



Kytherian Association of Australia  
[www.kytherianassociation.com.au](http://www.kytherianassociation.com.au)

## VISIT US ONLINE!

Keep up-to-date with all the latest KAA news & information  
 as well as details of our upcoming events.

Logon now & tell us what you think:  
[feedback@kytherianassociation.com.au](mailto:feedback@kytherianassociation.com.au)

Enquiries: Peter Samios

## GREEK DANCING CLASSES 2008

### FRIDAYS 17th OCTOBER - 19th DECEMBER (TERM 4)

**Matraville High School** Cnr Anzac Pde & Franklin  
 Sts, Matraville.

<b>Infants</b>	7.00pm-
7.45pm	
<b>Primary</b>	7.45pm-
8.30pm	
<b>Junior High School</b>	
8.30pm-9.15pm	
<b>Senior Group</b>	9.15pm-10.15pm



# The KYTHERIAN

The Newsletter of the Kytherian Association of Australia  
 PO Box A203, Sydney South NSW 1235  
[www.kytherianassociation.com.au](http://www.kytherianassociation.com.au)

OCTOBER 2008

## THE KYTHERIAN LADIES' AUXILIARY

*takes pleasure in inviting you to a*

### MELBOURNE CUP FASHION LUNCHEON

*Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008*

*11.30 am*

**SWISS GRAND HOTEL**

*"Bellevue Terrace"*

*Cnr Campbell Parade and Beach Road, Bondi Beach  
 (Parking available at a nominal rate)*

*A parade of exclusive fashions by Anthea Crawford  
 A sumptuous lunch  
 An array of Lucky Door and Raffle Prizes*

### BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL

Please contact: Helen Kanaris 9349 8113  
 Mary Moutzouris 9310 0420  
 Kathy Samios 9349 1849  
 Kyrranne Thomas 9764 6636  
 Rene Condoleon 93635915  
 RSVP: Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008

*We look forward to seeing you there –  
 And don't forget to wear your favourite hat!*

**"MEN ARE MOST WELCOME"**

THE KYTHERIAN ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIA  
 presents

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PICNIC

SUNDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 2008

(Details and Booking Form in next month's newsletter)



## KYTHO CALENDAR

**Fridays 17th Oct. - 19th Dec.**

Weekly dancing lessons for Term 4  
(see back page for details).

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

Day trip to the Illawarra Fly Tree Top  
Walk (see page 7).

**Friday 31st October 2008**

Spooky Greek Night (see page 16)

**Tuesday 4th November 2008**

Melbourne Cup Luncheon  
(see front page)

**Sunday 9th November 2008**

Las Vegas Musical (see page 13)

**Sunday 7th December 2008**

Christmas Picnic (details in November  
newsletter)

**Thursday 1st January 2009**

New Year's Day Dance

**Saturday 30th May 2009**

Kytherian Ball (see page 16)

## Mums & Bubs

"Mums and Bubs" outings  
are held on the last Friday of  
each month, for babies and  
children up to 5 years. For  
more information please call  
Erenie on 0410 318 053.

## Editor's Note



My daughter is getting married soon, so I  
thought that I would write a "mother to  
daughter" journal for her.

It can be something that she will always have to remind her  
of her crazy mother, even when she is old and I am long  
gone!

I am no Jane Austen, but I hope that she will find it  
enjoyable to read.

In it I have related many aspects of my life, including my  
own thoughts and experiences at the same age of 22, as well  
as describing my family life when I was growing up.  
I have also included details of her grandparents' lives to  
enable her to fully understand the great sacrifices that they  
made when they migrated to Australia.

I have often heard Oprah tell her viewers that keeping a  
journal is therapeutic .... she is right.

Through my journaling, I have also been able to have a  
greater understanding about myself at this point in time.

I realise that the older I get, the more I crave a simpler life.

Everything is so complicated these days and it is all too easy  
to be swept up with the superficial side of life.

For me, the material things really do not matter as much as  
my experiences and memories. These I carry with me and  
they will always sustain me. My computer and plasma  
screen, etc., etc. will not.

