**Janet**: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I am here today in Concord, New Hampshire and with me is Spiro Keros.

**Keros**: Not Siros Keros. K-E-R-O-S.

**Janet**: Okay there is no I, Keros. Okay Mr. Keros came from the same place that Peter Gulio. He was born on December 7th 1915. And then came to Concord, New Hampshire. Today is October 31st 1995.

And this is Janet Levine for the national park service. Well if you would tell me Mr. Keros what you remember about Labove. What are the things that you think about when you think about that little village when-

**Keros**: I used to walk there Labove. I used to own carpenter.

**Janet**: Did you go to school there too?

**Keros**: No I went to school in Greek school not Albania school.

**Janet**: Oh you knew how to speak Greek?

**Keros**: Sure. You?

**Janet**: No.

**Keros**: Oh yeah I speak Greek and I write and read everything so. I have been I Greek for 5-6 years. My cousin used to be over there teacher. And I stay with her and my uncle too.

**Janet**: Was that in Labovee?

**Keros**: No, in Greece. Levinaki is named town Greece.

**Janet** Do you know how to spell that?

**Keros**: No i can’t spell much.

**Janet**: But you were in their Greek town?

**Keros**: Yeah.

**Janet**: Here we have the help of our friend here. And-

**Keros**: You got a tape what do you want on that?

**Janet**: It’s just that we type it out at some point we type it out and some of this words we are not that familiar with so it helps. But okay you-did you leave Labolva before you came to the United States?

**Keros**: I was born over there.

**Janet**: You were born there and how many years did you live there.

**Keros:**  I told you I was born-I live-I marry over there I was 22 years old. And I came over here.

**Janet**: Did you go and live in greed before you came here?

**Keros**: Oh yes I used to go. I used to go in Greece back and forth. It was free. Free over there you could go anytime you want.

**Janet**: And where you doing carpentry work when did that?

**Keros**: Yeah I used to work in-I learned in Greece.

**Janet**: Oh you learned carpentry in Greece. I see.

**Keros**: Yeah I learn over there and I learn Greek language and carpenter business. Yeah

**Janet**: When you say carpentry where you building houses or building furniture?

**Keros**: Building houses and furniture.

**Janet**: Did you do a kind of apprenticeship? Where you like learning from a carpenter?

**Keros**: No. we used to work from the houses.

**Janet**: I see.

**Keros**: Building houses/ not me with the other party we were 2-3 of us. Right petro?

**Janet**: Year okay. So tell me your father name?

**Keros**: John.

**Janet**: John Keros?

**Keros**: Keros.

**Janet**: And your mother name?

**Keros**: Maria.

**Janet**: Maria. And do you remember her maiden name?

**Keros**: Middle name?

**Janet**: Maiden name. Before she married your father?

**Keros**: Oh. Maria Notilis.

**Male**: let me write to you.

**Janet**: Okay and how about your grandmother or grandfather did you ever know them? Your grandmother or grandfathers?

**Keros**: grandmother?

**Janet**: Yeah.

**Keros**: Yeah I used to know but I can’t remember her how old they are then.

**Janet**: No all I want to ask you was when you were a little boy do you remember them what they were like?

**Keros**: I remember the grandmother.

**Janet**: Whose mother? Your mother's or your father's.

**Keros**: No.

**Janet**: Fathers?

**Keros**: Mother. Father she die dead.

**Janet**; so it was your mother’s mother?

**Keros**: Yeah I told you.

**Janet**: What do you remember about her?

**Keros**: She used to come to my house all the time.

**Janet**: Did you ever do things with her?

**Keros**: Oh yeah.

**Janet**: What?

**Keros**: What do you mean? [Unclear 00:05:24]?

**Janet**: Would you go places with her?

**Keros**: No she is too old. To go places [laughter].

**Janet**: Would she cook things for you?

**Keros**: Cook yeah.

**Janet**: Do you remember any of the dishes that she made?

**Keros**: NO. I was too young to remember.

**Janet**: Now how about did you have brother and sisters?

**Keros**: Yeah i had two sisters. One sister she still live and the other one die.

**Janet**: Which one is alive?

**Keros**: Anna.

**Janet**: And is she here.

**Keros**: No she is Albania.

**Janet**: And what was your other sister’s name?

**Keros**: Sister's? The other one?

**Janet**: Yeah

**Keros**: Avianea.

**Male**: Let me write it down for you.

**Janet**: Yeah. How do you say it again? Okay let’s see. What do you remember about where you lived? Do you remember the house?

