

ANZAC GARDENS

PELLANA LAKONIA GREECE





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Abalinx 26 January 2018 Peter Adamis

This article is one man's final tribute to [ANZACS](#) & [GREEKS](#)

It is fitting that this article is published on Australia Day 2018. I hope that its contents are well received and that it is read in the spirit in which it was compiled. In saying that I am reminded of and acknowledge the [First People](#) of this nation we call home and hope that the day comes when we are all united as one people celebrating [Australia Day](#) together.

This article as indicated above is my final tribute to my mates past and present and to all those who had a hand in managing and mentoring me throughout my military career. I hope that I have not let them down or disappointed them. Only those who have donned and served their nations uniform can truly understand the comradeship and brotherhood of the meaning of [cobber, digger, mate](#). I say this because I am very loyal to those I have served with.

I have a Duty First attitude, one that has helped me throughout the difficult periods in my life. A philosophy of sorts if you like, as the Infantry motto of Duty First has many connotations. Which for me, is that whenever face with a situation that is a conflict of interest, I always put the interests of my family first, followed by the nation, cobber digger mates, relatives and friends. I am a God fearing man and not afraid to demonstrate that faith; a faith that I do not force upon anyone but try at all times to lead by example. I am fiercely independent and I will fight the good fight to uphold the values of my generation. A generation that lived without the technologies of today. In essence, this monument located within at my place of Birth Pellana, Lakonia, Greece is dedicated to them, (cobber, digger and mates of all the three nations, [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#) and [Greece](#)). [ANZAC Gardens](#)

FORWARD. *I was honoured and very pleased to be asked by Peter Adamis to write some words on this article about the [ANZAC Gardens](#) at Pellana at Lakonia, Greece. Firstly, I was honoured as Peter is a friend of long standing, tried tested and trusted I was very pleased because the word ANZAC has a special and personal connotation for me as I have served, alongside New Zealand in the commonwealth Brigade in Malaysia in the mid nineteen sixties.*

Again later in the nineteen sixties I served in an ANZAC Battalion in South Vietnam, the Fourth battalion the Royal Australian Regiment, ANZAC (Bravo, Charlie and Delta Companies from Australia and Victor and Whiskey Companies from New Zealand). Together Australian and New Zealand soldiers are convincing, effective and formidable warriors.

The concept of the [ANZAC Gardens](#) is solely Peter's. He writes of the origins of this creative, imaginative, inspiring and unique concept. It is conceived at a time of debilitating illness, pain and personal adversity. Further, the concept has an admirable theme.

Full of symbolism and a dedication of a friendship and a relationship of these peoples, Hellenes (Greeks), Australians and New Zealanders.

I was aware of the concept and vaguely knew of its design. Peter had spoken of his thoughts on a number of occasions and of course. I was a guest of Peter's, at Pellana, and observed the reality of the concept as it unfolded. The completed work left me gobsmacked, dumbfounded and astounded. My idea of the concept and its actual realisation were poles apart. I am happy. That ANZAC Gardens as it now stands is far superior and more beautiful and engaging of the gardens of my thinking.

The location is on a knoll overlooking the village of Pellana, Helens of Troy's palace, the mighty Evrotas River (dry in summer) and ancient Mycenaean tombs; and in turn which overlooked and protected by the revered, ancient and inspiring Taygetos Mountain Range. Talk about location, location, location.....

Peter gives a detailed and telling account of the Background, Inspiration Original Concept, the all-important Support he received from the staff at the Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre, and of the seven phases of the ANZAC Gardens and Monument. Finally, there are details about Pellana, Greek history, Ancient Greek battles (Spartan) and more modern ones.

All in all this article is a gargantuan piece with something for everyone. The article is articulate, fully bodied and what is most important, relevant to our times. [Maurice Barwick, \(Major, Foreign Affairs, Solicitor retired\).](#)

PREFACE. Peter's ANZAC Gardens Memorial is located on private property in his place of birth Pellana, Lakonia Greece. It will stand as an eternal link between old homeland and new homeland. Marking the beautiful landscape of Pellana the Australian flag will tell the story of those migrants of Greek heritage; like Peter Adamis, who served in the Australian Defence forces and those who fought in defence of Australia. Not far from where the Wanax (Great Chief or Lord) Menelaus held court with his wife Helen in Ancient Lacedaemonia and where ancient Lacedaemonians and Spartans forged their mighty armies. The ANZAC memorial will tell the story of the bravery of Australian, New Zealand and Greek servicemen and women. Amongst them Peter and his comrades. [Maria Vamvakinou, Federal Member for Calwell.](#)

INTRODUCTION. This monument is testament to the journey of one man and three countries. Peter Adamis and his resolve to honour those before him embodies the spirit of peoples past and present from the three countries. The ties that bind Australia and Greece and New Zealand- although only forged over the last two centuries- are enduring and reflect the deeply shared values. It is these values of honour, respect and courage which we should never forget. The monument will ensure this is the case. [Bill Papastergiadis President of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne & Victoria.](#)

Acknowledgements. The project called [ANZAC Gardens](#) and the monument within it could not have been possible, had it not been for the timely arrival of my old Boss, Maurice Barwick, (Ex 1 RAR, 4 RAR, Commandos, Foreign Affairs and Solicitor). Maurice was Officer Commanding Deakin University Company, Geelong, Victoria some 32 years ago (1985 - 1988). He was in a previous time the Second in command (2IC) of Infantry Centre, Ingleburn, New South Wales in 1972 whilst I was undertaking my Infantry Initial Employment Training. Since 1985 when we met in Geelong we have remained staunch friends and is considered a part of the family and called affectionately "Uncle Maurie".

In fact his dear departed wife Thelma was part [Spartan](#), as her Grandfather had migrated from Laconia, Greece over 100 years ago to the USA and subsequently to the Gold Fields of Victoria, Australia. Thelma was a beautiful lady who cared for my four sons' David, Paul, Matthew and Mark whenever we visited them over the years. That friendship deepened when my lovely wife Yovanna was introduced to Maurice and Thelma some years later.

I would also like to acknowledge [Maria Vamvakinou](#), the Federal member for Calwell, located in Melbourne, Victoria. Maria and her husband Mihali who have become good friends over the years and put both our politics to one side when we meet. My deep friendship with [Bill Papastergiadis](#), (President of the [Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne & Victoria](#)) is as a result of mutual understanding and sharing the same values, and I truly thank him for taking the time to read the document and write the introduction.

Many thanks to Kostas Zgourdas, the local Stone Mason in Pellana, Lakonia, Greece, who has been one of the cornerstones of the project, providing advice and support as well as in-kind support to Maurice and I. My two Albanian friends, Gerald and Vittorio for being on hand whenever called upon. To the villagers of Pellana for donating their time and advice and to those from Kastania and [Vergadeika](#), adjoining villages. Finally, I thank my very dear friend Leon Tsongas for the translation into Greek. A friend whom I have known since 2005 and whose advice and support over the years was not measured by time only but by the inherited goodness of the man.



I thank my brother Phillip for assisting me greatly in ways that I can never fully describe, yet without his support, much of what was achieved could not have been accomplished. Phillip and I were both born on the hill in a stable some 67 and 66 years ago.

Finally, I thank my lovely wife who gave me the opportunity to remain in my place of birth for seven months and supporting me whilst I was there. I realise that it was difficult for her, even though we managed to spend approximately two months together in Greece, Malta and Italy, life without ones partner is always difficult. My wife Yovanna gave me an added incentive to battle the cancer and had promised me a six months trip to Greece should I recover. What a great woman!

ANZAC the Name.

It is important to note that the use of the name ANZAC is not for any commercial interests, no connection with any trade, business, calling or profession or in connection with any entertainment or any lottery or art union or as the name or part of a name of any private residence, vehicle of charitable or other institution, or other institution, or any building. ANZAC Gardens is located on private property in [Pellana](#), Lakonia, Greece and not associated with any business, charitable organisation or any institution, but a simple personal tribute on my part.

Background.

