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# GREEK TRIBUNE

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## AUSTRALIAN NEWS

### GOCSA follows Government advice on vaccines

The State's peak Greek community body, GOCSA Inc. has issued a statement urging the Greek community members to follow the advice of State health authorities on vaccines.

"The Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia wishes to inform you that our organization is in full compliance with the South Australian Government's vaccination requirements against Covid 19 in relation to the Ridleyton Nursing Home and Social Services for our seniors.

Ridleyton Nursing Home is already closed to all people over the age of 12 who have not received all doses of Covid 19 approved vaccines.

With regard to Community social services for the elderly, all staff, including support staff, volunteers and external collaborators, are already fully vaccinated against Covid 19.

The same policy applies to our Community School teaching staff.

It is noted that all gov-

ernment-funded services must ensure that only fully vaccinated workers, volunteers and external support workers can provide services to vulnerable older people

Vaccination remains the most effective way of protecting against Covid 19 and preventing hospitalization or even death, especially for the elderly.

Under the weight of the new wave of Covid 19 in our State, the Greek Community adds its own voice to that of the Government and calls on those members of the community who have not yet been vaccinated to do so immediately and without further delay. Talk to your local doctor or pharmacist to arrange this.

Let us listen to the advice of medical experts rather than hearsay. Only by shielding ourselves against this deadly virus, through vaccination, will we be able to regain our freedom and return to the normality of our lives and activities. Lets strive to create a culture where we all care for each other".

### State Government recognises GOCSA's 90th anniversary

A proud moment for the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia, amongst other multicultural groups, as it was recognised by the state government for its 90 years of service and contribution to the State of SA.

The Community was presented with a Certificate of Recognition by the Hon Jing Lee, MLC Assistant Minister to the Premier on behalf of the Hon Steven Marshall together with the Chair of SA Multicultural Commission Adriana Christopoulos during a Special Parliament House Afternoon Tea on Wednesday.

The certificate presentation form part of the Government's policy to acknowledge and celebrate significant milestones within the diverse multicultural community of South Australia.

The Afternoon Tea was attended by the President Mr Bill Gonis and Treasurer Mr Peter Gardiakos on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Community of S.A.,

as well as representatives from other communities which also received Certificates of Recognition.

Mr Gonis said he was pleasantly surprised but felt particularly honoured to be presented with the Certificate explaining that it's a big yet rewarding responsibility to represent a Community such as the Greek community.

"I was taken a bit by surprise when I was called up to receive the Certificate from the Minister's hands but then immediately thought that we have been around as an active Community for over 90 years and is a reflection of the hard work from past members & leaders in our community so this is well deserved," said Mr Gonis.

A number of other communities have made their contribution to the multicultural character and fabric of the State in the last few decades and the Greek Orthodox Community feels proud for being one of the oldest and most active in South Australia.

## UNPRECEDENTED DEVELOPMENTS Covid surge in SA

Covid 19 continues to surge in South Australia breaking one record after the other, prompting authorities to announce the reintroduction of tougher social distancing measures at hospitality venues and for home gatherings ahead of New Year's celebrations.

On Monday, South Australia reported 3,246 new cases of COVID-19. Amongst those, are the Leader of the Opposition Peter Malinauskas and the SA Police Commissioner Grant Stevens. The number of people in hospital has risen to about 100.

New restrictions were introduced last week, with density requirements at cafes and restaurants reduced to one person per 4 square metres indoors, and one person per 2 sq. metres outdoors.

"The public health and social measures are to give ourselves time," Professor Spurrier said.

"The reason for having some more public health and social measures ... is to try and slow down

the spread, to try and slow down the number of people who will need to come into hospital."

Home gathering caps will shrink from 30 people to 10 people, while the government has asked South Australians to work from home and reduce travel around the state.

"We are increasingly concerned about the new Omicron variant," SA Premier Steven Marshall said.

"It will overwhelm our health system and seriously undermine our workforce's ability to respond to this Omicron outbreak.

"If we don't take decisive action now, we could see South Australia in the thousands of daily cases within the next couple of weeks.

"We're sending a very strong message to all South Australians now: please, reduce your mobility, reduce the number of people you interact with."

While the percentage of fully vaccinated citizens reaches 90% the percentage in ethnic groups, e.g. in the Greek

community is said to be lower. We should also add that, as Prime Minister Masial said yesterday, the government will soon impose a mandatory third installment on health workers. According to experts, the number of cases will double every four to five days for the next few weeks.

