

ROVOLIDIS ORAL HISTORY OF THE OAKLEIGH HELLENIC COMMUNITY



Arthur Rovolidis

Preamble. I am reminded of a remark made by an Australian soldier who was serving in Greece during World War 2: "The Greeks always made it obvious that we were their people and they made us (Australians) feel like their own" these words were uttered by Henry Jo Gullet, Soldier, Officer, Ambassador to Greece, Politician.

This article is not about Greeks in Australia, nor about their achievements, aspirations or their contribution to Australia. This is not an official history of the Community but merely one family's story of their involvement as part of the Oakleigh and surrounding Districts Hellenic Community.

It is not possible at this point in time to obtain all of the facts as there were numerous families that helped create the Hellenic community in Oakleigh and surrounding Districts. This is the third revision of the original article that was produced in November 2008 and was based the original discussions with the Rovolidis Family. Additional reviews were conducted in November 2009 and September 2010 incorporating new information data and photographs. Peter Adamis



*Composite Satellite Map of Australia
Photo Courtesy Google Earth*

The reason for the initial project arose out of discussions in the family home of Mr. and Mrs. Rovolidis. Both had become alarmed at the lack of knowledge and understanding amongst the younger generation of how the Greek Orthodox community of Oakleigh and Districts began. They were concerned that future generations would fail to understand and appreciate the hardships, trial and tribulations that the first generation of Greeks had to endure at a time when they lacked language skills, education, and network support that the current generation takes for granted.

They could see that as the years progressed and time took its toll on the original members, that the history of the Hellenic community in Oakleigh and the surrounding districts would be eroded and finally forgotten. This is their story as how they saw the community begin and evolve.

The article is also supplemented by additional research material by the Author and any errors are those of the author. This is a living document and will be reviewed periodically to include additional stories from oral, records and visual resources that become available in any format.

HISTORY



*Kulin Boundaries and people
Photos Courtesy Kulin online resource collection*

The first People. The original settlers and pioneers. Originally inhabited by the Kulin people. The **Kulin** nation, was an alliance of five Indigenous Australian nations in Central Victoria, Australia, prior to European settlement. Their collective territory extended to around Port Phillip and Western Port, up into the Great Dividing Range and the Loddon and Goulburn River valleys. To their east lived the Gunai/Kurnai people of Gippsland. Five distinct languages were spoken in two groups. The Eastern Kulin group includes Woiwurrung, Bunurong, Taungurong, Ngurai-illam-wurrung.

The western language group included just Wathaurung. When the Europeans arrived in the district; a grazing run was established in the settled district east of Melbourne in the early 1840s. Library records indicate that "throughout the 1840's, pioneer pastoralists grazed their cattle and built modest bush dwellings alongside the original settlers, the Bunurong people, kin to the Kulin people held corroborees on the edge of the River Red Gum forest which bordered Scotchmans Creek in the Oakleigh district. Although in 1879 Oakleigh was still a semi-rural township, the opening of the railway station and the build up of the town centre attracted more people to the area.

Despite the Great depression which was felt on a global scale, Oakleigh was able to move forward and with the growth in population during the 1920 and 1930 were able to build the civic buildings, the construction of the Oakleigh RSL Memorial Hall, Post Office, Council Chambers, Mechanics Institute and Wilkinson Football Grandstand. The new road to the township of Dandenong and the rail line to Gippsland provided transport for the growing industries of the Oakleigh brickworks. The expansion of the south eastern growth corridor during the 1960's and 70's attract many migrants from post war Europe and inner Melbourne city suburbs.



*Satellite view of the suburb of Oakleigh
Photo Courtesy of Google Earth*

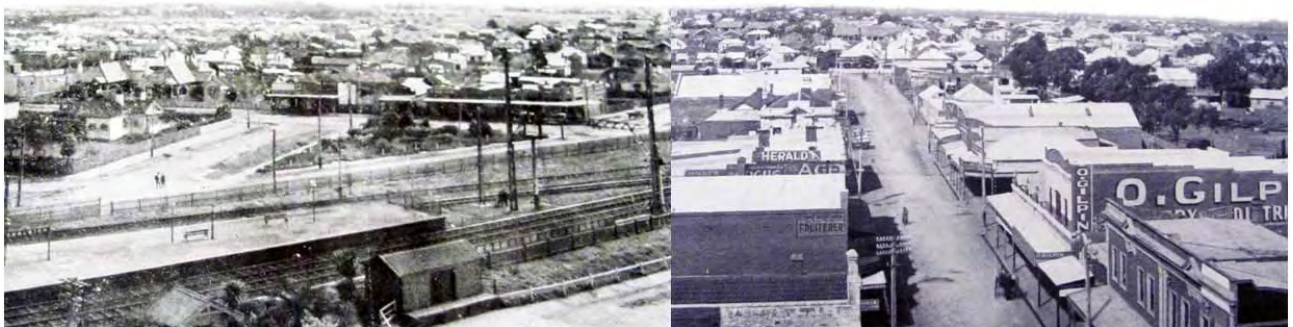
Location. "Oakleigh is situated approximately 17 Kilometres south east of the Melbourne city centre and was originally called Scotchmans Creek up until about 1853. It is believed that the name Oakleigh comes from two sources, one being that She-oaks were growing near Scotchmans Creek and the other being named after an early female settler named Mrs. Oakley. Scotchmans Creek's headwaters are in present day Mount Waverley and flow westerly.

In 1840 John McMillan leased the Scotchmans Creek grazing run, stretching over land from Mount Waverley to Oakleigh, which was later administered by a Shire named Oakleigh (1871-91) and then by Oakleigh borough (present day Oakleigh) and Oakleigh shire. Oakleigh shire was renamed Mulgrave in 1897. The connection between Oakleigh and Mulgrave was predominantly along Ferntree Gully Road, which began near the original Oakleigh Township on Dandenong Road, known locally as the Broadway. Oakleigh's influence in the Mulgrave area was persistent, and the Mulgrave shire's Council meetings were held in Oakleigh Township for the shire's first 23 years.



*Oakleigh Historical Society
Photo Courtesy: Peter Adamis Collection*

The Broadway is about 500 metres south of Scotchmans Creek, and it coincides with the place where an animal pound was established in 1842 (the South Yarra Pound). Nearby the South Yarra Inn was built a few years later. In 1853 the Oakleigh township was surveyed and allotments sold. An Anglican church was opened in 1854. Oakleigh was on two main roads, Ferntree Gully Road to the Dandenong Ranges and Dandenong Road to Gippsland. In 1865 Oakleigh was described as partially cleared land of variable quality, some being suitable for growing root vegetables.



