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Dear Friends of Kythera,

I'm late again with my newsletter... sorry about that. We returned from Easter on Kythera a few days ago. Although it rained a few times and was distinctly chilly on a couple of days. we still managed to get a tan and plunge into the sea a few times (mostly thanks to being challenged by my boys...)

I've been working on the "Above Kythera" book of aerial photographs for the last two months, surrounded by a half-dozen maps and google earth while I sort through more than 3000 photographs which I took in a plane in December and February. While some of the locations are easy to identify – it isn't hard to recognise Paliohora or Kapsali for example – some of the pictures only reveal their subjects by studying the pictures taken before and after and surmising where the picture in question must have been taken, then scouring maps for intersections which match. It's sort-of fun, but time-consuming.

How many of your Kythera-buffs can recognise this village on our verdant island?





The book will contain more than just aerials. We not only want to list the common surnames and the churches in and around each village, but also their "neighbourhoods". You might grin at the thought of little Kytherian villages being divided up into still smaller units. And you are not alone. When I walk into a village cafe and asked the old locals exactly that, their initial reaction was invariably to say "we're too small to have neighbourhoods". Then I showed them the aerial pictures of their villages and, like magic, they were telling me what each area of the village was called. In the "old days", when the villages were much more densely populated, villagers used suburb names to ease communication and directions. "OK", you might think, "big villages like Potamos, Karavas and Hora might have a few suburbs, but not one-donkey settlements like Petrouni or Trifyllianika..." And you'd be absolutely wrong. The chirpy and generous Kosmas Souris of Pantonia Apartments surprised me when, after naming 4 suburbs – (Bavea, Moschovitianika (Mesa), Kotsifianika (Kato), Makrianika (Pera) – of his native Gerakari, itself not exactly New York City, he then followed this with four neighbourhoods for the perhaps even smaller Petrouni:

## Petrouni Πετρούνι

**Surnames:** Koumesos, Moulos, Sougiannis, Souris, Sofios, Zantiotis

**Neighbourhoods:** Betianika, Gatsianika, Prapianika, Perakoumares, Sougiananika (Diaselathi)

**Churches:** Agios Mamas

Thanks Kosmas!

Many others have been more than helpful in supplying almost-forgotten neighbourhood names. I'll never forget visiting the café in Mylopotamos last week with my friend the plumber Theodore Tamvakis, going through the surnames, churches and neighbourhoods, him calling out to the dozen other locals in the smokey café to find answers and almost causing scuffles in the ensuing arguments. In the end they came up with 11 neighbourhoods for Mylopotamos: Agios Sostis, Kamári, Kalívia, Ríza, Skoulantriánika, Stratigádika, Neromili, Neraida, Potirianika, Trochalia, Glosátou. Are they all in Mylopotamos proper? Do any of them belong to Kato Hora or Piso Pigathi? Do they all actually have houses in them or are some just names of fields or gardens? Fortunately, it doesn't really matter. We're not trying to produce an academic work. The most important thing is to record the local knowledge before it fades.

Speaking of which – are any of you experts on your family villages? Or do you have elderly but sharp relatives from Kythera whom you can call and ask about their villages? Because I still need to find out the neighbourhoods of lots of village, and verify the ones I already have. If so, grab the phone, make a call, ignore the fact that your relative says that their villages were too small to have neighbourhoods, ask them what the area around the church on the hill, the platia, the cemetery, Auntie Froso's house etc. were called. You'll see. Suddenly they'll be gushing about all the names, churches and neighbourhoods.

Another great help has been the delightful Eleni Harou-Coroneos in Hora. She knows almost all the churches on the island off by heart and, with her brother Vasili, helped me map out Hora for the book. See how many of your knew all of this:

# Hora Χώρα

**Surnames:** Alvanakis, Andronikos, Avgerinos, Dapontes, Darmaros, Fotios, Haros, Kalligeros, Kaloutsis, Kantiotos, Kasimatis, Macheriotis, Masselos, Nikiforakis, Petrochilos, Pastos, Stais, Veneris

**Neighbourhoods:** Aspa (Platia), Anemomilos, Kastro (Fortetsa), Mesa Vourgo, Sfakiana, Stavromenos (Konostasi, Balabama), Varipatianika (Pera Horio), Limni (Trouli), Karvelas, Agia Anna, Halepaki,

**Churches in the Kastro:** Myrthiotisa (16C), Panagia Orfani (16C), Pantokratoras (16C), Agios Ioannis

**Mesa Vourgo Churches:** Chrisostomos-Filippos (15C), Agios Georgios Kaloutsis (15C), Agios Ioannis Drapanezos, Panagia Mesohoritissa (16C), Agios Dimitrios (ruins, 14C), Agia Triatha (16C), Sotiras Kaloutsis (16C), Archistrathgos-Agios Athanasios (17C), Agios Basilios (ruins).

