

Sydney: Burwood Council commemorates anniversary of the Greek Revolution of 1821



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Burwood Council's initiative has been a great honour for the Greeks for 20 consecutive years

For twenty consecutive years now, the City Hall in the suburb of Burwood (Burwood Council) in Sydney, Australia has continuously honoured the Greeks, Greece and Cyprus on the occasion of the National Anniversary of March 25, 1821. This year's event took place on the evening of Wednesday, 29 March 2023, in the fully decorated "Fitzroy Hall", with Greek and Australian flags, which is located near the Town Hall and a small distance from the local Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Nektarios. The room was modestly full of people, which confirms that the Greek-citizens of the said district of Sydney feel great pride in the ongoing initiative of their City Council and certainly pride in their origin and in the liberation struggles of their ancestors in 1821 against of the Ottoman yoke.

The event began with a warm welcome in Greek and English by the master of ceremonies and Director of the Greek Afternoon and Saturday Schools of Saint Nektarios in Burwood, Mr. Dimitrios Kametopoulos. Mr. Kametopoulos briefly mentioned the importance of the national anniversary of Greece and the program of the celebration that had been prepared by the Burwood Council. Immediately after, a moving dance performance by the dance group Nassibian Dancers followed – a tribute to the 57 lives lost in the most tragic railway accident that had befallen Greece in February, in the area of Tempe, in Thessaly. The performance was choreographed with respect for the victims by the choreographer and active member of Saint Nektarios, Ms. Christina Efthymiadis.

After observing a minute of silence in memory of the victims, the Parish Priest of Saint Nektarios Church, Fr. George Liangas, offered the customary prayer to officially begin the festive program, while the president of the Greek branch of Veterans and Retired Servicemen (RSL), Mr. Peter Tsigounis, followed with the recitation of the "Ode to the Fallen" in Greek and English.

First, the Mayor of Burwood, Mr. John Faker, was invited to address the gathering.

The Lebanese-origin and Maronite Mayor in his short speech, referring to the importance of the struggles for the freedom and independence of the enslaved Greek people, he extolled the Hellenism of his region but also its contribution to multicultural Australia in general, in all areas, including politics, economics, education and medicine.

Afterwards, Mr. Faker praised the pleasing work of the local Greek Orthodox Parish-Community of Saint Nektarios, which has been responding for 51 years to the religious, social and educational needs of the Greeks and non-Greeks of its wider Burwood Council. Mr Faker also expressed his wish that the annual outdoor event-festival of Saint Nektarios, which takes place in the parking lot opposite the Holy Church, every November, on the occasion of the church's feast day (November 9), to be upgraded from the present festival and to turn into one of Sydney's biggest Greek Festivals. In fact, the Mayor said that he would like this Greek Festival to be held on the main commercial street that crosses Burwood, with the ultimate goal of highlighting Greek culture even more in the wider Australian society.

Representing the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Mr. Yannis Mallikourtis, the newly arrived first secretary of the Diplomatic Office of the Consulate General of Sydney, Ms. Anastasia Christofilopoulou, offered a greeting. Ms. Christofilopoulou spoke with words of praise about the Hellenism of Sydney and the state of New South Wales, stressing that she herself has been impressed by the actions of the Hellenic Community in the short time since her arrival in Australia. Also, the diplomatic representative noted that the Greek Consulate General is present to support such initiatives, alongside its purely consular obligations to Greeks and non-Greeks.

Afterwards, Mr. Christos Christogiorgis was invited to the podium, who, apart from being a Greek teacher in the Parish-Community of Saint Nektarios for many decades, serving even today the Greek Schools as a cultural advisor, but also being an active member of the Parish for many years and a former president, he was Mayor of Burwood about twenty years ago, himself laying the "foundation stone" for the organisation of an annual honoring event for Greece and its struggle for freedom. In his speech, in the Greek language, Mr. Christogiorgis referred to the importance of the Revolution of 1821 and how a weak people, the Greeks, managed to shake off the foreign yoke, with the help of the then Greek Diaspora.

