

# IT'S OK TO BE GREEK ON ONE DAY OF THE YEAR



Hellenic War of Independence Day is soon to be upon us. What does it mean to the average Australians of Hellenic origins? Do we celebrate because it is our last link with the sunsets of the past, the horizons of the future when we dream or does it merely bring back wonderful memories of our childhood with links to our heritage? How do we celebrate it? With parades, full of a procession of students, communities, business organisations and floats military, politicians bands playing, drum beats and crowds of people enjoying themselves and laying of wreaths and speeches by those elected by the people.

I hazard a guess that some will stop and remember the bloody sacrifices the Greeks undertook for the sake of freedom, some will have a quiet drinks and remind everyone around them of the glories of ancient Greece and boast about its contribution to mankind, a few express themselves orally on the radio, a minority in the local news media and many on social media. Others whose health may not be the best or unable for reasons of incapacity will smile with pride on that day. It is also their link with their past, a link that cannot be expressed adequately except with a "kefi" that is associated with the pride one feels within.

Whatever the case may be, Greeks throughout the world, no matter where they may reside or congregate, "you can bet your bottom dollar" that the Hellenic Day of Independence will unite all those who have Hellenic origins no matter how much of it is demonstrated openly within their environment. It is a time when all Greeks put aside their differences (and there are many) to feel for that one day a united people and allow themselves the joy of feeling that Hellenic blood flow ecstatically throughout their bodies. A glow within so to speak.



It matters little what nationality one holds, it matters little with your gender is or your sexuality preference, whether you are left or right or even neutral in your ideology, it's what you feel within as being the purveyor of an ancient race for future generations. No one can take it away from you. Whether you are of a mixed marriage, the Hellenic DNA and its associated variables still reside in you. And yet, if one is not a Hellene in life, they can still become one by the pride they feel, adopt its soul cultural aspects so to speak.

The price for freedom did not come cheap, for the struggle to survive and better oneself is still alive and well in the Greeks of today. Those Greeks who went before us had a burning desire to be on equal terms with their neighbours, to live a life that they wanted, free from oppression and external influences that place untold burdens on a tiny country. A country that has been bled dry for its resources, manpower and intellectualism. Whether you consider yourself an Australian, American, Canadian, European, and Asian as a result of your citizenship, it makes no difference for being of Hellenic origins is greater than one's immediate environment.



Like the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish who celebrate in their own way; there is nothing wrong with having a sense of pride and feeling a nostalgia for ones origins. The Irish are a perfect example with "St Patrick's day. A day when the Irish humour is at its best and as everyone knows, they celebrate it in style. It is the same for those with Hellenic origins. It has nothing to do with misplaced loyalties, it has nothing to do whether one has or has not with sympathies for the old country and it certainly has nothing to do with ones citizenship.

It is Ok to have a sense of pride on that one day; it's Ok to feel a sense of unity and wanting to shout for joy. It's not too late to celebrate and the best way to celebrate is to support the Hellenic institutions no matter what they are, for they are a representation of you. No matter what one may feel for 365 days; "it is Ok to be Greek for just that one day of the year. **Hellenic Forum 19 March 2013 Peter Adamis**