The name ANZAC conjures up memories of pride, sacrifice, mateship, hardship, struggle, grief, joy and laughter and yet there is also an element of fear amongst those who find themselves up against ANZACS in a two way range. The word ANZAC itself stands for [Australian New Zealand Army Corps](#), representing those who participated in the landings and fought at [Gallipoli](#), Asia Minor (Turkey).

I like many who have served wearing the nation's uniform, hold firm the ideals, the mateship, the joys and laughter, because believe it or not, we too were young. The memory of mate's long gone still echo in my mind, still alive as they were many years ago. There are times when I have shed a lonely tear when no one is around, at finding about losing so many mates and I thank God for being given the opportunity to live long enough to complete my journey.

My mind also went to Phil, (Butch) Buttigieg who sent me a message querying why and how long I was considering staying in Greece. (I first met Butch along with many others in Singapore and Malaya back in 1973 and since then have kept in touch periodically over the years.) My response to him at the time was brief and said that I was there (Greece) for my immune system to become stronger and also to use whatever time I had spare to collect material for further research, writing yarns about my mates gone and still with us. There is nothing noble about that, it's just who I am and have always been. I must admit, time away from Australia was psychologically beneficial and helped the old grey matter to review, reanalyse, rewire the brain, identify what was important in life and move on.



Others reading this who know of me will chuckle and say yes that's [Pete the Greek](#), he has not changed a bit. Others who don't know of me or my Duty First attitude may scoff and laugh it off. Whatever the case maybe, it matters little to me as I am doing what I want to do and write about my generation of cobber digger mates. Brothers who once filled their lungs with oxygen, drank like fish, trained, walked that extra kilometre, never gave up, fought, brawled, called a spade a spade, fell in and out of love, got married, children, divorced, served the nation and always there for a mate.

I was and still am very passionate about life, my family, relatives, Cobber Digger Mates and my positive outlook on life, that no matter how many times I am brought down I will never give up and get up to fight the good fight. In fact it was also Butch Buttigieg who contacted me in hospital battling that deadly cancer and gave me encouragement to fight the good fight. While I was in hospital, I was touched by the many mates I had indeed forgotten and lost touch with them that I began to realise that I was not alone. Blue, Pete, Greg, Pup, Roger, Laurie, Jock, Tuck, Tom, Mick, Larry, Mark, Sid, Col, Barrie, Noel, and many others far too numerous to add here.

In fact those mates of mine who literally came out of the woodwork, touched me so deeply that the concept of a monument became set like concrete in my mind and one could say that it gave me an added incentive to live. Mates, are akin to brothers not of the same blood but brothers all the same. One bloke kept sending me messages almost every day, even though he was going through something worse than I, giving me encouragement and some who were able dropped by to see old [Pete the Greek](#) in hospital. I have always had a positive attitude even though I have had suffered deeply from stress and severe depression and three heart attacks, and yet I have somehow pulled through to fight another day.

Having stated the comradeship and serving together, I have a message for those of us who wear our medals. I would prefer to think that, we do so, not to demonstrate how good we are, where we have served, what we have done, what battles we may or may not have been involved in but we wear them proudly them as a reminder to others of the sacrifices men and women of this nation who have worn the uniform to keep us safe and enjoy the freedoms we take so much for granted.

As for those who have served and don't believe they are veterans, let me remind them all that nowhere does it state that you have to go to war to be called a veteran. Stop beating around the bush, cut the bullshit and march along with your mates for you are a veteran. For those who go about displaying their medals to show off, my message to you is that you are displaying disrespect to those that trained you, worked with you and to those who died. True friends are hard to find and I must say I am much blessed to have served with the finest people I have ever met; and for that reason alone, readers can understand why the need, concept, symbolism and thoughts behind the construction of the monument within ANZAC Gardens.



Inspiration. I was inspired by the blokes who had erected the [Royal Australian Regiment Memorial Walk](#) in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. I had visited the memorial Walk some time ago and I was so impressed that I said to myself that if they could do it, then so could I. The volunteers have created a magnificent trail amongst the tropical Queensland setting, of Enoggera Army establishment, maintained at all times and a great venue for veterans and families to visit.



The last time I was there was a number of years ago with my wife, who dropped me off to visit and catch up with old mates I had not seen for years.

On arrival, I was met with by Arthur Willemse an old mate from 6 RAR, who gave me a tour of the place. I also had the opportunity to meet up with some old and bold faces from [6 RAR](#) and the Infantry Centre.

Talk about a sight for sore eyes. The work already completed was an example of what mates can do when they are get together for a worthy cause. I for one salute them. Those who have yet to visit the RAR Memorial centre, I strongly suggest you do as much volunteer work has gone into it and it will continue to me maintained as long as the spirit of [DUTY FIRST](#) and vigilance at all times prevails.



Original concept.

Although I was inspired by the RAR Memorial walk, the original concept was conceived whilst I under treatment for a deadly blood cancer.

My treatment was in the [Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre](#), Austin Hospital.

The period 21 August 2015 to 21 January 2016 was one of chemotherapy and stem cell treatment. During the above period I used my lap top to keep busy and my mind off the drugs being pumped into my body and communicating with friends from the past certainly helped me. As I browsed through my old photos I began to close the gap with the past and recall memories of my service with many fine men and women.

It was during the course of my musings with the past that the idea of a monument came to me. Therefore, whilst I was in hospital, I promised myself that, should I survive the cancer treatment, I would return back to my place of birth and erect a monument as a tribute to the bonds between Australians, New Zealanders and Hellenes (Greeks). My wife, Yovanna obviously had a big say in it as well.

Olivia Newton John Staff support. At this juncture I must give credit where it is due and that is to the staff of the Austin Hospital located in Melbourne Australia. The Olivia Newton John Cancer and wellness Centre is top class. It also has a Wellness centre that is staffed by professionals who deal with cancer patients and provide post cancer treatment support. I have already written a number of article on this subject and I hope that others who go through the same experience, are able to draw some comfort from my personal battle with cancer. Those articles may be found in the menu section aptly named "[articles](#)" on website: <http://abalinx.com/> a website dedicated to helping others through personal networks.

ANZAC Gardens and Monument. As for the monument, it finally became a reality once I recovered sufficiently to make the journey to the old country and begin the various phases of construction. Construction that began on day one of my arrival in early April, delayed by the [passing of my Dad](#) and subsequently recommenced after the departure of my wife back to Australia. The monument itself is located now in Pellana, [Lakonia](#), Greece. It is one of its kind, not to be found elsewhere in the world. As for its construction, and that of ANZAC Gardens, it would involve seven phases.



My two Albanian mates, Gerald and Vittoria.

Phase 1. The first phase in April 2017 was put on hold in April 2017 until after the funeral of my father. [ANZAC Day](#) was observed alone, but I managed to play the last post, recite the Ode and got on with life. Life is what it is and we just keep putting one foot in front of the other. In the subsequent weeks, I dug a garden prior to the construction of the monument and created a commemorative garden as well as the first stages for the monument. I also was fortunate to employ two Albanian labourers lay the foundations down for future dioramas.

On the day, I prepared tables and chairs in the event one of the locals was curious enough to see what the little Aussie bloke was doing up on the hill. I carried out the ceremony amidst a flying myriad of tiny bugs, beetles, bees, wasp as well as the small starlings, large hawks and other fowl of the air hovering above me, wondering what I was doing. The day was hot and humid and the beginning a very hot summer.

With flags flying high, the last post being played and I recited the [ode](#) in English. I had a quiet moment to myself, walked over to the tables and chairs and had a glass of [Metaxas brandy](#). The reason for the brandy was because I had no rum available for the toast to dear departed friends. The ceremony was the first ANZAC Day commemoration to have been conducted on soil as ancient as the [Achaean who went to war some 3000 years ago](#) and fought the [Trojans](#) near the mouth of the [Dardanelles](#).