**Panoramic view of Oakleigh – Railway Station in the foreground
Photos Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society Collection**

Timber cutting was the main industry. Short lived primary schools had functioned in the early 1850's, and the forerunner of the present day school was began on a Wesleyan church site in 1855. In 1877 the railway to Gippsland begun, its Melbourne commencement point being Oakleigh. Two years later its extension from Oakleigh to South Yarra was completed. Oakleigh's strategic importance in railway movement was strengthened when a metropolitan ring railway, known as the Outer Circle, was opened in 1890, commencing a short distance west of Oakleigh at Hughesdale. The Gippsland railway line, about one kilometre south of the Broadway, occasioned the shift of Oakleigh's borough, bounded by Warrigal, Waverley, Huntingdale and Centre Roads was severed from the shire.

World War 1

The residents of Oakleigh have contributed their sons and daughters to two World wars and subsequent police actions that Australia has been involved in since the founding of Australia. In fact the First World War was to have a devastating effect on the Oakleigh District after losing many of its young men in Battle. On the other hand, 50 Greeks, living in Australia who were not brought up in Oakleigh, "served in Australia's armed forces, and some 450 Australian men and women would serve in northern Greece with units of the British or Serbian armies according to the research conducted by Hugh Gilchrist in this first volume on Australians and Greeks.

THE WESTERN FRONT

Many Oakleigh men fought on the Western Front, in the trenches or in support. Of these, 49 were killed in action, or died of wounds or illness. Eleven of those had served at Gallipoli.




The Darkest Day - Fromelles
On the 19th July 1916, the Australian 15th Infantry Brigade attacked the German positions at Fromelles. Leading the advance were the Victorians of the 59th and 60th Battalions.
That day, five men from Oakleigh, all in the 59th Battalion, were killed or were mortally wounded within a 500 square metre area. None of the 59th reached the German trenches; the battalion was essentially destroyed as a fighting unit.
That day, Australia suffered over 5,000 casualties. Victoria suffered grievously, with terrible news for Oakleigh families and hundreds of others around the State.

They also Served
A number of men did not die at the front.
Some died of disease before leaving Australia or before reaching France, others died from disease in English hospitals or were killed in tragic accidents behind the front. One of these was YMCA Secretary William Rowan.
Some died after returning home from the effects of their service.
All were mourned

FROM OAKLEIGH TO THE WAR

At the outbreak of the Great War Oakleigh was a small Borough. It produced vegetables, fruit and flowers for Melbourne markets with some poultry and dairying. It manufactured bricks and tiles and milled timber. More than 400 men employed in these industries enlisted; over ten percent of Oakleigh's population. Of these 68 died in service.

Leaving Home
Troop recruitment rallies were staged. The mostly young men who answered the call were sent off from the Mechanics Institute with passionate ceremony. Enlistees were pinned with medals naming them as soldiers of Oakleigh and the Empire.

The men were sent to camps at Broadmeadows, Royal Park and Seymour for initial, and often rudimentary training. They then embarked for the voyage to Egypt or direct to England for battle training before deploying to the Front.




Home Front Support
The Oakleigh Patriotic Fund, Red Cross and Women's National League and community sent parcels of comforts and clothing to the troops.
Volunteers made up medical supplies; the Oakleigh and Mulgrave Munitions Workers' League turned out hospital trays, walking sticks, crutches, deck chairs and similar items.



Articles and Recruitment posters World War 1 Photos Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society Collection

In fact the island of Lemnos was used as a base for a hospital for Allied soldiers during the Gallipoli campaign. Books on Oakleigh, ANZAC and their contributions to the Australian Defence may be purchased from the Oakleigh Historical society located near the current Police Station. After the First World War Oakleigh saw some growth with new people moving in and contributing to the overall prosperity of the area.



Photos Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society Collection

Oakleigh's urban potential was increased by the addition of part of Caulfield, comprising present day Hughesdale, in 1913. In 1924 Oakleigh was proclaimed a town on 2 August, 1927, a city. By then Oakleigh area was substantially built up, and housing was extending to Hughesdale and Huntingdale (East Oakleigh) in the vicinity of their railway station. At the close of the war these areas were described as rising suburbs.



***Oakleigh Football Club and Oakleigh Volunteer Band
Photos Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society Collection***

Having expanded westwards into Caulfield in 1913, Oakleigh municipality expanded eastwards into Mulgrave shire in 1948, acquiring more of East Oakleigh, Clayton and Oakleigh South between Huntingdale and Clayton Roads. In 1959 another municipal extension into Mulgrave shire occurred, reaching as far as Blackburn Road including the site of the future Monash University and all of Clayton South. The enlarged Oakleigh city was unchanged when it was amalgamated with Waverley city (formerly Mulgrave shire) on 15 December, 1994, to form Monash city.



***Left to Right: Uniting Church, Masonic Hall and the RSL
Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis Collection***

For the first ten post-war years Oakleigh's Warrigal Road was a boundary between a built up area to the west and a developing area with unmade roads to the east. This was particularly so as one moved southwards along Warrigal Road away from the railway line. The land in Oakleigh South was sandy and fairly flat, suitable for golf courses. The area has the Metropolitan Commonwealth and Huntingdale Golf Clubs. In 1960 the Chadstone drive-in shopping centre was opened on the border of Oakleigh, about 1.5 km from the Oakleigh shopping centre.



T

***he Avenue Dandenong Road
Photos Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society Collection***

Although trading in the three or four active street in the Oakleigh shopping centre was maintained with one-way traffic and pedestrianization, the contrast with climate-control-led Chadstone was apparent. In the early 1980's the railway goods yards were redeveloped for the Oakleigh Central shops. Australia's first motel was opened on Dandenong Road, Oakleigh East and the first 7-Eleven convenience store was opened on Warrigal Road (1977).



Left Oakleigh Mechanics Hall dated 1950 Right Oakleigh Mechanics Hall dated 2010
Photo Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society & Peter Adamis Collections

East of the shopping centre along the railway line there are substantial industrial properties, several lying idle from the reduction of Australia manufacturing. In the housing area later settlers, a significant number of them being Greek, have replaced post war settlers. However, despite the inflow of those residents the population of Oakleigh municipality during the mid 1990's experienced one of Victoria's fastest rates of decline. Today Oakleigh is part of the City of Monash, which has 162,910 residents and is Melbourne's most populous municipality. It is also close to the demographic centre of Melbourne, lying 20 km south east of the CBD in Melbourne's fastest growing population corridor. It is a cosmopolitan city with 37% of its residents coming from more than 30 countries.



Park lands in the heart of the Oakleigh shopping district
Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis Collections

It has a highly skilled and well-educated workforce, with 13% having a degree or higher education. Its residents also enjoy a level of home ownership that is considerably higher than the Melbourne average. Monash has some of Melbourne's best-known landmarks within its 82 square kilometres, including Monash University, Waverley Park, the Monash Medical Centre, the Victorian Police Academy and Jells Park. The City's leafy streetscapes are a feature of the area, as are the 600 hectares of parks, gardens and reserves managed by Council.

