimachia were destroyed by a disastrous earthquake, the Italian rulers asked the villagers whether they wanted their houses to be repaired or new houses to be constructed at the new area of Mastichari. That was the opportunity Gkikas was expecting, and although the Italians satisfying Mayors Krassas pressures to start reparations of the existing houses at Antimachia, Gkikas have started his own building process at Mastichari.

Therefore he brought the Magglides family from Kardamena that they were famous stone-builders to built shanties first and small houses afterwards.

Over 1926, 18 families had inhabited in Mastichari and soon they all discovered that there wasn't sufficient ownership plan and documentation due to the vagueness of urban plan and insufficiency between Charitos' and Gkikas' 60 acres' ownership.

In 1930, in a very strange way, Charitos and Gkikas took the decision to distribute their ownerships. Instead of a notarial document they used two (2) shells. A baby named Vaggelio Papouli, at the place where is today Posidon's statue at the harbour, threw them behind her back. Thus Gkikas took the eastern part, where Charitos took the western. Present at the above mentioned process were every villager of Mastichari who demanded from both, place enough for school and church purposes. Charitos stepping 4 times back he shouted: "From bottom to top belongs to the community". (As per our calculation there must have been approximately 10 acres.)

From that moment and afterwards every villager was involved on church' and school' construction. With the first stones they gathered with their donkeys, they set the church' foundation.

The church had been accomplished much later in 1945, after the second world

war. Materials (e.g. timber, tiles) that have been used, had been taken after Mayor's Akindinos Mavros' decision, from best Germans guardhouse at Telikarpos. Locals have also set committee's for fundraising, and in that way they have managed to finalise the inner part of the church, which they decided to dedicate to Immaculate Annunciation, in greek "ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΙΣ ΤΗΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ".

In 1945, the first teacher was Petrou Nikolas (o paidonomos).

In 1946, the first village priest was Michalis Avgoulas, who was a marvellous chanter at the church of HOLY TRINITY at Antimachia. Being a nice man but poor, and having many children Michalis Avgoulas couldn't manage surviving. Therefore the villagers took over his survival with money they were selecting in covering his living expenses. A few months later, although there were many protests, the Metropolitan Emmanuil Karpathios shifted him to the big church of Saint Nikolas at Kos town.

On December the 6th, 1948 Mastichari have had a new priest: Emmanuil Neskes that had been retired in 1978. Father Charalambos Saragias (Elias' father) took over until 2010. As he was a builder before, he managed to build many chapels at Mastichari's surroundings. Chapels that today offer us beauty and tradition apart from their religious value. The current priest that took over father Charalambos is father Nikolaos Gryllis.

Some more statistics :

The Germans first built Mastichari's mole (wooden port's platform) in 1944. School had been accomplished in 1951 when Ioannis Fakos was Antimachia's Mayor.

The first thrift-plant had been planted by Georgios Fratzis on the front yard of Anastasios Papoulis coffeehouse (kafenion).

The village took its name from the many mastic trees existing on the surroundings. Mastichari means the mastic trees village.

The first authentic resident of Mastichari had been born on September the 8th 1928 and it simply happens to be myself : STAVROS PAPOULIS

This the story of our village MASTICHARI, that had been told by our priest father Emmanuil Neske when he was 80 years old, and I have written on September the 2nd 1979 when I was 51 years old



STAVROS PAPOULIS