

Back in the 1920's - Our Early Association Days

by Emmanuel Alfieris

Back in 1922. The Kytherian Association's first decisions

As I shared in the March newsletter, I've been reading the Association's first Minute Book. It contains beautiful Greek calligraphic penmanship and fascinating insights into the Association's first deliberations. We've been discussing some of these at our TAP Nites and agreed we should share with the broader membership. Here are some of historic "Firsts" captured in our historic first Minute Book.

First Meeting – May 14th 1922

Cosmas Cassimatis and Theodore Kritharis met on May 14th, 1922 at Theodore's shop on 72 Oxford Street and resolved to form a Kytherian Brotherhood (or Fraternity as I prefer to translate "Adelfotita"). Cosma undertook to write the first constitution to present to Kytherians on the 28th of May following the celebrations for Agios Theodoros.

First Constitution Information Night – May 28th, 1922

On 28th May, again at Theodore's shop, 55 Kytherians came together to discuss Kosmas' and Theodore's idea after celebrating Agios Theodoros earlier that day. They enthusiastically adopted Cosma's and Theodore's idea to form a Kytherian Brotherhood. 90 members were signed up with 74 pounds membership fees collected. The first members suggested a number of changes to Cosma's first constitution draft and it was referred to a Review/Election committee to draft a final version that could then be voted on at the first General Meeting (an uncanny parallel with our current constitutional deliberations).

First Fundraiser – Funds to Celebrate Panagia Myrtidiotissa and Agios Theodoros

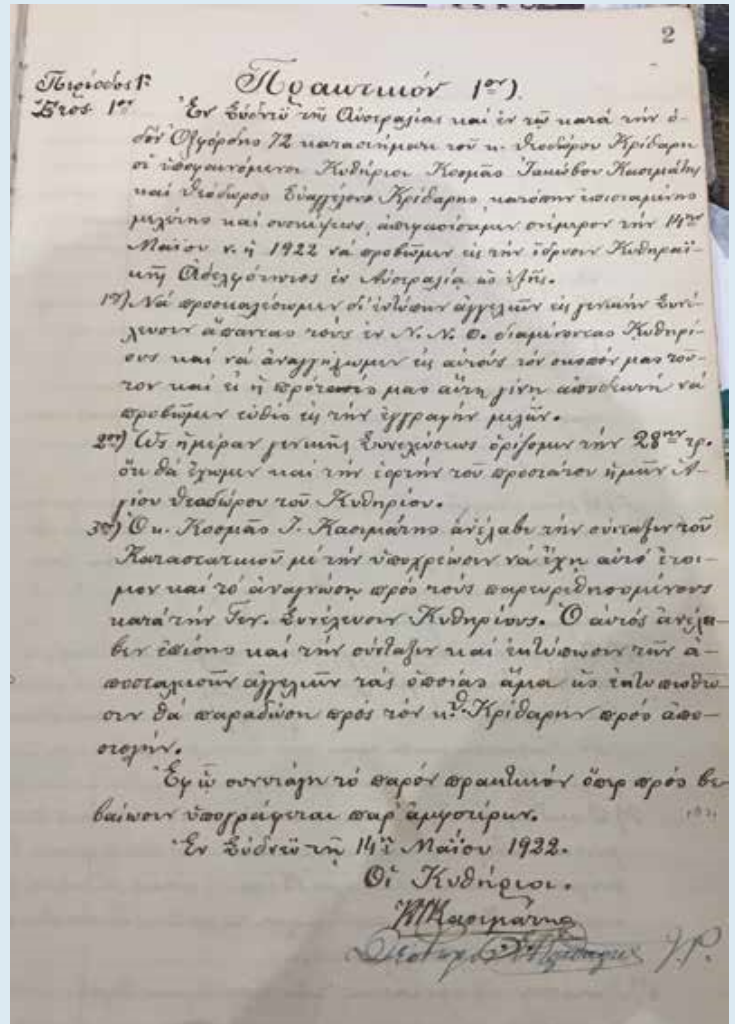
On the same night, the members resolved to start their first fundraising and 33 pounds were raised to host Panagia Myrtidiotissa and Agios Theodoros celebrations.

First Mail Out – 300 Membership Invitation Letters to Kytherians in NSW

300 letters were sent to Kytherians across NSW inviting them to join the Brotherhood. It points to an already large Kytherian community in NSW at the time.

First General Meeting and Elections – August 20th, 1922

Theodore's shop again hosted another important milestone. Once again this important meeting was organised to coincide with Kytherians' celebration of one of the Island's saints. Following celebrations for Agia Elesa, the Brotherhood held our first AGM, a format that was repeated for future AGMs. The revised constitution was passed and the first committee elections were held. 150 members voted. There were 18 candidates for the 7 committee positions.



THE FIRST PAGE OF OUR FIRST MINUTE BOOK WITH THE MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN KOSMA KASIMATIS AND THEODORE KRITHARIS

First Committee – Setting the foundation

The First Committee included – Cosmas Cassimatis received 118 votes and was later voted President by the elected committee at their first meeting on August 26th. The other members elected were - Theodore Kritharis (104 votes), Ioannis Protopsaltis (97), Kosmas Andronicos (78), Vasilios Feros (69, Secretary), Nikolaos Marsellos (65, Treasurer), Panagiotis Minoukos (61, Vice President).

First Logo – Panagia Myrtydiotissa within the Map of Kythera

The official logo/seal of the newly formed brotherhood was also put to members who unanimously decided that it should be the Icon of Panagia Myrtydiotisa within the outline of the Map of Kythera with the (Greek) Flag on one side and Aphrodite on the other. Medals were struck later that year and sent to members. The Committee was also tasked by the members to commission a flag with the same logo!!!

First Official Name – Kytherian Brotherhood of Australia – “Ta Kythera”

The official name of this new Kytherian association was The Kytherian Brotherhood of Australia – “Ta Kythera”. I think this now resolves the question our Queensland Kytherian cousins sometimes ask about why we use Kytherian Association of Australia.

First Benefactor- Ioannis Karides

The first committee resolved to record Ioannis Karidis as our first Benefactor who generously donated 40 English Pounds to the Brotherhood in his will.

First Donation – Supporting the Asia Minor Refugees

In response to the Greek Orthodox Community’s appeal, the Brotherhood donated 21 English Pounds to help the Asia Minor refugees many of whom were Kytherians from Smyrna.

These were some of the interesting “firsts” in the Association’s first year. Please provide feedback if you think this is interesting and I’ll share some other interesting “firsts” from 1923 and beyond such as – The Brotherhood’s first representative in Brisbane, the first president to resign and why, the first donation to an Australian institution and the first donation to Kythera... just to cite a few of amazing historical .



THE MEDAL AWARDED TO COSMA CASSIMATIS WITH A SLIGHTLY REVISED VERSION OF THE LOGO APPROVED AT THE AGM



THE MEDAL DEDICATION TO COSMA CASSIMATI CELEBRATING THE ASSOCIATION’S 40TH ANNIVERSARY IN 1961