**Keros**: Of course I remember

**Janet**: What was it like? What was it a stone house?

**Keros**: Stone house oh yeah. We build up the stone house. Same on the whole town is a stone house.

**Janet**: And did you have a place for animals?

**Keros**: Oh yeah we had goats. We had a cow and we working on a-outside a garden. My mother.

**Janet**: What kinds of things did your mother grow?

**Keros**: Vegetables. Corn all those stuff. Right petrol?

**Janet**: And how did you get around? What?

**Keros**: Walking. Or we had donkey.

**Male**: Horse and donkey.

**Keros**: You saying horse. Mule, mule.

**Janet**: Did you have certain duties things that you had to do? Around the house and around the farm?

**Keros**: No, no. my mother no let me nothing to do in the house.

**Janet**: So you were the only son also? You were the only boy?

**Keros**: Yeah only boy.

**Janet**: So did that give you special privileges being the only boy? [Laughter]

**Keros**: Anything else?

**Janet**: Were you a religious family?

**Keros**: Religious?

**Janet**: Were you a religious family?

**Keros**: Religious yes Orthodox. We used to church.

**Janet**: Do you remember any of the festivities that were connected with the church that you know celebrations?

**Keros**: Christmas.

**Janet**: How did you celebrate Christmas?

**Keros**: New-year, or Easter

**Janet**: Was Christmas-

**Keros**: yeah we celebrate in the church. [Unclear 00:08:42] and we dance everyone.

**Janet**: And how about Easter how did you celebrate that?

**Keros**: The same thing in Easter. With eggs we had red eggs. My mother-you paint the red eggs. Then we broke them in the church.

**Janet**: Oh you broke the eggs in church?

**Keros**: Yeah.

**Janet**: And why was that how comes you broke them in church?

**Keros**: This one is the religion. Yeah we broke egg.

**Janet**: And do you remember dancing and singing?

**Keros**: Oh sure dancing and singing yeah.

**Janet**: Do you remember the instruments?

**Keros**: This used to be-we used to have an orchestra.

**Janet**: Oh who was in the orchestra?

**Keros**: Oh i don’t know.

**Male**: Strangers.

**Janet**: Strangers. But what were they playing? What instruments.

**Keros**: You know violin. Drums everything.

**Janet**: Were you a dancer?

**Keros**: Of course we dance. Everybody dancing.

**Janet**: And let see what else. Do you remember any like games you played?

**Keros**: Game?

**Janet**: Not much game was there.

**Janet**: Not much playing?

**Keros**: No.

**Janet**: And can you describe like the village-I know there was another village-

**Keros**: Oh another village in the town. And another village for half an hour or an hour. And one is way down. Plenty villages around. Quite a few.

**Janet**: And the main city? The nearby city? Did you go there?

**Keros**: My city [unclear 00:10:44]

**Janet**: Right. And do you ever remember going there?

**Keros**: oh sure we go all the time?

**Janet**: Why would you go to the city?

**Keros**: Well we go over there to sell stuff or buy it.

**Janet**: Where there any-where there like stores for like clothing?

**Keros**: Like clothes, like groceries store like everything.

**Janet**: Was there such a thing as a market day?

**Keros**: Market?

**Janet**: Market day?

**Keros**: Yeah oh sure?

**Janet**: What’s was that like? With the market day what would happen?

**Keros**: They sell a lot of stuff in there you can buy.

**Janet**: Would you buy simply food or?

**Keros**: Vegetable.

**Janet**: Not clothes and things like that?

**Keros**: Clothes are different stores for the clothes. Just like here. You don’t have any stores and clothes and vegetables same thing.

