

## OAKLEIGH GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY IN TURMOIL – OPINIONS



**Hellenic Community at Oakleigh**

It would appear that the Hellenic fabric of the Oakleigh community is coming apart at the seams. It is with great sadness that this is occurring at a time when all members should be seeking a resolution that is equitable to all parties concerned. As with all communities, one must expect a lively and robust discussion to take place whether it's on a level playing field, in the board room or in public.

The Hellenic community of Oakleigh and Districts has a proud and distinguished history dating back to the early 1970 s' where a group of interested individuals came together to create one of Melbourne's brightest and vibrant Hellenic Communities. For whatever the reasons may be for the split in the community, it is hoped that wiser and cooler heads become the norm and that conciliation becomes possible.

From an external observer's point of view, the current management committee it would appear to be guided by market material and as such have based their decision to change the name for the future prosperity of the College so to speak. However having made this observation, what would be the long term repercussions given that the absence of the name "Sts Anargiri" from the Official College name.

The President and Management Committee would have been prudent and wise enough to have sought legal advice before taking this course of action and as such may be within their rights as a management committee to make those decisions. However if on the other hand it contradicts the community's constitution, one wonders what takes precedence. Which is it to be, the constitution or the legal advice being offered?

It has been mooted in the past that some individuals have beat their breasts in public, so to speak saying that any changes to the Community and/or its assets would have to be made over their dead body. Mere words or acts of bravado, who is to say as actions speak louder than words.

As for the present, the community appears to be developing, the people are maturing and embracing a culture that is no longer alien to them; and as such the community must move forward to a future which no longer seems to be uncharted. Rhetoric, acts of individual bravado, acts of eco terrorism and bureaucracy will not change what has occurred. The key to any changes within any organisation is its members.

If the majority of members have sway, the majority rules. The clue here then is to ensure that the membership base is secure and not subject to any fraudulent processes. That is not to say that any challenge whether it's on a legal or non legal approach is bound to fail. Any changes that affect an organisation should reflect those of its members and not the few and therefore any changes that are to occur can only come within. **Peter Adamis**