It has excellent sporting facilities catering especially for football, cricket, swimming, basketball, netball, softball and golf. Monash has developed a reputation as a 'high tech' centre for industry. The Monash Technology Precinct, one of the most important in Australia, contains some of the nation's most prestigious research organisations. The City is currently experiencing a major surge in commercial development. This will strengthen Monash's position as the centre for economic activity in Melbourne's eastern suburbs."



Eaton Street

Photos Courtesy Oakleigh Historical Society Collection

Post World War II

Now, Oakleigh along with the suburbs of Huntingdale and Clayton fall within the City of Monash. In 1995, all three suburbs were amalgamated with the City of Waverley to establish the City of Monash. Its first Mayor was Peter Vlahos whose Hellenic origins are from Messenia, Greece. Since then Monash City Council has seen Mayors whose origins come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Oakleigh is considered to be one of Melbourne's most populous suburbs in excess of 160,000 residents comprising of six major non-English speaking groups are Greek, Chinese, Italian, Malaysian, Sri Lankan & Indian.



Peter Vlahos – The first Lord Mayor of Monash City Council
Photo courtesy Peter Vlahos collection

OAKLEIGH HELLENIC CONNECTIONS

Hugh Gilchrist who recently passed away was like Henry Jo Gullett a soldier, Officer, Career diplomat, Ambassador to Greece and above all a Philhellene. In 'Afstraliotes Hellenes, Greeks in Australia', Hugh Gilchrist wrote that "The contacts between Australia and Greece go back for more than 170 years, to the day when the first Greeks set foot on Australian soil. For many decades these contacts were episodic and of limited significance." Hugh Gilchrist was a guest of the Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Community in 2005 where he gave a speech on the close relationships between the Hellenic people and that of Australians. He was given a very warm and rousing welcome by the Hellenic community. He shall be sadly missed.



Hugh Gilchrist
Photos courtesy Gilchrist and Google Online resources

The First Greeks in Oakleigh

The first known mention of any Greeks or those of Greek heritage is that of Thelma Barwick (Nee Kotsiakos) who worked in the Oakleigh area in the early 1960. Thelma grandfather was originally from Greece and had migrated to America before arriving in Australia during the Gold rush years and settling down in Castlemaine, Victoria. (See biography of Thelma Barwick nee Kotsiakos). Having said this, It is not known for certain who the first Greeks into Oakleigh were, but one can assume that those that did settle in Oakleigh, did so after World War 2. When additional facts and information regarding the first Hellenes into the area becomes available the article will reflect those changes.



Miss Oakleigh 1961 – Thelma Barwick nee Kotsiakos
Photo courtesy Maurice Barwick collection

The old country



Hellenic Diaspora 1947 – 1977
Photo Courtesy Adapted Google Image

The Greek migrants. Life may not have been easy for the early Greeks living in an Anglo environment, but many persevered and learnt quickly the language, the customs and the Australian way of life. Employment was always available and if one worked hard, enough funds could be put aside to purchase a home, educate their children, entertainment and for the future.



Map of Greece
Courtesy of Google map & Online resources

Francois De Stoop wrote about the Greeks of Melbourne, saying that "the *unsung heroes of the Greek Community* are undoubtedly the tens of thousands of migrants who came here after the war to build a new life for themselves and their children. They may not have had much formal education but they were determined to do their best in a difficult environment".



L – R Arthur Rovolidis 18 Year old in Athens – Despina Zoidis (Rovolidis Centre),
 Despina Zoidis (Rovolidis) as a young girl in Greece
 Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

The Greeks who had lived in the inner suburbs of Windsor, Prahran, Malvern, South Melbourne, Richmond, Brunswick and others from interstate as far as West Australia working on the Railroads, Queensland amongst the cane cutting region made Oakleigh, NSW working on the Hydro Electric project and many other locations, decided to make the Chadstone, Clayton, Oakleigh and surrounding districts their new home. Other Greeks also arrived from all parts of the Greek mainland, islands, turkey and a number arriving from Egypt after the Nasser Government came to power.



Humble beginnings from the old country
 Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis and Peter Adamis collections

Lacking any real education past elementary school, many drifted into factory, manual labour, hospitality service industries and manufacturing. The lucky ones who had the benefit of an education from their homeland and could speak some English were able to obtain employment in areas where their skills were most useful such as hospitals, schools, government employment and others would begin their own business like the Baltas (Fish & Chips Shop), Pateras & Lazogas (Real Estate), Rovolidis (Butcher Shop), Mastrogiani's (Bakery), Papadopoulos (Education), Sardellis (Vehicle Mechanic and Smash Repairs), Vlahos & Rossis (Legal Practitioners), Kon Nikolopoulos (Journalist).



Mrs and Mrs Zoidis with family and Father Moutafis who was visited them in their Home village in Greece
 Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection



The Mastrogianni family

The Mastrogianni family own and operated the Family Bakery In Springvale
Arthur Rovidis would take the Lambs to the bakery to be pre-cooked.

Photo courtesy Mastrogianni collection

These and any other families who embarked on the restaurants, cafe, plumbers, carpenters, lecturers, professors, news agents, Nurseries, Doctors, Dentists, Politicians, Australian Defence Force, Police and Emergency Services, Football, Sports, Media and a host of other careers and occupations. One could say that the Hellenic people had integrated well within Australian society and were contributing to the cultural diversity at all levels. This is the true meaning of cultural diversity; the weaving of new threads into the Australian core values and thus building and strengthening them by ensuring that Australia remains a vibrant and competitive country in this new age and millennium.



Arthur Rovidis and his brothers cutting cane in North Queensland

Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovidis Collection

Although not all of the families would join in, it was the Greek Orthodox church that united all of them. As time passed, Oakleigh became a focal point for Greeks from all parts of the Greek world, a place where individuals or groups could and would come together to meet and become united under one common cause, that is the creation of the Greek Orthodox Community. This was not an easy thing as many of the Greeks had their own ideas and aspirations on what the best way of getting things done.



Arthur Rovolidis on the railways
Photos Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collections

Everyone believes they are right and everyone has an opinion, after all that is what Greeks are all about, they like to take the lead role in any project or endeavour and solve the world's problems. However it soon became apparent that the Greeks of Oakleigh and Clayton needed to become united and create networks before they could move forward as a body. When Charles Price was conducting his initial research in the early seventies, he found that those Greeks who chose both the "Greek and Australian values and constructed what for them is a meaningful combination" were able to become successful.



