



KON NIKOLOPOULOS

This is a personal tribute to a friend
Kon Nikolopoulos

In a time honoured tradition, the bells of Patras in the Peloponnese, Greece, will toll for one of its sons who grew up in memory of Kon Nikolopoulos.

Last night driving home from dinner, my wife, Yovanna and I were shocked and devastated receive a telephone call from a good friend, Peter Jasonides of the recent passing of Kon Nikolopoulos.

Suffice to say, I rang my old mentor Nick Bantounas who confirmed the sad news. . I went to bed last night reeling from the news and found it difficult to find comfort in the knowledge that a bright light had been extinguished from our midst.

I woke up early this morning with Kon on my mind and found that Petros Kosmopoulos and Peter Jasonides had already paid their personal tribute to Kon Nikolopoulos as a result of their own personal interaction with him. Peter Vlahos also confirmed Kon's passing and as result I advised Peter that i would be writing my own tribute. For Peter Jasonides, Petros Kosmopoulos and Peter Vlahos I ask forgiveness if I have included their comments without their permission and hope that under the circumstances that they will understand that it is for the sake of posterity.

Although I knew that Kon was in intensive care at the Epworth hospital i was sure that he would pull through as a result of the myriad of prayers that had followed him when it was evident that his health was failing and he was preparing for another journey not of this world. Still one lives in hope that our friends pull through no matter what the illness is. In Kon's case it appears that the creator had other ideas and felt that it was time to embrace Kon and allow him to rest in peace with his son Bill who had preceded him some time before.

What can one say when the soul and voice of a community has been silenced through the maladies of life? What does say to those who have been left behind? What can you say to those who are left with the grief and the sorrow to carry on? Whether one like him or not is immaterial, for what is important is the messages that he has left behind, the paradigms, the examples he set to those who needed encouragement and above all to all of those who were in some way touched by his presence.

It is never easy to express grief other than to display public by being at a person's funeral and being there for those left behind. A person who has made his mark on a community will be remembered for the good rather than for any negative aspects of his life and that is how it should be. Some people are destined for greatness because it was thrust upon them, others took it upon themselves the mantle of leadership and yet there are those who fall into the humble region where they contribute their time skills and knowledge for the betterment of the community whatever that may be. Kon Nikolopoulos was to be found in the latter category of leaders and encouragers.



Kon Nikolopoulos covering a story in September 2014

Kon Nikolopoulos was one of those rare individuals that could be called upon to find a solution in a pragmatic and diplomatic way that never offended anyone. A man whom you could go for advice and leave armed with the knowledge that made life easier.

He will very sadly miss and one hopes that those he has left behind as a result of his encouragement will take up the torch and continue with his good work.

I have known Kon Nikolopoulos in excess of twenty five years. Initially as a Warrant Officer of the Royal Australian Regiment (Infantry), the Australian Defence Force. My initial observations of Kon in 1989 were that he had the drive, enthusiasm and passion for assisting Australians of Hellenic (Greek) heritage to integrate within the Australian landscape.

Over time, I found that Kon had become well known to the Australian Defence Force through his activities in actively pursuing the theme of attracting non Anglo Australians into the Australian Defence Force. His articles in the Ethnic media certainly helped put a positive light on serving in the Australian Armed forces of which is now enjoying the results of Kon in put in the late eighties and early nineties. I knew personally of Kon's efforts within Australia in pursuant in identifying the Hellenic culture within the Australian multicultural society and ensuring that the Australian and Hellenic cultures follow the same ideals and goals.

As a migrant of Hellenic background, Kon migrated to Australia in July 1971 with his family and embracing the Australian culture and its people by becoming a naturalised Australian in 1992. Kon was born in Patras in the Peloponnese, educated in Greece and learning English which assisted him in integrating within the Australian society. Kon holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree teaching Greek and Social Studies. Furthermore, he is a qualified NAATI Accredited Interpreter – Translator (Level 3) teaching interpreting and translating techniques.

As a long time serving member of the Australian Hellenic Community Kostantinos has been working closely with the leading Australian Hellenic organizations and has served on the board of The Greek Herald and Neos Kosmos. He has also worked for the SBS (Radio Station 3EA) producing and delivering news and current affairs in the Hellenic language, as well as co-hosting sports radio programs in the English language. As a bilingual speaker, Kon has worked closely with a number of sporting publications, such as Soccer World, Soccer Action, Australian and British Soccer and is currently hosting the Australian Correspondent of Odyssey, a leading program for the Hellenic Broadcasting Commission (ERT SAT).

Suffice to say, Kon has been active in pursuing many noble causes such as equality for all Australians, recognition of Australians of Hellenic origins contributions to the Australian way of life, in areas such as economic, social, cultural and political development of Australian and Hellenic language, culture and education. Throughout his career Kon has stoutly defended and promoted multiculturalism as the means of achieving social harmony and peaceful co-existence of peoples of diverse racial and cultural origins. He has championed the cause of the elderly and played a key role in the signing of the social agreement between Australia and Greece.