"We will be removing the need for people coming in from interstate to South Australia to have that PCR test within 72 hours of departure," Mr Marshall said.

Mr Marshall said the priority must now be screening people with symptoms of COVID-19.

"We are going to ask those people travelling back from interstate to make sure that they use one of the rapid antigen tests ... on arrival into South Australia," he said.

The Australian Midwifery and Nursing Federation's SA branch today said unless urgent action was taken, the situation could significantly deteriorate in the coming

days. "Given that all their arrangements were predicated on much lower numbers, there is a very real and present risk of the situation worsening in a very short amount of time," CEO Elizabeth Dabars said.

"When the borders were opened, the residential aged care sector actually asked for 100 days of grace before those borders were opened.

Case numbers have nothing to do with reopening, the Premier insists. "Well in excess" of 80 per cent of the new cases are Omicron cases, the Premier said.

The SA Opposition Shadow Treasurer Stephen Mullighan called for compensation for hospitality businesses impacted by extended restrictions.

Speaking on ABC radio last week, South Australia's Premier Steven Marshall has promised businesses will receive a financial compensation package this week

### Aged care home in staff shortage amid COVID-19 outbreak

An aged care home in Adelaide's north-eastern suburbs was urgently seeking staff over the holidays as 22 residents test positive for COVID-19 and paramedics are called in to work at the facility.

It comes on Christmas day as SA Health reports constantly increasing number of new COVID-19 cases. Twelve of those affected, were in hospital — four of whom were in intensive care.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation SA Branch posted a job advertisement for Bene Italian Village in St Agnes, saying the COVID-19 outbreak had forced many of the facility's workers into isolation.

According to the ABC, "the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation has received an urgent appeal from Bene Aged Care ... who are in dire need of staff due to a COVID-19 outbreak," the advertisement read.

"They are in desperate need of registered nurses, enrolled nurses and care workers to cover shifts over this holiday period."

The facility will pay all workers 25 per cent above their enterprise bargain rates, after securing assistance from the Department for Health and Wellbeing.

Nursing staff who are interested in helping have been asked to urgently apply.



Photo of a recent line up of people to get tested for COVID-19 at Adelaide Airport (ABC photo)

The call-out came 10 days after SA Health confirmed two healthcare workers who tested positive to COVID-19 had visited at least 22 aged care facilities across Adelaide's suburbs.

It is not clear if Bene Italian Village was one of those sites.

Meanwhile, the state's Ambulance Employee Association (AEA) said paramedics

were called to fill in for staff at the facility on Christmas Eve, and have been asked to help again on Christmas night.

AEA SA industrial officer Josh Karpowicz said the "urgent plea for assistance was completely unprecedented. There's never before been a time where paramedics have been requested to assist with nursing duties," Mr Karpowicz said.

### GOCSA demands return of Sculptures

The Greek Orthodox Community of SA held its annual General Meeting last month at the Olympic Hall. The GOCSA Executive reported to the members on the activity of the Association and presented financial reports on the business activity of the organisation particularly the Ridleyton Greek Home for the Aged.

At the closing of the AGM, a resolution was passed unanimously by the members in support of the Greek Government's efforts for the return of the Parthenon Sculptures to Greece. There is a detailed article on page 9 which gives the history and explains the issues on the sculptures.

The resolution adopted by the GOCSA AGM reads as follows:

"Two hundred years have passed since the sculptures of the Parthenon were taken away from their rightful place to be carried and placed in the British Museum.

Millions of people visit the Greek treasures in the UK paying

## Community Life



The members of the Greek Orthodox Community of SA at the annual AGM of the association, voted unanimously in support for the return of the Parthenon Sculptures to their country of origin, Greece.

an entry fee, which means a lot of money has been collected all these years to end up in the treasuries of Britain.

We believe that we have waited quite long enough for the Greek sculptures to be returned to where they belong.

A story that has been repeated in history so many times, a story about conquerors

- trespassers and looters who did not respect the cultural heritage of a people to whom this is an "ancestral heritage". Which is not an individual property but of an entire people. Who must enjoy respect and international protection, recognition and preservation and must be returned to where they belong: To the Greek people!

The Annual General Meeting of the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia convened on 28 November 2021, knowing what the historical reality is, insists that the time has come - and out of principal - for Britain to show the required understanding and accept the just request of Greece, of the Greek people and their respective governments to return the sculptures of the Parthenon to their rightful place, in Greece, where they were made and placed by the first highly-skilled sculptors three thousand years ago.