Early Greek Businessmen – Lemnos motors, Mermaid cleaning, Milk Bar
Photo courtesy Peter Adamis collection

1946 – 1975 . As indicated above, post World War 2 saw an influx of migrants from war torn Europe arrive in the area, many of them only willing to leave the poverty of their homeland for a new start in an alien country. A country that had different customs, languages and institutions to those that they had been used to in their own homelands. The migrants who came from Greece were able to integrate quickly within the parameters of Australian Society and blend well in the Oakleigh carefree environment.



Early Years
 Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Although the new settlers brought in their own religious beliefs and customs, the institutions left behind by the early settlers remained as silent tributes of their contributions and achievements. Institutions that still remain to this day are the RSL, Hotels, Cemetery Football grounds, Oakleigh Mall, Avenue of Honour (in memory of war service, following WW1), civic building and historical sites such as the Shire Offices (Est.1922), Uniting Church, Masonic Centre, Oakleigh Library, Mechanics Institute (Est.1906) and the Egyptian Church (Est.1928) It was within these embedded societal parameters that the Hellenic consciousness began to revive.



Mr & Mrs Zoidis with their Grand daughter Toula & Arthur Rovolidis
Photos Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collection

Hellenic consciousness. As more Greeks began to settle in the Oakleigh Clayton area, a consciousness arose within the Greek community that there was a need for unity and the importance of retaining their Hellenic heritage without it conflicting with the new way of life. Many would join small communities, others would join Church groups or create clubs related back to their village or place of origin.



Zoidis, Baltas and Rovolidis families
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Migration to Australia. Mrs. Zoidis like many other Greeks had migrated to Australia for a better way of life and to be with her daughters who come on earlier trips. Mrs Zoidis had migrated to Australia from the village of Kaloneri on the outskirts of Kozani, Greece with her husband Markos. On the 10 May 1960 they arrived in Australia and were taken to the suburb of Oakleigh where they joined their three daughters Sophia, Despina and Irene. They had been sponsored by their son in law Arthur Rovolidis who had married their daughter Despina. They lived with Despina and her husband Arthur Rovolidis in Atherton Road, Oakleigh.



*Archdiocese of Australia Invitation
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collection*

Mrs. Anna Zoidis . It soon became apparent to Greeks living in Oakleigh, Greeks like Mrs. Anna Zoidis that a place of worship closer to their homes was needed without having to travel the long distance to the Greek Orthodox Church in Carlton for their Church services. On reflection, one can honestly say with some degree of confidence that the in 1963 origins of the Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Church lay with Mrs. Anna Zoidis and subsequently with the aid of many other like minded volunteers of Hellenic origins Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Community was establish soon after.



*Second generation children – the Baby Boomers
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collection*

Arthur Rovolidis would take his mother-in-law, Anna Zoidis to the church at St John's in Carlton every Sunday, in Drummond Street Carlton, (now situated in Lygon Street , Carlton). It was on a Sunday afternoon, after a trip to St John's Carlton, the Rovolidis family sat down together as normal to discuss family issues; when Mrs. Zoidis turned to her son in law Arthur and said, "Arthur, why don't we start our own church." Arthur looked at her and said "All right, we shall see what can be done."



Arthur and Despina Rovolidis - Then and Now
Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Mrs Zoidis was an amazing woman whose idea would electrify and unify Greeks from Europe and Australia into a cohesive and dynamic community. The invitation above was bestowed upon Mrs Zoidis where she was presented with a medallion for her services to the church. (Archdiocese of Australia) Mrs Zoidis also assisted at the St John's Church in Drummond Street Carlton.



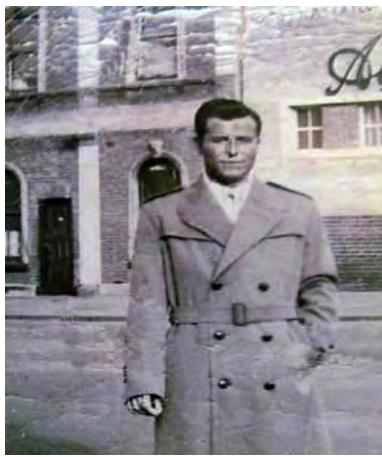
Vasili Pateras: *Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

Follow up Action and Events. The following Monday Arthur went to work as normal to the factory of Malcolm Moore, his employer who built Bulldozers amongst other things. During the course of the day, he spoke with a friend of his named Vasili(Vasili) Pateras and brought up the subject of building a Church. Vasili Pateras, an Egyptian born Greek thought this over as to how best approach and what would be required to make this a reality.



Fund Raising events: *Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

Vasili Pateras, an educated and keen organiser mused over the problem for some time and felt that the project would require the support of the wider Greek community. He joined the Clayton Greek Orthodox Community and in doing so he was elected Secretary, which provided him with the springboard to begin the campaign to create a church in Oakleigh.



L – R Arthur Rovolidis in South Melbourne, Mr and Mrs Rovolidis, Arthur Rovolidis with Grandchildren
Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

After much discussion and many meetings with other interested and like minded Greek migrants living in the Clayton and Oakleigh areas, Vasili Pateras visited the home of Arthur Rovolidis and advised Mrs. Zoidis that her dream of creating a church in Oakleigh was possible. Soon after Vasili Pateras was found knocking on Arthur Rovolidis door, bringing with him four membership books. These books were used to commence the campaign of signing members to their cause.



Faith and church: *Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

The first book was given to Arthur Rovolidis, the second to Dimitri Zafiropoulos, the third to Nikita Stavrinidis and the fourth Vasili Pateras retained. These four original members then went about recruiting members for the creation of the church fellowship. Within three months they had signed up 80 members. Each member had paid one pound (Australian) equivalent to two Australian dollars (today) to become members of the church fellowship.



Con Baltas Fund raisers: *Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

During the early years, it was necessary to coordinate fund raising events due to the high expectations and objectives that the community wished to achieve. It was the bonds and strength of unity amongst all of its members that enabled it to conduct successful fund raisers. Admittedly in the face of many barriers and with the lack of any professional help, the community and its members managed to combine and overcome any adversity to create the institutions being enjoyed by the current generation. Language, culture, religion and faith in the common community objectives ensured that the community through its management committee achieved all of its aims and objectives.



L to R: Andonis Varsamis, Chris Karathanis, John Anikitos, Arthur Rovlidis, John Zafiropoulos, Dimitrios Potamidis, Konstantinos Baltas, Consulate General, Procopios Karagiannis, Andreas Provataris, Father Nicholas Moutafis, Vasilios Pateras. Photograph taken inside the residence that was utilised as church. The residence is located where the main community hall now stands. Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovlidis collection

The Clayton Greek Community had invited the group to attend a meeting to discuss matters concerning the creation and location of a church and a community which was to be within the boundaries of Carnegie and Clayton. There was disagreement amongst the members the principal issue at that time was that the members of Clayton wanted independence of the Archdiocese of Australia whilst the members from Oakleigh wanted to join under the umbrella of the Archdiocese of Australia. The representatives were, ARTHUR ROVOLIDIS, VASILIO PATERAS, NIKITA STAVRINIDIS and DIMITRIOS ZAFIROPOULOS.