It is definitely better for one's health if you view life in a  
more philosophical way, appreciating the positives,  
accepting the negatives and attempting to deal with them  
as best you can.

In my journal, I express the wish that my daughter will  
arrive at such conclusions about life at a much earlier age.  
To tell you the truth, I think that she already has.



To all our members who have just returned from their  
sojourn in Greece...welcome back!  
To all our HSC students who are about to embark on their  
own journey in life....good luck and may all your  
aspirations come true.

**Books & CD's for sale -  
can be purchased from the  
Kytherian Association of Australia:**

- *History of Kythera* by Peter Vanges \$30
- *The Greeks in Queensland-A History from 1859  
to 1945* by Denis A Conomos (RRP \$49.95)
- *Ta Tessera Spitia* by Jim Saltis \$20  
[Jim Saltis 47 Market Street Randwick 2031]  
email [saltisjim@optusnet.com.au](mailto:saltisjim@optusnet.com.au)  
phone (02) 93999767
- *Katsehamos and the Great Idea*  
by Peter Prineas \$35 available Plateia Press  
32 Calder Road, Darlington NSW 2008  
email [plateia@ozemail.com.au](mailto:plateia@ozemail.com.au)  
phone (02) 9319 1513 Mobile: 0429 322 857
- *Aphrodite and The Mixed Grill . Greek  
Cafes in Twentieth-Century Australia*  
by Toni Risson 130 Woodend Road,  
Woodend QLD 4305.  
email : [s131107@uq.edu.au](mailto:s131107@uq.edu.au) -\$49.95 plus  
postage & handling. Phone 32811525.
- *By George* , Harris George. Life stories by  
Harris Tzortzopoulos, parents born Karavas,  
Kythera. Naval Officer later prominent solicitor  
in Maryland, USA.  
Available George Poulos \$35
- *A Touch of Greece. The Greek Café Owners of  
Junction St., Nowra* by Robyn Florance.  
phone : 44293564 (BH)  
Email : [rflorance@shoalnet.au](mailto:rflorance@shoalnet.au)  
\$17.50 including handling & postage.
- *Journey to Kythera* CD-ROM for Apple Mac  
[ActionPoints@hotmail.com](mailto:ActionPoints@hotmail.com) or 0417 590 194].

## CULTURAL ARCHIVE WEBSITE FOR KYTHERA

**Kythera-Family.net**

<http://www.kythera-family.net>

Donations can be sent directly to:

**The Treasurer**

**Kytherian Association of Australia  
PO Box A203  
Sydney South NSW 1235**

Cheques should be made out to:  
**Kytherian Association of Australia -  
Kythera Family Website Account**

More information about sponsorship can  
also be obtained by contacting:

**George C Poulos**

Ph: 02 9388 8320

Email: [transoz@bigpond.net.au](mailto:transoz@bigpond.net.au)

**Angelo Notaras**

Ph: 02 9810 0194

Please forward any items you wish to be included in our Newsletter to

**The EDITOR**

**PO Box A203**

**SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235**

or

**[kaanewsletter@optusnet.com.au](mailto:kaanewsletter@optusnet.com.au)**

**Please Note:**

Those submitting articles to this Newsletter are advised that these articles may  
appear on the *Kythera-Family.net* website.

**The deadline for articles is the 23rd of each month.**



## SPOOKY GREEK



Come dressed in a  
spooky outfit or  
black.....

Join us if you DARE  
**FRIDAY 31st  
OCTOBER**  
for A Halloween  
Greek Dancing Class  
from 7PM



## Kytherian Debutante Ball

*To be held at Star City  
Saturday 30th May 2009*

*Debutante Applications*

&

*Enquiries to Esther Calligeros*

*Phone : 93440298*

*Closing Date : 22nd Dec. 2008*



### **Yearning for Kythera**

*By Maria of Louradianika*

I have been searching for Louradianika. My grandfather, the Reverend Emmanuel Lourantos, founded this village, and built his home there, and another six homes were built, and were occupied by members of the Lourantos family. In all, the village consists of seven houses, and is situated near the Church of Agio Georgi. I spent many happy times there, when as a young girl of fifteen, my parents returned with me and my sister to Kythera. My grandfather was an extraordinary man, and when we returned to Louradianika to spend several weeks there, they were the happiest days of my young life. It is the next village down from Kato Livadi, which was my father's home and birthplace.

