

HELLENIC PRESENCE AT THE BRUNSWICK STREET PARTY



Australian Hellenic Pallaconian Brotherhood presence

THE PALLACONIANS AND THE 2012 SYDNEY ROAD STREET PARTY. The Street Party was held between the Union and Victoria streets in the heart of Brunswick. The street party supported by the Moreland City Council, Performing Arts, Festival, and other Street Party Partners such as Telstra, Melbourne Times Weekly, PBS 106.7FM and the many ethnic organisations that reside within the Moreland City Council was an overwhelming success.



Street Musicians

The street party has been operating for a number of years and this year's street party was the best demonstration of Multiculturalism at its best. There were over 75 ethnic groups being represented in form or another, from the craggy mountains of Scotland, Europe to the idyllic Shores of Vietnam in the Pacific.



Hellenic volunteers

Music at interval stations of raised platforms could be found including buskers who were playing at the sides of the road, thee tunes and music to a rapt and gleeful audience of interested onlookers. Many of the audience had the opportunity to sit and relax at the roadside cafes and makeshift refreshment bars that had been installed for public use. The organizers had certainly created a street party that was diverse and certainly a very colourful one to have attracted thousands of spectators.



Rino Di Genova and Ivan Mahoney were manning the information booths

In addition the hotels and restaurants had opened their doors and were doing a booming trade to the delight of the proprietors and publicans alike. The atmosphere was one of cordially, laughter, gaiety, full of joy and

happiness that brought a smile to one and the many who visited the street party. The event was well organised and supported by the Police and highly visible security groups that patrolled the event to ensure that the audience enjoyed themselves free of any unpleasant incidents of which there were none.



Logistical support volunteers

Up in the apartments above were the revellers that had positioned themselves appropriately observing the street party below and one could not but help envying their location and breadth of view. Any of those so located would at times shout out encouragement to the street walkers who had also taken part in the Street party, Groups such as the Scotsman playing the bagpipes along with his large "Human "dog representing one would assume an Irish hound which in this case would make the bagpipe player an Irishman.



Tim Scanlon entertaining the crowds

Other street walkers involved a pink band of bandsmen and women that had a security guard along with them for the stroll up and down Sydney road. Not to be outdone wee also those demonstrating African music with one member using his natural talents to gyrate his body in and out amongst the audience. There were martial arts groups, religious organisations, Save our heritage buildings, Salvation Army, opportunity shop's, Rotary club, Hare Krishna presentation, and many diverse bands including indigenous music group that captivated the audience.



The ever reliable volunteer George Miheleas at the stall

There were so many attractions that it was virtually impossible to take it all in and the distractions were such that the audience were often rooted to one spot, before being enticed to see another display of human endeavours at their best. The colours, music, smells from the various food stalls, aroma from the incense and other oriental aromas filled the air that it made an individual feel disconnected from reality and living in another part of the world. If that was the intentions of the organisers, then they succeed in bridging the gaps at the generational, cultural, individual, linguistics and emotional levels.



Kathy Petroulis at the stall

The Pallaconian Brotherhood as usual represented the Australian Hellenic Community on the day and they could be found located near the old Brunswick Town Hall, Dawson Street. The Pallaconian Brotherhood marquee was set amongst many other ethnic groups displaying their wares, selling food, trinkets, or merely being on display to show the flag as one would put it. The Pallaconians were well organised and the marquee was selling traditional gyro type of food, greatly reduced in price to attract customers and advise them of the Pallaconian Brotherhood presence and the ideals they stood for.



The street Gyros volunteers George Bakis and friend

The marquee set up involved approximately ten volunteers in four hour shifts with some members working the whole day through. Those at the frontline so to speak were supported by the logistics volunteer force located at the Pallaconian Brotherhood community centre in Albert Street some 500 meters north of the Marquee. The front line and logistics group of volunteers has been working since approximately 6.00 am in the morning in preparing for the Street festival under the watchful eye of the President Chris Paikopoulos. The President was found coordinating his volunteer groups which comprised of committee members and those of the community members at large.



President Chris Paikopoulos and John Yianakou

Many of the elders in the Pallaconian community had done this type of volunteering in the past and were on hand to pass on the cultural and traditional aspects to the younger generation that followed the. The younger generation who had so often made their presence felt by the various dance groups were visibly absent from this year's street party. Dancing in traditional ethnic costumes adds flair, colour and creates an atmosphere of gaiety and a sense of bonding. The Pallaconian dance group along with other ethnic based dance groups that were absent at this year's street party was disappointing to say the least and maybe organisers may wish to take that into consideration at the next years street party in 2013.



Peter Roumpos returning back to the Pallaconian Brotherhood after a long and tiring day.

Finally when it was all over, the dismantling of the marquees, removal of the street barriers, chairs, tables taken away, music equipment, products and trinkets, entertainment equipment, wiring, coals, charcoal, cooking implements, food and beverages, the street cleaned and rubbish removed along with many other items were gathered up and removed from Sydney Road. At the end of the clean up, Sydney road was back to normal with no evidence that a street party had been in progress during the day.

STREET PARTY ALBUM