**Exo Vourgo Churches:** Agia Varvara, Agios Jakovos, Agios Georgios Lomvarthos (15C), Agia Anastasia (17C), Agia Anna (18C), Agii Pantes (17C), Stravromenos (17C), Theologos (17C), Tries Irarches (Three Hierarchs, 18C), Sotiras (17C), Agios Minas (St Martin, 16C), Agios Dionysios (19C)

**Επώνυμα:** Αλβανάκης, Αυγερινός, Βενέρης, Δαπόντες, Δαρμάρος, Φώτιος, Χάρος, Καλλίγερος, Καλούτσης, Καντιώτος, Κασιμάτης, Μαχαριώτης, Μασσέλος, Νικηφοράκης, Πετρόχειλος, Παστός, Στάης

**Τοπωνύμια:** Άσπα (Πλατεία), Ανεμόμυλος, Κάστρο, Μέσα Βούργου, Σφακιανά, Βαρυπατιάνικα (Πέρα Χωρίο), Λίμνη (Τρούλοι), Καρβέλας, Αγία Άννα, Σταυρωμένος (Κονοστάσι, Μπαλαμπάμα), Χαλεπάκι, Κάστρο (Φορτέτσα)

**Εκκλησίες Κάστρου:** Μυρτιδιώτισσα (16ος), Παναγία Ορφανή (16ος), Παντοκράτορας (16ος), Άγιος Ιωάννης

**Εκκλησίες Μέσα Βούργου:** Χρυσόστομος-Φίλιππος (15ος), Άγιος Γεώργιος Καλούτση (15ος), Άγιος Ιωάννης Δραπανέζος, Παναγία Μεσοχωρίτισσα (16ος), Άγιος Δημήτριος (ερείπωμένη, 14ος), Αγία Τριάδα (16ος), Σωτήρας Καλούτση (16ος), Αρχιστράτηγος-Άγιος Αθανάσιος (17ος), Άγιος Βασίλειος (ερείπωμένη)

**Εκκλησίες Έξω Βούργου:** Αγία Βαρβάρα, Άγιος Ιάκωβος, Άγιος Γεώργιος Λομβάρδος (15ος), Αγία Αναστασία (17ος), Αγία Άννα (18ος), Άγιοι Πάντες (17ος), Σταυρωμένος (17ος), Θεολόγος (17ος), Τρεις Ιεράρχες (18ος), Σωτήρας (17ος), Άγιος Μηνάς (Άγιος Μαρτίνος, 16ος), Άγιος Διονύσιος (19ος).

Of course any mistakes in the above lists are certainly due to my typos or poor Greek, but I hope to have them corrected before the book goes to print.

Kythera if really big! In the air I was trying to figure out where exactly we were half the time. And even back on the ground I get mixed up sometimes, going through the pictures: the church bell-tower over Mylopotamos and Logothetianika look similar from a distance, and if any of you are experts in figuring out where Kato Livathi, Levounari, Katsoulia and Katouni begin and end, you either deserve a medal or a good psychiatrist.

The “Above Kythera” book will be divided up into villages and that brings us to the next problem: how to spell them. In addition to GoogleEarth I have six other maps, the oldest from 1899 and the newest by “Skai” a couple of years ago. Let's take a little village west of Karavas as an example. In the 1899 map it is spelt Pronki, in the [Kythera.gr](http://Kythera.gr) map from 2008 it is “Progi”. The 2010 VisitKythera one “Progki”. And the Skai map: “Prongki”. I know some residents living there and they insist on spelling it “Broggi”. Even in Greek there are variations on village names: “Λιβιάδι” and “Λειβάδι” can both be found on streets signs indicating Livathi.

Next question: what constitutes a village, and what a neighbourhood or sub-village? Karavas is, according to the 1899 map, a valley or district and not even a village. Yianni the baker there reeled the suburbs off for me: Amiralis, Koumesianika, Korianika, Kritharianika, Lepithas, Marmaro, Mavrogiorgianika, Medianika, Mothianika, Neo Hori, Pathoulia/Thothorakia, Pedianika, Portathella. And Vagianika and Kryoneri down the road. And Diakopoulia up the road. Anyway, back to the question: what is a village and what is a neighbourhood? Does a separate dot on the map (which map?) make it a village? Are Kominianika, Klarathika and Gerakianika three villages or one: Pourko/Poyrko? Never heard of them? Not surprising. They are west of Livadi (Livathi, Livadhi).

Next, the Greek Delta. Not the wet triangular sedimentary variety. The triangular letter: Δ. What a pain. You have to admit, the closest sound we have to it in English is represented by “th”. So if we want people to pronounce Αρονιάδικα correctly we should spell it “Aroniathika”. The otherwise erudite Skai Map people spell it “Aroniadhika”. And most Greeks like to spell it “Aroniadika”, probably because they reserve “th” for their Θ (theta). You might have noticed my preference for the “th” transcription of “δ” in my articles – some of you certainly have because I receive regular complaints about it. My opinionated position is: if you want people to say it correctly, you have to give them a phonetic spelling. It isn't pronounced “Alexandrades”, so why not use a “th” instead of the “d”? Pronounced with a “d” it sounds either like we are a 4 year old who can't manage a “th” or a German or Dutch person who can only say “Dis and Dat” anyway.

That said, I'm as inconsistent as the next immigrant. I would never dream of spelling Dokana "Thokana" or Dimitri "Thimitri", even though they are pronounced that way. The reason is because some things have an "accepted spelling" in English (like Kythera, although, in Greek, it is pronounced "Kythira"). A "δ" at the beginning of a word needs to be spelt with a D in English otherwise we won't recognise it easily. Who would correctly recognise "Thiakofti" at first glance? But, and this is my distinction, if the "δ" is in the middle of a word why not spell it "th" to facilitate pronunciation? Livathi is as easy to read as Livadi. And the Greeks have a "d" already: "nt". Johnny Depp is spelt "Τζόννι Ντεππ" (Tzonni Ntepp). A Greek could translate "Livadi" thus as "Livanti". Confused now?