Both my grandparents are buried at Louradianika, as custom is that a priest must be buried adjacent to the church, with the resting place touching the side of the church. My grandmother Maria, born Calligeros, is also buried next to my grandfather as is the custom. My great-grandparents are also buried there, as my great-grandfather was also a priest.

When I returned several years ago, I was told that my uncle had passed several years earlier. Uncle Nick was in my life from the day of my birth. He returned to Kythera to care for his elderly parents. I had taken my eldest son David with me because of my ailing health. We went to the house daily, and one day, as we sat drinking coffee and eating paximathia, I told my son that I could find no-one to tell me where my beloved Uncle Nick had been buried. I had searched the graveyards, but could find no sign of his resting place. As David and I sat, overlooking Agio Georgi, twelve white doves appeared from nowhere. The sky was blue, with no sign of a cloud, and the sun was shining. As my son and I watched this incredible sight, the doves flew down towards the Church, and started circling nearby. We started towards where the doves were circling, and as we approached, they vanished, as quickly as they had appeared. We found a crumbling stone out-house, but there was no roof, and time and weather had caused it to crumble. But in amongst this derelict place, which would have housed donkeys years before, I found myself thinking that perhaps this was my Uncle Nick's resting place. I gathered large stones, and placed them on the mound, in the shape of a cross, so, if this was his resting place, then, this was all I could do, to acknowledge that here was the grave of a truly wonderful, kind and loving man, whom I adored during his life, and still adored after he had passed. As tears fell on my cheeks, I made him a promise, that if God would allow me, that one day I would return to Louradianika, and organise some kind of headstone, with his name on it, showing that

this was the final resting place of my much adored Uncle Nick. Perhaps it is not the place where my adored uncle lies, I don't know for certain, as no one could answer me when I asked, but, if it was, then, I felt that I was acknowledging it. His body was laid to rest, but his spirit and soul was with God, and his loving family.

Louradianika had, and still has, such special memories for me. I remember my Aunt Helen, my grandfather's sister, who was 90 years old when I was a child, and I still have her original jacket which was part of the national costume. She was such a small build, and the jacket, which to this day is treasured, shows how petite she was. My Uncle Nicholas, another uncle, would drive his tractor down to Agio Georgi every night to light candles in the church, and then secure it for the night. It was being restored when my son and I were there, and I have been informed that a benefactor has completed the restoration.

I wanted to return to Louradianika, but my health deteriorated to the point that I am now disabled with a terminal illness, and can no longer walk, so I will not be able to keep my word to my beloved uncle, but God knows where his body has been laid to rest, and my son will hopefully one day fulfil my wish. I believe that my much adored grandfather has whispered in God's ear, not to take me just yet, as he believes that I have work He still wishes me to do.

My love for Cerigo is very deep. It is in my heart and my soul. The house at Louradianika was sold by my sister and myself to our cousin Emmanuel Calligeros, to keep it in the family. I have no photos of Louradianika, and I would be eternally grateful if someone could find a way to photograph this tiny village, so that it is not forgotten, and as a tribute to my grandparents and family members who made up this tiny and delightful village.

I respectfully ask for any assistance my fellow Kytherians may be able to give me, as a tribute to my family, not to allow Louradianika be forgotten. I have no photos, only memories which are as vivid today, as they were when I was a girl of fifteen, but I would like to share this village of happy memories with my fellow Kytherians.