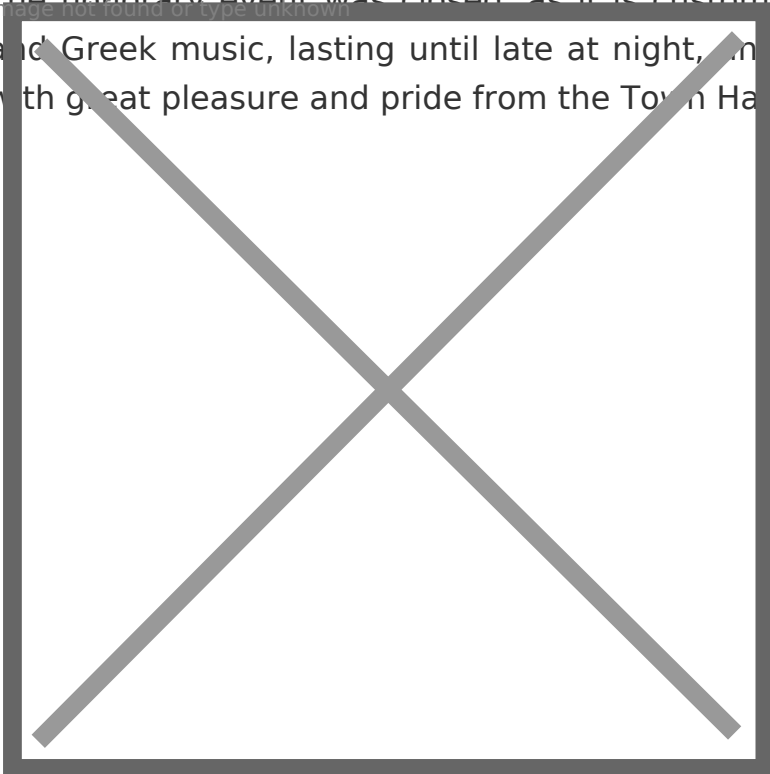
A short greeting in English about the importance of March 25th was also addressed by the teacher Mrs. Eftychia Aronis. Finally, an address was given by the president of the Greek Orthodox Parish-Community of Saint Nektarios, Ms. Penelope Kioussis and Fr. George Liangas, who, among others, heartily thanked those who

contributed to the many months of preparation and holding of the said honorary event.

The program was interspersed with various events, such as poems by students of the Greek Schools for freedom and for '21 and an artistic program of traditional and modern Greek dances by the dance group Nassibian Dancers. Also, the program included religious chants and patriotic Greek songs by the local choir, under the direction of Mr. Christos Christogiorgis, accompanied by the well-known bouzouki master Mr. Anastasios Lambrou.

It should be noted that the event was attended, apart from the aforementioned persons, by several other officials such as Fr. John Kapetas, the Mayor of the neighboring Council of Strathfield, Ms. Karen Pensabene, the vice-president of the Samios Association of Sydney and New South Wales "O Lykourgos", Ms. Theodosia (Soula) Gerasimos, Mrs. Adamantia Tzialla and Christina Mitsopoulou from Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney, the Greek-Australian candidate a few years ago for the mayoral seat of Sydney, Ms. Angeliki Vythoulkas, the recently "world-awarded Greek woman of the year", philologist and artist, Dr. Pipina Elli and other community personalities.

The honorary event was closed, as it is customary every year, with a rich offering and Greek music, lasting until late at night, and with the large audience departing with great pleasure and pride from the Town Hall of Burwood.