At the same time, the members of the Community express their full and unwavering support towards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of our first homeland that promotes this issue until absolute and complete justice is served. We are and will remain in solidarity with Greece until the final vindication".

The resolution was sent to the Greek Government and Parliament, the British Government and the United Nations.

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## Cultural, social and political events in South Australia

Contact: Harri on 0484 387 818 - or email your community's news or a photo: info@greektribune.com.au

### PANRHODIAN SOCIETY COLOSSUS HOSTS CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The Pan-Rhodian Society of South Australian held its annual Christmas lunch at the "Colossus" hall on Henley Beach Road.

The lunch was well attended by more than one hundred people who enjoyed the hospitality and the good food of the association. Santa Claus was also present and Christmas/New Year's carols were sung by the group's choir.

In the picture the outgoing President of the Association Philip Frangoulis and the committee pose for a photo for the Greek Tribune. A new committee, elected by the members of the group last month, is due to take the reins of the association in mid-January.



## Dezzi's art work dedicated to her pappou wins first prize!

On Monday 22 November 2021 Dezzi Tsoukalas received first prize in the 14-18 Years Art section in the Children's Week competition of The Ethnic School Association of South Australia Inc.

Dezzi's art work, titled "Antio Pappou" (Goodbye Grandpa) was dedicated to her late grandfather John Tsoukalas who passed away in April 2021.

John was born in Antirrhion Nafaktias, Greece and migrated to Australia and settled in Port Pirie in 1956.

He married Joan in 1960 and together they raised 3 children.

John was blessed with 8 grandchildren.

Dezzi Tsoukalas is a student of the Greek Orthodox Community of SA Greek afternoon school.



## The United Nations urge Britain to return Parthenon sculptures to their place of origin

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has taken an important step further from a recommendation by passing a decision urging the return of the Parthenon sculptures from the British Museum, Greece's culture minister said on Thursday.

"Together with the recommendation that was issued - referring to the poor conditions of exposure that the sculptures are kept in at the British Museum - there was also a decision from the Intergovernmental Committee that pertains specifically to the return of the Parthenon sculptures," Lina Mendoni said a day after the 22nd session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property (ICPRCP) ended in Paris.

"The committee urgently calls on the United Kingdom to review its position and enter into a discussion with Greece, recognizing that the issue is of an intergovernmental nature - in contrast to claims from the British side that it is a matter for the British Museum - and mainly that Greece has a valid and legal claim to demand the return of the sculptures to their place of birth," Mendoni added, describing the decision as a "particularly significant development."

Greece's petition to have the splendid marble sculptures reunited with the other surviving artifacts from the ancient citadel at the Acropolis Museum has

gained additional urgency in the wake of reports of water leaks and mold at the gallery where they are kept in the British Museum.

### The history behind the sculptures

The Parthenon temple sits on top of the Acropolis of Athens, the two-thousand-year-old fortress above the Greek city.

Built between 447 and 432 BC, the temple is one of the most iconic buildings on earth, once used as a church, a mosque, a treasury and an ammunition store.

Centuries ago, the Parthenon featured breathtaking sculptures of gods, goddesses and the battle between Centaurs and Lapiths at the marriage-feast of Peirithoos - all hand-etched from solid marble.

But today, when you step beyond the columns, they're nowhere to be seen.

That's because Thomas Bruce, the 7th Earl of Elgin and the British ambassador to Turkey, made a dubious deal with the Ottoman Empire, which occupied Greece at the time.

Then, between 1801 and 1812, he had many of the sculptures removed and shipped off to Britain.

### "It is simply a lie"

In 2011, the Greek government approached Geoffrey Robertson about the return of the marbles.

The Australian-born human



rights lawyer is now based in the UK and he has a very clear view about the future of the marbles.

"Diplomacy is futile," he says. "The only way that the marbles will ever come back is to have the judgment of the International Court of Justice."

He believes it would be better to bypass the British courts and go straight to the United Nations.

"I thought the principle that cultural heritage, that [items that] had been wrongfully acquired should be returned, would be upheld by the International Court of Justice, if you could get there."

Robertson says that Elgin did not have permission to take the marbles.

"They were stolen by Elgin. He [paid] massive bribes to the Turkish commanders, who just turned a blind eye while they were ripped off," he says.

It has long been believed that Elgin secured a firman or

a permit from the head of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan, which entitled him to take the marbles.