Phase 2. The digging, preparation, collection of thousands of pebbles and rocks by hand, the sand, cement and soil all came together in creating two circular mosaic foundations. It took the two Albanian workmen some three days to complete the operation and painstakingly place each pebble down in order that it created a conglomeration of tiny pebbles stuck in the ground. A steel pole was placed in the middle for further development and both circles surrounded by larger rocks.



Commemorative Garden. The commemorative garden was created in my spare time and it involved digging, cementing with large rocks and pebbles on the outside circle. Inside the circle housed the large olive tree that our Dad would hand us on to train us never to give up. Five large stones were placed within, each with a letter sprayed on them. At the base there is where the stones lie, each letter represented a member of the family such as **K** for Kaliope, (mother), **P** for Peter (myself), **P** for Phillip (brother), **H** for Helen (sister) and **K** for Kon (brother). As for the olive tree in the centre, a large **V** was sprayed to represent Vasili (William or Bill for short - Father).

The garden was completed as a result of dad's passing two weeks after my arrival in Greece. Note the two olive saplings on the right of the olive tree which represent my brother and me. My late father in 2013 suggested we leave them to grow and develop. Furthermore also at the base a small iron rod has been cemented in to a depth of two feet and at the bottom encased in a small plastic box reside the remains of my left thumb which I accidentally cut off with an electric circular saw. In other words part of me and/or my DNA draws me back to my place of birth.



The long grass was cut, branches and dried foliage burnt and the refuse distributed amongst the gardens. Fences were repaired, a flag pole erected and the Australian flag placed on high.

Another temporary flag mast was erected near the road and the Greek flag was hoisted so that all visitors passing through could see that there was movement and activity at the old cottage.

I had the occasional visitor coming up the grass driveway and dropping in to see what the commotion was all about. I am pretty sure that they thought I had lost my marbles and I found out later that I was the source of local gossip in the taverns of the village. They all knew my passion and love for my place of birth and therefore left me practically alone.

Klephtes. On the negative side, I found that my presence attracted thieves and vagabonds and therefore I was not immune from attempts to rob me and of my possessions during my stay. After a while I realised it was part of the course and after some six attempts of breaking and entering, the thieves gave up in disgust as I kept no funds on the premises. An unusual way of welcoming back home people but what can you do but roll with the punches. Today the home has been made into a veritable fortress with additional security arrangements being installed. Thus the price of peace and tranquillity has its costs.

Phase 3. This involved the official opening. It was timely that this was opened by Maria Vamvakinou, the Australian Federal Member for Calwell. She had promised to drop in to visit me during her visit to Greece for a series of conferences. Maria was given a tour of the area and where the monument was to be constructed and was kind enough to open the Tholos Tomb Monument while still its early stages. On the day, Maria Vamvakinou, her sister, Helen and husband Nick and I were in attendance. I was happy to have Maria officially open the Anzac Gardens project. A dinner in her honour was provided and held under the huge oak tree located in the centre of the village.



Maria Vamvakinou and I at Pellana at the ANZAC Gardens.

Phase 4. The crucial phase involved members of the local village community in the preparation, construction and installation of the project. Influencing and encouraging members of the village community is one thing, getting involved and contributing to the construction of the monument is another thing.

However over a period of a few months, word got around that I was serious about the project and that costs were at a minimum. This very important phase was completed over a ten day period in October 2017, some five months after the initial ANZAC Day.



Maurice Barwick standing on the new driveway.

For the past few months I had been flying the Australian and the Hellenic flag for months in order to gain attention to the project and to highlight its significance.

The main mast was over ten metres tall and it took my old mate Spitha (Peter Rassias) and I to put in into place later securing it with steel wire. As a mark of respect the Hellenic flag is still flying high to this day.

A secondary mast of seven metres was located near the monument and the words ANZAC painted on the rear of the shed. The Australian flag was up during my whole stay in Greece and taken down upon our departure. Again as a mark of respect to the people of Greece and an indication that the Aussie was no longer in residence. A third mast is to be erected at some distant future in order to fly the New Zealand flag and thus complete the ANZAC representation. I hope to approach the New Zealand Government for a flag and if not possible, then I shall buy one. Later, I enlisted the help of Vittorio and Gerald Merici. Both lads being Albanian guest workers who assisted in the manual labour and preparing the Tholos tomb exterior and interior. Their support during the erection of the stone monument was valuable and very much appreciated.



Myself, Stavros Mihalopoulos, Kostas Zgourdas, Vittorio Merici and Maurice Barwick.

These two lads worked hard in digging up the soil, collecting rocks and stone with the aid of Stavros Mihalopoulos and creating the circular Tholos like structure.

In addition, signage was placed at the front of the concrete wall painted in black on a white back ground the name "[ANZAC GARDENS](#)" in Greek and in English. There is sufficient parking on the property to accommodate visitors and tourist from the exterior. Best time to visit ANZAC Gardens is between April to November. Meals can be obtained at the local tavern and as every knows there is nothing like Greek hospitality.

Phase 5. This involved the village elders, religious representation, guests and officials. The day being commemorated was [OXI Day](#). Onsite tours, photographs, opening ceremony, blessing by the priest, reciting the Ode in English and Greek, explanation in Greek and English the meaning of the monument and its implications why it was constructed in the village of Pellana. On completion of the official ceremony, light refreshments and speeches.

Phase 6. This will involve completing the dioramas for the ancient capital of [Lacedaemonia](#), [Battle of Thermopylae](#) and the [Gallipoli landings](#). In addition, we hope to obtain three sculptures of soldiers to represent Australia, Greece and New Zealand. As we had insufficient funds for the project, the sculptures and dioramas will be completed at some future stage. It is planned that the dioramas be completed over a five year period, depending on the support, availability of manpower and the willingness of others to provide in-kind support to complete the dioramas.



The main rock structure being installed by Dimitri Maliaros

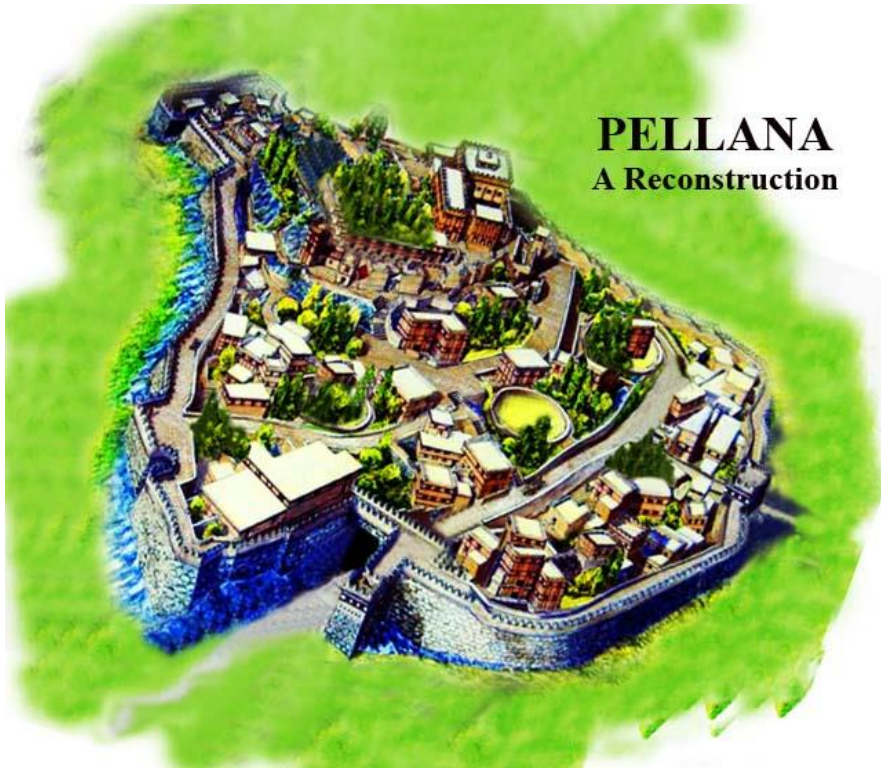


Kostas Zgourdas sculpturing the main rock.

