THE KYTHERIAN ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND

Strong Bonds & Shared Heritage

NEWSLETTER – AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2026



Monastery of Panagia Myrtidiotissa
Photo Credit – John Stavrou

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CAN'T WAIT!

2026 KYTHERIAN BALL – GODS AND GODDESSES GALA

The **2026 Kytherian Ball is coming up on 24 October!** Get ready for an unforgettable evening filled with music, dancing, wonderful company and plenty of Kytherian spirit.

Gather your family and friends, dress to impress in this Black Tie affair, and join us as we celebrate our community, culture and heritage together.

KEY DATES TO REMEMBER

August 15 – Dormition of Panagia (Virgin Mary)

Seniors Event – Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

September 24 - Feast Day of Panagia Myrtidiostissa

September 27 – Panagia Myrtidiotissa Church service followed by Picnic Lunch at O'Grady Park

24 October – Gods & Goddesses Gala Ball

European Summer in Kythera

There is something truly magical about a European summer — long golden days, warm evenings, crystal-clear seas and that unmistakable feeling that life slows down. And nowhere captures this quite like Kythera.

Throughout August and September, our beautiful island comes alive, welcoming Kytherians, families and visitors from across Greece and around the world. Villages are filled with familiar faces, cafés and tavernas spill into the streets, and town squares become the heart of summer life.

August brings Kythera's wonderful paniyiria and village festivals, where generations come together for traditional music, dancing, local food and celebrations that often continue well into the early hours. It is a time to reconnect with family and friends, celebrate our traditions and create new memories together.

As September arrives, the island takes on a gentler rhythm. The days remain beautifully warm, the sea inviting and the crowds begin to ease, making it one of the most wonderful times to explore Kythera's beaches, villages and hidden corners.

From long lunches by the water to dancing beneath the stars, summer in Kythera is more than a holiday.

It is a homecoming — to family, friendship, tradition and the island we love.

FOCUS ON ….. MYLOPOTAMOS!

In this issue – let's discover Mylopotamos, where Kythera's timeless beauty, history and nature intertwine!

Tucked into the lush western hills of Kythera, **Mylopotamos** is a village that feels wonderfully removed from the modern world. Its name, meaning "river of mills," hints at a landscape shaped by flowing water, where old stone watermills, shaded pathways and tumbling streams create one of the island's most enchanting settings.

At the heart of the village lies a charming square beneath the canopy of ancient plane trees, where traditional cafés invite visitors to linger over a Greek coffee or a leisurely meal. Beyond the square, narrow lanes lead towards the famous **Fonissa Waterfall**, a cool, green oasis surrounded by dense vegetation and moss-covered stone.

Nearby, the abandoned medieval settlement of **Kato Chora** reveals another side of Kythera, with atmospheric ruins, Byzantine churches and sweeping views towards the Ionian Sea. Mylopotamos is quiet, romantic and deeply authentic - a place to wander slowly, discover hidden corners and experience the timeless beauty of Kythera.



Mylopotamos – photo courtesy of Stephen Trifyllis



Got a photo you'd like to share for our newsletters? Feel free to email to us at admin@kytheraqld.org.au and we will acknowledge your wonderful contribution! We can't wait to share these with our community!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends of the Kytherian Association,

What a wonderful few months it has been for our Association with so many opportunities for us to come together, celebrate our heritage, and enjoy the friendships and community spirit that connect all Kytherians.

Our stall at Paniyiri in May was once again a tremendous success. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces stopping by, catching up, and supporting our stall with delicious Kytherian sweets and Olive Oil from Millennia Organics who kindly assisted us. A huge thank you goes to Mrs Kentrotis who guided us for making traditional Diples to have these unique sweets on offer, as well as to our incredible volunteers who gave their time and assistance to make the weekend such a success.

On 19th June, our Seniors enjoyed a wonderful Kytherian Trivia Day with plenty of laughter, some friendly competition, and lots of reminiscing about our beloved island. Special thanks to Spiro Comino who prepared & hosted all the trivia questions, Stephen Trifyllis for the use of some of his beautiful photos, and to the Kytherian Brotherhood of Queensland who gave support towards the delicious lunch which everyone enjoyed.

This was followed by our Young Kytherian Souvla Night, held at Souvlaki Time on 3rd July, which gave our next generation another opportunity to meet, form friendships, and strengthen their connections with their Kytherian Heritage. There was over 50 attendees, and it was great to see some young Goyan attendees as we encourage ties with the wider Greek Community as well. Thanks to our young committee members Katina Black, James Calos & Spiro Comino for getting everyone together.

Most recently, over 100 people of all ages attended a wonderful Kytherian Kefi Night at Olympic FC on 31st July. Many family groups and friends came together for a night of food, fun, great music, plenty of dancing and kefi. Members of other associations also joined us as everyone is keen for casual Greek nights like these.

Special thanks to DJ Kos Kastrisios and his son "Kas Boi" for getting everyone up on the dance floor, the catering team at Olympic, and our committee members John Stavrou & James Calos for all their help. Occasions like these remind us what our Association is all about… bringing generations together and keeping our Kytherian spirit alive here in Queensland.

