The Romanian Benevolent Society Fârsărotul

SOCIETATEA FĂRSĂROTUL
FONDATĂ IN AMERICA 1903

80TH
Anniversary
1903 - 1983
The Romanian Benevolent Society Fârsârotul

Eightieth Anniversary
1903 - 1983

Saturday, June 25, 1983

Fredricks
Fairfield, Connecticut

Program

Selection of Miss Society "FARSAROTUL"

Ethnic, Macedonian-Romanian, and Modern Orchestra

7:00-8:00 p.m. Cocktail Hour — Hors d'oeuvres with Open Bar
6:00-9:00 p.m. Full Course Dinner
   Medley of Fruit Supreme • Salad a la Frederick
   Roast Sirloin of Beef • Vegetable du jour & Potatoes
   Special Dessert • Coffee, Tea, Sanka, etc.
9:00-1:00 p.m. Dancing — Open bar
11:00 p.m. Selection and Presentation
   of Miss Society "FARSAROTUL"
CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
of the Roumanian Benevolent Society "Farsarotul"
(A Roumanian Tribe)

We the undersigned, of full age, being desirous of associating ourselves together as a
non-stock membership corporation for social and mutual benefit purposes, as hereinafter
more particularly described, pursuant to and in conformity with the Acts of the Legislature of
the State of New York, relating to membership corporations, do hereby certify and declare
that we are of full age, two-thirds of us are citizens of the United States, and all of us are
residents of the State of New York.

WE do hereby certify and declare as follows:

FIRST. THAT the particular objects, for which said corporation of Society is formed are:
1. The promotion of social intercourse among its members and to voluntarily help each
   other in case of sickness or distress.

2. That the corporate name by which said corporation of Society hereby to be formed,
   shall be known and distinguished is and shall be Roumanian Benevolent Society
   "FARSAROTUL". (The name of a Roumanian tribe living in European-Turkey.)

3. That the territory in which the operation of said corporation are to be principally
   conducted is in the Borough of Manhattan, County of New York, City of New York.

4. That the principal office of said corporation shall be located in the Borough of
   Manhattan, County of New York, City of New York.

5. That the number of Directors of said Corporation shall be three.

6. That the names and place of residence of the persons and of said Corporation
   until the first annual meeting are:

   • UMITRU CIUFECU 68 West 43rd Street
   • LEON BLEECKER 201 West 23rd Street
   • S. A. BALAMACI 235 West 46th Street

7. That the annual meeting of said corporation shall be held on the second Wednesday of
   June of each and every year.

In testimony whereof, we have made and signed this certificate in duplicate and have
hereunto set our hands and affixed our respective seals this 12th day of (November),
one thousand nine hundred and nine.

UMITRU CIUFECU LEON BLEECKER S. A. BALAMACI

Dr. Phil Lee de Clanney Anthony F. Burke Louis Solaten

I, ANTON GRONICH, A Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby
and certify, that on this 12th day of November, in the year one thousand nine hundred and nine,
personally appeared before me, to me personally known and known to me to be the individuals
named in and who executed the foregoing certificate and they thereupon severally acknowledged before me, that they did execute the same for the purpose therein set forth.

(Signed by the Notary)

I, Edwad McLal (?), a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, of the first
Judicial Department, do hereby approve the foregoing certificate of incorporation and
consent that the same be filed. Dated November 16th, 1909.

(1909)

December, 1909

Bleecker

FILED AND RECORDED

Over One Hundred

Ilia Bici
Rev. John Popescu
Atanase Pandaru
Nicola Balamaci

Over Ninety

Pandely Teja
John Tasi
Hrista Fatsi

Over Eighty

Aristide Adam
Ilia Adam
Sofia Adam
Christy Balamaci
Costa Balamaci
Spiru Batsu
Dionise Becea
Grigori Becea
Thomas Becea
Anton Calesu
Ilia Calesu
Atanasi Carabina
Demitrie Caramitru
Demitrie Cela
Dimitrie Culescu
Dimitrie V. Dargati
Cleo Fatsi
Vasili M. Fatsi
Nichola Gartsu
Costa D. Geambazi

George Gecca
Cota Janelu
Vasil Lity
Dimitrie H. Nastu
Vanghel Nastu
Mita Rigea
Ahilea Talabac
Vasilihia Teja
Theodore Tonna
Vasil Uscatu
Glancing Back . . .