Kon is a humble man who has a strong belief in justice and a fair go for all. Kon supports the ongoing maintenance of the Hellenic language and culture, lending his unqualified support to community bodies, government instrumentalities and educational institutions responsible for the teaching of the Hellenic language and culture in community and public schools as well as in Tertiary Level institutions. Kon is dedicated to the Hellenic traditions and leads the Organising Committee for the Commemoration of the Hellenic National Day, the community body responsible for the annual commemoration of the Hellenic National Day.

During the past 15 years, Konsatntinos has been actively involved with the Oakleigh Hellenic (Greek Orthodox) Community distinction and has been rewarded by being elected a member of the Trustees and subsequently the Secretary within the group. In addition, Kon has been instrumental in furthering the plight of the underprivileged and was a founder member for the People without Means Awards. Konstantinos has delivered numerous lectures on Hellenism and what it means to be Australian. His exemplary moral ethics are highly respected by his peers, the Hellenic and wider community. During his long career he has enjoyed enormous success that has established him among the finest lecturers the Australian Hellenic community has ever produced.

During the past three decades Kon plays a key role in the planning and execution of the annual Commemoration of the Greek National Day in Melbourne. In the 1990's he was the Master of Ceremony at the grand parade at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance, a demanding duty her performed with great success. In 2003 Kon was elected unanimously General Secretary of the Organistical Committee for the Commemoration of the Greek National Day a position which he continues to hold with great success.

The organizational Committee for the Commemoration of the Greek National Day is a representative body of Melbourne's Greek Community and commands the respect of the Trustees of the Shrine of Remembrance, of Melbourne City Council, of the State Government, of the political leadership of the Commonwealth of Australia, of the Armed Forces, the Hellenic Republic and of Australia's Greek Orthodox Church.

Kon has been honoured by the Hellenic Association and Victoria's Award for Excellence in Multicultural Affairs awarded by the Government of Victoria. Kon is the perfect example of Multiculturalism at its best, a person who has successfully combined Hellenic and Australian cultures and thereby strengthening the fabric of Australian society. A man of integrity, loyal, with a passion for his fellow man giving his time selflessly, and an Australian in the true sense of the word who firmly believes in fair play and the freedom to choose one's path in life. On reflection, I can foresee that we as Australians will hear and see more of Kon Nikolopoulos and of his support for the Australian way of life.



Kon Nikolopoulos and Peter Adamis September 2014

The last time I saw Kon was in Oakleigh shopping centre on the 1 September 2014. Kon was having a cup of coffee with Effie and we bumped into each other. He looked well and we chatted amicable together about life in general and of each other's families. I confess that he looked on top of the world, was chirpy, happy to see me and in the course of our discussions promised we would catch up soon. But life with its twists and turns had other plans for the both of us and we never got that opportunity.

Nick Bantounas who was a very close friend of Kon's rang me on my return from Greece with the news that Kon was ill in hospital and that he was intensive care at the Epworth. I guess in this case my prayers went unanswered and the Creator had other work for Kon. If anyone is to be recognized for their good work amongst the Australian Hellenic community it must none other than Kon Nikolopoulos. On behalf of my family and I we extend our condolences to Effie and Nickolas. Have a good journey and rest in peace my good friend.



Peter Adamis is a Journalist/Commentator and writer. He is a retired Australian military serviceman and an Industry organisational & Occupational (OHS) & Training Consultant whose interests are within the parameters of domestic and international political spectrum. He is an avid blogger and contributes to domestic and international community news media outlets as well as to local and Ethnic News. He holds a Bachelor of Adult Learning & Development (Monash), Grad Dip Occupational Health & Safety, (Monash), Dip. Training & Assessment, Dip Public Administration, and Dip Frontline Management. Contact via Email: abalinx@netspace.net.au or via Mobile: 0409965538



COSTAS NIKOLOPOULOS BY PETER JASONIDES

KALO PARADEISO KOSTA the Greek omogeneia in Australia, the Greeks of the Diaspora, mourn the loss, the unexpected and the unexpected death of journalist Costas Nikolopoulos. The late Costas Nikolopoulos served and honored the Greek journalism. He was a journalist with self-denial that respected the journalistic ethics and not ever negotiated the patriotic principles.

We lost one of the greatest pennies that went through all the media (newspaper, radio and television). In recent decades he served as the newspaper's new world syntaktin while he and correspondent through information and Ellads. In respect of the spouse the Effi and his son Niko in the favorite, wish you health and strength to face this ordeal. His memory be eternal. Good paradise teacher (in journalism) and buddy (in life), Kostas.

KOSTA NIKOLOPOULOS BY PETROS KOSMOPOULOS



16 January 2015

I'm saddened to hear the passing away tonight of journalist/editor/publisher and friend, Kosta Nikolopoulos, aged 67. Kosta was the ultimate professional. While he was a hard task master, he was also fair, loyal and generous. He had a great sense of humour. A very witty man. Kosta wrote many ground breaking stories and interviewed numerous politicians for the newspapers he worked for since the mid-1970s.

