

Community:

Greek Women of the Diaspora Honored

Thessaloniki.- Greek expatriate women were honored for the second consecutive year in Thessaloniki in a special ceremony hosted by the Prefecture of Thessaloniki in cooperation with the World Council of Hellenes Abroad (SAE).

The event was held with the support of the ministries of foreign affairs, Macedonia-Thrace and sports and was addressed by Macedonia-Thrace Minister Stavros Kalafatis, Thessaloniki Mayor Vassilis Papageorgopoulos, General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad General Director Ioannis Kyparissidis, who convey a message by Deputy Foreign Minister Theodoros Kassimis, Metropolitans Anthimos of Thessaloniki and Demetrios of Irinoupolis and Seychelles Islands, SAE President Stefanos Tamvakis and SAE Secretary Olga Sarantopoulos. Also present were local administration officials, foreign diplomats and a large crowd. Thessaloniki Prefect Panagiotis Psomiadis underlined the contribution of the Greek expatriate women, who raised their children with the love for the homeland embedded within their hearts, adding that "we owe it to these wonderful women that Hellenism shines and will continue to shine forever and everywhere."

He also referred to the great contribution of the Greek expatriates in the



defense of national interests and called for unity "to protect the sacred name of Macedonia."

"We honor the Greek woman of the Diaspora for her manifold and continuous contribution to World Hellenism," SAE President Stefanos Tamvakis stressed, thanking the Prefect of Thessaloniki on behalf of all the board members. "We honor your timeless efforts to support the expatriate family and preserve the Greek identity, language and tradition," Tamvakis said addressing the honorees. "The Greek women worldwide are strong and acknowledged," he said.

Minister of Macedonia-Thrace Stavros Kalafatis described the Greek expatriate women as the "bearers of the Ecumenical Hellenism's value system," pointing out that Thessaloniki is the Metropolis of World Hellenism. He referred to the "Ark of Hellenes Abroad" warmly supported by the min-

istry of Macedonia-Thrace and to the draft law on the Greek expatriate voting rights. The Greeks abroad should have the right to vote in Greek national elections, he stressed.

The comments made by the honorees while receiving a gold-plated olive tree branch, an eternal symbol of wisdom and peace, were very moving.

Pan-Macedonian Association, Inc., USA President Nina Gatzoulis, who received her award from the minister of Macedonia-Thrace, underlined that being honored in Macedonia has a great symbolic value, adding that the award honors all the women from Macedonia who live in America and the organization that gives a fight since 1947 to defend and promote historical truth. Professor in the Classical Studies Department, University of New Hampshire, Gatzoulis stressed that the FYROM name issue is not closed for the Pan-Macedonian Associations

around the world and that they are against the use of the term "Macedonia" in a future FYROM name.

Lucy Grigoriadis from Toronto, Canada, founder of the Greek Orthodox Social Services (for victims of domestic violence, spousal abuse) and chairperson since 1984, referred to the volunteer work offered by the Greek women in Canada. "I have a vision of a society characterized by harmony, solidarity and humanity," Grigoriadis stressed receiving her award from Thessaloniki Mayor Vassilis Papageorgopoulos.

Journalist Katerina Katopodi from Johannesburg, active in human rights issues, dedicated the award she received from Greek Telecommunications Organization (OTE) North Greece Regional Director Vassilis Rigopoulos, to the Greek women in South Africa, who raised their children to love the homeland.

The need to continue the fight for the equal treatment of women was underlined by **Paraskevi Mesimeri-Kianidis Australian-Greek Welfare Society Director,** who was honored with the Queen of England Medal of Honor for her social work helping women and immigrants in Australia. She received the award from the president of SAE.

Alexandra Protsenko-Pitsatzi, President of the Federation of Greek Associations in Ukraine, recited a verse from the anthem of the Greeks in Ukraine when she received her award from ERT World Satellite Programme Director Nikos Kourtis. Protsenko has received awards from the Ukrainian State and the Greek Orthodox Church for her efforts to promote the propagation of Greek culture and Greek-Ukrainian cooperation.

Internationally recognized research scientist **Dr Katerina Harvati (Germany)** and active volunteer in community affairs **Sophia Papadopoulou-Tagaropoulou (Panama)** were unable to attend due to previous engagements. **Their awards were received by SAE Secretary Olga Sarantopoulos** and Federation of Greek Communities in Belgium President Evdoxia Panta who referred extensively to the role of the Greek expatriate women.

Yamba named top town in Australia

A sleepy seaside hamlet in northern NSW has been named Best Town in Australia by a panel of tourism and travel experts.

Yamba, a township of 5,600 people whose sole industry is fishing and best known as the town closest to Angourie, one of Australia's most famous surf breaks, beat some of Australia's tourism "hot spots" to top the list of the best 100 towns.

According to the survey conducted by Australian Traveller magazine, Port Douglas, Broome, Byron Bay, Port Fairy and Margaret River were among the towns pipped by Yamba.

Australian Traveller editor Greg Barton said Yamba's selection as top town, along with the second choice of Esperance, in southern Western Australia, was surprising.

He said they had qualified as outsiders but that both could be described as "coastal fishing gems".

"Yamba ... may be upset at being named the Best Town in Australia. Their idyllic secret is out and they may have to share," Mr Barton said.

"The final list was surprising for me but on reflection it makes sense.

"These towns have stunning scenery, a unique story and the mystique of the understated and undiscovered - until now.

"They just don't come with the crowds and circus that surround some of the more popular towns."

Mr Barton said to choose the 100 best towns, the panellists were presented with a short list of 300 towns.

They were asked: "On a scale of one to 10, how likely are you to recommend a friend add one hour to their trip just to visit



this town?"

The answers were then tabulated to compile the top 100.

"We think we have it pretty spot on," Mr Barton said.

"I'm sure we'll be inundated with alternatives and howls of injustice. Let the people decide."

The top 10 towns, in order, are Yamba, NSW; Esperance, WA; Port Douglas, Queensland; Broome, WA; Port Fairy, Victoria; Beechworth, Victoria; Byron Bay, NSW; Apollo Bay, Victoria; Strahan, Tasmania, and Margaret River, WA.

In a state-by state breakdown of the listings, NSW had 29 towns in the top 100, Victoria 16, Queensland 16, South Australia 13, WA 13 and Tasmania seven.