It is historically attested that the Macedonian-Romanians were and are a vibrant and humanizing force in the Balkan Peninsula. Transplanted in the New World by the adverse political-economical conjectures, they struggled to recreate in America the familial cohesiveness so instrumental in preserving their identity.

A major concern of the "Farsarotul", as for every ethnic group in this country has been of how to attain an ideal balance in developing an active role in the United States without losing its own cultural heritage.

There was a period in our history when a process of "homogenizing culture" was in vogue.

Ethnic diversity in this country is a social fact of life apparent to virtually everyone. The newcomers never forgot their heritage and even if they attempted to suppress it they were reminded of their "uniqueness" in numerous, not too subtle ways, which has provoked a resurgence of Ethnicity in the grandchildren of the immigrants.

Looking Ahead . . .

The rediscovered ethnic interest has actually increased among the descendents of our immigrant pioneers. They have exhibited a commitment to the community and understand which elements of our culture are relevant for future generations. In search of redefining the role of our cultural identity, there has evolved "a sense of belonging", individual self esteem, solidarity with people of similar descent.

Today ethnic communities and fraternal societies identify their groups in "a national culture" that preserves and expands their particular culture. It is appropriate that our Society Farsarotul should function as a conduit between our communities in order to keep a better perspective of our heritage and to promote and encourage cultural awareness.

We, the contemporaries, should not bask in the glorious sun of our forefathers; we are duty bound to contribute our share and to charge our youth to strengthen our rank and file.

We hope to sustain a consciousness of our Macedonian-Romanian experience and the destiny of our adopted nation. The more we understand our own culture, the more we are capable of comprehending the other cultures which compose the American Mosaic. Accept your own identity and that of others, in order to create an America where everyone is at home, blending a picture where each piece retains its own special shape, color and intrinsic quality.

Our greatest dept of gratitude is offered to our predecessors for their vision and dedication to their Society, families and Nation.

We invite you to become a member of the Society Farsarotul and thank you for being with us at the beginning of our ninth decennial.
Seatea ti liber tatea chiruta, avinarea dit munții a lor, i e si-afleau di când si-apreasi lumea, i j răspândi pi Râmn, feră vreama lor-pisti tut locu, câ asă ex cumandă si simferu ali Evropi "Darbi": alți s-chie rampă și alți să si-avdeyă. După mulți frumintări, mindueri și bană greauă tu unea lumi nicunuscă, a noilor viină nu lă si aspăra ocju și nu tricu mult câ și-adună s-urdzără primu a lor organism tu-America și va-si țânea stog, va s-j-agiuta și va s-lă apăra cultura s-nuștăli adeti adusi cu el ju trast.

Avum bărbați cu mintea limita, ca isvurlu curăți di munti, și bagara mult suflit s-vreari tu thimelu ali societări și nu avura rihăți până nu-și agiusmă scopu: una asociață fraterno-culturală și s-ție locu a unui părinti bun s-viglitor pisti fumeajă. Aist duh curat dit "Vlahu-Horî", fu sturu di cai si-ndupurau cand ddeau di zori. Fu casa pârințăci și-i aduna s-avu-ntgan s-acresca fumeli, s-analță biseri și scule rămăși; aist "duh" danası s-va si-danasească ti multi ahi ninti cu "FĂȘAROTOUL".


Dimănarea noastră easti ca partea ci u giucară parinții, ausili și străausili ti "Fălcări" s-și ghică giunarea noastră invitață. Easti aradă și borgia lor morală s-baga putearea și-vetea tută ta s-țână să-vă pira di "Vatră". S-a de-a numira disaga a "Fărșărotui" s-încărcați cu vreai și tiină ti Soia s-ți rădzătina noastră Traco (Macedona) Romană, s-țână apresa cândiia sum icoana ali Râmnăni.

