



THE KEFI CLUB NEWSLETTER

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Have Your Say



Our next meeting of the Kefi Club is the 12th May again at Norton Parish Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. for the Annual General Meeting. The agenda will be sent out nearer the time.

Afterwards it will be your chance to sample a variety of mezethes brought in by members to sample whilst sipping Ouzo. Supposedly the two are meant to go together. We should have great fun finding out Here again we are hoping for members support to see how many different varieties of Ouzo we can muster.

Tickets for our annual BBQ will be on sale at this meeting, £3 for members and £6 for Non-members. As previously it will be held in the very picturesque setting of Colwall Cricket Club on the 16th June. Commencing at the slightly earlier time of 7 p.m. An extravaganza of Greek produce is promised

“How Brave”



Dianne receiving her prize from Jackie

This was the comment from our two judges Steve & Jackie from the Hospitality Department of Worcester College of Technical who for the second time were called upon to give an impartial decision to the best in class for our 3rd cooking competition. Previously we have had two classes, a savoury and a sweet, this year was no exception. As with earlier competitions the decisions were made all the more difficult due to the quality and diversity of the foodstuffs on display. However, it was a return to the winners' podium for Dianne Otley who produced Octopus in a red wine sauce, well done. In the sweets category we had a new winner it is congratulations to Sandra Rhodes who baked some fine examples of Baklavas and Galaktoboureko (custard pie). Like before once the judges had finished tasting we could then sample the dishes

(always the best part for me). Thanks to everyone who took the time and effort into making this event one of the most enjoyable we hold and of course thanks to our two judges Steve & Jackie.

Toppling the topless towers of Troy

Our guest speaker, Martin Harris from the Department of Classics, Malvern College took time out from his very busy schedule to give a very thought provoking talk on the writings of Troy and the historical evidence to substantiate it, at our meeting in March. Thanks again Martin.

The 'Kefi Club' by Luke Elsdon

Although Greece and the Malvern Hills area are not obviously linked, there is a Malvern club associated with Greece and the things that make it as fascinating as it is. This is called the 'Kefi' club.

The 'Kefi' club was founded four years ago, in 2002 by Nick Kontarines, who is the honorary secretary and Patricia Marshall, who is the club chairperson. I recently requested an interview with Mr. Kontarines who kindly agreed, in order to pass on his enthusiasm for all things Greek!

The club was set up with the aim of enabling people to discuss one of the most historic and exciting countries in the world.

The 'Kefi' club is a local association that allows people to share their experiences and learn new things about Greece. It is an opportunity to meet and talk to people who share a love of the country. The meetings are always stimulating because no two are ever the same. The topics covered include Greek culture, ancient and modern archaeology, the beautiful countryside, traditions, historical and current language, ancient



mythology, holidays, history and food & drink.



The main aim at meetings however is to have a good time, because the word 'Kefi' in Greek means 'jubilant mood'.



The club currently has twenty-five members and is hoping that more will be tempted to join. Non-members however are welcome to attend meetings as well.

Many of the club's members joined in order to learn as much about the country as possible because

they either have relatives living in Greece or their children married Greeks and had children in Greece.

These members want to find out more about their Greek relations' way of life.

The Kefi Club News Letter is produced each month and contains news, recipes, articles and points of interest. The newsletter is circulated by e-mail and handed out to members to give to friends.

Recently the 'Kefi' club has had to change its monthly venue to the Norton Community Centre on the opposite side of Worcester from Malvern. Mr Kontarines assured me that the alteration is only temporary and that the search is on for a new, relatively comfortable location to hold monthly meetings.

The 'Kefi' club is an excellent way of getting people interested in Greek culture, and I for one think that it will go very far.

For details of club meetings and membership enquiries (£7 annually) please contact the Club secretary, Nick Kontarines (01684 566 323)

Luke has produced this great article about our club for an essay competition run by the Malvern Gazette in conjunction with local schools.