What about Hora? Or Chora? Hitra or Chitra? Mirtidia or Myrtithia? Fourni or Furni? The list is endless. I suppose it is to be expected when we're dealing with an island which itself, like me, has endless variations of its name: Cythera, Cythira, Cerigo, Tsirigo, Kithira, Kythira, Kythera...

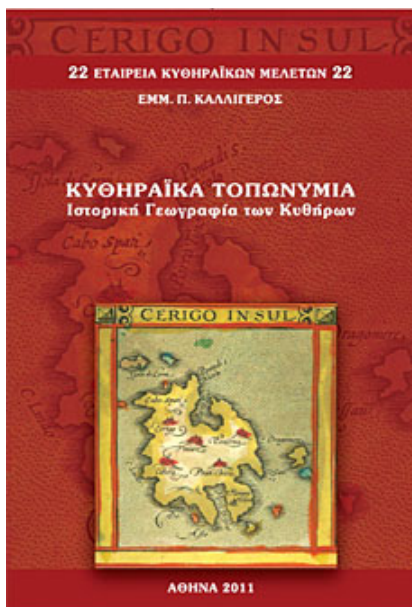
**Dimitri-James-Victor-Alexander Dewhirst-Prineas**  
([james@kythera-family.net](mailto:james@kythera-family.net))

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## Kytherian Toponamia. Historical Geography of Kytherian Place Names

Another important and interesting book by Emmanuel P. Kalligeros for Kythira has just been published. Ten years after the first release of the book **Kytherian Surnames**, which was released in 2002, second edition in 2006 and soon will be released in English, he has released his second book in the trilogy series on the Kytherian nomenclature, topography and historical geography.

The book **Kythera Place Names: historical geography of Kythera** is the product of years of research on place names, the religious monuments and history of the settlements of Kythira.



The first part the book contains the story in concise form of all the settlements of the island from ancient times until today with emphasis on the etymology of their names, the first appearance in historical written texts and the first, key inhabitants.

This chapter also relates to the settlements that have been lost, changed name, or those which were once there, but whose traces have been lost. The main goal of this chapter is to separate history from myth and legends.

In the second part of the book there are two lists. A list of place names, which includes over 4000 place names and minor place names with a few references to them. It is an attempt to record Kytherian place names, which are quickly forgotten in our time and are in danger of being lost.

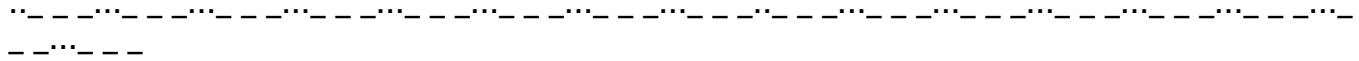
There is also a second list of notable churches, which includes more than 350 churches of Kythera with a few useful references for the reader who has a particular interest.

Finally, in the introduction of the book there are three chapters on three specific issues of interest to Kythera, which illuminate the main theme of the book. These are the rule of the Venier during the 14th century, invasion of the Catalans in Kythera also during the 14th century and the Census of the guardian of the Kastro in the 16th century.

The introduction also contains references to fifty Kytherian families whose presence dates back before the 16th century and some even reach back in time to the 13th century, as occurred with many villages and settlements.

The book was published by the Society for Kytherian Studies (5 Themistocles, Athens, tel 210 3832806), and is available from bookshops in Kythera and printed by Stamoulis Publications.

The cover was designed by Kallia Drosou with maps of the Collection of Ant. Tantoulou, while the maps were obtained online by Al. Sougianni

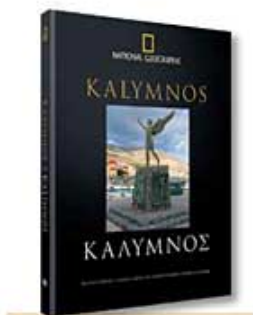


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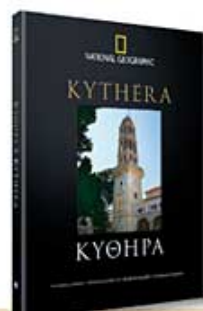
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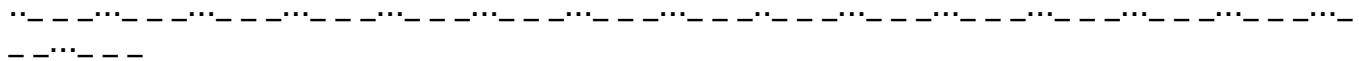


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## Kytherian Initiative's beach cleanup

On Palm Sunday, April 8th, members and friends of Kythiraiki Protovoulia (“Kytherian Initiative”), the political association bent on reforming local government on Kythera, cleared up a winter’s worth of rubbish from Fyri Ammos beach. The refuse, consisting largely of wave-born plastic bottles and containers, was gathered up and carried away for recycling. Fyri Ammos on the east coast, one of the island’s longest and most attractive beaches, is still pristine and unspoiled. Kythiraiki Protovoulia, which has announced that it will if necessary have recourse to legal measures to halt any further illegal development of Kythera’s beaches, is making sure it remains that way.