S-vină namisa di noi tută Râmnăni, di iucido iu si-află; așeți și au dor ti limba, ti bisearică, ti adeți, ti libertăți și ti uminătăți. Văclimăm s-vinși cu

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**PAST PRESIDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>1908, 1915, 1919</td>
<td>Custachi Belba</td>
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<td>1909-1910, 1924-1925, 1926-1930, 1850-1952</td>
<td>Pandely Talabac</td>
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<td>1911</td>
<td>Dimitri Simu</td>
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<td>1912</td>
<td>Dionișe Babu</td>
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<td>1913</td>
<td>Dimitre Sp. Teja</td>
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<td>1914</td>
<td>Atanase Pandaru</td>
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<td>1915-1917</td>
<td>Spiru Musi</td>
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<td>1918</td>
<td>Rev. Ioan Popescu</td>
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<td>1920</td>
<td>Alexandru Biscu</td>
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<td>1921</td>
<td>Dimitrie Balamaci</td>
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<td>1922</td>
<td>Hrista Dimitrescu</td>
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<td>1923</td>
<td>Spiru Pippa</td>
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<td>1926-1927</td>
<td>Tanasi Rosu</td>
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<td>1931-1933, 1939-1940</td>
<td>Thanasi Babu</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934, 1943-1946</td>
<td>Ilia Bici</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935-1938, 1941-1942, 1947-1948</td>
<td>Ahilea Cipu</td>
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<td>1953-1954</td>
<td>Tasu D. Tasi</td>
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<td>1955-1958</td>
<td>Spiro Vasilescu</td>
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<td>1959-1970</td>
<td>Christy Balamaci</td>
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<td>1972-1973</td>
<td>Vasile Fatsi</td>
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<td>1974-1975</td>
<td>Constantine Vanghele</td>
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<td>1976-1978</td>
<td>Nicholas P. Fatses</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-1981</td>
<td>Robert Nicola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-1984</td>
<td>Aureli D. Ciufecu</td>
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**Aureliu D. Ciufecu**

Presedinte
THE ORIGIN OF THE ROMANIAN-PHARSALIOT; 
A HISTORICAL REVIEW

Since prehistoric times the Thracian people have occupied that area of Europe bounded by the Aegean and Adriatic Seas, by Dacia and Moesia in the North and Thessaly in the South. According to Herodot, historian of the V Century B.C., "the Thracian population was the largest and most numerous, second only to the Indians".

From an historical point of view the inhabitants of the east and the north of Macedonia were the above mentioned Thracians while the inhabitants of the west of Macedonia were the Thraco-Illyrians. Towards the end of the V Century and the beginning of the IV B.C., Macedonia experienced a meteoric expansion under King Philip II (382-336). In spite of his short reign, he was able to create the most powerful army in the world. He was the founder of the "Phalanx", the most feared method of combat. The Empire grew even more, after the accession to the throne of his son, Alexander the Great in 336.

Their contemporary, Demosthenes, denounced them in his famous anti-Macedonian speeches in Athens, as "the Barbarians from the north". Meanwhile these "barbarians from the north" had been able to conquer most of the "known world" and were at the time the sole masters of the "two worlds", from the Nile to the Indus Rivers. When Alexander died in Babylon in 323 B.C. the Macedonian Empire was divided into four kingdoms. The Roman Republic immediately took advantage of this political division. After the Romans conquered Athens and the East of the Mediterranean, they first defeated Pyrrhus, the king of Epirus. Later, the Roman legions caught the Macedonian army and won a total victory in 197 B.C. Perseus, Philip V's successor, was crushed at last in 188 B.C. at the battle of Pydna, won by Consul Aemilius Paulus.

Rome partitioned Macedonia in four protectorates, under their supervision. The Macedonians rebelled against the new rulers, their political domination and the tribute that they imposed. Their rebellion was broken up and by 146 B.C. Rome had gained total control, annexed their territories, and proclaimed in the Senate that Macedonia was a province of the Republic under the authority of a Roman Governor. From then on, the Republic romanized the new territories with colonies from Italy, especially from Abruzzi, and veteran legionnaires. These new won territories became the stronghold and main base for the Romans in their future conquests against the people living to the north of the Danube, the Dacians. However, the Pax Romana was disrupted due to the political rivalries going on between the two major powers, the Romans and the Parthians.

