CONNECTING WITH THE PAST:





A Tale of Heritage, Culture & Adventure

After the wave of migration over the last sixty years, hundreds of thousands of second and third generation Greek-Australians have been born. Unlike a lot of their parents - many of whom entered Australia as poor migrants, later generations of Australian-born Greeks have been afforded the luxury of higher education and broad career prospects.

ow that there's a level of economic and educational comfort, what's next for second, third and future-generations of Greek-Australians? In a growing number of cases, a thirst for knowledge and pioneering spirit on a different, more intellectual level. That's why learning about history is starting to grow in appeal.

Having been transplanted a great distance geographically, and with the voices of grandparents starting to fade, what can a visit to Greece really mean for Australian-born Greeks? Surely more than ouzo, mezes, nice beaches and monument tours?

In the case of the Greek island of Kythera, something new took place in July this year. A project that helped stimulate a thirst for both knowledge and adventure through community backed archaeological excavations. I their stay organised by mem-Archaeology is far from new

in Greece, but what was new, is the inclusion of the local community and members of the Diaspora in the project, both as sponsors and beneficiaries. Perhaps the term 'Community Backed' Archaeology is most appropriate.

A handful of Greek archaeologists planned to survey a path along the side of a mountain where Kythera's ancient capital (Paleokastro) is currently buried; an arduous task considering how overgrown the area was with dense, inhospitable scrub.

With the help of members of the Kytherian-Australian community, a team of twenty full-time volunteers were assembled to assist archaeologists, with up to fifteen more daily volunteers helping most of the time. The full-time volunteers were primarily Greek archaeology students from Athens, with logistics during bers of the Kytherian-Aus-





tralian community. Funding to feed volunteers over the 18day period was provided from Australia through the generous support of the Nicholas Anthony Aroney Trust and Kytherian Association of Australia.

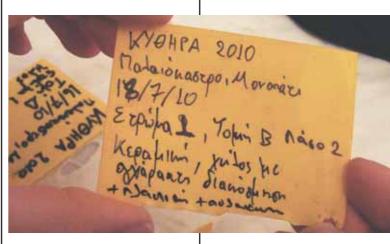
The team stayed in a picturesque 170 year-old, mountaintop monastery - with accommodation provided by the local Bishop and Greek Orthodox church. Kythera's Dimos (council) helped provide bus transport from the monastery to the dig site each day, with local supermarkets, bakeries and other businesses also supporting the team. It was a united, Greek-Australian coordinated effort, with a mix of local Greek volunteers and members of the Diaspora all pitching in to assist archaeolo-

Support involved more than just money but complete help with logistics. For example 50 meals a day were required for full-time volunteers over an 18 day period, totalling approximately 900 meals (excluding breakfast).

Hundreds of members of the public also visited the site on tours, many being Greek-Australian children. So the end result was an active, unifying, adventurous and intellectually stimulating project involving youth, parents and grandparents.

Sections of the mostly for-

called Agios Kosmas at the top of the Paleokastro mountain, built in approximately 1290AD. This church is unique as it was constructed using Doric columns from approximately 600BC, which stood in the area from a temple in the ancient city. Together with Bishop Seraphim, Kythera's Metropoliti, the team organised the first



gotten 2500+ year-old ancient Laconian-controlled capital were found, helping discover enough evidence to write a new chapter of ancient history. The team found walls, columns, coins, thousands of roof tile fragments, ancient ceramics and dozens of other different kinds of artefacts.

It would be hard to find a more interesting and practical community backed project which unified local residents with members of the Diaspora, and deeply involved; youth, culture, history, education, exploration and adventure. Not only did volunteers and visitors learn about ancient Greek history (from the dirt up) but they got to participate in the discovery of it. What a way to connect with the land of your forefathers!

Most of the volunteers who provided physical labour were 18-30 year olds, with older generations being inspired by the on-site tours. An added bonus was the clearing and opening of a path to a church church service held at Agios Kosmas over 100 years.

Youth of today is part of a generation brought up with on-screen heroes such Indiana Jones and Lara Croft, so coupled with the intellectual/cultural stimulation and feeling of adventure associated with archaeology, the project created a melting pot of learning, excitement and intrigue, resulting in something truly special.

A lecture outlining the concept of Community Backed Archaeology, perhaps sparking similar initiatives in other parts of Greece, plus a presentation of what the team discovered while excavating parts of Kythera's ancient Laconian-controlled capital will be held at Sydney University on the evening of Wednesday November 10th.