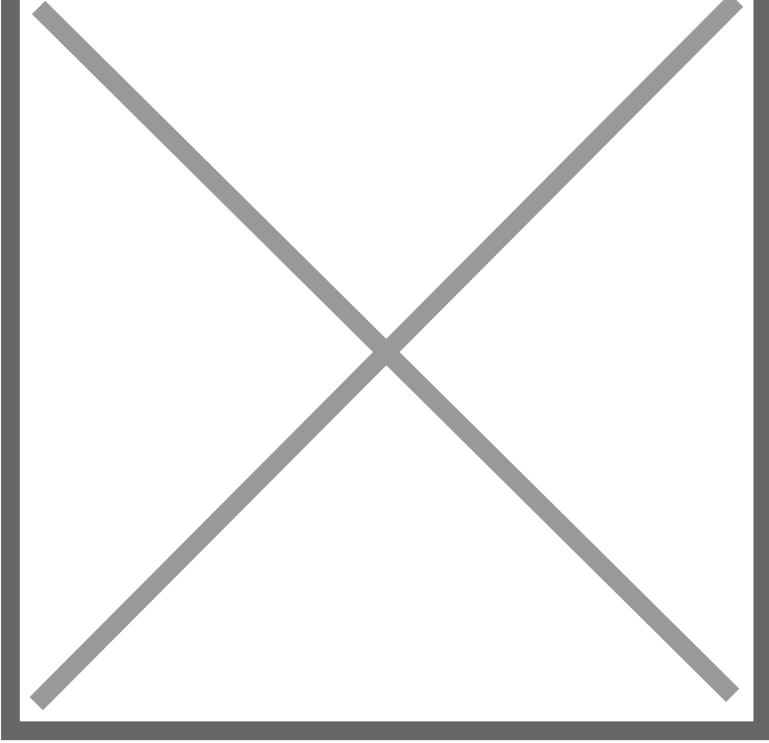






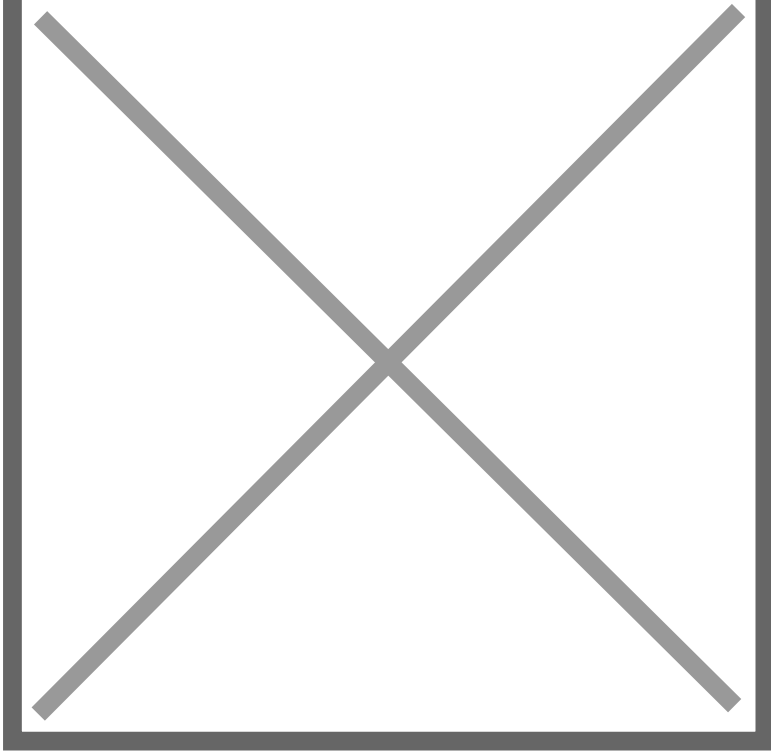








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