23/06/2021

Hundreds gather at Saint Sophia Cathedral in Paddington to enjoy BBQ and see restorations







Hundreds of people from Sydney's Greek community flocked to the historical Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Paddington on Sunday to enjoy a delicious Greek barbeque fundraiser and witness the recent restorations.

The church is known as the first Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere, and it has even been given State Heritage Status by the New South Wales Government.
The festivities began inside the Cathedral with a special Divine Liturgy marking the Pentecost and presided over by His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Meletopoulos, who was representing His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

Taking in the liturgy from the front pews were a number of prominent members of the Greek community including, but not limited to, Konstantinos Giannakodimos, representing the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Christos Karras, Peter Poulos MLC, Bayside City Councillor Vicki Poulos, and City of Sydney Councillor Angela Vithoulkas.
They, along with other parishioners, were then treated to a number of speeches about the recent restorations of the Cathedral, which have cost over $850,000 and

include the cleaned interior. A new baptism font was also donated by ELLKA.

“Everyone thinks this is a bit of a paint job. It is a major project that has been undertaken. There was concrete cancer, major roofing, water was coming in through the place,” Chris Skiladellis, who is on the Advisory Committee in charge of overseeing the restorations, said in his speech.
“It really did go downhill quite a bit, but the work has been extensive and it looks beautiful today.”

He also stressed that more work and funding is needed to fully restore the Cathedral to its former glory. In particular, work on the windows of the church is estimated to cost about $10,000 for each one.

After all the official proceedings were completed, parishioners moved outside towards the tantalising smell of lamb-on-the-spit and kontosouvli, as organised by Nick Andriotakis. Many enjoyed their meal as they chatted and took in the new plaque made from Pentelic Marble and donated by Euro Marble.
“We wanted to do something here so we thought it’d be appropriate to source out a bit of marble with a bit of history… We managed to bring out three plaques [of Pentelic Marble],” Nick Voulgarakis from Euro Marble told The Greek Herald on the day.

“One is with a custodian, which is still being held, the other was at Euro Marble on our premises, which we unfortunately lost… and the third one is there on the wall. So it’s happy days.”

A special final touch to a Cathedral rich in history and much-loved by Sydney’s Greek community.





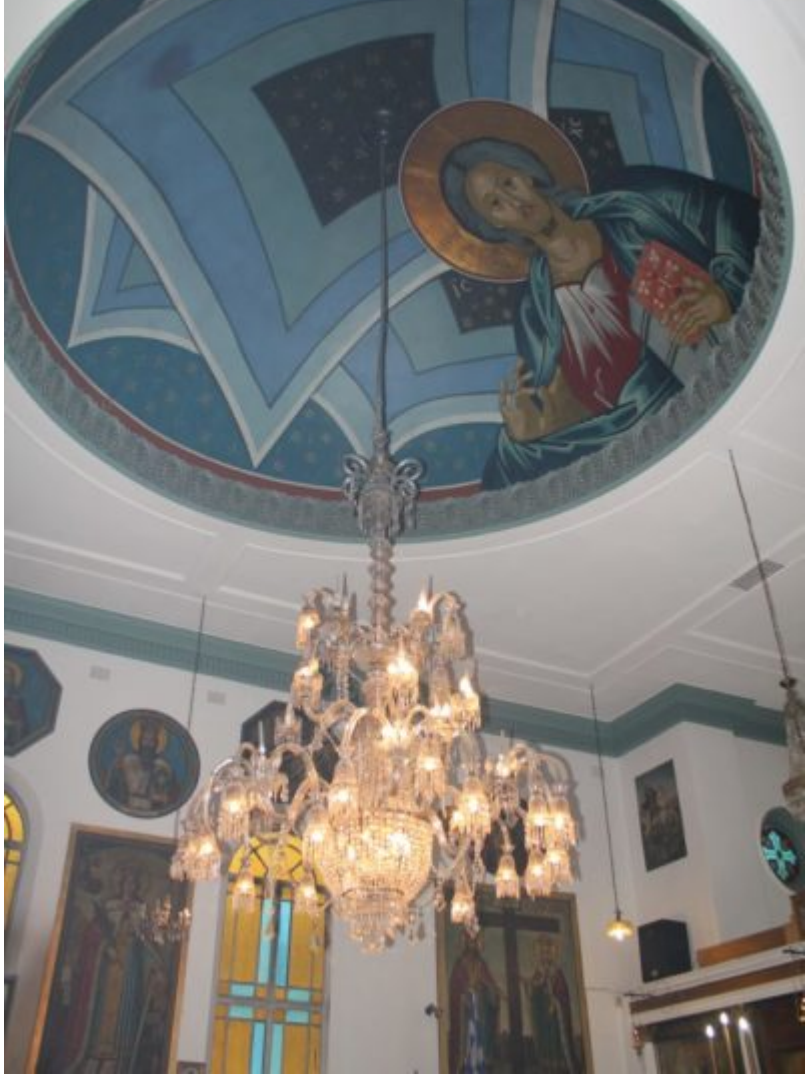

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