Early Trustees: *Mr Chris Karathanasis, John Zafiropoulos, Procopios Karagiannis, Vasili Pateras, Konstantinos Baltas, Dimitrios Potamidis, Arthur Rovlidis*
 Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovlidis collection

In addition to these members, an additional three individuals who expressed an interest were brought along to the meeting. The additional members were ANDREAS PROVATARIS, CON PAPADOPOULOS and MR TSOUTSOUROS, (brother in law of Con Papadopoulos). As the members could not agree at that meeting they went to the home of Mr. Provataris where they held a meeting and decided to create a church in Oakleigh and soon after they met with representatives of the Archdiocese of Australia to form a new church on Oakleigh.



L – R Vasili Pateras with Lions Award, Kalomiris and Baltas, Tsongas, Simon Crean, Karydias Bantounas
 Photographs Courtesy Pateras, Bantounas & Tsongas collection

The reason for using Mr Provataris home for the meeting at that time was because he had no young children. After some considerable discussions amongst the original members of the church fellowship, they agreed to accept the invitation. Every member had his point of view and each was keen to have his say where the location of the church should be located. After a lengthy debate and discussion it was found that a church could be created within the boundaries of Oakleigh and Clayton.



A Community function: Kalomiris, Theodoretos, Baltas, Zafiroopoulos, Bantounas, Paterakis, Laliotis, Rovolidis
Photo Courtesy Nick Bantounas collection

The group as a whole found a suitable church location in the Huntingdale area and agreed that it was the most logical choice. However new issues arose which caused some consternation, one of which was the selection of the priest and who was to appoint him. The group representing the Clayton Greek Orthodox Community did not want a priest sent by the Archdiocese of Australia whilst the group from Oakleigh could not see any problems. Suffice to say, at the end of the meeting, the group from Oakleigh went to the home Andreas Provataris in Hughesdale and another meeting was convened. During this meeting it was decided that they would create a church and community in the Oakleigh area without the support of the Clayton Greek Orthodox Community. It was also agreed that the church would be the first priority followed by the community. After the meeting, the group wrote to the Archdiocese for permission to create a church and requested a priest to serve the community.



Double Headed Eagle
 The Eagle turning left signifies Rome in the West.
 The Eagle turning right signifies Constantinople in the East.
 Photograph Adapted from Google Internet images

Archdiocese Approval. The Archdiocese under the leadership of Archbishop Ezekiel was located at St John's in Drummond Street, Carlton at that time prior to being relocated to its present position. The Archbishop, a kindly and revered person said that before he gave permission, he wanted to meet with the entire group so that he could meet with them face to face and ascertain their sincerity, and gauge for himself their commitment. The archbishop was impressed by their faith and devotion to their cause and it was not long after that approval was given.



Hellenes in the Oakleigh Shopping Mall 2010
Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis collection

It is of importance to note that although the minutes from this meeting indicated who was present, Mr Arthur Rovolidis name had been omitted from the list present. It was not until many years later when a member of the clergy made it public knowledge that the then acting Secretary present at that meeting later personally apologised to Mr Rovolidis for the oversight and which has been corrected here.



Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Church 2010
Photo Courtesy Mr Peter Adamis Collection

The Presidents. In December 1963, the Greek Community of Oakleigh was founded by the same members who founded the Church fellowship. Within a short space of time, a Management Committee was formed along with office bearers being appointed. Their responsibilities were to assist in the organisation where ever possible and to provide a legal representation on behalf of the community. The Presidents who served worked long hours during the early years in close cooperation with businesses, organisations, politicians, local and federal bodies to create, implement and complete projects in line with the overall plan of creating a community for all Greeks no matter where their origins were from. The unifying factor was the spiritual Father Moutafis who was always available to ensure that matters went smoothly.



**Andreas
Provartaris**
1964-1968

**Demetrios
Potamidis**
1968-1970

**Anastasios
Mousios**
1970-1983

John Anikitou
1983-1984

**Anastasios
Zaharias**
1984-1985



**Anastasios
Mousios**
1985-1987

Kon Baltas
1987-2003

Leon Tsongas
2003-2007

Angelo Sardellis
2007-2010

The Presidents who served are as shown below in chronological order
Photo Courtesy Mr Leon Tsongas Collection

The Management Committee had initially focused on the formation of after-school Greek Language Program Centre's and the building of a church and the first After School Greek teacher was Vasiliki Anastasopoulos and it is of interest to note that Thalia Karydias also stood in as a standby Greek teacher until another teacher was found. The Greek Language Programs were operated very successfully and progressively peaked in providing services to over 1000 students in the surrounding districts and the ability to learn the Greek Language, their heritage and identity.



Kon Baltas Honorary President
Photo Courtesy Mr Leon Tsongas Collection

Unsung Heroes, **Sacrifices:** There are many unsung heroes and individual groups who sacrificed their time, energy, resources, families and funds to make the community what it is today. The spiritual leadership provided by Father Nicholas Moutafis solidified and welded together any differences amongst the members of the community. Although Father Moutafis has passed away, his legacy is still within the community. Con Baltas gave his time and resources from his shop/cafe located centrally in Oakleigh and often a meeting place. The Zafiropoulos family who worked tirelessly as a family unit, including brothers, cousins and other relatives in raising funds, the Kalomiris family in providing the management and organizational structures, the Con Papadopoulos family unit gave their expertise in education, translations and many other leadership positions, Jim Lazogas gave his expertise in the purchase of land, buildings and Real estate to get through to the next stage.



*Petitions: Angelo Kalomiris, Arthur Rovolidis
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis*

Community Supporters

Arthur Rovolidis supplied the meat necessary for conducting BBQs, Fund raisers, functions from his butcher shop for free. He would take the lamb meat to the Matrogianni Bakery in Springvale to get them cooked and return to auction them off at festivals, religious functions and fundraisers. The Smarniotis family in the electrical trade, construction and repairing of assets, The Karydias family with fund raising, educational, welfare and secretarial support.