Many will also remember him at SBS Radio where his booming voice would inform Greek speakers of the day's events. Kosta was the person who gave me my start in journalism. In 1987, as an 18-year-old uni student, he took me under his wing when other media outlets were closing doors on me. He persisted with me until I learnt the craft while finishing my studies. I always tell of the story about how he never published my first 20 articles (and I contemplating quitting). His aim was to always keep me grounded.

Kosta tested me to see if I'd develop the thick skin that was required to work in the media. Those articles were returned full of corrections in bright red. He taught me a valuable lesson in humility, too. His words to me were "read, read, read, write, write, write... You can always improve your writing even if you've been in the game for 30 years. I'm still learning."

The media industry is brutal, especially to the beginners, and Kosta was my mentor and protector. I recall him scolding a colleague in Sydney who wasn't willing to be patient with me. He regularly picked up the phone and blasted those who were hard on me. After a couple of years, Kosta rewarded me for my hard work and persistence by appointing me sports editor.

My career in communications took off. I worked with Kosta at the Greek Herald between 1987 and 1992 and with Neos Kosmos until 1995. In recent years, our paths would occasionally cross at Oakleigh Shopping Centre on a Saturday afternoon. He was always a gentlemen and wanted to know how my career was progressing. After I left the media, Kosta rang me once to enquire about stolen mail that was meant to reach Greece when I was Deputy Media Relations Manager at Australia Post.

It was weird defending the corporation's position while Kosta asked me questions about how we were dealing with the situation. Despite our previous working relationship, he approached this story as he did any other. He wanted both of us to maintain our professional integrity. This was the way Kosta worked. The Greek community has lost a very talented journalist. His legacy will live on in the pages of the Greek Herald and Neos Kosmos where he spent the last two decades plying his trade interviewing ministers, premiers and prime ministers.

Kosta loved his job but above all loved his family. He was a good family man. Kosta had the terrible misfortune of losing his eldest son in a tragedy a few years ago. You're not meant to outlive your children. Each time I met him since that tragedy, you could sense the sorrow never left him. My condolences to his wife, Effie, and son, Nickolas. Καλό ταξίδι, Κώστα.



COSTAS NIKOLOPOULOS BY PETER VLAHOS

17 January 2015

Costas Nikolopoulos was an accomplished journalist and a respected personality of the Greek Community. With his passing, Neos Kosmos will not be the same paper.. One always looked forward to Costas' opinion articles, at times one might not have agreed with his conclusions on issues.

but one noted them and one always sought his opinion on issues...his contributions to Greek journalism in this country are second to none...he was in a league of his own. I will miss him and his passing creates a major void in our community. ..

Rest in Peace Costa.....

KOSTAS NIKOLOPOULOS BY NEOS KOSMOS



REST IN PEACE KOSTAS - NEOS

KOSMOS 16 Jan 2015

Kostas Nikolopoulos (left), the journalist who interviewed most of Australia's politicians

It is with a heavy heart we bring you the news of the passing of our colleague, and family member, Kostas Nikolopoulos

It is with a heavy heart we bring you the news of the passing of our colleague, and family member, Kostas Nikolopoulos. Kostas passed away peacefully aged 67. He will always be remembered for his integrity and true spirit to his community and his profession. As a pioneer of multicultural journalism, Kostas leaves behind a strong legacy as one of Australia's greatest political journalists. Twenty years of his life was dedicated to Neos Kosmos; but what he gave to the community, both Greek Australian and the wider Australian public, supersedes his written words. He shaped the political landscape with his unwavering commitment to telling the truth and reporting the news. Our thoughts are with his family at such a sad time. A true gentleman in every sense of the word. Rest in peace Kostas Nikolopoulos.

KOSTA NIKOLOPOULOS BY FOTIS KAPETOPOULOS

17 January 2015

Vale Kosta Nikolopoulos. I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of my NEOS KOSMOS colleague Kosta Nikolopoulos. He died too young. Kosta was an intelligent, articulate and elegant man. Exceptionally well versed on the intricacies of Greece's and the Greek Diaspora's politics and society. He was a great community activist and his support and work with Hellenic Independence activities were broadly recognized by all. He was a generous and open man, open to diversity of cultures, lifestyles and political views.

Once I left Neos Kosmos to Premier's Office, he would ring me on a regular basis with the classic Kosta question: "Hello my boy, what's up, any news, what's going on in there?" This innocuous sounding question was anything but. That question meant that Kosta had heard something, and I need to get my story straight. Kosta was very funny. In his baritone voice he would always say loud enough for all to hear, "You know why we (he and I) are the most elegant and most intelligent in here Foti? Because we are from Patra!" So Kosta my man, see you on the other side one day, I will pour libations tonight for you and thank you for all the great conversations, the mentoring and the friendship. Love to your family. Kosta yes, we are both Patrini.