**Maria (Marcellos) Whyte, maria.whyte@gmail.com**

*Editors note: If you do have pictures of Louradianika please post them on Kythera-Family.net so Maria and all of us can also see her treasured village. JP*



## SEPTEMBER FAMILY DANCE

Our 'Panayia Myrtdiotissa' Family Dance on 27th September, was an extremely successful evening at the Grand Barclay Reception Lounge. As always, the food was delicious and the great music ensured that there was plenty of 'kefi' on the night.

Congratulations to all the dancing groups who impressed us with their fabulous dancing and to our dancing teacher, **Mrs Joanna Tsakiridis** on her excellent work with the children. To watch our children perform with such skill and confidence made us all very proud.

Our raffle prizes were won by the following guests;

1st prize was an AKAI 66cm colour TV with integrated DVD player valued at \$900, won by **Harry Cassimatis**.

2nd prize was a \$250 Gift Voucher for St. George Smallgoods, donated by **Nick & Kathy Haros** and won by **Theodore Simos**.

3rd prize was a Psonia Gift Voucher valued at \$100, donated by **Maria & Natassa Andrew** and won by **Lambros Hatziplis-Photios**.

4th prize was a Designer Kutz Hair & Beauty Deluxe Treatment & Blow Dry valued at \$80, donated by **Gloria Papayanakis** and won by **Andrew Tzannes**.

1st 'Lucky Door' prize of a basket of wines was won by **Chris Levonis**.

2nd 'Lucky Door' prize of a basket of wines was won by **Tina Levonis**, who kindly donated it back for another draw which was won by **Sylvia Milis**.



## 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday



During August this year, **Mrs. Stratoula Prinea**, (the mother of **John G Prineas** of South Coogee) celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> year on this planet.

**Mrs. Prinea** who in spite of her old age, has a very active and alert mind, celebrated the big day with her 3 children, **Panayiotis**, **John**, and **Matina**, together with some of her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Some of her friends and neighbours were present at the lovely setting of Scandia Restaurant in Kythera.

**Stratoula** made a lengthy speech, and finished off with the verse:

«Την Πρώτη πόρτα άνοιξα  
και στην ζωή εμπήκα.  
Δυο μέρες σουλατσάρισα  
Κι' από την άλλη βγήκα.»

(Life is short even if you live to be 100)

We all wish her that her remaining days, whatever they are, to be healthy and happy.





# Social News

## *Birthdays \* 18th \**

“Congratulations to **Lucas Mallos** who celebrated his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday with his friends at the Randwick Labor Club recently”. Happy Birthday **Lucas**!



## PANAYIA MYRTIDIOTISSA'S CHURCH SERVICE

On Sunday, 28th September we celebrated our Panayia Myrtidiotissa's Liturgy at Kogarah Church.

Her Icon was carried around the Church by our four Committee Members. At the end of the Liturgy our young dancers and their teachers performed in the plateia in front of the church. They danced beautifully! A big “thank you” to those children and their parents for making the effort to attend the service and Panayiri despite having had a late night at the Family Dance on the previous night.



The photo above is courtesy of the **Kosmos** Newspaper.



## KYTHERIAN SAILS IN 45<sup>th</sup> AEGEAN SAILING RALLY

James Calligeros son of Peter and Esther Calligeros experienced a different view of contemporary Greece when he followed the steps of his uncle, Bill Psaltis, to participate in the 2008 Aegean Sailing Rally.

James was part of an Australian team which included his good friend Greg Vetsikas, an experienced ocean racing sailor John Wigan and skippered by rear commodore of the Cruising Yacht Club Mike Cranitch, who chartered a racy 38 footer to sail 400 miles from Piraeus to Naxos, then Lipsi near the Turkish coast and back to Tinos, finally finishing under Poseidon's Temple at Sounion.

This was James and Greg's first overnight Open Sea experience and they were thrilled at sailing through the night, with a strong Meltemi filling the spinnaker, surfing down waves, as they glimpsed the lights of mountain top villages and coastal ports dotted throughout the grey Aegean islands.

Every second day was a festival ashore, with Greek food, wine, dancing, singing and hospitality, climaxing in a magnificent farewell function at the Greek Naval Academy in Piraeus.