You can follow Protovoulia's activities on our website, <http://www.protovouliakythera.com/>.

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## Guestbook Entry

Katrina Sklavos – Singapore

Hi there. I am trying to find a family tree that details the lineage of my family. My father was George Sklavos, (his brothers, John & Noel) son of Jim and Kettie (Katherine) Sklavos from Brisbane. I believe that my grandfather's uncle was the early George Sklavos and we are related to Father Yianni Sklavos, a priest from the church Agia Triada in Mitata, however I am not sure how it all pieces together. If anyone has any information on this lineage I would really appreciate it.

with thanks,

Katrina

[katrina@katrinaread.com.au](mailto:katrina@katrinaread.com.au)

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## The Golden Greeks

by John Sourrys



Photograph: George and Maria Sourrys and family.

One of the species thrown up by the outback was the Greek Cafe. Hailing from the small island of Kythera, the Greeks began to come to Australia from the turn of the last century. Sydney was to be the first stop. The Greek immigrant would work for another Greek in a cafe, pay off his passage and learn the trade. First by standing behind the cash register. Then with a little capital, venture to all towns in New South Wales and Queensland.

The central heartbreak of every Greek is that he leaves behind a community, a place where every rock and piece of grass is known. After the privations of a long voyage, he arrives in Australia without any English. Only one who has arrived on a foreign shore can tell you what it feels like.

One such Kytherian was George Sourys. He first went to Mt Isa, a mining town in North West Queensland. It was a frontier town where the streets often ran with blood. Small tent houses sprang up around the mines. There was a link with aborigines. Some of the whites had gone native. They were usually sunburnt and the scars on their faces bore testimony to some past battle. Barefooted they had a black wife with one child on the breast and bringing up the rear would be these half-caste children.

Nor was the link with the aborigines confined to the poorer classes. An English Governor came to Mt Isa for a civil reception, he excused himself to go and find his nephew. His nephew was an aboriginal boy, his brother's son. His rebellious brother had left England never to return, and as the Governor sat by the campfire with the young aboriginal, tears rolled down his face.

George was interested in buying a business in this boomtown. The lead bonus had attracted workers. He put a 100 pound deposit on a shop. The sulphur fumes from the mine would stand above the ground, burning your eyes and people were continually coughing. Georgie, as he was called, decided to leave when a railway stationmaster told him 'I am getting out, these fumes will kill you'.

He then went to Hughenden. Hughenden in North West Queensland, midway between Townsville and Mt Isa. was named after Disraeli's residence in England. It stood on the Flinders River and was an important sheep and railway town. With large sheep stations around it, it was the centre of the shearing industry. About 200km from Winton where Banjo Patterson penned Waltzing Matilda, it was said to be the first town where Waltzing Matilda was sung publicly.

Lacking any capital, he bought a horse and cart. He called the horse Lucy, after an Australian girl whose temperament he admired. He would make his own ice cream and pies. He would go around the town by day ringing his bell calling out "ice cream, pies" in his broken English. At nights he would pull up outside the movie theatre.

Somebody mustn't have liked the way he operated, because one morning he woke up and found Lucy his horse gone. Frantically he looked everywhere for her. He suspected one of the cafe owners. It meant he was finished. A young boy told him that he'd seen a horse up the river. There was never a more joyous reunion when he found her.

Two things happened that set Georgies destiny in Hughenden. A shop became available near the railway line. The previous owners had gone broke. It was on the wrong side of the town but well equipped. He went to see a Mr Llewellyn, the manager from the Bank of New South Wales. He told him "I'll back you". It never would have happened today. This began a love affair with the Bank of New South Wales. Later, the future Bank Managers would send a teller to Georgies to collect the takings and save him a trip to the bank.

The other event that occurred was that the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour. In a short time Australia was overrun with thousands of American Servicemen. Being in the north, a base was set up outside Hughenden. Georgies became very busy. Being raised on a Greek Island, he knew how to cook fish. The fish would arrive from Townsville by rail. 'Nobody cooked fish like Georgie,' remarked a Mrs Cath Murphy in Mt Isa. He stayed open until the early hours of the morning, until the last dime was spent.

The Americans had money. Always accompanied by a band, they were an attractive group. They

would jump on the running board of the taxi and call out, "Go man Go".

They went to local dances. The Aussies could say to another nationality after the war years 'no dancing with the white girls'. This was funny because the coloured girls did not go to the dance and the Americans ignored the Australian men. Anyway the Australian girls were attracted to their flashy ways. Skirmishes broke out and one night the Americans gave the Aussies a hiding.

Two things dominated the Greek mind. Capital and a safe to put your money in. He began to make a lot of money, but safes were not available. An Emmanuel Comminos, another Kytherian who went through Hughenden remembered that he had a huge rubbish bin filled with money, figuring that if he were robbed, no one would look in the rubbish bin. At night during the blackout, he would walk home with his money rolled up in a newspaper under one arm and the other carrying a knife. He would wave it in front of him as he walked home in the darkness.

One day an American officer called him aside and told him 'George where we come from we don't serve niggers'. He didn't like the idea that George was serving black servicemen. Stories were circulating around town that if a Negro misbehaved, they'd shoot him. Georgie said, 'everybody is the same to me'.