Community supporters L – R Karydias, Bantounas, Samrmaniotis, Varsamis, Rovolidis
Photo courtesy Nick Bantounas collection

Community Contributors

Vasili Pateras and Lazogas provided their real estate expertise, Theodoropoulos in maintenance, Papadopoulos in translation of documentation, to name but a few. The many other families such the Zoidis, Kalomeris, Moussios, Potamidis, Anikitou, Zaharias, Arvanitis, Tsoutsouros, Karagiannis, Lemonis, Father Nicholas Moutafis, Sfindilis, Provataris, Tsotsioros, Stavrindis, Bantounas, Arathanasis, Vlahandonis, Gioutlou, Tsongas, Vardakis, Anastasopoulos, Alabournos, Alexopoulos, Amanatidis, Anagnostopoulos, Anastasiou, Anastasopoulos, Angelidi, Angelopoulos, Yeghyaian, Apokis, Apostolou, Rossis, Petsis, Panagopoulos, Apeitos, Mihelakis, Mones, Tsantekidou, Tzatzalos, Varsamis, Garifallakis, Thomopoulou, Stefanatos, Papadopoulos (deceased), Kakavas, Adamopoulos, Vassos, Sardellis, and Adamopoulou, all had a hand in one way or another in supporting the community.



Youth Association Back L to R: Mr George Aleveras, Unknown, John Zafiropoulos, Unknown, Unknown Front L to R: Helen Dramoundanis, Unknown, Father Nicholas, Unknown
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collection

Publicity, Local Council and Maintenance Support. Peter Vlahos although a member late in the formation of the Community was instrumental in providing the necessary support at the Monash City council Level, The Potamidis, Varsamis, Carydias working in helping others to allow them to work on community projects, the Samarniotis family working late to put complete projects, Kon Nikolopoulos Editor of Neos Kosmos providing the publicity necessary to make it a vibrant and dynamic community, Kon Deves (later) in taking photographs and providing the much need publicity, Theodorellos "Mr Fixit" as indicated above, always on hand to provide the appropriate maintenance and support where necessary; Varsamis and their expertise in financial matters and many, many others too numerous to mention in this article.



Despina Rovolidis and Friends at Community function
Courtesy Mrs Kaliopi Adamis collection

Father Moutafis apart from his normal clergy activities would often be seen carrying cement and bricks to the workmen so that money could be saved. Then he would have to leave the work site and visit a sick member or hear confession, provide support to the needy and then arrive home late at night to be with his family exhausted. These and many other stories that have yet to be told and one which only skims the surface of what was involved. Mr & Mrs Rovolidis believe that the new generation must understand and take hold of the challenges that face them and move forward with confidence to emulate and surpass those who went before them.



Hellenic Visitors & Community Members
Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Philanthropic & Business Support. The list goes on and on and one cannot stop just here. We can speak about the philanthropic side where individuals and business supported the community, such Angelo Sardellis, Andonis Petsis, Nick Bantounas, the Greek business organisations, (Spartan paints, Alexopoulos Jewellers, Greek Business Forum, Hellenic Institute (Latrobe) the Oakleigh Greek business quarter, politicians, local Police Station at Oakleigh, the original Youth group and now the new generation Youth Group, the elderly lady that continues to post twenty dollars \$20.00 every month to the community to go towards the Church fund goes unnoticed.



Filoptohos – Womens Asociation Church Administrative Support
Back L to R: Mrs Kypriou, Milona, Mrs Potamidi, Mrs Stavrinidi, Mrs Karathanisis, Mrs Alexandra Varsamis,
Mrs Milona Front L to R: Apeito Andogoni, Mrs Kanaki, Mrs Provatari, Gayher Nicholas, Mrs Zoidis, Mrs Mela, Mrs
Karagianni. *Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

One could honestly say that without the women's auxiliary, the youth association, the support of the wider community and Father Moutafis guiding hand, the community would never have been able to create what the current generation is enjoying. On reflection, according to Mr and Mrs Rovolidis, the hard work, long hours, the never ending fund raisers, the trials and tribulations, the stress, concerns, legal matters and al that comes with raising a new community from scratch was worth it.



*vents and functions at the Sacred Heart Hall – Mrs Zoidis is on the extreme right,
Father Moutafis Centre and Arthur Rovolidis centre Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

Education. The education aspects of the college fell upon the Papadopoulos family who used their expertise, knowledge and experience in attracting students of Greek Orthodox background to the St's Anargiri College. Although there were two previous Principals, the Papadopoulos family alone has contributed in so many ways to the College and to that of the community that their contributions have been vastly underestimated and devalued. Had it not been for Con Papadopoulos and his dogged determination, much of the work today would not have been accomplished.



Women auxiliary and supporters 2010
Photo courtesy Kelly O'Dwyer collection

Con Papadopoulos was followed by his son Ivan Papadopoulos who also had an educational background and had worked in some of the roughest Colleges in Melbourne . Ivan Papadopoulos in his role as Vice Principal took on the task of the Principal after a number of years understudying his father. whilst he was the Vice Principal. Ivan Papadopoulos was to take the college to even greater heights than ever imagined. In the role of Principal and was able to usher and assist the College to enter and embrace the age of Information technology. The story of the Papadopoulos family and their influence within the community can never be underestimated for they worked with the community and were there when the going got tough.



Dinner Dance and BBQ to raise funds
Photos courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Early years – Willing Hands free of costs. In those early years, the chanters worked for free at the church, the secretary worked for free, the candle Maker worked for free, the Church Deacon, (maintenance) worked for free, all in the sake of ensuring that the community had sufficient reserve funds for future building projects. The funds raised by the Benevolent Association alone, contributed thousands of dollars towards the community and welfare of its members. Question remains whether the new generation is willing to give their time, money and experience for free and will they retain and pursue the objectives, aspirations and the legacies left behind by the elders who built this fine community.



Con Papadopoulos, with members of community
Photo courtesy Nick Bantounas collection

These are the legacies left behind by the generation that built this community. It is a community that deserves to survive and not succumb to the machinations of those intent on bringing down the good works of the past. It is a community for the community by the community and rests with the community that built it. Nowadays, it would appear that the community has sufficient reserve funds to draw upon to pay the salaries of the church Chanters, Secretaries, Candle maker, Administrative secretary and other additional administrative and logistic support necessary. It is presumed that should the community fall on difficult times it can draw upon the reserves such as the sale of the properties that were purchased while father Moutafis was still alive.



*Community members with visitors from Greece
Photo Courtesy Mr Leon Tsongas Collection*

Church Services. Between 1964 and 1967, the Community conducted its church services at the Oakleigh mechanics hall. Every Sunday the Rovolidis family would religiously collect all the icons, the Church alter table (their dinner table), the holy cups, tables cloths, the church cross and other church related accoutrement and take them to the Mechanics Hall (belonging to the City of Oakleigh).