Phase 7. Over the next four years the allocated area will be developed to include a diorama depicting ancient Pellana, the site of the Battle of Thermopylae and the site the Gallipoli landings. Once the final phase is completed, members of the public will be able to visit the site, take photographs of the surrounding scenery.

They can also take the time to visit the village and/or take a drive around the mountain villages, have lunch and even take a drive into [Sparta](#), the capital city of Lakonia. Alternatively they may seek out the local historian to provide them with the history of the village and view the ancient ruins on the adjacent hill some 500 metres across and the [Tholos](#) ancient royal tombs. To assist visitors, a section has been cordoned off for visitor's vehicles and other modes of transport in front of the ANZAC Gardens. There are no fees involved.

Historical Connections. It is of interest to note that the Tholos tomb monument faces all points of the compass against the background of the [Taygetos mountain range](#). It is only fitting that the monument be erected at the location of ancient Pellana, a village with a very long history reaching back beyond that of [Homeric heroes](#). Pellana today is a far cry from some 3000 years ago where it was thriving administrative town surrounded by numerous villages all paying homage to the central authority located in the town of Pellana.



Ancient Pellana - A Reconstruction.

The above diagram is but a reconstruction and not exactly to detail.

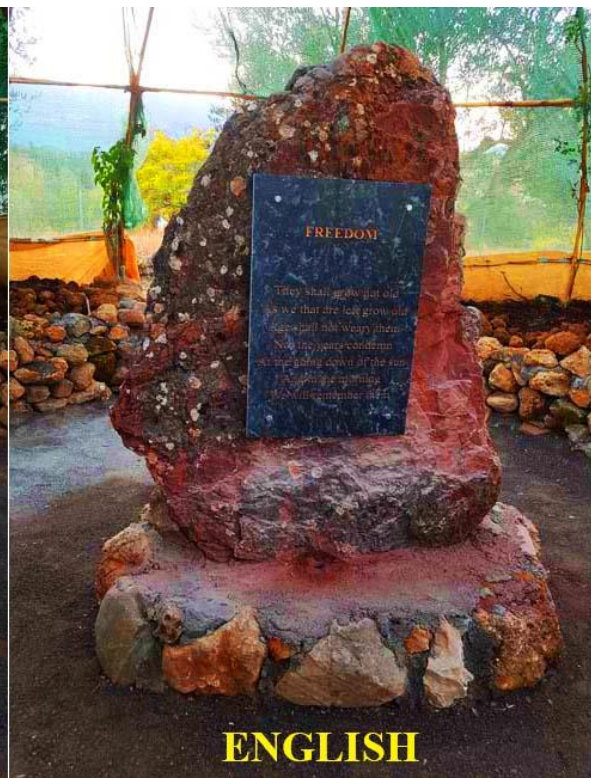
It does however follow the contours of the hill where the palace & surrounding ancient buildings are.

The model itself is also based on [Mycenae](#) where the [Agamemnon](#) the brother of Menelaus lived.

Historical evidence. One would have to research amongst the ancient works to find out more about the town for there are scraps of information amongst ancient authors who write about Pellana and about its people. There are passages about Pellana cloaks, runners at the [Olympic Games](#), Funeral stelae, [King Agesilaus](#), [Pellanis](#) the maiden who fell into the stream, [King Tyndareus](#) and his children, the return of [Hercules](#), [Helen of Troy](#) and many other items that point to the existence of ancient Pellana.



GREEK



ENGLISH

Pellana was the ancient capital of Lacedaemonia (modern Lakonia), prior to the arrival of the Dorians (who subsequently evolved into the Spartans). With the arrival and introduction of [Lycurgus rhetras \(laws\)](#) the Spartans used Pellana as one of its “gates” that led into [Lacedaemonia](#) and was often used as forming up point (FUP) before going into battle. [King Agesilaus](#) was at Pellana when a messenger arrived from Sparta advising him that [Epaminondas](#) was nearing Sparta with his [Thebans](#) and allies. [King Agesilaus](#) using the ancient road that followed the [Evrotas River](#) made it back with his Army and with the help of Spartan citizens was able to defend and repulse the [Thebans](#) led by [Epaminondas](#) and thus [Sparta](#) was saved.

Today, many of the ancient buildings lie buried some six metres below the surface, while other material has been broken up, discarded and relocated elsewhere and/or used as building material within the current dwelling of Pellana itself. The ancient ruins which were excavated now lie open to the elements and it is rather sad to see such ancient ruins disappear from view. No attempt has been made to cover the ruins surround the palace or the ancient burial grounds. Visitors to the village today will be disappointed if they expect to see the ruins of the ancient capital of Lacedaemonia. However part of the plan is to create the past at ANZAC Gardens in order to give visitors an idea of what ancient Pellana was like.

All of the ancient buildings and tombs have been looted and razed to the ground, leaving only the remnants of their foundations to be rediscovered by [Spyropoulos the archaeologist](#), who has been credited with finding them. The tombs are well worth visiting, while the palace and surrounding buildings are fenced off to keep tourists and prying visitors from further looting and from would be treasure hunters and amateur archaeologists.

Relatives still alive in Pellana, had over the years advised me that when they were young in their thirties, forties and fifties, would find many ancient artefacts and play with them as toys, not knowing their historical value or connection to the ancient town of Pellana. Many errors of judgement and lack of foresight has led to the destruction of many ancient ruins.

It is a great pity that the hill where the ancient palace once stood is off limits to visitors, but due to the lack of funds and infrastructure to support such a project is not possible under the current economic environment. This may change once the austerity measures have been lifted and work can take underway in uncovering the hidden secrets still buried deep below the surface.

Physical evidence. Gold coins, vases, pottery, pithos like vases that once held oil, wine, grain of all sorts, gold and bronze artefacts, skeletal remains, rings, building material, symbols and signs, roads, hidden chambers, religious centre, royal burials, tholos tombs, clay pipes still carrying water, stone arches now gone, food utensils, wells, caverns, stone ramparts, towers and walls, store houses, temple to the God of healing ([Asclepius](#)) are but some of the finds that have been excavated. A few that were not looted and sold off to interested buyers may be found in crates hidden in the [Sparta Museum](#). A museum like the one in Argos that is in great need of renovation.

Greeks at Troy. Although the Iliad does not mention Pellana as such, but there are references to it as a result of Menelaus who ruled the region as the [Wanax](#) or great chieftain alongside with his wife Helen. Helen along with her sister [Clytemnestra](#) (wife of Agamemnon) are daughters to King Tyndareus who lived in Pellana as the [Wanax](#). Menelaus, Master of the War Cry and with his brother Agamemnon who led a Task Force of 1196 ships manned with warriors against the Trojans in Asia Minor near Gallipoli in 1250 BC.

ANZAC connections. It is safe to say that there are many battle similarities between the ANZACS and the Greeks both in modern and ancient events. Not only in battle but in a shared love of freedom, democratic values and institutions that mirror each other. One must admit that it is the concept of freedom from tyranny that binds the ANZACS and the Greeks. This best described by the following examples demonstrated below.



Troy/Gallipoli 1250 BC – 1915 AD. The storming of [Troy](#) by the Greeks in 1250 BC and that of the ANZACS at [Gallipoli](#) some 3,165 years later. While the Trojan War is synonymous with Greeks, so is the Gallipoli landings synonymous with the ANZACS.

It could be said that all three nations came into their own on the battlefield of conflict and were forever enshrined in the hearts of men. History is a wonderful reflection of mankind's achievements, of their trials and tribulations in creating environments where a society can live in peace. But as history rightly points out, peace comes at a price and unfortunately that price costs the lives of man. Another reason for remembering and respecting those who fought and died knowing that their sacrifice was not in vain.



Thermopylae/Kokoda Track 480 BC – 1941 & 1942.

At Thermopylae, the Greeks comprising of [300 Spartans and 700 Thespians](#) battled an army of Persians determined to destroy the Greeks in 480 BC. The Spartans went ahead of the other allies as an advance guard and with other allies confronted the Persians in a narrow pass where the defeated charge after charge of Persians.

