

The Karavas Water Project

Environmental Archaeology and History in Northern Kythera:

Jon M. Frey (Michigan State University)

Timothy E. Gregory (Ohio State University)

Richard MacNeil (National Native Title Tribunal, Melbourne)

Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory (Ohio State University)

Presentation at University of Sydney: Wed, March 20th



As is well known, the natural environment in various parts of Greece differs significantly from one place to another, providing inhabitants with particular opportunities and restraints and helping to create different historical experiences.

This presentation discusses the Karavas Water Project, an environmental archaeological and historical approach to understanding the past in the northern part of the island of Kythera.

It is also a direct outgrowth of the Australian Paliochora-Kythera Archaeological Survey, sponsored by the University of Sydney and the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens, which carried out fieldwork from 1999 to 2003.

The Karavas Water Project recognizes that the water resources available in northern Kythera are unusual for Greek islands that are frequently plagued by a scarcity of water, requiring in many cases that water be brought in by boat.

Indeed, the area of Karavas is well known for its plentiful springs and deep green gorges that create an environment that more resembles a sub-tropical rain forest than it does the parched landscape of many parts of Greece.

The present project, begun in 2011 and continued in 2012, has as its goal the detailed topographic exploration of the main Karavas watershed that runs in a generally southwest-northeast direction from the heights near Gerakari to the sea at Plateia Ammos. The project includes the basic mapping of the topography and the identification of the many



natural and humanly modified springs, as well as the water devices that were constructed to convey and store the water and to utilize water for a variety of purposes, including irrigation and power, most notably the water mills that still mark the sides of the watershed at various points.

The project is based on the observation that a proper utilization of natural resources often allows small or even isolated societies, over the centuries, to develop systems of sustainable production and exchange so that they can survive, frequently despite political, military, or even significant economic shifts. Thus, the Karavas Water Project uses an environmental approach to examine such systems in Kythera as a clue to imagine similar sustainable systems into the future.

This presentation will provide a broad overview of the purposes and accomplishments of the Karavas Water Project in its first two seasons, including photographs and drawings of what some of these areas now look like, once they have been cleaned of the obtrusive recent vegetation.

Karavas Water Project

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Water is one of the most precious resources in Greece, and the area around Karavas is fortunate to be rich in such a resource.

The Karavas Water Project (KWP) team has been documenting the the history of water usage in northern Kythera, through observation of major features and oral history, creating detailed maps and diagrams after clearing overgrown vegetation.

Come along to hear about what they've done, see photos, diagrams and maps, plus get the opportunity to ask questions.

The project focusses on identifying of the many natural and humanly modified springs, as well as the water devices that were constructed to convey and store the water and to utilize water for a variety of purposes, including irrigation and power, most notably the water mills that still mark the sides of the watershed at various points.

Sydney Talk
Wed, March 20th



Where: Sydney University, Centre of Classical and Near Eastern Studies Board Room, in the **Madsen Building** - Level 4, Room 480 (one storey up and directly behind the building's main foyer on the Eastern Avenue pedestrian mall). Metered parking is available on campus at a reasonable rate.

When: Wednesday, March 20th, 6.45pm for a 7.15pm start

How Much: Free. Light refreshments will be served.

RSVP by March 13th is essential. Space is **strictly limited**.

Please call Kathy Samios on (02) 9349 1849 or email john.fardoulis@gmail.com to secure your place.

This information night is being generously supported by the Kytherian Association of Australia, in conjunction with the Sydney Friends of the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens. Refreshments are being sponsored by Fardoulis Chocolates www.choc.com.au.

Getting to the March 20th Karavas Water Project Presentation

The presentation is in the Madsen building, University of Sydney, which is near City Road. There is an entrance and small car park just off City Road. If the adjacent car park is full, there are on-street spaces throughout the university or undercover parking accessible through the laneway at the back of the Fisher library.

Who Should Attend?

- * People who love Greece & Kythera.
- * History buffs or anyone with an interest in exploration, adventure, past civilisations or archaeology.
- * Academics, students (particularly in archaeology), members of community groups, Hellenic committees.
- * Anyone interested in the northern region of Kythera, particularly Karavas.

The presentation is being held in the Centre of Classical and Near Eastern Studies Board Room, which is on Level 4, Room 480 (one storey up and directly behind the building's main foyer on the Eastern Avenue pedestrian mall).

Note: Metered parking is available on campus at a reasonable rate (usually capped at \$6 for the evening).