**Janet**: How about things like shoes? Like were your shoes were they hand made or did you but them?

**Keros**: Well some of us wear hand made some us already made.

**Janet**: Did you have an idea that you wanted to be a carpenter when you were a little boy?

**Keros**: Yeah I liked to be carpenter.

**Janet**: That’s what you wanted?

**Keros**: Yeah it is what I wanted.

**Janet**: So how did it get arranged that you would go to Greece and-

**Keros**: Not very far only about walk 8 hours. In the border-the border to Greece. And we went over there we stay with my uncle. My uncle he was a priest over there. And my cousin he was a teacher. And she had a house and I stayed over there for four or five years.

**Janet**: So you had been speaking Albanian in your own home but then when you went to Greece you learnt Greek?

**Keros**: Yeah. We speak Greece over there. Greek.

**Janet**: Now did you do all your carpentry work in Greece? When you worked as a carpenter?

**Keros**: We learn over there.

**Janet**: And then you came back?

**Keros**: And then we went back again went to labella

**Janet**: And then you worked in labove?

**Keros**: We went to labove with the other fellas.

**Janet**: I am sorry going ahead.

**Keros**: Go ahead.

**Janet**: Now you met your wife in Labolva?

**Keros**: Oh yeah. I met my wife-it was a girl.

**Janet**: She was a little girl?

**Keros**: Sure.

**Janet**: Was it an arranged marriage?

**Keros**: Oh yeah we arranged it alright.

**Male**: tell them the story.

**Janet**: Is there a story about the arrangement?

**Keros**: Huh? [Laughter]

**Janet**: Is there a story about your marriage getting arranged?

**Keros**: No not stories.

**Janet**: Well how did you meet her? How did you happen to know her?

**Keros**: Well my mother meets her mother and come and visits us over there that’s why.

**Janet**: How old where you when you got married?

**Keros**: Oh I was about 21-20 something like that.

**Janet**: And she?

**Keros**: She was 16.

**Janet**: And what’s her name?

**Keros**: Madeline.

**Janet**: Madeline and her maiden name?

**Keros**: Middle name?

**Janet**: Maiden name before she married you?

**Keros**: Oh Madeline p

**Janet**: PHIL- FILIDAF

**Keros**: Yeah that’s all.

**Janet**: And did you have a big wedding?

**Keros**: Oh yeah big wedding.

**Janet**: Can you describe it how is it? How is it different from a wedding here?

**Keros**: Oh lots of different from over here.

**Janet**: Oh good tell me everything-

**Keros**: One week wedding over there.

**Janet**: One week?

**Keros**: Yeah take one week. Started from Monday and finish next Monday.

**Janet**: And what happens for that whole week?

**Keros**: Dancing and we roast some sheep’s. About 10-15. And lots of wine. Lots of what do we call it-

**Janet**: And did the bride sit in a horse?

**Keros**: Oh yeah you have to put her on a horse. You put her in a horse and they bring her to my house over there. And after somebody take them down.

**Janet**: So who took her down?

**Keros**: But you have to place $10 for me, 50 the other fella who is giving the most of it they take him down.

**Janet**: Take her down. Wow

**Keros**: And after we started dancing all night all day.

**Janet**: Did women have to have dowries in those days?

**Keros**: Down?

**Janet**: Dowries? Did the women bring a dowry to the marriage?

**Keros**: Oh yes.

**Janet**: Do you remember your wife's dowry? What’s was it? Was it like linens or was it like a horse or what would be in a dowry?

**Male**: clothes. Clothes

**Keros**: The suit you mean? The brown?

**Janet**: Did your wife's family have to give a-

**Keros**: Oh yeah they give a good presents. She comes at my house, my relatives they waiting for the presents. They give you presents

**Janet**: What kind of presents?

**Keros**: All kinds like shirt, stockings, different. That’s all I go to go.

**Janet**: No. is you in a hurry?

**Keros**: Yeah

**Janet**: Ohh okay we will try to go quicker. Okay you were married and then did you live in Albania for a while after you were married?

