

# Greek shipping legend John M. Carras dies

Nigel Lowry, Athens

**JOHN M. Carras, seen by many as the last of the so-called 'Golden Greeks' who took shipping by storm in the aftermath of the Second World War, has died in Athens, aged 93.**

The Carras (Hellas) offices in Piraeus were closed today in respect, and friends confirmed that the funeral was due to take place in the afternoon.

Mr Carras was the reigning Greek Shipping Personality of the Year, a title conferred at the Lloyd's List-organised 2007 Greek Shipping Awards, after the Carras group bucked a trend of ordering major bulk ships only in the Far East to sign orders for

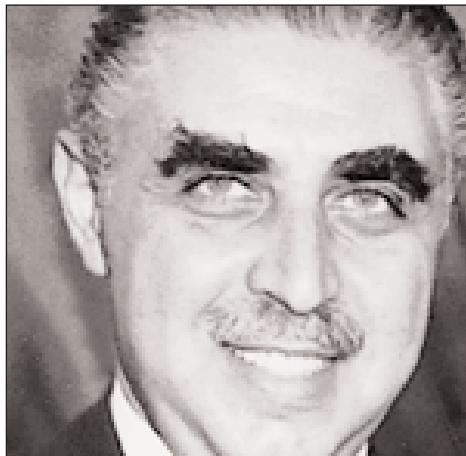
six capesize bulk carriers from Denmark's Odense shipyard.

But the judges will have sentimentally wished to pay tribute to a long career that gave Mr Carras near legendary status in the industry.

One of a number of major shipowners to hail from the village of Kardamyla on the Aegean island of Chios, he began his career between the two World Wars, launching Carras Ltd in London in 1938 together with his father Michael Carras.

But he operated from the US during and after the Second World War and was able to secure one of the 100 Liberty freighters that revitalised the war ravaged Greek fleet.

Mr Carras was the first shipowner in the world who ordered and took delivery of a Japanese ship built for export after the war. Delivery of the tanker



Tini in 1952 as the first of a quartet of 18,000-tonners ordered from Hitachi, marked the start of a huge influx of Greek business for Japan's nascent shipbuilding industry.

He became well-known in the industry for a concentration on ordering

high quality newbuildings and paying cash for them.

More than 40 newbuildings were delivered over several fleet renewal cycles, the most recent of which prior to the latest orders at Odense involved four capesizes in Korea in 1997 and five more in Japan in 2003.

Although in earlier decades Carras controlled a mixed fleet of bulkers and tankers, the fleet recently has been all-dry including 11 Greek flagged capesizes and a number of panamaxs.

Together with wife Athina he had four daughters, one of whom married another giant of Greek shipping, the late George P Livanos.

Mr Carras was grandfather of Peter Livanos, one of today's most prominent shipowners in the dry bulk, tanker and liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier fields.

## Olympic Airways to be replaced by Pantheon Airways

ATHENS - The Greek government on Tuesday was waiting for the green light by the European Commission to replace its debt-ridden state airline, Olympic Airlines, with a new carrier under the name Pantheon Airways.

Under the consolidation plan submitted by Greece, Olympic Airlines will be replaced by Pantheon Airways, which will take part in an international privatization tender.

According to state television NET, the new company will keep running all domestic flights, but will drastically reduce its international routes.

The European Commission on Wednesday had asked the European Union's highest court to impose daily fines on Greece for failing to recover illegal state aid given to Olympic Airways.

The decision refers to at least 161 million euros (202 million dollars) restructuring aid to Greek's ailing national airline between 1998 and 2002. In December 2002, the commission ruled that the aid was illegal and demanded Athens get it back.

The EU executive has also taken Greece to court for failing to recover some 540 million euros of state aid given to Olympic and its successor, Olympic Airlines, from 2002 to 2004. According to news reports, the new airline, Pantheon, is expected to receive an operating permit in the next few weeks and will open negotiations with Olympic Airlines personnel.

The more than 4,500 employees of Olympic will have to choose between becoming voluntarily redundant, securing bonuses and full pension rights, or be transferred to public posts or to work for the new company.

'Olympic Airlines services to islands will not stop, the employees will be secure and the transition to the new company will be as quick as possible,' the Transport Ministry said in a statement.

## New law limits number of pets per Greek citizen

A law silently passed this past June in Greece which will limit each Greek citizen to having only two pets (meaning dogs or cats) in their possession. The law is an attempt to protect citizen's rights in having pets in buildings that may forbid animals, but at the same time raises the worries that more stray dogs and cats will end up on the streets of large cities, especially Athens. Citizens with more than two pets have been flooding calls to the Minister of Agriculture Development voicing their concerns, but with little response thus far, many wonder how serious this law will be taken.

The law also stated that increased measures will be taken to neuter the thousands of stray animals that live on city streets and give financial support to organizations that help 'find homes' for stray animals. Sad to say that after nearly 3 million euros given to such programs, there is no exact account as to how many animals have been neutered and where the money has gone.

A June 24 circular signed by Deputy Minister of Agriculture Development



and Food Costas Kiltidis restricts every Greek citizen to a maximum of two pets (dogs or cats). It also limits pet travel from Greece to other European countries.

"The direct result of this circular will be the rapid increase of strays in the streets," says Irini Molfessi, president of the Panhellenic Animal Welfare Federation (PFO).

The PFO has already received "hundreds" of phone calls from concerned citizens with more than two animals,

while animals with the correct travel documents have been turned away at the airports of Iraklio and Thessaloniki.

In an interview with the Athens News, Kiltidis seems irritated by the aftershocks of what he himself calls "a stupid circular". Claiming that his ministry is not trying to discourage the adoption of strays, he says that the document simply reiterates articles of existing Greek and European Union law.

Greek law 3170 of 2003 says that up to two animals can be kept in a flat - this was included in the law to protect pet owners from the 'rules' of some apartment blocks forbidding animals - but it does not restrict the number of pets that can be kept in a house, explains Papa. "Yet in his circular, Kiltidis states that no one is allowed more than two animals, wherever they live." Kiltidis suggests that "anyone who wants more than two animals and lives in a rural area can simply set up a treatment centre or shelter for strays in their house".

## Inauguration of first Greek school in Bucharest

**BUCHAREST (ANA-MPA/I. Rantou) - Greek Ambassador to Romania George Poukamisas inaugurated on Monday the first Greek school in the Romanian capital. The name of the new school is "Athina." A kindergarten and three first classes of this primary school will operate and each year a new class will be added. It is a public school.**