



May 2022

# GREEK TRIBUNE

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## AUSTRALIAN NEWS

### A tribute to Mikis Theodorakis

Regarded as the greatest composer in Greek history, Mikis Theodorakis used his artform to express the inexpressible, galvanising an entire nation when penning the film score to Zorba the Greek, along with countless other rousing symphonies and ballads.

The work by Mikis Theodorakis "The Ballad of the Dead Brother" and his greatest hits will be presented in concerts around Australia.

"The Ballad of the Dead Brother" like a modern tragedy is placed in the most tragic period of Modern Greek history. Based in the 1940s a battle for independence gradually escalated into a civil war, it becomes the basis of a great tragedy.

The composer himself has said:

"With the Ballad of the Dead Brother, I identify myself more than any other piece of my work, in all aspects: musical, humane, personal, activism, and above all "Greek", because the civil war immersed Greece in tears, blood and an everlasting struggle."

This ballad has

been performed in Greece by four of the most important voices, Grigoris Bithikotsis, Giorgos Dalaras, Dimitris Mitropanos and Dimitris Basis.

It is our pledge to honour the memory of Mikis Theodorakis, the man who not only composed the work of great poets but managed to recreate it in such a way that it reaches our souls.

In Australia it will be performed by international vocalist Dimitris Basis accompanied by the symphonic orchestra under the direction of George Ellis and special appearance by performer Maria Yiakoulis:

Melbourne: Friday 6th May 2022 - Melbourne Recital Hall - (03) 9699 3333

Perth: Friday 7th May 2022 - Perth Concert Hall - (08) 9231 9999

Sydney Sunday 15th May 2022 - Sydney Recital Hall - (02) 8256 2222

Adelaide Friday 20th May 2022 - Adelaide Town Hall - (08) 8231 4307

Brisbane: Friday 27th May 2022 - Queensland Performance Arts Centre - 136 246

### Minimum wage is being introduced for Fruit pickers

Farmers say supermarkets must pay sustainable prices for fresh fruit and vegetables and ensure it is produced by reputable growers as major changes are made to the way Australia's fruit pickers are paid.

From April 28, changes to the Horticulture Award mean that farm workers typically paid according to how much produce they pick or pack must be guaranteed a minimum hourly rate.

Workers can still be paid the piece rate, according to their productivity.

The average competent worker must be allowed to earn 15 per cent above the minimum, almost \$30 per hour.

The changes were announced by the Fair Work Commission following a successful appeal led by the Australian Workers' Union (AWU).

When the Fair Work Commission decided the piece rate system was not working, Australia's Agriculture Minister David Littleproud suggested any changes could drive up

the price of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The Victorian Farmers Federation president Emma Germano said the changes to the Horticulture Award "Labor costs are the highest part of the production cost and can usually be up to 60 per cent of the gross farm receipts on farm," Ms Germano said.

"I don't think there's any question that this is going to have an impact on prices."

The piece rate is commonly paid for workers in crops that cannot be mechanically harvested, including citrus, cherries, apples, and berries.

The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance's CEO Michael Rogers said there must be better policing of the way workers were paid.

"We have a very strong position that anyone who does not pay people properly and treat workers fairly needs to leave the industry," Mr Rogers said.

Mr Rogers said changes to the Horticulture Award would cause some businesses to restructure.

## GREEK COMMUNITY TRIBUNE

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## AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL ELECTION

# PM calls election on May 21

Australians will get to decide who leads the country for the next three years when they go to the polls in a federal election on May 21.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison locked the date on 10 April after visiting the Governor-General in Canberra.

Speaking to the ABC, Mr Morrison said he did not think his government was "perfect" but that the public would judge it on what it had done over the last term.

"Our government is not perfect — we've never claimed to be, but we are up-front and you may see some flaws but you can also see what we have achieved for Australia in incredibly difficult times," he said.