They were delayed [King Leonidas](#), his men and allies withstood the Persian juggernaut long enough for the Greeks to rally and eventually defeat the [Persians in alter battles](#). The same with the ANZACs who fought at [Thermopylae \(1941\)](#) some 2421 years later against an overwhelming Army of Nazis, by delaying their advance into Greece. They were told “that here they were and here they would stay”.



Kokoda Track. In addition, it is a well-established fact that the Kokoda track is known Australia's Thermopylae.

It was during WW2 in 1942 when the Brunswick Boys, Victoria, Australia of the 39th Battalion, led by Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Honner a West Australian veteran of Greece and Crete to delay and if possible stem the Japanese force who were determined to invade Australia.

These young lads according to my old friend Keith Rossi (Brigadier - deceased) fought the Japanese tooth and nail. They were made up of young men who had not seen battle before and had been thrown in to stem the tide of an aggressive battle hardened Japanese Force. Had it not for the 39th Battalion fighting strategic delaying tactics, Port Moresby may have been over run and Australia being threatened by an exuberant Japanese. The day will come when Australians look back in wonder at the 39th Battalion and say that it was their finest hour.

Therefore it is important to note the important roles Greeks like their brothers in arms, the ANZACS, continue to play in maintaining the peace throughout the world. Recently it Afghanistan, the dangers of being involved in training the Afghan military resulted in the death of nationals one of whom who was Greek by the Taliban forces still active in the country.

Conflicts/Peace Keepers of today 1990 – 2018.

Greeks and Anzacs' have been involved in peace keeping operations in one form or another in such locations as: Korea 1950, Gulf War 1990 - 1991, Iraq 1991- 2003, Bosnia & Herzegovina 1992 - 2004, Somalia 1993 - 1995, Imia/Kardak Crisis 1995 - 1995 (Greece), Albania 1997 - 1997 (Greece), Congo 1999 - 2011 (Greece), Kosovo 1999, Afghanistan 2001 – 2014, Insurgency in FYROM & missions in FYROM 2001 – 20013 (Greece). In addition Greece was also involved along with Australian Naval operations in the Standing Naval Force Mediterranean 2001 - 2016, Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 Horn of Africa 2002 - 2018, United Nations Mission in Sudan 2005 – 2011 (Greece), Missions in Lebanon 2011 - 2018, Military intervention in Libya 2011 – 2011 and American-led intervention in Iraq against ISIS 2014 - 2018.

Australian and New Zealanders of Hellenic origins. Today, after some 150 years of migration, is it not fair to say that there are more than one million Australians and New Zealanders of Greek origins living in both nations. The children of the diaspora have integrated well into society, contributing to the longevity, welfare, economic stability, embracing values and institutions without losing their ancestral identity. Like their kin folk in the Americas, their distant European cousins, those of the Middle East, Baltic States, Russian steppes, Indian sub-continent, African and Asian nations; they have done well by their presence and strengthen the threads of the ANZAC mentality. This monument and ANZAC Gardens is a tribute to them.



Ode to Australians of Greek Heritage.

The following poem was written by me some years ago and it is appropriate that it be part of the history of the monument. The translation into Greek was first attempted by myself with disastrous results and then attempted by a friend in South Australia who is also a member of the Lakonian Brotherhood in that state. Finally a clearer version was completed by my good friend, Leonidas Tsongas currently residing in the city of [Thessalonica, Macedonia, Greece](#). It is of interest to note that the city of Thessalonica is as sister to [Melbourne Victoria Australia](#), a place where the majority of Australians of Greek heritage now live. A copy of the poem may also be found on the [Victorian Panlaconian Brotherhood](#) website.

"O stranger to this land of ours we call home, Australia. Remember that we too are Australians. We who are of Hellenic origins, and made Australia home were and are always obedient to its laws. We who reside under the great Southern Cross once crossed this great land and have memories of old. May those who doubted our loyalty, remember that we too shared the burdens of Australia and willingly took on the aggressor to retain the freedoms we take for granted this day.

For those of us who are buried in this land we call Australia we salute those who now carry the torch we once carried with pride. To live in a land free from oppression, hunger and disease. To raise our families and educate our children in the manner of the land we now live in. We ask now of the new generation that when the time comes, that they too remember that our lives were not in vain.

Consider therefore, carefully before you criticize, that we who lie beneath this Australian soil, that we once lived amongst you in the flesh and felt the cool breeze against our cheeks and the heat of the sun during the day. We too had visions, dreams, and objectives that were not always fulfilled, but that somehow we managed to find our way through life.

We kept true to the laws of the land, worked hard to sustain our selves and that of our brethren. Laughed, cried, howled and jumped with joy when good news or calamities came our way. We took on the good the bad and even the nightmares of others in good stead, without wavering from what lay ahead. In all matters great and small, we Australians of Hellenic origins never forgot our heritage, culture and our sense of identity during our journey throughout this land we call home Australia.

*We ask not much for the next generation other than to remember that we never forgot that we came from a race called the Hellenes. Therefore on the last day of the year, spare that one precious moment to reflect on those who went before you and that of the past and when that moment has passed, look forward to a year with the same confidence and courage of a race called the Hellenes. Stand tall and be proud of our origins and let us not deny our heritage, for it is who we are, Australians of the Hellenic race" **Peter Adamis.***

Ode to Australian Greeks in Greek. “Ο ξένε σ’αυτην την χωρα που αποκαλούμε πατριδα, Αυστραλία. Θυμηθείτε ότι κ’εμεις είμαστε Αυστραλοι. Εμεις που ειμαστε απο ελληνική προέλευση, και καναμε την Αυστραλία πατριδα ήμασταν και είμαστε πάντα υπάκουοι στους νόμους της. Εμεις που κατοικούμε κάτω από τον τρανο Σταυρο το Νοτου κάποτε διέσχισαμε αυτή τη μεγάλη χωρα και έχουμε μνήμες των παλαιών. Σ’ αυτούς που αμφέβαλλαν την πίστη μας, θυμηθητε ότι κ’εμεις μοιρστικαμε τα βάρη της Αυστραλίας και πρόθυμα ανελαβαμε τον επιτιθέμενο να διατηρήσει τις ελευθερίες που παίρνουμε για δεδομένο αυτήν την ημέρα.

Για όσους από εμάς που είναι θαμμένοι σ’αυτην την χωρα που ονομάζουμε Αυστραλία χαιρετούμε όσους τώρα μεταφέρουν τη δάδα οπως κάποτε μεταφέραμε κ’εμεις με υπερηφάνεια. Να ζουμε σε μια χώρα που είναι απαλλαγμένη από την καταπίεση, πείνα και αρρώστα. Να αναθρέψουν τις οικογένειές μας και να εκπαιδεύσουμε τα παιδιά μας με τον τρόπο της χωρας όπου ζούμε σήμερα. Ζητάμε τώρα απο την νέα γενιά ότι όταν έρθει η ώρα, να θυμουντε ότι η ζωή μας δεν ήταν μάταια.

Εξεταξε ως εκ τούτου, προσεκτικά προτού επικρίνεις, ότι εμείς που βρίσκομαστε κάτω από αυτό το Αυστραλιανό έδαφος, ότι κάποτε ζούσαμε ανάμεσα σας στη σάρκα και αισθάνθηκαμε το δροσερό αεράκι εναντίον τα μάγουλα μας και τη θερμότητα του ήλιου κατά τη διάρκεια της ημέρας. Είχαμε και εμεις οράματα, όνειρα και στόχους που δεν ήταν πάντα πληρούνται, αλλά ότι με κάποιο τρόπο, καταφέραμε να βρούμε το δρόμο μας μέσα στη ζωή.