But Robertson says there never was a firman. He says copies of all firmans were kept and they have been searched, to no avail.

"All Elgin could produce to justify his claim of ownership was a letter that had been written by an official at the port to the Ottoman government to the governor of Athens," he says.

"It didn't give him any rights other than to enter [the temple] and [sketch] and to pick up stones on the ground."

The legality of the British Museum's claim on the marbles is based on this paperwork but the original document has never been found.

"The Sultan never signed anything," says Robertson.

"This has been claimed but it's simply a lie."

## Seasons Greetings from PM Scott Morrison

This year more than most, we are reminded of what we are truly thankful for. Each other.

There are six families in Devonport in northern Tasmania, from the Hillcrest Primary School this Christmas, who are completely devastated and our thoughts are with them. Everything they cherished in life was taken from them in a terrible instant. It's unimaginable, and so our hearts break for them. And this Christmas we'll shed a tear and raise up prayers for them, I believe right across the country, for them that they might find some measure of comfort in this hour of their terrible grief.

As they grieve, many Australians will be gathering together for the first time this Christmas in a long time, but sadly not all. Others will be on their own, still. Others are always on their own at this time of year, and it's a very lonely time. Others will be missing a loved one for the first time, who is no longer around the Christmas table. We're thinking of you also.

This pandemic, it continues to buffet us, the Omicron variant is just the latest challenge that we have faced. But together, always together and only together, do we keep pushing through.

At the end of this year, of course, we can think of the many difficult times we've had and the losses that people have incurred. But Christmas, you know, is a time of hope and we are an optimistic people. And whatever comes our way, we back ourselves to overcome and to push through, as we have during the course of this pandemic, saving lives and livelihoods like few other countries in the world.

That is our quiet confidence as Australians, driven by the love we have for those around us and the way of life that we value so much and enjoy here in Australia, that we're able to lead and aspire to in our wonderful country.

I'm so grateful for Australia. To be an Australian. And for my fellow Australians.

I could want for no greater gift than the spirit

of the Australian people that's been on display, that have inspired and endured and cared and shown great courage.

Even now, so many selfless Australians are out there caring for others this Christmas, working and volunteering to keep Australians safe and showing their fellow Australians that they matter, that they are valued and that they are cared for.

They are driving trucks, delivering critical supplies, they're giving us our booster shots and doing our COVID tests. They're working in emergency departments, they're volunteering in homeless shelters. They're standing ready to respond to the many natural disasters that sadly we so often face this time of year and fires and floods and terrible storms that we've only recently just experienced. They're patrolling our beaches. They're serving overseas in our national interest.

And I particularly want to acknowledge our Australian Federal Police and the Australian Defence Forces, who are on deployment in the Solomon Islands right now and the many others serving in so many other parts of the world. I want to say thank you to all of those selfless Australians. May God especially bless you and your families this Christmas, especially if you're apart.

May all those who need a refreshing after what has been a difficult year, by just having a good long laugh out loud, round that Christmas table with friends and family, may you find it. May those who have been alone this year experience the warmth of companionship this Christmas.

May those of us who have faith find great encouragement as we reflect on God's great gift to us and his son, Jesus Christ. And may all of us experience something of the joy and the wonder of Christmas, especially our children. Jen and I wish you from our family to yours, a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in 2022. Merry Christmas Australia and God Bless.

## Pope blasts 'shipwreck of civilisation' on Lesbos migrant camp visit

Pope Francis returned in December to the Greek island of Lesbos to offer comfort to migrants at a refugee camp.

He blasted what he said was the indifference and self-interest shown by Europe "that condemns to death those on the fringes."

"Please, let us stop this shipwreck of civilisation!" Francis said at the Mavrovouni camp, a cluster of white UN containers on the edge of the sea lined by barbed wire fencing and draped with laundry hanging from lines.

Arriving at the camp, a maskless Francis took his time walking along the barricades, patting children and babies on the head

and posing for selfies.

It was Francis' second trip to Lesbos in five years and he lamented that little had changed since 2016, when Lesbos was at the heart of a massive wave of migration to Europe.

At the time, Francis brought 12 Syrian Muslim refugees home with him aboard the papal plane.

But no such papal transfers were announced this time around, though during the first leg of Francis' trip in Cyprus, the Vatican announced 12 migrants who had crossed over from the Turkish occupied territory in the north would be relocated to Italy in the coming weeks. Cypriot officials said a total of 50 would eventually be sent.