Three main events are of primordial importance and lay out the foundation and origin of the Romanian people:
1. In 146 B.C. Macedonia becomes a Roman province,
2. In 48 B.C. the battle of Pharsalia takes place
3. In 107 A.D. after a fierce resistance to the Romans, the Dacians are conquered by Trajan.

The continuous trade that took place between south and north of the Danube, within the Roman world, created in this area an affluent and prosperous Roman culture. Historians and linguists have proven that the Danube and the mountains have not been boundaries but links for the eastern Romanity. The construction of towns, fortresses and roads, like for example, via Egnatia crossing Macedonia from Durazzo to Serdica-Salonica, brought new colonists from across the Adriatic. Consequently, a rapid Romanization of the Macedo-Thracian population took place at least two centuries before Trajan's venture into Dacie.

From this new amalgam of Macedo-Romans, one particular group distinguished itself from all other living in the Oriental Romanity. This was the Roman-Pharsaliot, or "FARSAROT" to use the Romanian spelling; in other words the "fighter of Pharsalia". A strong instinct was preserved in this particular group. They inherited the courage, pride and heroism of their predecessors. These veteran legionnaires, who on the battlefield of Pharsalia gave Caesar the victory and in this way spared Rome from civil wars.

As a matter of fact, a Pharsalioi (to use the archaic form) when asked: "what he is?" will not simply respond, "Roman", but, "Roman-Farsarot", to remind you and emphasize his ascendence. To sustain and promote the above affirmations we are citing only a few statements by foreign scholars.

Among those defining "the place of birth" of the Romanian Pharsaliots in Pharsalia, (Thessaly) was the Italian Professor Antonio Baldacci. He was most fervent in locating their place of birth.

Another was Gustav Weigand, the Romanian historian from Leipzig, who dedicated his life studying the "Sprache der Olypo-Walachen" (in 1888). He purposefully went to live amongst them and researched their origin.

Professor Antonio Baldacci underlines strongly that the name Pharsaliot-Farsarot derives from Pharsalia.

"Due to his love for freedom, his antagonism to foreign influence and developed independence, the "Farsarot" is named the "Eagle of the Mountains". His sensibility, moral force and virtues as a soldier are inherited from the braves of the Thracians, Macedonians and Romans. All these qualities underline and remind us again of their noble ascendance and were instrumental in maintaining their nationalism.

This prototype of "Farsarot", perhaps unique among the Romanians from the Balkan Peninsula, drew the attention and admiration of the German scholar Weigand who concludes as follows: "Der Vergleich mit einem Romischen Legionsoldaten ist ganz am Platze" (the similarity with the Roman legionnaire is remarkable). The emissary of Emperor Napoleon I, Pouqueville, while staying at the court of Ali Pasha, in Janina, Epirus, states as follows: "Les Tartares reprochent les proportions Romaines; et le temps qui affaiblit les types nationaux n'a pas... ("The bone structure of the head reminds us of that of the Romans, and time seems not to have weakened their national type, the way it did to others..." . He further comments: "Déspite their geographical closeness, to confuse them with the Greeks or Albanians would be wrong". Further, Weigand writes: "Ich sehe eine mischung von Megalovlachiten aus Pharsalia, aus der das Pharsaliot-Farsarot".

Taking into account the above, we are stressing the fact, that during the two centuries of national pride and well-being, and even after the XIV-XV Centuries, one could say that the Romanians from Thessaly felt at home in Thracia, East of the Balkans. We know as
mentioned by the chroniclers that: "At Mt. Athos the Vlach shepherds were selling their cheese..." In the west, we have located them on the coast of the Adriatic Sea. The historian N. Iorga is relating the following statement for the middle of the XIII Century: "The nephew of the founders of the 'Empire', Ioan Asan, who spent his youth on Romanian soil, over the Danube, reigned over the territories from Durazzo to the doors of Constantinople."

A relative of Kekuwanos, the Bizantine general of Armenian origin confirms that the Emperor Basil bestowed upon Niculita a the title of: "Duc des Vlaques... Niculita, Celnic (Duc) of Great Vlachia (1050-1355) was most probably a Farsarot. The characteristic name Niculita was common among them, and as mentioned by the famous scholars above, Thessaly was the birthplace of the Romanian-Pharsalians.