1st August was the commemoration of Agia Elesa, a special patron saint of Kythera, and our Association contributed towards the morning tea that was held at the Church of St Paraskevi after the service on 2nd August. Several tables of our members came together to celebrate the feast day of this holy martyr.

We now look forward to one of the most important dates of our cultural calendar. September 24th is the feast day of Panagia Myrtidiotissa, the beloved protector of Kythera, who we will be celebrating on Sunday 27th September with a special church service to be held at the Greek Orthodox Church of St George, including carrying the Panagia Myrtidiotissa icon which was restored several years ago.

Afterwards, everyone is invited to join us for a Picnic Day at O'Grady Park at Fairfield which is the 2nd set of fields for Olympic FC. Lunch will be available from 1pm onwards so please get your family & friends to come along and enjoy a beautiful afternoon together as a community.

Bookings are essential for catering, so please buy your tickets online in the Magazi section of the Kytherian Association website. Any sweets donations will be much appreciated so please contact me if you can assist.

And then….. Olympus comes to Brisbane!!

On Saturday 24th October, the magnificent ballroom at the Sofitel Hotel Brisbane will be transformed for the biggest and most glamorous event of the year- the 2026 Gods & Goddesses Black Tie Gala Ball.

This is going to be a very special night with a fabulous 5 hour food & drinks package, sensational entertainment by Filoxenia Greek Band, music, dancing and hundreds of guests coming together for an unforgettable evening. Our Ball Subcommittee has been working very hard to make the magic happen, but we do need as much support as possible from Sponsors and Prize Donations so please contact Joanna Gianniotis or John Stavrou to assist.

Whether you're Kytherian or a friend of our community, we would love you to join us, so please get your table groups organized, and tickets bought before it's too late as our Balls are only held every second year and are always a sell-out event. Tickets are available online, and I can assist people with their bookings and enquiries.



For any enquiries/correspondence, please contact the Secretary, John Stavrou
Kytherian Association of Queensland
PO Box 5219, West End Qld 4101
Email: admin@kytheraqld.org.au Ph: 0433 183 276

FEAST DAY – AGIA ELESA OF KYTHERA COMMEMORATED – 1ST AUGUST

The Holy Martyr Elesa of Kythera was a young woman from the Peloponnese who arrived on Kythera in 375 AD. Saint Elesa is considered a protector of the island.

Elesa was martyred by her father as he strongly objected to her becoming a Christian.

Her father Elladios was a wealthy pagan. Elladios tried to force Elesa to marry a pagan ruler however she refused and secretly fled to Kythera to begin life as a nun.

Elesa was pursued by her father to Kythera where he followed her up a mountain as she attempted to escape him. Elesa tried to flee her father by climbing into a crack in the mountain; legend says the earth opened to hide her from her father. On the mountaintop where the Monastery of Agia Elesa now stands, her father caught her, tortured her, and eventually beheaded her as she refused to renounce her faith.

The Monastery of Agia Elesa built in 1871 is a significant pilgrimage site dedicated to her memory and martyrdom. The grave of Agia Elesa can be found in the yard of the monastery.



FEAST DAY – PANAGIA MYRTIDIOTISSA COMMEMORATED – 24TH SEPTEMBER

The Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Of the Myrtle Tree" (Myrtidiotissa) can be found in the monastery church of Myrtides Kythera. The holy icon of Our Lady on Kythera according to legend, has miraculous properties.

This icon was found in the 14th century in a myrtle bush by a shepherd.

The Virgin Mary appeared to the shepherd tending his sheep in a valley filled with myrtle bushes forty days after her Dormition and told him to search for the icon.

In his amazement, the shepherd kneeled to pray. When the shepherd rose, he saw the icon in the branches of a myrtle bush. Overcome with joy, the shepherd took the icon home and told his friends and relatives the story of how he had discovered it.

The next morning, the icon was missing and he thought it had been stolen. He then returned with his sheep back to the place where he had found the icon. On returning to the same spot the shepherd was surprised to see the icon once again in the branches of the myrtle bush. While glorifying God, the shepherd took the icon home with him once again. Unfortunately, on waking the next morning the icon and once again disappeared. This happened three times until the shepherd realised The Virgin Mary wanted her icon to remain in the spot where he had first found it.

A small church named after the icon, "Of the Myrtle Tree", was built to house the icon. Over the years the church was replaced and enlarged.



Photo courtesy of Kythera-Family.net

UPCOMING EVENTS!



TICKETS SELLING FAST!

Join us on 24th October 2026 now at the magnificent **Sofitel Brisbane** for our dazzling Gods & Goddesses Gala Ball - an incredible evening of glamour, and celebration. Don't leave it until the last minute – otherwise you may miss out. (Tables limited to 10 people per table).

Featuring the electrifying **Filoxenia** band from Sydney, the night promises flowing wine, vibrant energy, and an atmosphere overflowing with unforgettable kefi.



KYTHERIAN STALL – PANIYIRI – MAY 2026









SENIORS TRIVIA DAY – JULY 2026