"You can see our plan. Our plan will deliver more and better jobs and the lowest unemployment seen in some 50 years."

Mr Morrison said voters would face a choice when they walked into the voting booth.

He urged them to stick with a government they knew amid uncertain times, listing war in Ukraine, a deadly pandemic and an economy recovering from recession as the biggest issues Australia was facing.

Labor's platform centres on policies like lifting childcare subsidies, placing more nurses in aged care homes, and providing nearly half a million fee-free TAFE places.



Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Leader of the Opposition Anthony Albanese

"Australians deserve better," Mr Albanese said.

"This government doesn't have an agenda for today, let alone a vision for tomorrow. They demonstrated that in their budget, which was nothing more than a ploy for an election campaign."

With four weeks remaining in the campaign, Anthony Albanese had to go into isolation after testing positive with Covid 19.

Labor appears to have lost ground in the opening week of the federal elec-

tion campaign according to the latest Guardian Essential poll, but a majority of respondents still think Anthony Albanese will be Australia's next prime minister.

In the latest survey, the Coalition's primary vote is 37%, Labor 35%, the Greens 9%, One Nation 3%, independents and others 5% and United Australia party 4%, with 7% of respondents still undecided.

The Coalition is seeking its fourth term in office, while Mr Albanese hopes to return Labor to government for the first time since 2013.

## SA Liberals elect David Speirs as their new Leader

Former South Australian environment minister David Speirs has promised to "rebuild the Liberal Party," after being elected its new leader at a joint partyroom meeting this morning.

Mr Speirs has replaced former premier Steven Marshall, who resigned as party leader after last month's state election loss.

"It is an honour to be elected as the leader of the South Australian Liberal Party and I look forward to immediately getting to work and developing a new vision for this great state," Mr Speirs said.

"We represent a fresh, diverse, unified team which will rebuild the Liberal Party, will cast an alternative vision for the state of South Australia, and will provide a fresh

approach to what leadership looks like — not just in our party, but in our state."

Former education minister John Gardner has been elected Deputy Leader.

### Former Deputy Premier Vickie Chapman to quit

Voters in Adelaide's eastern suburbs will go to the polls for a third time in just a few months, with former deputy premier Vickie Chapman set to quit politics.

Ms Chapman told colleagues of her plan to quit on the same day they met to elect former environment minister David Speirs as the party's new leader.

Ms Chapman is taking leave interstate and was a notable

absentee from the leadership ballot.

Mr Speirs said he did not believe the timing of her decision was personal.

"I've never had a cross word with Vickie," he said.

"We've obviously had policy discussions behind the closed doors of cabinet where we haven't necessarily been on the same page but those would be few and far between."

He said he was "sad to see her go".

"I respect that decision but we must move forward and try and heal any divisions that do remain in the party," he said.

According to the ABC network, Ms Chapman will not formally



New Liberal Leader David Speirs

tender her resignation until after parliament resumes on May 3, meaning a by-election in her safe seat of Bragg cannot be held on the same day as the federal election on May 21.

## Greek community celebrates Easter

Following the 40-day Easter Lent of the Orthodox Calendar, thousands of Hellenes across Adelaide celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus Christ in what constitutes the most important religious celebration in all of Christendom.

The Greek Orthodox Community's churches commenced the Easter services on Palm Sunday as Holy Week marked the beginning of the Passion of Christ.

According to an announcement from the GOCSA, all the Community's churches reached beyond full capacity in the days leading to Easter Saturday as its members made their way to pray for peace, prosperity and good health.

"Following the tradition, women of all ages gathered at each of our churches on Thursday to help decorate the Tomb of Christ 'Epitaphio' as well as prepare the church for Good Friday.

"Black and purple ribbons

## Community Life



Members of the Greek Orthodox Community SA, celebrating the Resurrection of Christ at the Franklin street Cathedral on Saturday midnight

ran across the churches' interior reflecting the mourning atmosphere for the Passion of Christ, while the morning services on Thursday and Saturday drew thousands of parishioners who came to receive the Holy Communion.