One thing he learnt in Brisbane was that you had to be consistent. He felt that it was a failure of the Aussie businessmen that he would be up one day and down the next. He began to give credit. There was a method in his madness, because he figured, then they wouldn't steal from you. He also got the reputation that he was easy to put the bite on. A young railway man in Hughenden, away from his family, soon found out he could get a few bob. Some young men are belittled and bullied. Self-accusatory, they would not be received by the group. But if they could motion Georgie out the back of the shop and walk out with 5 pounds, they felt like somebody did care. The secret was simple. A young man might feel like doing himself in, but if he had one friend he was okay. Now we hear of black deaths in custody and youth suicides in the bush.

He was not avaricious. However, over the course of time, nearly everyone in Hughenden owed him money. He trusted people where others would feel trust was ridiculous. People would come to him with all sorts of propositions. He bought the whole block in the street and he used to like it when travelling with showmen like Lucky Grills would erect a tent on his vacant lot and thank 'George Sourrys for providing us with the land '. People like Lucky Grills never forgot him. George Moore the famous jockey would have a cup of coffee with him. One day Wirth's Circus came to town and a circus handler bought a small elephant into the shop. George started protesting 'get the elephant outside'. 'Watch out for the showcases'. Glass was hard to get in the bush towns. The handler was a bit cheeky and he yelled out, 'he only wants a drink of water, he's thirsty.' There were people running everywhere with buckets of water.

Georgie was a good dancer who would dance Zorba for hours. John Coronos from Brisbane said that they'd dance when they closed the shop. They'd put on the phonograph and start dancing. The Aussies would peer through the windows. They'd never see anything like it, and they'd throw their hats up in the air and burst out laughing.

As he said many times, civility costs nothing. He liked the commercial travelers who came through the town. He respected them and never let them go without plying them with his hospitality. One traveller said 'you're the only person between Townsville and the Isa who offers me a drink'. Sometimes the young commercial traveller would become the Managing Director and he never forgot that kindness.

Now George owned a couple of other shops that he bought and closed down. They would be unoccupied and another group would make a proposition. They were the down and outers, although they didn't see themselves like that. They were without family home or money and liked alcohol. Sometimes they lived on the riverbank. They proposed to George that they move in, and they would look after the empty property. George considered the possibilities. If they were to move in, he knew they'd guard the property and the Insurance Company couldn't knock him back by saying that the building was unoccupied. There were no better caretakers. They'd take pride in pointing out there were no broken windows and reporting, 'I saw some bloke hanging around

and let him know I was watching'. Everybody won.

George's business still stands in Hughenden. It is now run by his daughter, Gina, with the same good will and fellowship and a desire to make everybody happy.

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## Archie Kalokerinos. 1927–2012

"Archie" Kalokerinos was born 'Archivides' Kalokerinos, to Greek parents from the island of Kythera, in Glenn Innes, Australia, on 28 September 1927. (He was named after the Greek hero Alcibiades, but during translation the spelling was mistaken). He was always proud of his Greek heritage – "...my Greek background acted, always, as the guiding light through the darkness and unknown."

"Dr Archie" as he was affectionately known, took his medical degree from Sydney University in 1951 and then spent six years in England. On his return to Australia he was appointed Medical Superintendent of the hospital at Collarenebri, a town 500 miles north-west of Sydney.



In 1965 he tried his hand at opal mining at Coober Pedy. He became a world expert on opals, and in 1967 and 1971, wrote two definitive books on the subject. Later, becoming disillusioned with opal mining, he returned to medicine at Collarenebri, where he served until 1975.

Dr Kalokerinos became very concerned about the high mortality rate of Aboriginal children in north western New South Wales. He came to the conclusion that the infants had symptoms of scurvy, a deficiency of vitamin C, and he treated them accordingly. At one stage, in one Central Aboriginal community, every second Aboriginal Infant was doomed to die in infancy. The death rate, in the area supervised by Archie Kalokerinos dropped to zero after Archie applied his "counter intuitive" therapy. Dual Nobel prize winner Linus Pauling, in the foreword to Kalokerinos' book *Every Second Child*, endorsed his views, and his clinical acumen.

In 1975 Phillip Noyce produced the compelling film docudrama about Dr Archie Kalokerinos and aboriginal healthcare and his use of vitamin C, entitled "God knows why but it works". Opening the Kytheraismos Conference II, in Canberra, on the 15th September, 2006, then Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, asserted that he could "... think of no other group that has more totally integrated itself into the mainstream of Australian life, yet preserved a passionate love of their home culture than the Greeks. They have really shown the rest of the world and the

rest of Australia how it should be done. “The people of Kythera”, he added, “have made an enormous contribution to Australia, over a very long period of time. They have made a particular contribution to regional and rural Australia”.

Amongst the many high-achieving Kytherians in the room, he singled out Dr Archie Kalokerinos for special mention. “Dr Archie Kalokerinos practiced medicine in central New South Wales, and through his consistent and selfless efforts saved the lives of many young indigenous Australians”.

It would be interesting to perform a ‘Schindler’s List type analysis’ of the extended families of the children ‘saved’, and determine how many aboriginal people owe their existence to Dr Archie Kalokerinos.