Crete in the Spring

by Jo & Charles Taylor

We ended up in Crete at the end of March, with surprisingly warm and sunny weather (made a nice change from Athens last year where we got caught out by the cold!), and a car for a week. Think typical English summer - low 20's and blue skies with the occasional cloud and you set the scene. While we were in jeans and t-shirts, the locals were still warmly wrapped up in winter coats.

Our first day was spent getting our bearings around Rethymno and trying to work out how to get out! Luckily Chris Lloyd had warned us about a particularly dangerous junction coming out of town. We watched part of the solar eclipse from Rethymno and then set off to visit Chris, stopping on the way to watch the pinnacle of the eclipse - something approaching 90% totality which had a strange subduing effect on the sunshine and the temperature - casting a slightly other-worldly effect on the lush, spring green, flower-filled hillsides.

Chris's place is a project and a half - we have great admiration for her vision and only hope that all goes well from here on - the one completed room (sorry Chris - vault) is absolutely gorgeous and from that alone you can imagine how wonderful it will be, but it looks a very long road yet to be travelled. Sitting on the roof / terrace with a cold drink and gazing across to the sea and the snow capped mountains in the distance you can easily see the appeal of the location. Keep going Chris - it's well worth it. We went out for dinner in Rethymno with Chris a couple of times and had a great time and lots of local food, some of which we might not have tried without her knowledge.

The rest of the week became rather goat filled as many farmers were moving flocks around, presumably to take advantage of spring grass. We even found one flock on the beach at Triapetra.



The Amari valley is lush and green at this time of year and we spent a while talking to a villager who was out gathering snails and horta to have with some eggs for his lunch - he mistook us for Austrians and was quite surprised to find we were English and could speak some Greek.

We spent a very hairy morning driving over a mountain road (which we nicknamed the road to hell) that in some places had its tarmac edges hanging over nothing more substantial than thin air! Having spent about an hour dodging boulders and areas of stone filled road (thank you to whoever made sure we encountered no other vehicles) and admiring the wonderful view over the several thousand feet drop (yes really) we made our way down to Hora Sfakion for lunch where there was a distinct smell of varnish in the air - they'd spotted the two tourists who had got there before us! We made our way back via the less mountainous roads along the coast - there's only so much excitement you can take in one day!

A gentler day saw us take in the beautiful eucalyptus trees of Yeroupolis (or Georgioupolis), one of our favourite spots, as well as the more touristy Almyrida and Kalyves, with a drive back into the hills where we saw some very large bullet holes in the road signs. One thing we did notice was that there always seemed to be more / bigger bullet holes in the signs as you left town - a case of running the bad guys out of town perhaps!



We had some pleasant meals in Rethymno in the evenings, finding small tavernas and mezethopoleios in the back streets, more places opening for the start of the season as the week went on. Avoiding the harbour side touts is definitely the right thing to do if you want to keep the cost down.

In the space of a week we drove over 900kms, most of this very slowly, which gave us the opportunity to take some fantastic pictures, see some wonderful views, and experience a green, flower-filled

Crete that many summer visitors never see.

(By the way the road to hell was from Argyroupolis to Imbros via Asi Gonia and Kallikratis and Asfendou - if you want to try it or avoid it!)

News reports

Chinese interest peaks over Mount Olympus

Mount Olympus could soon have a “sister mountain” in China’s Mt Tai, say authorities near Greece’s highest peak. Officials from the prefecture of Pieria and the Chinese province of Shandong intend to twin the mountains, promoting them together in a deal similar to the sister cities programs, in which two municipalities “adopt” each other mainly to increase tourism. Both Olympus and Tai are rich in history and culture. In mythology, Mount Olympus was home to the 12 most powerful gods while Mount Tai has a 3,000-year-old tradition of religious worship. Pieria has refurbished and expanded its hiking shelters on Mount Olympus and built three new ones in anticipation of more tourists. “The province of Shandong with a population of 92 million people is a very big tourist market,” said Prefect Giorgos Papastergiou. (ekathimerinini.com, 15/3/06)