Επιτηρησαμε τους νόμους της χωρας, εργάστηκαμε σκληρά για να διατηρήσουμε τον εαυτό μας και τους αδελφούς μας. Γέλασαμε, φώναξαμε, ουρλιαξαμε, και πήδηξαμε με χαρά όταν λαβαμε καλές ειδήσεις ή καταστροφές. Πήραμε το καλό και το κακό και ακόμη τον όλεθρο των άλλων με καλή θέση, χωρίς αμφιταλαντεύσεις από τι μας προσμενει. Σε όλα τα θέματα μεγάλα και μικρα, εμεις οι Αυστραλοι απο ελληνική προέλευση δεν ξεχάσαμε ποτέ την κληρονομιά μας, τον πολιτισμό μας και το αίσθημα της ταυτότητας μας κατά τη διάρκεια του ταξιδιου μας σ’αυτήν τη χωρα, που ονομάζουμε χωρα Αυστραλία.

Δεν ζητουμε πολλά για την επόμενη γενιά, εκτός από το να θυμουντε ότι ποτέ δεν ξεχάσαμε ότι ήρθαμε από μια φυλή που ονομάζεται Ελλήνες. Ως εκ τούτου, την τελευταία ημέρα της τρέχουσας χρωνιας, χαρισε μία πολύτιμη στιγμή να προβληματιστούν αυτούς που περασαν πριν απο εμας και απ’το παρελθώ, και όταν εκείνη η στιγμή έχει περάσει, προσβλέπε σε ένα χρόνο με την ίδια εμπιστοσύνη και το θάρρος μιας φυλής που ονομάζεται Ελλήνες. Στάσου ψηλα και υπερήφανος για τις ρίζες μας και μην αρνησαι την κληρονομιά μας, για αυτό είναι που είμαστε, Αυστραλοι της ελληνικής φυλής”. **Παναγιωτης Αδαμης.**



Sponsors. The project has been sponsored by [ABALINX AND ASSOCIATES.](#)

ABALINX meaning, Adamis and Barwick, two ex-[Royal Australian Regiment](#) - [Australian Defence Force](#) personnel. [ABALINX](#) is a not for profit organisation with international links and dedicated to helping others without costs involved.

Maurice Barwick (retired Australian Army Infantry Major – 1 RAR, 3 RAR, 4 RAR, Commandoes, DUC, Foreign Affairs and Solicitor), Kostas Zgourdas (retired Stone Mason and past Village President) living in Greece, Dimitri Maliaros (past Village President), Stavros Mihalopoulos (retired farmer and village elder). Leon Tsongas (past President of the [Oakleigh Greek Community](#) in Australia), Stefanos Zgourdas (stone and marble mason).

Phillip Adamis ([Brother and Businessman](#)) and myself (retired Australian Army Infantry Warrant Officer - 1 RAR, 6 RAR, CARO, 11 IRC RWAR, SCMA, DUC, 2 RVR, 8/7 RVR, 3 ARU, DFRU-M, 5/6 RVR, APA-M, Detachments - Tropical Trials Establishment, Infantry Centre, Canungra, Army History Unit, Trainer, Manager, Business & Public Relations Manager and Director).

In-kind support. Others involved in supporting the project were Vaso Sigalos (Womens Association), George and Peter Paraskevopoulos ([Local Hardware proprietors - Kastori](#)) Andoni Koumaris (Local Green Grocer - Kastori), Chris Skorstis (Handyman), Takis Moutis (local sand and cement supplies - Kastori), Peter Rassias (Spitha Maintenance), Dimitri Bogris (Taxi driver), Dimitri Morphis (retired Policeman), Ilias Sigalos (Agricultural representative), Chris Glekas (retired Policeman).

Dina Sigalos (Tavern owner), Arthur Papastathis (retired Fireman), Giannoula Morphis (Tavern proprietor), George Mihalopoulos (Farmer), Aristotle Karagiannis (Olive merchant), Chris Perdicas (Architect), John Glekas (retired farmer and village elder), Katerina Feikou (President Womens Association), Arthur Varoutsios (President Men's Association).



Peter Adamis & Spitha (Peter Rassias)

ANZAC Gardens Site Visits.

Visitors are allowed onto the site on request. Interested members may either contact Kostas Zgourdas on: Greece: Mobile number [6979223738](tel:6979223738) who will make arrangements for entry and viewing; and/or Contact me at email: <mailto:abalinx@gmail.com> upon which arrangements will be made for viewing. Alternatively I am available via mobile Australia: [0481342791](tel:0481342791) upon which arrangements can be made to visit ANZAC Gardens. George Mihalopoulos, (farmer) is the designated on site guardian and will be looking after the site during our absence. Chris Glekas, my cousin and (retired Policeman) has overall responsibility. There are no costs involved.

Commemoration Days.

ANZAC day representing Australian and New Zealanders at Gallipoli landings and Oxi Day representing the [Greek Prime Minister, Metaxas](#) who said OXI (NO) to the Italian Ambassador back in 1941. Depending upon village and surrounding district participation, other events may also be considered to further the longevity of the monument, maintenance of the ANZAC spirit and the bonds that bind all three nations. All concepts and ideas will be considered on their merits.

Symbolism.

They say that a picture says a thousand words. If that is the case then the monument amongst ANZAC Gardens in Pellana Lakonia, Greece represents a million departed souls. There is much symbolism in the monument and each section has a meaning as demonstrated below:

**Flags.**

The Hellenic and Australian flags fly high above the Tholos tomb housing the monument to the fallen.

The New Zealand Flag has yet to be obtained and we hope to request the New Zealand Government to provide one to complete the ANZAC representation. As mentioned elsewhere, erecting the ten foot mast was one of the toughest jobs of all.

**Main Stone.**

Searching, locating and identifying the main structure was not easy as it meant walking to the top of the hill, past the church Prophet Ilias and searching for a suitable flat rock.

A reconnaissance had been conducted the day before on top of the hill and it was after viewing a number of huge rocks that we discovered the most suitable one for the monument.

After much manoeuvring by Dimitri Maliaros, a friend and past President of the village, the huge rock was picked up and transported all the way down and across to the tiny knoll where ANZAC Gardens was located. Not an easy task as it seems and it would take about four of us to relocate it and put it into place. It is important to note that the main rock was donated by Aristotle Karagiannis whose field it was found on the hill overlooking Pellana.

Credit goes to Kostas Zgourdas who had the life experiences as a stone mason and with the help of Gerald, Vittorio and myself the rock structure was put into place using ancient methods of wooden poles as catapults and levers to put it into place. I must admit that Kostas, for his age was magnificent. As for Maurice Barwick, he stood silently by recording all the construction, taking photographs and videos for the sake of prosperity and history.

Tholos. The Tholos like structure housing the monument is a representation of an ancient Mycenaean tomb that houses royalty. The installation and finer points of the monument were constructed by Kostas Zgourdas, the local and regional stone mason. The reason for the Tholos type structure was to emulate the ancient Royal tombs carved out of the hillside some 500 metres to the north of the ancient palace and it was felt that the structure should be part of the ancient landscape.



Black Pillar and Crucible.

The black pillar represents the soul of all those fallen in battle fighting for the freedoms we take for granted. The white round marble crucible is the fire that is kept alight during the ceremony.

The black pillar will house a stone crucible which will contain a fire that will be lit on ANZAC DAY and OXI DAY each year. The red rock crucible bowl symbolises the blood bond between the Hellenes and the ANZACS.

The stone crucible was donated and carved out of local stone mason, Kostas Zgourdas. The Pillar was donated by John Glekas and relocated by Stavros Mihalopoulos and put into place by Vittorio Merici the Albanian guest worker. The area upon which the crucible stands on the pillar will be eventually covered to provide shelter from the elements.

The Ode. On both sides of the upright rock two marble plaques containing the Ode in Greek and in English. On each occasion a reading of the Ode will be part of the ceremony. "The Ode comes from For the Fallen, a poem by the English poet and writer Laurence Binyon and was published in London in the Winnowing Fan; poems of the Great War in 1914. The verse, which became the League Ode, was already used in association with commemoration services in Australia in 1921".