At the apogee of Vlach power, Rabbi Benjamin de Tudela from Navarre (Spain) while travelling through Thessaly (in 1163-1164) quotes as follows: "Nobody can go to war against the Vlachs and no Emperor could conquer them."

To further enforce the anthropological character of the "Farsarot", I am quoting Professor C. Noe, who said: "They have a spirit of solidarity and discipline, which surpasses other considerations, keeps them united... virtues, which in our utilitarianistic world are in disguise, as for example: honor, dignity, honesty, friendship, courage etc... are all of primordial importance and are revered sacrosanctly. This integrity cannot be altered even by foreign environment."

The moral upbringing and stoic education applied by the "Farsarot's" family, is envied by others. These virtues are the pillars of the solid foundation on which is based the Macedo-Romanian ethnicity. This respect for the family reminds us of the precepts formulated by the Roman statesman "Cato the Elder", who as censor in 184 B.C. vehemently opposed the foreign influence over the east, which was eroding the Roman society and he kept praising and preaching the preservation of the Roman virtues. Ethical traditions and the way of life of the Farsarots is dominated by the head of the family — paterfamilias. — The family is closely knit and its head is usually the oldest member. A group of families compose the "Falcarea" or "Farsarot". A group from Murihova Mountains established the centers of Pleasa, Disnitsa, Stropani etc... and many of them inhabited the towns of Corcea (Curceaua in the Dacian-Romanian language has fewer non-Latin words than Italian, Spanish or French. If we accept the hypothesis that Latin and Dacian were two closely related dialects, deriving from the Thracian language, then Giuliano Bonfante's conclusion corresponds to the linguistic reality. The Dacian-Romanians and the Farsarots have preserved with veneration the close relation with Rome by calling themselves Romans in contrast to other Macedo-Romanians who call themselves Armiani.

The French consul to Salonica, E. M. Cousinery, writes in his memoires: 'Voyage Dans La Macedoine', published in 1831, the following quotation: "When asked 'What they are? the local people answered with pride that they were 'Romani'..."

This brief review is intended to furnish a retrospective view of the history of our people. I hope I have reawakened in all of you an awareness of our history and culture.

Aureliu D. Ciufecu
The Societys History

Just about the beginning of this century, when the largest and most difficult immigrations to this country were beginning to take place, a number of our people disembarked on these eastern shores of America. They had come here to get away from the adverse conditions at home. They had come to take advantage of the wonderful opportunities found in this land, and to erase the material weaknesses of their families abroad.

When they arrived, they were confronted with conditions far more formidable than were ever experienced thereafter in the history of this society. Their greatest obstacles were their ignorance of the English language and a lack of American friends to help them.

The majority of the Macedo-Romanian communities, settled in America between 1905 and 1917. The first World War stopped immigration for about four years. It resumed in 1920 for another decade. Confronted with a completely new way of life, the Romanians were forced by circumstances to perform all kinds of hard labour; railroad jobs in Indiana and textile factories in New England. The more fortunate ones obtained jobs in hotels and restaurants.

Not much time elapsed before they organized and formed the society called "Farsarotul," which is the first Macedo-Romanian society in this country. It was founded on the thirteenth day of September, 1903, under the name, "Speranta," by the late Nicolae Cican and six other members. Its scope was to aid our unfortunate, our widows, and our invalids, without any benefits to be derived from this assistance.

The directors of the Society at the time of incorporation and as documented on the certificate of Incorporation were Dumitru Ciufescu and Spiru A. Balamaci.

Shortly after, with a multiple increase in membership, branches were established wherever groups of our people settled, such as New York, St. Louis, San Francisco, Bridgeport, Woonsocket, North Grosvener-Dale, Central Falls, and other places.

Two or three years after the founding of the society there was a period of misunderstanding among its members. Fortunately this dark chapter did not stay with us too long. This bitter and costly experience serves as a reminder that it should never be undertaken again, for the future of this society lies in its harmony and a sincere brotherly love.

On December 10, 1906, the name of the society was changed to the "Romanian Benevolent Society, "Farsarotul," and it was incorporated as such on the 23rd day of December, 1906, in the State of New York.