*Bishop Aristarhos Arthur Rovolidis is behind the Bishop
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

On arriving they would unload all of the accoutrement and set up the mechanics hall in preparation for the Church service to be conducted by whatever clergy was available at that time. In most cases the church Service was conducted by Bishop Dionysus Nazianzou and Bishop Aristahos. At the end of the church service, all of the accoutrement would be gathered up carefully and ferried back to the home of Mr and Mrs Rovolidis home who were the custodians of the church property during that time. This method of conducting Church services continued up until 1967.



*Left to Right: Mrs. Bouzouli, Maria Zafiropoulos – Presvetera, Mrs Anna Zoidis.
Mrs Mella, Mrs Bakali, Mrs Harakopaki, Mrs Potamidou, Mrs Apaitou, Mrs Maragoudaki
Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection*

First Property. In 1967 when the community purchased its first property at 81 Willesden road, Hughesdale, the community was able to conduct its first church service on its own property. The property was renovated by knocking down the walls and changing its shape so that it could fit more people within. However it quickly became apparent that the renovated home was too small to accommodate the thousands of Greek Orthodox families that were now living in the Oakleigh and surrounding districts. It did not take long for the community to raise funds by conducting meetings, fund raising events, religious name day functions with the aim of collecting money. The main events were conducted at the sacred Heart Church Hall located in Oakleigh with the kind permission of the church elders of the Sacred Heart church.



Festivals – community and College awareness
Photo courtesy Kelly O'Dwyer collection

Fund raising for Church Buildings. In addition to the events conducted at the Sacred Heart hall, the community also raised funds through the dances, BBQ's, raffles, Auctions and also through donations via philanthropic means including the Benevolent association and women's movement. These funds were used to build a small church on the now current site of the Multipurpose hall to accommodate more people than before and in preparation for the building of the main church in Willesden road. The church services use of this new Church in Clapham Road was conducted by Father Nicholas Moutafis and occasionally by the archbishop Ezekiel. Father Nicholas Moutafis was to go on and change the face and the direction of the community and ensure that the community's energies were put to good use for the future. Suffice to say, this little church served its purposes until the new church was built.



Back L to R: Andonis Varsamis, Nickos Dabakakis, Nikitas Stavrinidis, Arthur, Rovolidis John Zafiropoulos
 Front L to R: Dimitrios Potamidis, Andreas Provataris, Father Nicholas, Procopios Karagiannis, Vasilios Pateras
 Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

When the main Church was being built, father Nicholas Moutafis wanted it be large enough to accommodate more than 500 parishioners and allow sufficient breathing room and places for the elderly and the young as well., he wanted an office for the community, a place for confession, a meeting room and ad and administrative Church arm to assist him with the day to day church tasks. He had many supporters who were only willing to help him achieve these goals and the community's aspirations.



Sts Anargiri Church Oakleigh
 Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis Collection

Finally in 1971, the day had arrived where the Church was completed. There was much joy and a sense of self satisfaction and pride amongst the Greek Community of Oakleigh and Districts. The publicity alone brought the local and Greek News media to cover the event and also to highlight the importance of not giving up ones belief in a country that had embraced them as citizens. Australia had given the Greeks from abroad the opportunity to be free citizens and to worship and believe in their God amongst their own kind in their own environment.



Satellite photograph of the Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Community
Photograph Courtesy Google Earth

The Management Committee with the support of its members and with the financial backing of the Federal Government embarked on the establishment of an educational institution in 1983. It has progressively developed to be one of the best performing institutions of its kind, providing education to over 800 students today. An elected Management Committee the members of whom all voluntarily offer their services without any remuneration manages the Community and its activities. This volunteering spirit was entrenched since the Community's founding and is the key to its very success.



L – R Vasili Zafiropoulos, Nick Bantounas, Manolis Vardakis in Oakleigh
 Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis collection

All Committee members who have served over the years have been willing volunteers and have given their time, effort and donations for the common good and the wider community, but more particularly for the immediate benefit of their offspring. There are many Hellenic families that have contributed by attending functions and events at the local or church religious festivals, but have yet not being able to join as full members due to the quota on memberships. There many still outstanding as probationary members waiting for a vacancy to occur. This anomaly may have a negative effect on the long term well being of the community and it remaining a relevant part of the wider community in terms of influence and cultural diversity.



Management Committee 2008
 Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Today it is proud to offer to its members and to take wider Community of the Greek Diaspora as seen from the above satellite picture. The community can boast of Church, a Community Centre, an educational institution covering both primary and secondary schooling needs, an Early Learning Centre, a Saturday Language Activity Centre (that apart from offering the customary Greek Language Program also offers Theatrical Drama & Folk Dancing), Independent Living Units for the elderly, a Youth Library and a Sunday School.



Homes for the Aged
 Courtesy Mr Peter Adamis collection

Community Services. Apart from focusing on its elderly citizens, the current Management Committee as part of developing the Community Master Plan also wishes to include the construction and operation of a Community Club. Here, parents, students, youth and the elderly will have a common place to attend, to play, to discuss issues, to share a meal and a drink and to meet similar to the way other community clubs operate.



Candle Factory
 Photo courtesy Mr Nick Bantounas collection

Proposed Public Greek Library in Melbourne

This is a much-needed facility that is well overdue. Management Committee have previously identified this as a priority and every effort has been made to bring this project to fruition. These and other plans, it seems are well thought out, however, the success of these projects will depend on the support that this Community can muster. Certainly the trend it has set the historical achievements made in such a relatively short time, in less than two generations, guarantees a secured investment that will pay dividends for all, well into the future.



*The Hon Simon Crean addressing the Greek Community
Photo Courtesy Mr Nicholas Bantounas*

Hence, where other Communities are folding under the constant threat of economic demise or a reduction in membership and/or lack of interest by the next generation, this particular Community, through its numerous institutions, facilities and Active Programs, has maintained high participation rates over the years. Its previous President Mr Leon Tsongas claimed that through encouragement, engagement and the strategic tapping, the smart utilisation of intelligent sources, the Greek Diaspora had the potential to excel in every field and no one should feel that they are isolated or under-utilised.



*The Sts Anagiri College
Photo Courtesy Mr Peter Adamis*

Major Projects. 2008 enabled the management committee to oversee the finalisation of a number of previously organised major projects. These major Projects included the Community Conference and College Assembly Centres, the arrival of Federal Government grant for the College computers organised by Peter Adamis (the previous Business and Public Relations Manager, the final stages of the Church fence line being completed, with the assistance of a major donation of \$10,000 by the community's philanthropic benefactors Mr. and Mrs Nick Bantounas. It is now believed that the Community has received additional government grants to enable the Community and its associated educational institution to thrive well into the future.