English

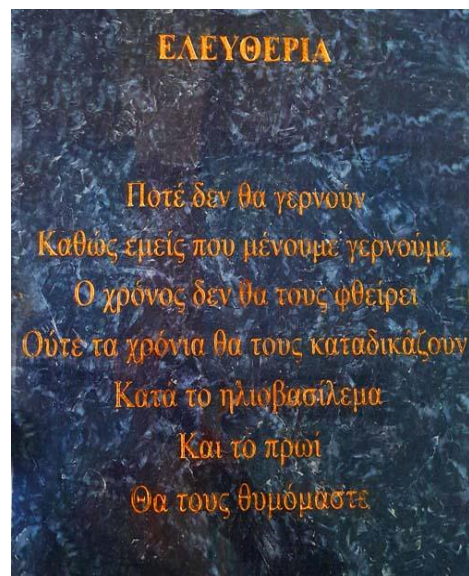
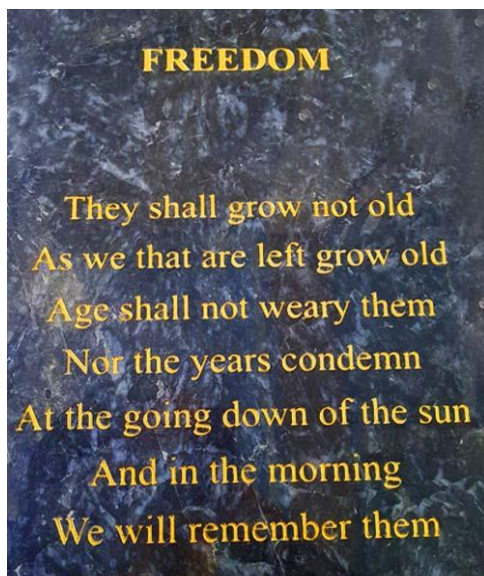
They shall grow not old,
As we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
And in the morning
We will remember them.

Greek

Ποτέ δεν θα γερνούν
Καθώς εμείς που μένουμε γερνούμε
Ο χρόνος δεν θα τους φθείρει
Ούτε τα χρόνια θα τους
καταδικάζουν
Κατά το ηλιοβασίλεμα
Και το πρωί
Θα τους θυμόμαστε

Plaques. On the upright stone whose origins are from Pellana holds two marble plaques. One in English and the other in Greek. When dawn awakes the sun's rays strike on the English language version marble while the sun rays fall upon the Greek version marble at sunset. Stefanos Zgourdas, the son of Kostas Zgourdas was responsible for the marble plaques and for the inscriptions in both Greek and English. It took some time to figure out the best method of translating after Chris Glekas felt that the original translation by myself did not feel correct.

Discussing the matter further with Vaso Sigalos and Chris Glekas, and Kostas Zgourdas, it was decided to submit the translation to my mate Leon Tsongas who was living in [Thessalonica](#). Leon was the past president of the Oakleigh Greek Community and Districts back in 2005 prior to moving to Greece with his family. The images below is the result of Leon's translation and I must admit that on reflection, the translation is far superior to that of my own.



The foundations. The monument lays upon a rock base surrounded by the fine sand found in Pellana and its surrounding districts. The fine sand brought to the site by Takis Moutis symbolises that mankind must return to the earth once our labours amongst the living has been done. The rocks were transported by Stavros Mihalopoulos with the help of Gerald and Vittorio the two Albanian guest workers who were instrumental in making the circular tholos structure possible.

These three gentlemen worked by far in excess of what was expected them only to be surpassed by Kostas Zgourdas who worked tirelessly to make the monument come together. I must add that Kostas Zgourdas provided much in-kind support and worked tirelessly at night in order to prepare the monument for the grand opening on our last day in the village of Pellana. For that I am truly thankful.

Entrances. There are two entrances called the "[dromos](#)" (road) same as those of ancient Mycenaean Tholos tombs that are scattered throughout the Greek mainland. One entrance faces the West as the sun's rays strike the marble while the other entrance faces the East as the sun's rays flee over the [Taygetos mountain range](#). Stone steps have been embedded on both of the entrances and wedged amongst the circular rocks around the monument.

Circular base. The inside and outside is surrounded by local rock held in place by being wedged one against the other to form a circular structure. The inside has been sunken to the depth of approximately one metre and the external structure has a mound of stones around its base. The meaning of the circular base and foundation is to depict peace and tranquillity guarding the monument in the centre.

Flowers. Flowers symbolise memories of those since gone, of happiness, joy and laughter. The flowers are local and are self-seeding to ensure that each year we are reminded of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms we take for granted this day. Seeds were donated by our good friend Stavros Mihalopoulos who was forever telling us that he was going to sacrifice a rooster and a young kid (goat) in our honour. (Maurice and I). We had to restrain him on a number of occasions from actually going ahead with his kind offer.



[Olive Trees.](#)

The monument is surrounded by olive trees. These trees symbolise life itself that no matter what troubles mankind, life will continue to exist once those turbulent times cease.

While in the distant background the mountain peaks of the Taygetos mountain range gaze down upon the monument casting its long shadow on the plains below.

Australian Eucalyptus Trees.

Three Australian eucalyptus trees stand silently outside of the Tholos monument. They represent three Australian ex-service men, one named Maurice, (Maurice Barwick ex-Royal Australian Regiment, Foreign Affairs, Solicitor), the second named Bruce ([Bruce Ruxton](#) - past Victorian RSL President - deceased) and the third named Peter, (Peter Adamis ex-Royal Australian Regiment). We hope that when we return in twelve months (2018) that the three trees have taken root in the soil and their leaves overlook the monument in harmony with the native olive trees. It is of interest to note that the origins of eucalyptus trees in Greece are as a result of a gift from the Australian government to the people of Greece.

I will confess that with the help of three “unnamed gentlemen” three eucalyptus trees were “liberated” and I “forced them” to carry out the dirty deed in true Aussie fashion by ferrying away the trees and placed in a safe house until the time of planting. I must add that these three gentlemen were being taught the ancient art of being a “[Klephte](#)” (Brigand, cattle rustler, freedom fighter and larrikin). As I have Klephte blood flowing in my veins from both sides of my parents) Rassias and Adamis – approximately 150 years ago), I would say that I was eminently qualified to train these “unnamed gentlemen”. All three gentlemen qualified as Klephtes and were found competent. However they still have yet to learn is the art of klephte blackmail of which is further training and qualifications is required.



Silent Guardians. In the original plans, the monument is to be surrounded by three marble or stone statues. One for each nation, Greek, Australian and New Zealand. As funds became depleted, the proposed statues were not able to be purchased and were put aside for another day. However it may be possible to purchase bronze statues from Australia and New Zealand and transport them to Pellana and erect them on location.

The other option is to purchase them in Greece and do likewise. However, prices between Greece and Australia fluctuate greatly and it may be in the best interests of all to purchase them in Australia. A final decision has yet to be made and further consultation is required. In the image above is an Australian on the right, a Greek in the middle and a New Zealand on the left.

Pellana the Village and its potential.

There is even discussions of a fund being created to assist a local village cottage industry with the village of Pellana being the centre of tourism and a haven for those seeking respite from an otherwise stressful environment. At the present moment under the austerity measures being imposed upon the Hellenic nation, any proposal of entrepreneurship or creation of wealth appears difficult as people in the villages located in the countryside have been hit hard and struggle to make ends meet.

However despite all the difficulties faced by the Hellenic nation, cottage industries are still possible and I for one would like to see small family industries crop up here and there. I can see my old mate Kostas Zgourdas, the stone mason contributing his numerous rock and wood carvings. Kostas Zgourdas art work is located near the apex of the village and in a relative quiet and peaceful surroundings. In addition Kostas advised me that he is building a small museum to house his rock and wood carvings and still dabbles in the occasional marble.

On the other hand there is my young cousin Kaliope who is an accomplished artist and is well known for her rock paintings. Kaliope creates them in Athens during her spare time from looking after her grandchildren and working in a child care centre nearby. I have encouraged her to conduct a small display in the village during the festive and tourist season and thus bring attention to the village.



