



The Hellenic Society Prometheas

Newsletter 18

February 2003

Greek Letters Day: January 31 at St. George

The Hellenic Society Prometheas celebrated the traditional **Hellenic Letters' Day** on Friday, January 31, 2003 at the Founders Hall of St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Bethesda, Maryland. Mr. George Mavrogiorgos, the newly appointed Education Counselor of the Greek Embassy spoke first and paid tribute to the Three Hierarchs of Orthodoxy. He explained the goal and the purpose of the *Certificate of Attainment in the Greek Language* and the efforts of the Greek Government to promote the dissemination of the language to Greeks abroad. About twenty students received such certificates and were warmly applauded by the audience of more than 200 people. They were congratulated and were wished **“kai se anoterá”** (**..many more successes and achievements**). The Greek consul, Ms. Adamantia Klotsa addressed the students and the audience briefly, and presented the certificates.

The main speaker, Mr. **Rigas Kappatos**, a poet and writer, spoke about the origins of the Greek language and the various stages of its evolution from the early copper period until today. Citing convincing arguments and examples, he emphasized the importance of the Greek language as a vehicle of culture and as the foundation of other European languages. The complete text of the speech is provided at the link <http://www.prometheas.org/Documents/RigasKappatosLecture.htm>

Mr. Pericles Stabekis recited a small part of rhapsody X of the Iliad. The celebration ended with the cutting of Prometheas' vasilopitta.

Η «Ημέρα των Γραμμάτων» εορτάσθηκε πανηγυρικά την Παρασκευή το βράδυ 31 Ιανουαρίου, από τον πολιτιστικό σύλλογο «Προμηθέας». Σε μία κατάμεστη αίθουσα από κόσμο, στην εκκλησία του Αγίου Γεωργίου, πριν από την κύρια ομιλία της βραδιάς επιδόθηκαν τα διπλώματα Ελληνομάθειας από την Πρόξενο της Ελλάδας κ. Αδαμαντία Κλότσα. Πρόκειται για έναν καινούριο θεσμό που έχει υιοθετήσει η Ελληνική κυβέρνηση για τα παιδιά των Ελλήνων του εξωτερικού που μαθαίνουν Ελληνικά. Περίπου είκοσι παιδιά καταχειροκροτήθηκαν από τους πάνω από 200 παρευρισκόμενους και τους ευχήθηκαν «και σε ανώτερα». Προλόγισε ο εκπαιδευτικός σύμβουλος της Ελληνικής Πρεσβείας κ. Γιώργος Μαυρογιώργος, αναφερόμενος στην εορτή των Τριών Ιεραρχών. Στη συνέχεια, ο κύριος ομιλητής της βραδιάς, ποιητής και πεζογράφος Ρήγας Καππάτος, μίλησε για την Ελληνική γλώσσα και τις καταβολές της, αναφερόμενος στα διάφορα στάδια εξέλιξής της από την πρώιμη εποχή του χαλκού ίσαμε σήμερα. Ο ομιλητής τόνισε ιδιαίτερα την σπουδαιότητα της Ελληνικής γλώσσας σαν φορέα πολιτισμού αλλά και σαν πηγή δημιουργίας των άλλων γλωσσών της Δυτικής Ευρώπης,

μέσα από πειστικά παραδείγματα. Η εκδήλωση έκλεισε με την κοπή της πατροπαράδοτης βασιλοπιττας.

Mark your calendars:

Hellenic Independence Day Celebration in the Washington Metropolitan Area.

Organized by the Hellenic Society Prometheas and cosponsored by all the Hellenic Organizations and church communities. **Sunday, March 23, 4:30 PM** at the new Community Center of St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church in Falls Church Virginia. The keynote speaker will be the distinguished novelist and short story writer **Mr. Harry Mark Petrakis**.

New Greek Cinema: Through the Women's Lens (Feb 2-9)

Co-sponsored by the Embassy of Greece, and the Greek Film Centre, a series of four short films by Greek women filmmakers is presented at the National Museum of Women in the Arts from Feb 2 to 9th. The movies are: Alexandria (Maria Iliou), Sunday Feb 2; Quarter in 4 Movements (Lucia Rikaki), Wedn Feb 5; Close So...Close (Stella Theodorakis) Friday Feb 7th; and Tomorrow Will Be Too Late (Layia Giourgou), Sunday Feb 9th.

National Museum of Women in the Arts: 1250 New York Avenue NW (202) 783-7370

Macedonian Dinner Dance on Feb 16th

The Macedonian Association of Greater Washington DC invites you to the 14th Annual Dinner Dance which will take place at the Fairview Park Marriott Hotel on Feb 16th. For more information call: 703-281-7318 or 301-294-0265.

Post-byzantium: the Greek Renaissance in New York

The Onassis Cultural Center is showing the "Post-byzantium: the Greek Renaissance" in New York the in New York through February 8th. It features 15th-18th century treasures on loan from the Byzantine & Christian Museum of Athens.

Other News of Interest

Architect Frank Gehry on a Memorial for September 11th

While the well-known Architect Frank Gehry did not respond when the Lower Manhattan Development Corp. solicited proposals to build a memorial for Sept 11th 2001 in the place of the World Trade Center, he has his ideas about how the monument should look like. January 2002, when he was teaching at Yale University, he took 15 students to see Agia Sophia in Constantinoupolis and said to them: “this is what we need in New York. I think you should think on this scale or bigger, about a building that could be spiritual but not religious. The pope would come, and the Islamic guys, and it would be a symbol of openness and tolerance”.

Source: New York Time Magazine, Jan 5, 2003 (pg. 11)

A Dream about a Hellenic Museum in Washington DC

Michael Parlamis, a civil engineer from New York, is a man with a mission. He wants to develop a Hellenic Heritage Museum in Washington DC. Not just any museum, but a virtual replica of Agia Sophia. Parlamis wants the US Government to donate the land and is talking to Turkish Americans to build a version of the Blue Mosque next to it. Last October, he visited Patriarch Bartholomew and has been talking to Greek-American organizations on how to implement it.

Source: Odyssey Magazine, Jan/Feb Issue (pg 22)

Updated websites

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese has updated its web site (<http://www.goarch.org>) with daily news, live coverage of services from churches around the US, a calendar of holy days, a guide on chanting the eight Byzantine Modes of the Sunday Orthros.

Counting Greek Words

Mr. Athan Anagnostopoulos, who (along with his wife) established and operates the well-regarded Greek Institute in Cambridge MA, has spent the last 6 years assembling Greek words over the 3,000-year compendium of the Greek language. So far, he has gathered more than 50 million words from the time of Homer to present. Recently, he convinced the Greek Government to provide and staff a building in Plaka, Athens to house all these documents. The Center for the Study of Greek Theater and Greek Museum honored Mr. Athan Anagnostopoulos for his work.

Source: Odyssey Magazine, Jan/Feb Issue (pg 25)