Original & renovated Community Conference & College Assembly
Photo Courtesy Ms Anna Rovolidis & Mr Peter Adamis Collections

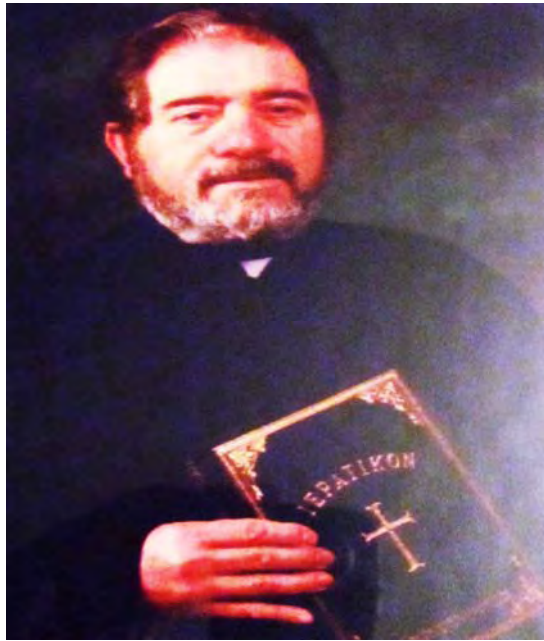
The challenges of 2010 and Beyond. With the current world economy going into recession and the Australian economy not being immune to the ills of the world, the Management Committee of the Greek community of Oakleigh will be faced with many challenges in 2009. To ensure that the services and objectives of the community are retained and maintained at current levels of efficiency, drastic (maybe draconian) strategic decisions on a financial, political and grass roots level will have to be considered.



Kelly O'Dwyer third from the left, member for Higgins with clergy, members of both major political parties and members of the community Photograph Courtesy Kelly O'Dwyer collection

However with due respect to the community; with the support of its friends and members, there is sufficient assets and projects to sustain it well into the future, thereby significantly providing them with the peace of mind, security, welfare, spiritual and cultural support. Therefore, the future of the community will depend upon strong and dynamic leadership, a proactive management committee and the support of its members. According to Dominique Francois De Stoop in his book, *The Greeks of Melbourne*, "the Greek Community therefore has reason to be proud of its achievements and its successes in preserving its language, culture and traditions. These achievements of individual Greek-Australians is the product of hard work and determination, not privilege and inherited wealth. They are helping to shape Australia's future and to redefine the Australian identity in the process".

TRIBUTE TO FATHER MOUTAFIS – A GUIDING HAND FOR 37 YEARS



Father Moutafis

Photos Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collection

Many members within the community played a role to lay the foundations for a church and community, but few would have had the influence or the greatest impact on the community than late Nicholas Moutafis. He was much loved and very well respected Moutafis, being the first priest to be appointed in 1964 to Community to cater for the congregation in the newly created Greek Orthodox, Sts Anargiri church. Father Moutafis remained in his role as the parish priest for over 37 years, until he quietly passed away on 23 June 2001.



Blessing of foundations for the new church Father Moutafis with the aid of Bishop Kourtesis: Photograph courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

Father Moutafis and Bishop Kourtesis were good friends and helped each other throughout the years. Father Moutafis was also well known by the greater Australian community through his philanthropic work and also with his vast contacts with the Australian Military Forces. The Hellenic memorial which now stands in the gardens near the Shrine in Melbourne was also a tribute to Father Moutafis who gave his support to Peter Kalimnakis (Coordinator) in raising funds at a time when it appeared support was wavering. Using his military connections Father Moutafis was able to obtain their support during fund raising events. The Battle of Greece and Crete was another event that always meant something special to Father Moutafis because of his direct involvement during WW2.



The good times: Members of the Community at a function
Photo Courtesy Nick Bantounas collection

On reflection, despite any changes to the world economy and subsequent changes politically within Australia, this vibrant Community is well aware and equipped to handle the demands placed upon it. Whether the community moves forward with the 2004 master plan left behind by Father Moutafis and past Management committees, is a matter for current and future boards of management to decide. It was under his guiding hand and much loved personality that the community was able to strive forward towards a bright future. He had the gift and the personality to attract and bring together people from all walks of life and work with them to create the legacies that the current generation is now enjoying.



Father Moutafis in Oakleigh by a grateful community
Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis Collection

Under Father Nicholas Moutafis guiding hand, he was able to light the way forward in assisting successive boards of management to towards establishing major religious, philanthropic and educational institutions within the Oakleigh and surrounding districts and laying the foundations for the Hellenic community of Oakleigh to be one of the leading Hellenic speaking institutions within the greater Melbourne and Victoria, Australia. With the passing of Father Moutafis, also went the spiritual and guiding light from the community. Father Moutafis death was greeted with great sadness and grief by members and the wider Australian community that he had personal contacts with. His spiritual guidance has yet to be equalled and/or matched.

The legacy left behind by Father Moutafis cannot be valued in any sense of the word other than to say that his words of comfort and spiritual guidance still haunt the great hall of the community centre. Others have tried to fill the vacuum left by Father Moutafis and all have failed to reach the level of compassion and sensitivity that he had brought to the community. Father Moutafis name is still revered within the local and wider community and thoughts of his memories linger still.



Vasili and Irene Pateras

Vasili Pateras work throughout the years has never been fully acknowledged.

This is a small tribute to one of the community's great men who used their considerable talent as administrators to lay solid foundations for the community. *Photo Courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis Collection*

Sources: Mr & Mrs Despina Rovolidis oral and photograph collection, Ms Anna Rovolidis photograph collection, Mr Vasili Pateras photograph collection, Leon Tsongas photograph collection, Mr Tim Moutafis photograph collection and website, Mr Vasili Zafiropoulos Collection, St Anagiri College Year Books, Neos Kosmos, TA NEA News Articles, Mr Nick Bantounas Collection, Mr Peter Vlahos photograph collection, (Former Mayor of the City of Monash), Oakleigh Historical Society photograph collection, Leader Newspaper Articles, Google, Google Earth, City of Monash, Internet Resources, Kelly O'Dwyer photograph collection Dominique Francois De Stoop, Mrs Kaliopi Adamis, South Australian Government, Peter Adamis



Passing the time of day in Con Baltas shop
Photo courtesy Nick Bantounas collection

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The photographs were provided by Mr and Mrs Rovolidis, Mr Nicholas Bantounas (Former Management Committee Member and past Treasurer, Mr Peter Vlahos, former Management committee member and former Mayor of the City of Monash), Leon Tsongas, (Past President Oakleigh Greek Orthodox Community and Districts Inc), Kelly O'Dwyer (Member for Higgins), The Oakleigh Historical Society and the author's personal collection of September 2010.



Arthur and Despina Rovolidis
Photograph courtesy Mr & Mrs Rovolidis collection

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The Authors: Arthur Rovolidis, Peter Adamis & Despina Rovolidis
Photo Courtesy Peter Adamis collection – 2010