

ARTHUR ROVOLIDIS

ONE OF NATURES TRUE GENTLEMEN

The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis



Arthur Rovolidis. Arthur Rovolidis arrived in Australia a relatively young man in early 1950 after migrating from a village in the Northern parts of Greece. He worked in a variety of jobs including a stint in cutting cane in far north Queensland. After some time going from one job to another, Arthur settled down in Melbourne Victoria and in the course of time came into contact with the relatives of his lovely wife, Despina.

Arthur and Despina settled in Chadstone and took up the trade of a butcher. Eventually they bought a small butcher shop in Oakleigh and both worked together in the family butcher, raising their children in the growth corridors of Chadstone. As time wore on and more Greeks flocked to Oakleigh from other suburbs of Melbourne, so did the family business prosper and such Arthur and his wife became solid pillars of the Oakleigh Greek community.



Arthur and Despina in the Community board room. While they had the Butcher shop they were instrumental in providing material, spiritual and in kind support to the Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Community.

To raise funds for the Oakleigh Greek Community, Arthur would provide carcasses of meat (lambs) for auction or for any community BBQ.

This was always free of charge. At other times, Arthur could be found assisting others in need through his work with the local church and his interests within the wider Greek community.



An early photo of Arthur during the early days on the management committee.

As one of the founding fathers of the Oakleigh Greek Community, Arthur was instrumental behind the scenes.

He was forever ensuring peace, harmony and community spirit was kept alive and that solutions found for the challenges people faced in those early days.

His positive outlook on life was infectious and there was nothing that could not be solved according to Arthur. He had a caring and compassionate attitude towards other in need and requiring support and was always on hand to help others. You could always count upon Arthur to be there during the difficult periods in one's life providing support and nurturing those in distress and/or down and out on their luck.



Carydias, Bantounas, Sarmioniotis, Varsamis and Arthur Rovolidis counting Church tributes after a church service.

A man of few words, Arthur was loved by all for his unselfishness, compassion, cheerful and soothing words in difficult times.

Arthur Rovolidis is one of the founding members of the Greek Orthodox Community of Oakleigh and District, being involved since 1963, and on every Management committee since that time. He is a trustee member who is very popular, earning the trust of the community's members from Day one. Throughout his life he had managed to be on the board of the Oakleigh Greek community providing valuable services towards his fellow man for over 45 years. A multi-skilled individual who continues to serve on a voluntary basis as he has been doing 1964.



Peter Adamis, Manolis Vardakis and Arthur Rovolidis. His invaluable contribution to the capital projects achieved by the community, such as the Community Church, Homes for the Aged, Community Centre and the Primary and Secondary Colleges.

His contributions are many making it difficult for others to emulate him and creating a legend.

Every year Arthur has been voted to coordinate the community's official functions, purchase of goods, hiring of kitchen staff, waiters, cooks amongst many other administrative tasks.



Arthur is seen here behind members of Parliament from the Hellenic Republic signing the Community's guest book.

Arthur skills made him the ideal choice for the smooth and efficient conduct of community events such as the biannual celebration of honouring the Community's Patron Saints, St Anargiri.

Throughout the years he has provided his services free of charge in a humble way that characterises him. However, apart from all that, his excellent skills as a Chef/Cook/Adviser for the Community have made him renowned by all and it was through his efforts that many functions and events were undertaken successfully.



Arthur is seen here with Peter Vlahos, the former Mayor of the City of Monash.

Peter Vlahos was instrumental in supporting Arthur during some challenging times faced by the Oakleigh Greek Community.

Arthur was also declared a Life Honorary Member of the Community in recognition of his work.

He is an excellent role model to the next generation, who can appreciate from him the level of commitment a person can make to assist in realising a community vision and its objectives for the common good in a harmonious multi-cultural environment.



Arthur in his youth. Today, Arthur can be seen amongst the Community providing assistance to the young and to the elderly in addition to representing members of the Community at functions, events and at Board meeting for the betterment of his fellow community members. Life in the Community would not be the same without a kind word of encouragement and a pat on the back for a job well done from Arthur Rovolidis.



Postscript. *I first met Arthur and his wife in 1979 when I was posted to Melbourne during my military career. I would buy our meat from his shop and often visit his brother in law Con Baltas near the Oakleigh Train Station. I know from my own discussions with the Rovolidis family that meat would (lamb) would cooked in an oven that was run by a family friend the Mastrogiannis.*

Years later when I was contacted to the Oakleigh Greek community as the Business and Public Relations Manager, I came across Arthur and his lovely wife again in unusual circumstances. Despina was in the Monash Medical centre with health related problems and i was called in to visit Arthur who had been rushed into the same hospital with a heart attack.



Arthur with members of the management committee. When I entered the hospital I was introduced to Despina in her ward who instantly recognised me but could not remember my name.

Later in the day when Arthur had stabilised I visited him and we talked of the past.

Arthur and his wife became my very good friends and many a time I would visit them during my tenure with the community seeking out his advice and support in matters regarding the Oakleigh Greek Community. Now some nine years later we still see each other when I travel to Oakleigh to visit my parents I would drop in for a quick coffee and chat.



The Rovolidis family. As a friend, I owe much to Arthur for his advice and support through some difficult periods. In my estimation, he is truly a great man and leader in the Oakleigh Greek Community.

I must confess that due to my poor writing skills, I have not been able to capture the true essence of Arthur and have failed to demonstrate all of his caring and compassionate qualities.



The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis is a (not for profit) Journalist/Commentator. 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