

Glendi Video Transcription

“The First Glendi”

When we first started, it was to build this church, this temple. We were in the little church on the property before, and we were busting at the seams.

I feel like the origin story of the rainstorm adds a mythology to Glendi, so every year we tell this story about how the first one got rained out, and we were in the hall. So there's a place we've come from, and it's grown into this great big festival.

I was here for the first Glendi Festival, and it wasn't sprinkles. It was torrential rains, and we were all running around with garbage bags over our head. I know I personally thought, "We'll never do this again."

All the sound equipment and everything had to be covered up. All the booths had to be moved into the hall, and the hall was much smaller than it is now.

Not all of the booths moved indoors, because some of us were doing things over charcoal. We were actually still outdoors working. We had wooden booths that Barbara borrowed from Monroe Elementary School, and they had tarps over the top of them. My son who was nine for that Glendi -- his job was to take a broom and push the tarps up.

After a second year of a one-day event, we moved in our third year to a two-day format, and that's what we stuck with.

Well, the Glendi has really evolved. From that first small party that we had to really opening up to the community and bringing so many outsiders to our parish, to the festival.

Members of the church who came to that first Glendi, and came every year after that, eventually became Orthodox.

The way that the festival keeps going is for the generations to embrace the tradition and to learn to prepare those foods.

You know, these are things that have been made for generations. Recipes that have been passed down.

The last few years, we've had about 2,500 people come over the two days.

When I first joined this parish, we were in the little church, which is still on the property here. There were, I don't know, maybe five children here. Now, now we have a really young, strong, youthful generation.