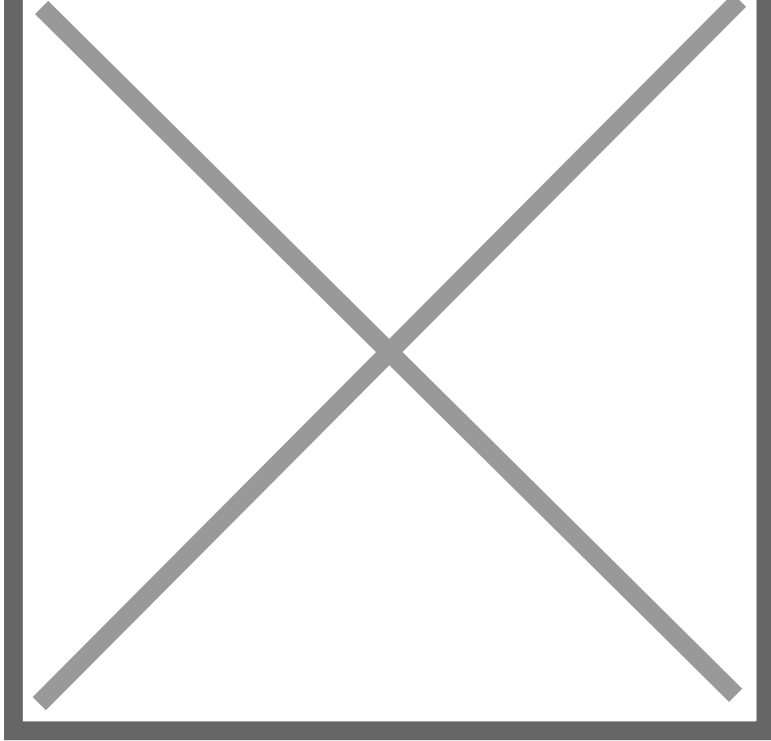
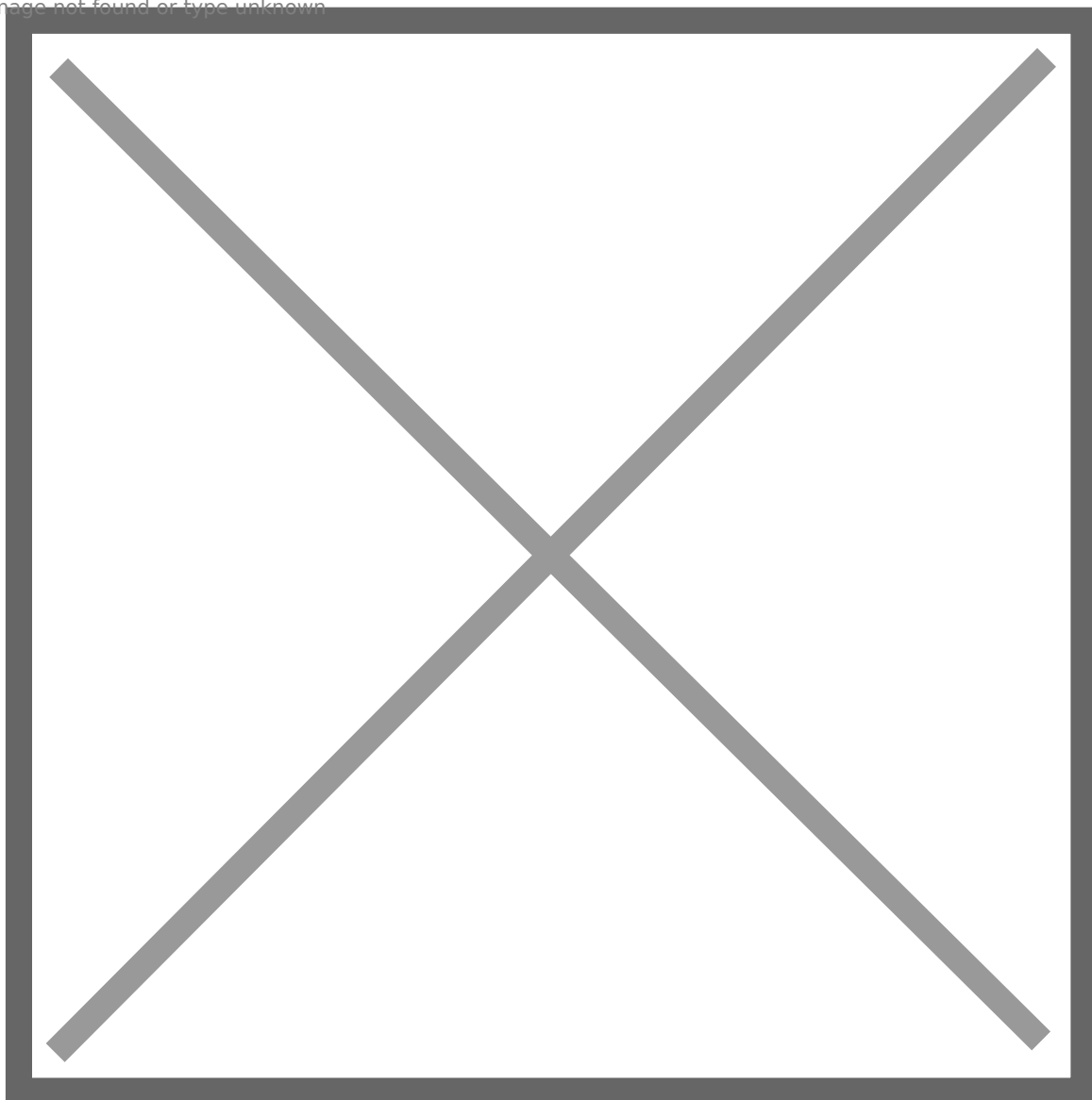


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