From 1976 to 1982, Dr Archie worked with the Aboriginal Medical Service. From 1982 to 1992, he conducted a medical practice in the northwestern NSW town of Bingara. Former Mayor of Bingara, John Wearne, speaks for an entire community when he says “...many people in Bingara will grieve for the loss – he was much revered in Bingara”. His offices were situated within what is now the newly renovated Roxy ‘complex’. This is only fitting, as the Roxy complex, including theatre, café and museum, ‘memorializes’ the contribution that Greek-Australians have made to rural Australia.

Dr Kalokerinos would later enter a number of controversial debates, including those surrounding vaccination, sudden unexpected shock, sudden unexpected unconsciousness, otitis media, sudden infant death syndrome, and shaken baby syndrome.

Dr Kalokerinos was a Life Fellow of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health, a Fellow of the International Academy of Preventive Medicine, a Fellow of the Australasian College of Biomedical Scientists, Fellow of the Hong Kong Medical Technology Association, and a Member of the New York Academy of Sciences. In 1978, he was the subject of *This is your life* and was presented with The Australian Medal of Merit for Outstanding Scientific Research.

He retired from full time practice in 1992, and apart from performing occasional ‘locums’ in Tamworth, he spent most of the latter part of his life doing private research. He subsequently moved from Tamworth to Cooranbong on the Central Coast, and then to Rushcutters Bay in Sydney.

In 2000 he was declared the Greek Australian of the Century by the Melbourne newspaper, *Neos Kosmos*.

On 17th Dec, 1977 Dr Archie married Catherine Hunter, at St Lukes Church, Mosman. In a brief autobiography he wrote of her: “There is one non-Greek who I need to thank. It is my English wife, Catherine. She tolerated a great deal when I became obsessed with what I was doing. In the end, there is nothing like teamwork”.

Archie was the beloved husband of Catherine and adored father of Ann, Helen and Peter.

Archie recounted his life in his autobiography, *Medical Pioneer of the Twentieth Century*, a book that has never been out of print, and which is available from Biological Therapies Publishing, Melbourne.

Archie’s most endearing qualities, Daan Spijer, argues, were his humanity and honesty, and these are qualities that emerged throughout his life. Those who had been privileged to meet “Dr Archie” will know that these qualities were evident even more forcibly, in personal encounters.

He passed away peacefully, on 1 March 2012  
His intellectual, vibrant and engaging presence will be sorely missed.

May his memory be eternal.

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## **Ithaka verses Kythera**

*by Kiriaki Mavromattes-Orfanos*

"Kiriaki, don't be embarrassed to admit you're Kytherian. We'll make allowances."  
"Georgios, your Kythera-envy is showing."

Those of you who know us well, would be aware of Georgios' and my constant sparring over the relative merits of Ithaka and Kythera. And it occurs to me to place this argument in context by describing both islands. After all, given that I have been to both places and Georgios has never set foot in Kythera, I'm the only one of us qualified to do so.

Ithaka doesn't look like an island so much as a partially submerged chain of mountains, where like an iceberg, most the island bulk is under water. The several pinnacles of a mountain range are linked by a ridge forming a spine that coils southward and to the right to a second, anchoring expanse of land, which is crowned by Mt. Petaleiko. As the ridge descends from Mts. Exogi and Neritos it narrows to form the Isthmus of Aetos. From here you can see both sides of the island at once, with Kephalaria looming monolithically, like a Mediterranean Uluru, across the straits on one side and Ithaka's inner coastline sweeping towards Vathi on the other. Turn your head one way and you see village lights perforating the crests of and coves of Kephalaria, look the other and there's the moon shim, shimmering across the bay where Odysseus set foot on his island again after twenty longing years.

Ithaka's profile is sharp and elegant with its undulating peaks creating a flowing vertiginous silhouette. But the varied greens of its olive groves, cypresses, orchards, forests and vineyards conceal the landscape inside its foliage. And the smell of sage rides high on a wave of heat.

If you look at Ithaka on a map, you can see that it's curved and elongated. Tucked safely in the lee of Kephalaria, between the larger island and the mainland, it consists of two large land masses connected by a narrow ridge. The harbour of Vathi is protected by the escarpment of Mt. Neritos as it travels around towards the heights of the Monastery of Kathara, and from Kathara, you look down to the perfect horse-shoe shape bay of Vathi, hovering somewhere between heaven and earth. Ithaka looks past its many companion islands, including Leukada and the Echinades, towards a fractured horizon. It is a civilized, connected view implying a larger world into which one can venture and from which one always yearns to return.

A map will show you how companioned it actually is as it floats suspended, like a pearl caught in mid-fall, off the southernmost tip of the first long finger of the Peloponnese. At night you can see the lights of Elafonissos, Neapolis and Antikythera and further south is Crete, looking a bit like a gondola, or possibly a trireme.

Kythera is hardly alone.

As you approach it from the north, you can see it floating bluely just off the coast, and that's when you see, if you apply a little imagination, its essentially female shape. A woman asleep on the waves, her long hair floating on the surface of the water, her profile lost in dreams, her hand lightly resting across her stomach, the gentle rise and fall of her breasts, her long legs slightly bent.