**Keros**: I live about 6 months. And left at Albania September and I come to this country.

**Janet**: You came by yourself?

**Keros**: All by myself.

**Janet**: And why did you come here?

**Keros**: My father was here. He brings me.

**Janet**: How long had your father been here when you-

**Keros**: My father been here long time. He been here 1905.

**Janet**: Oh did you remember him?

**Keros**: Of course I remember. He dies over here.

**Janet**: No but I mean had he come back to Albania so that you knew him before you came to the United States?

**Keros**: Oh yeah he had a couple of visits. He come couple of time down in Albania see. But I was too young to bring me down here when I get a little older he bring me down.

**Janet**: So you wanted to come here to join your father?

**Keros**: Yeah he brings me here.

**Janet**: So do you remember leaving the town do you remember getting ready to leave?

**Keros**: oh yeah I remember.

**Janet**: What was it like leaving?

**Keros**: I remember over here at [unclear 00:18:40] down here.

**Janet**: That’s where you came to?

**Keros**: Yeah. Before I came down here

**Janet**: Do you remember the voyage at all?

**Keros**: What voyage?

**Janet**: The voyage on the ship?

**Keros**: The ship? We came from France. From France harbor. And the ship is named President Roosevelt.

**Janet**: Do you remember the trip from Labolva to [unclear 00:19:12]

**Keros**: No ship Labovee.

**Janet**: I mean how did you go from Labolva?

**Keros**: How do you come from labove here or?

**Janet**: From labove to [unclear 00:19:24]

**Keros**: Oh went through from Italy by train. All by myself nobody else.

**Janet**: Could you speak to anybody?

**Keros**: Yeah they speak Greek everybody they are waiting for me. They come up from the train they pick me up they put me in another train see? And when they [unclear 00:19:45] he stayed about a week. And after the boat we came to network.

**Janet**: And the name of the boat was the president Roosevelt?

**Keros**: Roosevelt.

**Janet**: And do you remember anything about that voyage? Anything about the trip over the ocean?

**Keros**: Not was nice. No problem. No rough.

**Janet**: Were you in the third class? The bottom of the boat?

**Keros**: Third class. Yeah we can’t afford to pay first class.

**Janet**: What was it like?

**Keros**: $80 for the ticket.

**Janet**: Really?

**Keros**: Yeah

**Janet**: And what were the conditions like?

**Keros**: Condition?

**Janet**: Yeah on the boat?

**Keros**: You mean the food or?

**Janet**: Anything the food the sleeping-

**Keros**: Not so good.

**Janet**: Do you remember when the she-when prescient Roosevelt came into the New York harbor?

**Keros**: Yeah

**Janet**; did you see the statue of liberty?

**Keros**: Of course I see. I ask myself is this the statue of liberty. We are in New York now they say. Some fellas over there Greek fellas.

**Janet**: Did you ever know about that? Did you know what it was even?

**Keros**: no we didn’t know anything.

**Janet**: And how about Ellis Island?

**Keros**: Well this big one.

**Janet**: What do you remember about it?

**Keros**: I remember there we landed in New York and from there we took a little ferry boat and it took me down there.

**Janet**: And what was your impression of Ellis Island?

**Keros**: Nice. We stayed there about an hour. My father come he picked me up.

**Janet**: Did you get examined?

**Keros**: Oh yeah we had examination. Doctors were there examine say okay. You pass it.

**Janet**: Were you treated well or?

**Keros**: NO.

**Janet**: You were okay?

**Keros**: Yeah sire me am alright.

**Janet**: So then when you saw your father what was that like when he came and picked you up how did that feel?

**Keros**: I know before because he visit us one.

**Janet**: And where did he take you? When he too you off of Ellis island.

**Keros**: Well he stays one night in New York and the next day we come to concord.

**Janet** By train?

**Keros**: By train yeah.

**Janet**: Do you remember anything that struck you as new and different? Things about this country that you never saw before?

**Keros**: Oh it’s United States I never saw before. It was surprise.

**Janet** So where there any different foods-

**Keros**: Different food here different everything. Lots of different.

**Janet**: So when you got here to concord did you start working?

**Keros**: Well I would-yeah you stay about a month in the house. We go around and after we started working.

**Janet**: What was your father doing when you first came?

**Keros**: He working in shop. He used to work in a cable used to be cable here. Wire.

**Janet**; Not TV right?

**Keros**: Then after they take me down there too. I used to work here too. Yeah.

**Janet**: So you worked with your father then?

**Keros**: Yeah. Over the ridge [unclear 00:23:19] used to be big shop over there.

**Janet**: Now did you ever go back into carpentry in this country?

**Keros**: Oh yeah after when my father die. We decided to have a coffee shop.

**Janet**: You and your father?

**Keros**: No the other fella. Named peter my cousin. , peter latish name. And we decided to open a coffee shop on the pleasant street. 19 pleasant streets. What was the name?