Court’s venomous bite over viper protection

The European Court of Justice ruled yesterday that Greece has not been doing enough to protect a rare breed of viper that is mostly indigenous to the Cycladic island of Milos. Yesterday’s decision orders Greece to do more to protect the snake, known as *Vipera schweizeri* or the Cycladic blunt-nosed viper. The snake is on a list of endangered species and experts believe that half of the rare vipers can be found on Milos. The court said Greece is doing little to protect the snake, arguing that sheep and cows are allowed to graze in an area used by the vipers to reproduce and rest. Mines also operate in the area, the court said. Greece has argued that its current legislation and programs were sufficient to protect the endangered viper but the court said the measures were “fragmented.” [ekathimerini .com 17/03/06]

16 children

The Prefecture of Thessaloniki said yesterday that it will honor on Sunday 48-year-old Katerina Orfanidou, a mother of 16 children, for her contribution to the community. Orfanidou, who has nine sons, seven daughters and four grandchildren, said that despite the financial strain she remains optimistic but added that little aid has been provided by the government. [ekathimerini.com 17/03/06]

Intact monk’s corpse seen as ‘sign of God’

Church authorities in Lamia, central Greece, have described the body of an Orthodox monk that has remained intact 15 years after its burial as a “sign of God” as medical experts fail to come up with a scientific explanation to the alleged phenomenon. “From the start I believed that this is a sign of God,” said Bishop Nikolaos from the prefecture of Fthiotida. “We are not rushing to make him a saint... and are not calling on pilgrims to worship it,” he added. Despite attempts by Church officials to play down the incident, media coverage of the deceased monk, Vissarion Korkoliakos, has led thousands of people to flock to the site where the body is kept. Church authorities had summoned four local doctors and an Athens coroner to explain the alleged phenomenon. However, experts could only describe the case as unique.

A warm welcome to New Members

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the committee to welcome five new members to the Club they are Gill Wire, Paul & Stacey Pascali and Stewart & Liz Mansell-Skelton.

Wrestling with Latin and Greek. (A.N. Wilson)

The Loeb Classical Library is approaching the publication of the 500th volume, Quintilian's Lesser Declamations. It means that all the great Works of classical Latin and Greek and many of the work of Late Antiquity, are now published in a scholarly text with a good translation on the opposite page. *Just as the world has decided it can get along without classical literature, we are in apposition to read nearly all of it.*

Lover of classical literature owe the survival of many ancient text, not to the Christianity, but to Islam. It was from Baghdad in the rein of Mamun (813 – 833)

That many Greek texts, lost in any manuscript, emerged in Arabic translations. The revival of Greek learning took place when Arabic translations were themselves re-translated into Greek. In the 12th century the great centre of Aristotle studies was Islamic Toledo.

"Our" heritage of Greek and Latin learning, filtered through texts saved by Arabs, is indeed a common inheritance.

(extract , The Daily Telegraph, 20th March 2006)

Zeus worshippers want to head for Acropolis

Worshippers of the 12 gods of Mount Olympus are planning to ask the government to allow them to practice their faith at ancient sites like the Acropolis, sources told Sunday's Kathimerini.

The followers of this minority faith have been buoyed by a court ruling in February that allowed the existence of an association, known as Ellinai, whose members claim to worship Zeus and the other 11 gods. Ellinai was formed last October by 23 Greeks but it is estimated that some 2,000 people worship the 12 ancient gods in Greece.

Sources said Ellinai will seek permission from the Culture Ministry to establish places of worship and to be allowed to worship at ancient temples such as the Parthenon and the Temple of Poseidon in Sounion.

[www.ekathimerini.com 17 April 2006]



A slightly larger edition of the Newsletter than usual. I hope it e-mails to everyone successfully. Thanks to Luke for his article I hope you do well. Should I be worried about the editor's job? Thanks also to Jo and Charles for sharing their experiences of Crete with us and for keeping us up to speed with Chris Lloyds' progress. I know it was a bit of a rush job to get your article to me so soon after coming back.

For our next meeting in May the committee accept no responsibility for the condition of how people feel the morning after the night before where Ouzo is concerned. It promises to be a great evening.

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