There are oil products produced by my good friend Aristotle Karagiannis. He and his sons run one of the two successful olive oil presses in Pellana, the other is run by "Fasaria" John Filipopoulos. Both olive oil presses attract much business and there is a healthy competition between the two. The olive oil is currently being marketed in tins and in bottles for the local and European markets.

Food products by Dina Sigalou, Postcards and tourist information by Aunt Giannoula Morphis, Buggies by Ilias Zavras and/or Spitha (Peter) Rassias who is an accomplished artist, tours to the Pellanida cave complex and ancient tombs. There is a catering business being managed by the Karagiannis family, whose service Lakonia and neighbouring states of Messenia and Arcadia.

The village also sports a bakery which services parts of North Laconia, adjacent Messenia and Arcadia. There are four taxis servicing the small community and surrounding district. A Womens and Men's association which meet on a regular basis and conduct events and religious functions and much more. There is a football soccer field where the local young lads compete with other lads from surrounding districts.



Buses do visit the ruins and at times given a lecture by the local historian Stavros Maheras on the history of the village, the ancient palace of [Menelaus](#) and his wife [Helen of Troy](#).

The ancient Hellenistic Tholos Royal tombs, the cave aptly named "Pellanida" located 2000 paces past the church called Prophet Ilias at the top of the hill.

I have also created a path to the ancient tombs with the tacit approval of Dimitri Morphis a retired policeman and a good friend of my fathers. (Dimitri took it rather badly when he found out about my father's death, as they had been friends for 89 years. Dimitri is a philanthropist and regularly drives to and from Athens to visit his place of birth.)

Orienteering or just having a relaxing time under the shade of the village oak trees. There is so much that can be done that it only needs a spark and then it would take off like wild fire. There are many empty homes used periodically during the winter months by those who have decided to relocate to the cities and return only to harvest the olives and oil products. In view of this it is possible should the villagers and owners take up the opportunity, rent their homes and thus create another industry that will assist with their domestic duties and lifestyles? However for such changes to occur there must be reasons for visitors to travel to Pellana.

Tours to surrounding villages and restaurants located high up amongst the Taygetos mountain range, a quick trip to the beaches of Laconia using the newly build highway and to simply enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the village life sipping wine under the huge oak tree in the centre of the lower part of the village. You can order from either Dina Sigalos who runs the Café cum tavern or Aunt Giannoula who runs a smaller tavern located adjacent to the centre square.



Dinner in the village in honour of Maria Vamvakinou the Federal Member for Calwell

It is quite possible to hire motorcycles either from the locals and/or travel to Sparta which is a mere 15 minute drive using the new highway and renting a vehicle or a motorcycle is recommended.

This is probably the best advice regarding transportation as it enables the visitor to use the village as a base and continue with their touring. Alternatively, the visitor may hire one of the four taxis owned by the Dimos family located in the centre of town. Those who decide to stay in the village for a protracted period of time and are renting or living in their patriarchal home can always call upon Spitha (Peter Rassias) for handyman jobs and tasks needed around the home. He can be contacted on: Greece - [6948538362](tel:6948538362), or alternatively call on Chris Skorstis on [6946082210](tel:6946082210). Domestic House cleaning & assistance is also available



The finished monument 28 October 2017

A Final personal tribute. This is my final tribute to my adopted country, a place I call home, [Australia](#). I would like to think that I have done my bit and having done it, I would prefer to end my days contributing by writing and remembering my mates and a generation of a bygone era. In essence, one could say without a doubt that the monument in Pellana, Lakonia Greece is in itself dedicated to all Hellenes, Australians and New Zealanders.

On reflection, I do hope that someday, visitors from Australia, New Zealand and those of Greek heritage living in Europe find the time to visit the monument and look upon it kindly, wondering why an Aussie bloke with a Hellenic background far from his adopted country erected the monument. It is a legacy I do hope remains undisturbed. Should anyone wish to help promote and develop the ANZAC Gardens, please contact the author and accommodation can be provided during their stay and holiday in Greece. While I still live, I welcome ex-military personal that I have served with to visit and stay me whenever it is suitable to all parties.



Contributions.

Although the project has been privately funded, readers who wish to contribute may do so by contacting the author via email at abalinx@gmail.com with the title:

**PELLANA ANZAC
GARDENS MONUMENT**

Alternatively call mobile:
Australia: 0481342791. All
contributions acknowledged.

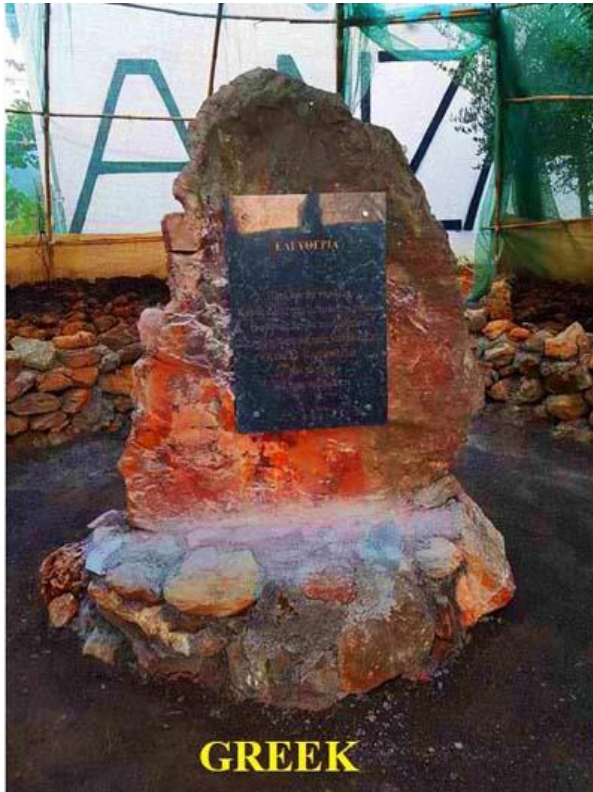
2017 was laced with sadness with the passing of family friends and acquaintances and yet despite their passing, I have become the recipient of their memories and will not forget their contribution to making me who I am. I miss my [old man](#) and the time to ring him up and say hi, knowing full well that I would receive a gruff voice in response. Now it's my turn as an elder and with that role comes additional responsibilities.

To my Cobber Digger Mates, it has been an honour to have served alongside you and travelled this road together. We did what we had to do to safe guard the interests of our nation and in doing so, many have paid the ultimate sacrifice. You are not forgotten, for your memories will live long after we have all gone. Life as we know it can only be sustained by vigilance and with that vigilance comes responsibility.

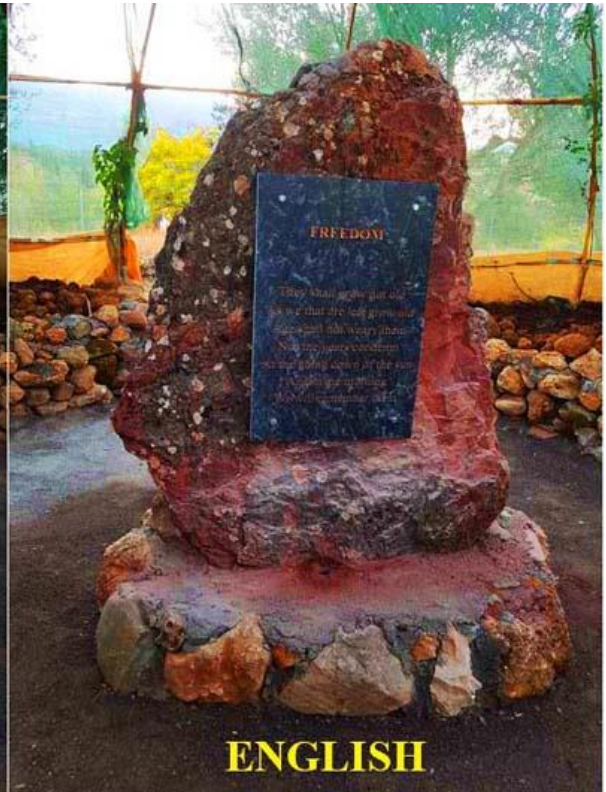


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