It's an interesting story, about more than just 2000 year-old artefacts but a way of unifying the community on many levels, engaging youth and providing a connection to







ancient Greek heritage. Perhaps you'd like to join the team as a volunteer next year? Come along and find out how.

Call George Poulos on 02 9388 8320 for more information. Or contact Kathy Samios on 02 9349 1849 or email

john.fardoulis@gmail.com to reserve your place at the free lecture.

Article by John Fardoulis



Community Backed Archaeology

A case study of how, with support from Australia, the ancient capital on the Greek island of Kythera was rediscovered in July 2010

A talk explaining how the GreekAustralian community can help support the quest for new chapters of ancient history over in Greece, discovering history from the ground (dirt) up. The concept is that volunteers as well as financial and other support is provided from Australia. This vital support helps Greek archaeologists undertake field work, the results of which are then shared with the community/Diaspora.

A case study will be presented where members of the KytherianAustralian community organised a team to support archaeological digs on Kythera during July, 2010. Sections of the mostly forgotten 2400+ year old Laconianruled ancient

capital were found at Palaeokastro, helping write a new chapter of ancient history. Hear how the team found walls, columns, coins, thousands of roof tile fragments, ancient ceramics and dozens of other different kinds of artefacts.

Key finds and an explanation of how the same community backed concept could be implemented in other parts of Greece will be presented. Where: Sydney University, New Law School Lecture Theatre 101

When: Wednesday, November 10th,

7pm for a 7.30pm start

How Much: Free. Light refreshments will be served.

RSVP by Nov 1st is esential.

Please call Kathy Samios on 9349 1849

or email john.fardoulis@gmail.com to secure your place.

This project was made possible by the gracious support of the Nicholas Anthony Aroney Trust and Kytherian Association of Australia.

Legal battles on the horizon to return Parthenon marbles to Greece

In Melbourne, at their 56th annual convention, AHEPA appointed Emanuel Komninos and lawyer Victor Bizanis in charge of the case.

Mr Bizanis said the precise defendant for the case is yet to be established, however there is no evidence of legal documentation from the time allowing Lord Elgin to remove the sculptures from the Parthenon before selling them to the British government.

The legal battle will be an expensive pursuit, Mr Komninos said, however AHEPA has already provided funding of \$15,000.

Getting the okay from the Greek government may present difficulties, Mr Komninos said. "The Greek Minister for Culture has made it very clear to me that the Greek government does not wish to go to court," he said.

Mr Bizanis said he will pursue an appointment in person with Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou to present their case. "These were a component ripped off one of the great buildings of Europe, the other half is in Athens, it's a restoration to unite two articles in the appropriate place, which is in the hands of the Greek people," Mr Bizanis said.

Article by: LAURA BURGOINE





PHOTO LEFT: from left to right: Peter George, Father Dimitrios Giameos, John Hatzistergos, Con Raptis, Emmanuel Samios.

PHOTO TOP: (inside the church building), from left to right: Peter George, Con Raptis, John Hatzistergos, Father Dimitrios Giameos, Emmanuel Samios

ATTORNEY GENERAL RE-VISITS ANCIENT GREEK HISTORY GROWING IN DUBBO

NSW Attorney General and Minister for Citizenship, John Hatzistergos last week made a visit to Dubbo to inspect the descendant of Hippocrates' teaching tree.

Mr Hatzistergos visited the University of Sydney's School of Rural Health in Dubbo to see the tree which he planted in 2005 as Health Minister.

"The famous plane tree of Hippocrates still grows on Kos and according to tradition it was planted by Hippocrates who taught students of medicine in its shade," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"In 2005, the University joined with the local Greek community in celebrating medicine's teaching tradition and planting a sapling taken from Hippocrates' teaching tree in Kos.

"Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, was born on the island of Kos between 470 and 460BC. Students of medicine still take the Hippocratic Oath today.

"I congratulate Professor Bruce Harris, along with others from the University, for instilling in the students of medicine a sense of ancient tradition and their role in having the tree planted at the school."

Mr Hatzistergos said he also met with representatives from the Greek Orthodox Church, The Lady of Myrtles, in Dubbo to discuss the tremendous work of the local community.

Amongst them were parish priest, Rev. Fr. Dimitrios Giameos the President of the Committee, Mr Emmanuel Samios and other Committee members, Mr Con Raptis and Mr Peter George.

"Greek-Australians in Dubbo are a vibrant community that continues to celebrate its faith and traditions, forming an integral part of New South Wales' multicultural mosaic," Mr Hatzistergos said.