At that time the sole preoccupation of our members was to send the greater part of their income to the old country to help the poor, widows, invalids, schools and churches. The spirit of home patriotism was at its peak and the contributions were quite extensive.

In 1918, when the society had $6,025.50, the members decided that the scope of the society should be amended. Whereas they had always been thinking of those on the other side, they were now more concerned with their own immediate problems. Some of the changes that followed were:

Monthly dues were raised from 25¢ to 75¢.

The beneficiary of an active deceased member would receive a death benefit of $250.00.

Each member shall pay monthly dues for a period of thirty years.

Although the progress of the society has been rather slow since it was founded, its administration has been carried out in a most efficient and honest manner that bestows praise upon its fellow members. The patriotic prestige soared with their increased benevolent deeds.

From the time of its founding to the present day the society has given benevolent aid to its members and fellow Macedo-Romanians wherever they were. During the past 75 years the society has contributed to a large variety of causes, some of which are:

- An amount of $2000.00 donated for the erection of the monumental Romanian Orthodox Church in Coniza, Albania. Unfortunately this edifice was destroyed by an earthquake.
- The society has contributed $1,500.00 for the renovation of Romanian schools in Coniza, Please, Nevesica, and other places.
- It has donated 50,000 leis for the erection of the Romanian church in Frasani, Romania.
- It contributed to the aid of those suffering in that same town when a fire transformed ninety-one homes into a mass of rubble and ashes. It gave 400,000 leis.
- The society contributed $5000.00 for the erection of the Romanian Orthodox church in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.
- Another $500.00 was given for the acquisition of church property in Bridgeport, Connecticut.
- When the need of a house of worship for Romanian Americans was realized in this city of New York, the society took the initiative and contributed $500.00.
- It aided the Romanian Orthodox church in Southbridge, Massachusetts.
- It contributed for the acquisition of Romanian church property in Worcester, Massachusetts.
- It contributed a generous amount to the Romanian Red Cross during World War I.

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During the past 25 years, the society took a keen interest in our youth and has created a Scholarship fund in the 1950’s. Up to date “the Farsarotul” society has given about forty Scholarship Aids, totalling over $15,000.00. A major contributor to the Scholarship Fund is our Honorary member of the Board of Directors, Mr. Theodore Tonna, with a $1,000.00 pledge every year. From our new generation born in the United States have sprouted professionals, men and women such as lawyers, professors, doctors, etc... 

We sincerely hope that our youth in return will take an active part to keep the society alive. We send a warm message to them and ask them to follow the good example of our predecessors. In doing so they will assume the responsibility to safeguard the society for coming generations. Our youth is the key to yet unopened doors in the history of the society “Farsarotul” and we hope to see them add a new chapter to its constant growing volume.

America now takes a different attitude and is beginning to recognize the treasures of the ethnic heritage. For too long the advocates of the “melting pot” discouraged any interest by the “New Americans” in the civilization and the language of their ancestors. This is gradually changing now. We have the mandate to value and reveal the richness of our culture, no matter where we find ourselves as a group, as a society or as an individual.

As an ethnic Romanian-American society, in a country where anyone has the freedom of his own opinion, we want to convey to you that we have the duty to conserve our cultural, spiritual and social values. We should never forget that our prime role, as guardians of the Romanian Cultural and Benevolent Society “Farsarotul”, is to enforce with wisdom and resourcefulness those two institutions, which still serve us so well, the Church and the Society. Only these two will perpetuate our spiritual richness for future generations. Now it is up to us to unite and with a new stride to safeguard our traditions, culture, language and ethnic origin.

It is imperative to plan for a future “Cultural Center”. A center where the individual is stimulated to research his source in history and provide him with the traditional aspects of our culture.

We are fast approaching a century of Romanian life in this blessed land. On this festive occasion we take the opportunity to examine our past and express our gratitude to our predecessors; men with keen intelligence, developed instinct for the preservation of their ethnicity, with intrepid spirit and patriotic feelings.

In order to follow in their footsteps, it is our sacrosanct duty to respect the commitment to our ancestors and to maintain and perpetuate our ancestral heritage.
eightieth anniversary
eightieth anniversary