The team was based at the Mistral Hotel, overlooking the yachts at Mikrolimano, where James' parents Peter and Esther and grandparents John and Anne Prineas were on hand to see James return safely from the sea.

James reports, that in retrospect, a highlight of the race, was sailing past Mykonos at sunset and into a gale force Meltemi, as they battled towards Tinos, into drenching cold waves that swept the deck, he recalls what a wonderful feeling it was to get safely into port and warm clothes.

The team achieved a second in the leg to Lipsi and James is now looking forward to emulating his Uncle Bill who won the Rally in 1973.



## Upcoming Event

### Kytherian Young Mothers Group presents:



**It's fabulous. It's scandalous. It's everything you want in one show!**

Spend a night in the city of sin! Experience the extravagance, high stakes, entertainment and scandals of classic Las Vegas... in Sydney.

This sizzling new musical captures the heart and soul of the world's entertainment capital, with something for everybody. Brilliant song and dance numbers surround a fascinating story of love, lust and luck... money, murder and the mob... complete with mind-blowing, spectacular acts of illusion. You won't believe your eyes! Don't miss the world premiere season of Las Vegas (Confidential) The Musical at Sydney's opulent State Theatre this November. It's the most fun, sexy, glamorous night out in years. And remember, what happens in Las Vegas.... is strictly confidential!

**Creator / Writer: James Karp (who was our special Magician at last year's Christmas Picnic)**

Director: Christopher Hurrell

Choreographer: James Taylor

Cast includes: Tamlyn Henderson, Katrina Retallick, Tiffani Wood, Tony Nikolakopoulos, Garry Scale, Alistair Toogood, **Simone Karp (Kytherian)** plus showgirls, gamblers, henchmen and little old ladies from Utah.

Date: Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Time: 5pm

Tickets are \$65 and are limited.

For Enquiries please call: Maria Notaras 0425230991

Maria Coolentianos 0409639897.



### *The Return of the Elgin Marbles: are we any closer?*

One of the British Museum's standard defences is that pieces of the Parthenon sculptures are held at other institutions, namely the Vatican Museums; the Musée du Louvre, Paris; the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; the National Museum, Copenhagen; the Glyptothek, Munich; the University Museum, Heidelberg; the University Museum, Würzburg and the Museo Nazionale, Palermo, as if to suggest that there is no point in demanding the return of the sculptures from London when there are fragments spread all over Europe. Well at long last this particular defence is starting to crumble. In 2006 the Heidelberg Museum returned a small fragment to Greece. And now the Antonio Salinas Museum in Palermo has returned a fragment from the east frieze as part of a long term loan. The fragment depicts part of the right leg and part of the garment of the goddess Artemis who, together with other gods, are sitting facing the procession. As the former curator of the Elgin Collection in the British Museum, Ian Jenkins, has written in his book *The Parthenon Frieze*, the positioning of the gods Poseidon, Apollo and Artemis and their arm movements create a pleasing sequence "culminating in the pointing gesture of the love-goddess Aphrodite who, of all the gods, makes the most explicit acknowledgment of the procession".



The position of the Palermo fragment in the frieze and the actual piece unveiled in Athens

The piece was officially handed to Greek authorities by the Italian President Giorgio Napolitano on 23 September 2008 who also indicated that the Vatican authorities had agreed in principle to return fragments from the pedimental sculptures in the coming months. The 2,500-year-old marble fragment was one of the works Scottish diplomat Lord Elgin had removed from the ancient Acropolis in the early 19th century. Elgin gave it to a friend in Sicily during a stop on his trip back to London and it eventually made its way to the Palermo museum. The Hellenic President Karolos Papoulias thanked his Italian counterpart and said that Greece was trying to ensure the return of all the Parthenon fragments abroad, including the sculptures at the British Museum in London. Mr Papoulias underlined the significance of the return by stressing the symbolism and importance of such a gesture and noted that it was hoped to start operating a new Greek Archaeological School in Rome as part of a new framework of co-operation between Greece and Italy. No doubt the British Museum and its supporters will again attempt to downplay the significance of Italy's proposed return of a fragment of the Parthenon frieze. But the return of the Palermo fragment is significant for it allows for the piece to be put into context and to be displayed together with the rest of the surviving panel depicting the procession.