**Janet**: Of the coffee shop.

**Keros**: Star hotdog.

**Janet**: Star. And so you were in partnership with him?

**Keros**: It was him for 33 years?

**Janet**: Oh wow. Now did you have children?

**Keros**: No.

**Janet**: And when did your wife come over here then?

**Keros**: Well I went back again.

**Janet**: When did you go back?

**Keros**: 1944

**Male**: No. no. 35.

**Keros**: 34-35 something like that.

**Janet**; The year that you came here for the first time

**Keros**: all by myself.

**Janet**: That was 1929?

**Keros**: Yeah. I stay four five months. I was being American citizen.

**Janet**: You became a citizen?

**Keros**: Uhuh. Became citizen. And then went back again 1945

Male: 35

**Keros**: 35 and I bring my wife

**Janet**: Now did she have to come through Ellis Island? No because you were a citizen.

**Keros**: Citizen yeah.

**Janet**: Okay let’s see. Now how do you feel about having come to this country? As a young man. What difference do you think it made the fact that you started out in Albania went to Greece then you ended up really living your life out here? How do you feel about that?

**Keros**: Well I like it. This why I stay here.

**Janet**: And what makes you really satisfied? Anything that you have done in your life that makes you feels really good that you were able to do it.

**Keros**: Well all the time it’s nice and good here. Yeah.

**Janet**: Are you pleased that you choose concord New Hampshire to live?

**Keros**: Yeah we like it. There used to be plenty of friends here but everyone has died.

**Janet**: Was there a big Greek Albanian population here?

**Keros**: Yeah quite a few. About 15-25 family. They are all gone now.

**Janet**: What was the Greek community like here in concerned? Did the people stick together?

**Keros**: Oh yeah they stick together. Sure.

**Janet**: They went to the same church?

**Keros**: Yeah same church.

**Janet**: And you must have seen a lot of changes in concord?

**Keros**: Oh sure.

**Janet**: Do you remember some of the things that were here when you first came that are no longer here anymore?

**Keros**: Everyone that I miss see is gone.

**Janet**: Yeah right

**Male**: the railway station

**Janet**: The railway station do you remember that-

**Keros**: Yeah the railway station, bus, station [unclear 00:27:18] from here to Manchester.

**Janet**: Really?

**Keros**: Yeah after [unclear 00:27:24] put a bus to go to Manchester. After bus I but car myself [laughter]

**Janet**: What was your first car?

**Keros**: First car Dutch.

**Janet**: Whist year was that?

**Keros**: Didn’t know what time. It was in the time.

**Janet**: Maybe 1948.

**Keros**: You can’t buy a car. You have to have an occupation to get you.

**Janet**: So do you remember was the depression a hard time of you?

**Keros**: Oh yeah big depression. I used to work in the dishwasher $5 a week. Yea big depression.

**Janet**: And then when the war started was drafted were you brought into the service at all?

**Keros**: The service? No I didn’t go in the service.

**Janet**: Okay and how is this time of your life now that you are retired. How was life for you at this stage?

**Keros**: Well yeah nice to be retired.

**Janet**: It’s nice to be retired but-are you-

**Keros**: Restaurant business very hard job.

**Janet**: Lots of hours?

**Keros**: Lot of hours. I open 7-11.

**Janet**: Seven in the morning to seven at night?

**Keros**: Yeah.

**Janet**: So you are glad to be retired? Or do you miss it?

**Keros**: No I don’t miss anything. Hard work in the restaurant. That’s all I got to go.

**Janet**: Okay I want to-wait let me unhook you-I want to thank you very much. I have been speaking with Spiro Keros and this is Janet Levine and I am signing off. Thank you.