"Continuing on Good Friday, the Tomb of Christ dominated in every church with thousands

attending the Royal Hours service and the litany of the Tomb of Christ reminding churchgoers the sacrifice He made for humanity".

Byzantine hymns were chanted around the Tomb and at around 9.00pm the church procession of the 'Epitaphio' made its way out and around the block, with thousands of people

following its course.

The list of official guests who attended the 'Epitafio' procession on Good Friday and Holy Saturday at the Community's churches included Minister for Multicultural Affairs Zoe Bettison, Lord Mayor Sandy Verchoor, Maria Maglieri on behalf of SAMEAC Chair Andriana Christopoulos, Mayor for Charles Sturt Angela Evans Mayor for West Torrens Michael Coxon, Jayne Stinson MP and many more.

The celebrations peaked on Easter Saturday with the traditional midnight mass as thousands of the Community's members flocked to church to attend the Resurrection Ceremony and to receive the Eternal Light. At midnight, priests sang out "Christ has Risen", marking the end of the Passion and making the joyful announcement of Christ's resurrection.

It's worth mentioning that the Cathedral of Archangels & Gabriel hosted as per every other year the special Service of Love, conducted later in the evening.



## 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



At the reception given by GOCSA at the Olympic Hall for the 25th March in honour of the Greek Revolution of 1821, special guests were the Member for Adelaide Steve Georganas, Dr Rachel Swift, Liberal Candidate for Boothby, Representing the Liberal Party, Deputy Mayor of Adelaide Mary Couros, Ms Adriana Christopoulos Chair of SAMEAC and her partner and Greek Consul General George Psiachas



Vice President of GOCSA Con Papaconstantinou, General Secretary Peter Ppiros, Treasurer Peter Gardiakos, Supervisory Chair Manuel Koutelas, Councillors Eleni Glaros, Eleni Mermingis and Dimitra Psarros at the celebration for the 25th of March.



Dr Alfred Vincent and his partner Valda with Deputy Mayor Mary Couros, and Ms Adriana Christopoulos Chair of SAMEAC at the 25th March Reception

## Nick Xenophon attempts come back to Senate

After almost a four year absence from politics Nick Xenophon is attempting a come back to the Senate at the May 21 Federal election. His slogan is "I give a damn" And he is focusing on key issues including Aged Care, Health, the environment, housing affordability and gambling.



Because he is running as an independent his name won't be above the line, but people can still vote for him above the line on the large white Senate ballot paper. On Friday he was allocated the letter 'O', And he admits that one of his biggest challenges will be to get the message across that people can vote for him easily above the line even though his name is it next to the letter 'O'.

"Because I'm in the political centre, and because I'm running in the Senate, my plea to traditional Liberal and Labor voters is to vote how they wish in the lower house-the smaller green ballot paper - and to vote for me in the Senate, on the big white ballot paper.

One of the policies that Mr Xenophon is pushing for is for age pensioners to be able to earn as much as they wish from working - if they want to do some work on the side- without being penalised. Under current rules, an age pensioner earning

more than \$150 a week is penalised with a reduction of \$.50 in the dollar after that amount which discourage is pensioners from working. In New Zealand, pensioners can work as much as they want without their pension being affected.

"This is a long overdue policy change. A recent survey carried out by the peak group National Seniors Australia found that up to 500,000 age pensioners around the country would consider working to supplement their incomes if the rules were changed and they were not penalised so much."

Nick also pledged that he would work with both the state and federal governments to get the best possible results for South Australia. "As an independent, if I'm elected, my role will be to squeeze the best deal for South Australia and its citizens".

## Thoughts and Questions on the Future of Modern Greek in Australia

### A speech by Dr Alfred Vincent\* at a formal Reception by the Greek Orthodox Community of SA on the occasion of Greek Independence Day On 25 March 2022.