With the return of the Palermo and Heidelberg fragments, and the promised return of the Vatican pieces, it is clear that the Greeks are starting to have an impact in their campaign to reunite all the known surviving components of the Parthenon sculptures. Viewed in isolation, those fragments fail to convey the enormity or splendour of the Parthenon sculptures with the most obvious example being the Duveen Gallery in the British Museum which remains a sterile, uninspiring environment for one of antiquity's greatest treasures.

And with the New Acropolis Museum soon to be opened, all these sculptural elements will finally be able to be exhibited in their correct geometrical configuration and within sight of the Parthenon itself. Italy is to be applauded for this enlightened initiative. The Parthenon fragment in Palermo is as much a part of the Parthenon as are the sculptures in the Elgin collection in the British Museum. The return of these sculptures to the Acropolis in Athens is long overdue.

George Vardas  
Secretary

*Australians for the Reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures*

### Upcoming Event Illawarra Fly Tree Top Walk

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008



The Kytherian Young Mothers Group together with the Kytherian 4WD and Recreation Club are holding a day trip to the Illawarra Fly Tree Top Walk.

The Illawarra Fly is a 500 metre long, 25 metre high elevated tree top walk ascending at a gentle grade and suitable for visitors of all mobilities. Nestled amongst the temperate rainforest of the Southern Highlands the treetop walk takes you along the picturesque Illawarra escarpment and offers inspiring views from Shellharbour to Bass Point, Lake Illawarra and the South Pacific Ocean.

The Illawarra Fly is located near Robertson in the Southern Highlands approximately 2 hours from Sydney.

We will be meeting at the famous Robertson Pie Shop at **10.30am**.

From there it is a short drive to the Illawarra Fly where we will undertake our treetop adventure.

Cost of entry to the Illawarra Fly:

Adult: \$19.00

Child: \$9.00 (6 - 16 years)

Family: \$49.00 (2 Adults + 2 Children)

Seniors: \$17.00

For Enquiries please call Maria Coolentianos 0409639897, Stella Preneas 0402296100 or Maria Notaras 0425230991.



### Eco-tourism on Kythera: Trekking to the watermills of Milopotamos

In 1993, long before eco-tourism became a popular term to describe alternative tourism, the authors of the Lonely Planet guidebook, *Trekking in Greece*, wrote about the mountains of Greece that are graced with a craggy, uniquely Balkan beauty and often riotous vegetation and about island landscapes that guaranteed a satisfying and surprisingly varied trekking experience.

The island of Kythera is traditionally associated with its beautiful beaches, historic castles and churches and summer sojourns. However, the island also offers some incredible eco-tourist delights and trekking opportunities as four committee members of the Kytherian Association of Australia recently discovered at the conclusion of the Kytheraismos Symposium.

For Victor Kepreotis, George Poulos, Theo Poulos and this writer, the trek into the valleys and gorges below Milopotamos – the village of water mills – was an incredible descent into a landscape of luscious vegetation, pebbled and rock-strewn pathways, crumbling mills, waterfalls and breathtaking views, filled with rich historical, cultural and natural imagery.

Our trek commenced early one morning just past the famous town square of Milopotamos where several signs proclaim “to the watermills”. Before long we came across a fork in the path – one leading down and the other up (each marked with a different coloured marker). It recalled in my mind what the famous poet Robert Frost once wrote:

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference.”

We took the lower (red marked) path and what a difference that made. We soon found ourselves walking along a well-beaten path gradually descending into a world of long-abandoned stone buildings, in varying stages of decay and ruin, located in almost inaccessible ravines and covered in vegetation.