Kythera's base colour is gold but in the middle of the day it can look acidic, in parts a little too yellow, especially where the fire burned it right down to the bone exposing the skeleton of the land, its long spine, its skull and rounded bits. Here and there the odd tree burgeons in front of the remains of its fellows as a lone witness to the carnage. Yet in the early morning, or in the attenuated dusk, the island glows in that unique laundered light as if it has been meticulously crafted out of antique gold, its reeds and grasses lacing and interlacing each other into a gilded

filigree net that casts itself magically over the landscape.

For the most part Kythera is prosperously greened; olive groves, planted mathematically cast symmetrical shadows, like the tessellation on a Persian mosque. Low-slung vineyards carpet the ground and the landscape is punctuated by cypress trees, standing tall like mournful exclamation marks. Almond trees and Spanish Broom, yellow daisies and anemones, calendula and irises, narcissus, poppies and violets, Queen Anne's lace and orchids, lavender, daffodils, jonquils and hyacinths make their seasonal appearance and shine like precious stones in fallow fields. Wild thyme, oregano, parsley, mint, dill, chamomile and sage, provide a subtle mixture of scents which find their way into the local honey. Cyclamens grow wherever they can find a foothold and that's anywhere and kontopodarousas, the tough, tiny, short-stemmed pears, appear where you least expect them.

In contrast to the elegance of Ithaka, Kythera seems altogether more rugged. It's a tougher nut to crack.

Ithaka's beauty reaches out and grabs you. Kythera's beauty does not. Instead, it takes you by stealth and when the realization that Kythera is beautiful flows through you – and it does – you never again lose sight of it.

Ithaka's villages know their place. There's Anogie, meaning 'up there'; Exogie, meaning 'floats above the planet'; Vathi, meaning 'down there'; Stavro, meaning 'where four roads meet' and Perahori, meaning 'over there'. With the prepositions exhausted, there are other names like Lefki, Frikes and Kioni. But you also have Piso Aeto, which is 'behind Aeto'.

Although some of Kythera's sense of place is about topography; Potamos, meaning the river and Livadi, meaning the valley, mostly the villages are named after the people who founded them; Pitsinades, Aroniadika, Logothetianika, Byzantine names telling another story.

Swimming at Ithaka's Filiatro is to dive deeply into lambent water, reaching downward to claim that gleaming pebble on the ocean floor only to find that you are metres above it. It's to see (not feel) shoals of tiny fish nipping at your feet and then dart into the light and disappear into a shimmering transparency, becoming a glimmer, a flicker, a flash. It's to float contentedly for hours, supported by the water, discussing the political situation or where you're going for dinner or catch up with friends.

To swim at Lykodimo in a Kytherian dusk, is to feel the velvety water slide over your skin and tease out your hair as you float on your back, letting the day flow out of your body. It's to watch the sun not so much dip below the horizon as to melt into the sea. It's to be caressed by low, slow, rays of gold. It's to discover that you're swimming not in the ocean but in the setting sun, as light becomes water and water becomes light. It's to be cushioned by the waves, while you wait for the stars to come out – there are more stars in Kythera than there are in Ithaka. And if you're lucky, you'll be there during a panselinos and the full moon will cast its own special magic over your swim.

But at both places, you find your hand closing around pebbles which you hide in your bag, determined to bring the islands home with you, stone by stone.

Ithaka is proud of its Homeric history and makes frequent references to Odysseus. But apart from a couple of mentions in the Iliad, in both cases using the adjectives 'sacred' or 'holy', Homer largely ignores Kythera – then again, it is Odysseus, the hero he's concerned with, as opposed to Ithaka itself. Although to be fair, in the Odyssey, Homer did have Telemachus, the son of Odysseus, tactfully refuse the offer of a gift of three thoroughbred stallions and a burnished chariot from Menelaus, on the grounds that it was 'Goat, not stallion land, though it means the world to me.' Kythera, on the other hand, points to Celestial Aphrodite and her presence pervades the island although dare one say that perhaps she now conceals herself behind a virgin's veil. But there's the beach she's said to have arrived on where the pebbles are red and

the water is restful and somewhere close by there's a shrine. Would it be too much of a stretch to imagine her swimming at Lykodimo at sunset or to hope that the wooden statue of her dressed as a warrior – one of only two described by Pausanias – be one day discovered in some secret place on the island, in the same way that some people in Ithaka now believe that they've climbed the steps to Odysseus' palace? (It's near Stavro, by the way).

Both islands share a history of occupation by the Venetians and the British. In fact there are at least three substantial Venetian structures in Kythera; the Kastro in Hora, Paleocastro in Mylopotamos and a small fort in Avlemona, where kittens are suckled in the shelter of discarded canons. There are some canons on an old overgrown fort above Loutsia beach too, just around the bay from Vathi. And both islands have a Venetian lazaretto.

During the British period, Kythera as the easternmost, seventh – and hidden – island of the Eptanisa, served as a place of exile for political prisoners. But in a delicious by the by, Kytherian dissidents were sentenced to exile in Ithaka.

Both islands have a history of migration and many proud Kytherians and Ithakans were born somewhere else, obliged to ration their time on the islands, if they're lucky enough to go there at all, to small holidays during the tourist season (because you can't visit a Greek island and not to want to put a toe into the water) where they're left to imagine what it must have been like to live there all year round and wonder why their parents left in the first place.