It is a great honour to be invited to this offering of tribute to the men and women who dedicated their lives and their resources to the liberation of Greece. As an educator and now an observer and researcher, my particular way of honouring the creators of the Greek state is to move mentally from the past to the present and the future, and from Europe to Australia, and to ponder on what we ourselves can offer to Greece, and in particular to the Greek language and its rich culture. What I can do is to share some thoughts, mainly questions, about the situation of Greek in Australia.

In recent years the teaching and learning of Greek has been in decline. In NSW the number of students taking Modern Greek at HSC has plummeted and university teaching positions have been lost. In Melbourne the university departments of Modern Greek at Melbourne University and Monash have been annihilated; the one remaining, La Trobe, has had a reprieve thanks to Greek community support, but its position is still precarious. And then there is Covid: as early as June 2020 Iakovos Garivaldis wrote in the newspaper Neos Kosmos about the disastrous effects lockdowns and online learning were having for the teaching of Greek. I do not have details about the position in South Australia, though I do know that the excellent department at Flinders University has been seriously reduced. Even if the decline has not been as dramatic as elsewhere, I'm afraid the crunch is bound to come.

It is important to understand that the problem is not peculiar to Greek. It applies to all languages. Australia as a whole does not take the teaching of languages other than English very seriously. Language learning has been declining quantitatively over many years. Our education systems give less time to languages than other economically advanced countries. NSW, incidentally, is worse than other states. The EU, by

contrast, has a language policy, one of the objectives of which is "that every European citizen should master two languages in addition to their mother tongue". The Commission proposed in 2017 that this should be the norm by 2025. Some countries have already got close to achieving this goal.

Australia seems to have been affected by language complacency: English is the world language, so why bother to learn any other? This is of course an incredibly superficial attitude, but it seems to be deeply ingrained. And in Australia it's not restricted to people of English-speaking background. No community is isolated from this mentality. No community is a bubble. Even if a child goes to a Greek pre-school and then to Greek day schools, and speaks Greek at home, he or she will still be deeply affected by dominant attitudes, for example through social media and the general social environment.

This attitude can only be turned around by a profound change, which I believe would need to be enshrined in a new national languages policy. Different language communities need to get together and lobby for it, together with non-community-based educationists who know the value of a genuine multilingualism and multiculturalism.

Is such change even possible? I don't know. But it may be worth aiming at. Let us not forget the 1970s, when Australia was transformed over a few years from being a monocultural country to one that embraced and supported multiple languages and cultures. Some of the achievements of that period, such as SBS, are still with us.

There are some valuable ideas on the situation and future of Modern Greek in Australia in the recent book by Joseph Lo Bianco, published by the Australian Council for Educational Research. Lo Bianco focuses particularly on Victoria, since his research was commissioned by the teachers of Modern Greek in that state. Nonetheless his work has a wider relevance too, and not only for Modern Greek.

Here's a situation which some of you may recognise from your own experience. A few days ago, I was talking in Sydney

to a former student, who had been looking after her four-year-old nephew, we'll call him Nicholas. Her parents had come out from Greece after the war and had prospered through hard work. Our friend and her siblings are all university educated; they have an unusually good knowledge of Greek and take part in Greek cultural activities, although they use English among themselves. Nicholas is extremely bright. He understands Greek to some extent, speaks a little, and sometimes asks how to say things. But he only speaks Greek with his grandparents; he's reluctant to speak it with anyone else. He says things like: "Mama, speak English! Only yiayia and papou can speak Greek to me!"

On hearing this I began to ask myself some questions. In ten years time, as a teenager, what will be Nicholas' relationship to Greek language and culture? Our friends would like him to learn to speak well and to value his cultural heritage, but what can they do to help him to want that? If he doesn't want to learn Greek, if he sees it as a pointless chore, then he'll either reject it completely or he won't make a good job of it.