Along the way we crossed running streams and rivulets and negotiated tricky pathways past crumbling ruins. We climbed up broken stairs to view some of the mills (or what remained of them) and wondered with amazement at how these mills would have operated, and at the same time we were careful to look out for low hanging entranceways and beams. The three taller members of our expedition managed to avoid bumping our heads. Fortunately, the bruise on Victor's head has only now fully healed.

As we walked, we also chanced upon some mountain goats in the distance. We

In 1830 they formed a brotherhood under the name “Kytherian Brotherhood, Panaghia Myrtidiotissa”, which was actually the oldest known organisation of immigrants in Smyrna. It made yearly contributions to the Greek Hospital and to the Evangelic School in Smyrna in order that Kytherians have access to these institutions, and organised the necessary religious celebrations, i.e. Panaghia Myrtidiotissa on September 24<sup>th</sup>, and Aghios Theodoros on May 12<sup>th</sup>. In 1907 the brotherhood organised an excursion from Smyrna to Kythera in order to participate in the feast for Panaghia Myrtidiotissa. The brotherhood was still active right up until the fateful events of September 1922.

On Saturday 9 September 1922, after the Greek armies in Asia Minor had been vanquished and the *Megali Idea* had literally been blown away, the victorious Turkish cavalry rode into Smyrna after three years of occupation by Greek forces. In the following days Smyrna literally became a hell on earth and Giles Morton in his book provides what one critic describes as a “harrowing, day-by-day account of the city's descent into chaos”. The city began to fill up with hundreds of thousands of Greek and Armenian refugees, fleeing the inevitable Turkish reprisals. But the real disaster came when the Turkish forces — deliberately, according to numerous eyewitnesses — set the city ablaze, after dousing the Armenian quarter with gasoline. Soon there were half a million people on the city's quay, trapped between the harbour and the huge fire behind them. Morton reviews eyewitness accounts and concludes that the Turkish armed forces, both regular soldiers and so-called Turkish “irregulars”, were responsible for setting Smyrna alight.

But the Turkish barbarism did not stop there. The Greeks and Armenians in Smyrna were subjected to mass-murder, rape, looting, pillage and arson. The Greek Orthodox Bishop of Smyrna was hacked to death by a wild Turkish mob. Meanwhile, numerous British, French and other allied warships sat in the harbour, indifferent to the plight of the refugees, for fear of offending the Turks and getting mixed up in the Greek-Turkish war. Desperate to escape the fire, hundreds of thousands of people crowded the narrow waterfront, where they were penned in by Turkish soldiers and kept without food or water. Thousands dropped dead of hunger and disease, or committed suicide by leaping into the sea, where the corpses soon formed a thick mass. Despite these grotesque scenes the Great Powers did not intervene. According to one report, as naval officers on the British flagship dressed for dinner on 13 September, when “the screams from the distant quayside grew too loud to be ignored, the captain ordered the ship's band to strike up tunes”. The US Consul at the time, George Horton, later wrote a book “The Blight of Asia” in which he lamented the destruction of Smyrna and confessed to a “feeling of shame that I belonged to the human race” as he took his last glimpse of the city.

Most people were ultimately evacuated on Greek ships, largely through the efforts of Asa Jennings, an American working in Smyrna. As the book makes clear, Jennings was the real hero of those dreadful days but he was not able to save the 100,000 men and boys who were deported to the interior and never seen again.

Many Smyrniot-Kytherians who managed to escape never went back to Kythera, or even visited the island, nor did they relate to their children the doctrines of their former local identity. According to the official refugees' census in 1923, only 446 persons returned to Kythera. 132 returned to Potamos, 69 to Milopotamos, 48 to Karvounades and 51 returned to Hora. After the events of 1922, the majority of Smyrna's Kytherians – and in this respect they were not alone – settled in and around Piraeus with other refugees from Asia Minor and preferred to be known as Smyrniotes of Kytherian origin, thus choosing to be counted together with the other refugees of the “*Asia Minor Catastrophe*”.



SCENES FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF  
SMYRNA

We must never forget Smyrna.

**George Vardas**