In the end, it probably boils down to the simple fact of where you're from. But don't make the mistake of imagining that because Georgios was born on Ithaka and I was not born on Kythera, that my commitment to my insular neck of the woods isn't as strong as his is to his.

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## **A Kytherian Blessing**

*by Maria of Lourandianika*

My memories have been written for a very long time now, but the most special were brought to me yesterday by my wonderful "Georgie" Gianniotis, a most respected member of our Kytherian community, although as this goes to print, the date was late March 2012.

Together with his brother Paul, who I last saw when I was just 8 years old, they travelled from Sydney to be reunited with me.

Paul, my Paul, who the last time we sat in his mother's home, punched me in the arm as he could not decide what name would be the flavour of the day, Paul or Pedro. I made a mistake with the name, and the black haired young lad gave me a solid punch to my arm.

Paul stood before me yesterday, the black hair now greying, the eyes I recalled as being black more of a deep grey, and many kisses, hugs and tears later, I looked at my Paul, (yes, Paul, not Pedro) who gave me his arm for a return punch, his hair worn in the same style. It will be a day I will never forget.

I spoke to my husband, and together, we made a spanakopita, and it was beautiful, as I happily sat in my wheelchair at the kitchen table, rolling out the pastry, watching it turn a golden brown as a car pulled up in our driveway.

The following hours are hours I will treasure forever, as we sat, talking, everyone trying to say their piece, to cover the many years lost.

My Georgie, gave me some photocopies of my father dating back to 1920, standing with his

mother amongst chooks, impeccably dressed in a 3 piece suit, a flower in his lapel, always the dapper dresser. I in return gave him and Paul copies of photos taken at "Tsifliki". The small piece of dirt where we would drive to on many Sundays. We reminisced, as the hours passed.

Stories of the old Canberra which gave shelter, work, and support to many young Kytherians were told. Paul spoke of when he worked there at the age of just 9 years old for 10 shillings a week, his job to wash the dishes. He would wipe the top saucer on a stack, the bottom, then place them back on the shelf, until one day he dropped them, breaking them, never to return to work as he was too afraid.

Mysteries of old were exposed much to my delight, and for some hours, I managed to put my pain behind me, as these two wonderful people who I love and adore took away my pain.

My Georgie spoke to me of forgiveness, as this will bring me peace, as he tells me, I am a forgiving soul, and slowly I am attempting to follow his advice, after all, I am my father's daughter.

I could not sleep last night, thinking of the stories I heard.

I was obviously a wilful child as George told me, as he related a story of when I was just a little girl, my father holding my hand in church, taking me to the Archbishop, telling me to kiss the hand extended to me. I refused it seems, and three times my father demanded I obey him, yet still I refused. I do not recall this, but believe it to be true.

My father had returned to Kythera, after establishing the old Canberra Cafe with 4 other young men to marry my mother and to return to Australia. George's mother was a mother to the young bride, alone in a strange country. How well I remember her.

My Georgie has accepted that I will return to Louradianika one day, but not as he believed. With tears in his eyes, he told me he understood that I had finally found peace with my decision to be buried in Louradianika at Ayio Georyi, where I will not see the sealed road, but the old dirt road and stones, where my maternal family is buried.

He will push an empty wheelchair from Ayia Triatha in Livadi to Ayio Georyi, but the chair will contain my spirit, and he will sing happily, as he will know I am finally free of pain and at peace, returning home where I yearn to be for all time.

My paternal family lived in Kato Livadi, where my paternal grandfather was also a Greek Orthodox priest, yet, I feel a stronger bond with Louradianika, spending such a long time there with my maternal grandfather, Papa Lourantos, where he taught me the true meaning of life, lessons which have helped me overcome so many obstacles in my life.

I have despaired lately with pain and sense of loss, losing the will to live just last Monday, yet, the thought of these two incredible people who are in my heart now, and have been all my life, kept me from acting foolishly and against all my beliefs.

My George spoke to me as a father, and I listened, speaking also of Kythera, as George was surprised to hear that I had spent almost a year on our island at the age of 15 as I proudly told him that I would go hunting alone, and bring home more quail than my father on my hunting trips. Surprised to hear that I was a crack shot with a rifle.

My George, even though he said he missed the dill from the spanakopita, but the original recipe had no dill and no onion, and I made it with real English spinach, and it quickly vanished from the large baking tray., enjoyed a second helping as did my Paul, who rang to say how much he enjoyed it. How worthwhile I felt, having my husband do all the preparation for me under my watchful eye, but I followed my mother's recipe. She used silver beet, but this time, I used the real spinach. Even I managed to eat a little.

My Paul. What can I say? I had seen photos of him in The Kytherian with his large balloons flying over the capital in Canberra, yet I did not recognize him, but when he stood before me, the years vanished, and the smile was the same as the young boy, the hair styled the same, and never will I forget his kisses and warm hugs.

I was given such a beautiful piece of art he had done. How could he have painted such an icon? Unbelievable, and I now have it on my wall next to the saying from my George to fight on and to have courage.

I have been blessed to see my father as a young man, still in his dapper 3 piece suit which he wore all his life, a father I had never imagined before.

Memories are forever, and I dedicate this memory to my Georgie to Paul, and to all the Gianniotis family which includes husbands, wives, children and grandchildren.

Thank you for the best memories possible.

I love you all, and may God bless you and watch over all. Hristos Anesthi to all.

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