And in ten more years, when he's an adult of 24 and the grandparents are probably no longer around, what will be his attitude then? In what if any situations will he still be using Greek? What would attract Nicholas to be actively involved in Greek cultural activities?

This is not a completely new problem. But what may be new about Nicholas' case is that the very limited situations in which he uses Greek will probably no longer exist in ten or twenty years. If present trends continue, there will be very few people around who will use Greek regularly as native speakers. It is true that new immigrants have arrived in Australia since the Global Financial Crisis, but they are few in comparison to the post-war wave of immigration.

Of course, there are many different routes to knowledge and commitment. Last week I was talking with another friend, a young man of 32, we'll call him George, who has a good knowledge of Greek and has become passionately involved with Greek cultural and community affairs. I was surprised to learn that he didn't speak a lot of Greek

as a child; his mother's native language was actually Spanish. At secondary level he might have considered studying Greek, only it was not offered at his high school. He came to it, he says, as a mature student of 25, taking courses at university and spending some time in Greece. When I asked him what triggered his commitment to Greek language and culture, he said it was through volunteering for Sydney Olympic football club. Many of the fans were older Greeks, and he wanted to communicate with them more effectively. So that was the trigger; later he found other benefits from his knowledge of Greek.

But the issues we saw with Nicholas are not irrelevant to George. When he and his Greek-Australian wife have children, they will want them to learn Greek and participate in Greek culture. But the situation with Greek will have changed by the time their kids are teenagers. Even Sydney Olympic will be far less Greek-speaking than in George's day. So how will they ensure that their kids will be motivated to devote time and effort to learning? What kind of trigger will be effective for them?

These and similar conversations have led me to formulate more questions which I would like to share with you. In my imagination, I try to move myself ten years forward to 2032. And I ask myself, what will then be the position of Greek in Australia? What position would I like it to have? Will it be sufficient for kids to learn a little bit of Greek, or should we aim for more? Realistically, what will be the domains, the areas of our lives, in which Greek will be spoken? Where and how will it be learned? What will be the motivation for people to learn it? What policies and programmes might help to achieve the desired results? For Nicholas' relationship to Greek in 2032 will be affected by decisions made in 2022. And a decision to do nothing is still a decision. I then might try to ask the same questions for 2042, when Nicholas will be a young adult and George's children will probably be in high school.

To answer these questions, a basic prerequisite is to have an accurate picture of the present position of Greek in each state, and of attitudes towards it. How much Greek are kids really learning?

How are they using their Greek? Do they regard it as a language you speak only to grandparents and to teachers?

These are not simply academic exercises. If I was a member of a Greek community I would be trying to get Greek organisations to debate them actively and to formulate policies appropriate to the present times. There is a lot that can be done. Opportunities for the use of Greek by people of all ages can be created and maintained. Available funds can be carefully invested in appropriate projects. Governments can be lobbied on matters of language policy and education.

It could be an exciting debate. Electronic media have opened up vast new opportunities for language learning and cultural participation. In the future we can expect even more surprising developments.

I will end by quoting from a report by Dr Michelle Kohler of Flinders University, published in 2017. At the end of the study she concludes:

"[...] there is a mood in many areas of the nation for change and to reimagine languages education in light of the nature of the modern world, of contemporary understandings and innovations. There is an opportunity in the South Australian context to take a bold stance and to become a national/international leader in this area; however [...] this will require a new vision and a long-term commitment to realising and supporting it into the future."

Alfred Vincent  
(alfred.vincent@bigpond.com)

\* Alfred Vincent graduated in Classics in the UK and did his PhD there on a Modern Greek topic. He was the first lecturer in Modern Greek studies at the University of Sydney. After retiring from that position in 1998 he spent two semesters as a Visiting Professor at the University of Crete, which awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in 2002. For many years he has been a member of the committees of the Greek Festival of Sydney and the Greek Film Festival in NSW. In 2012 Alfred was made an Honorary Member of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW. He continues to research and write on Greek topics.