



## Ancient shipbuilding museum in Crete

One of the 17 dockyards built by the Venetians to repair their Medieval and Renaissance-era vessels, the "Moro" dockyard in the old port of Hania, Crete, now houses a special exhibition showcasing a Minoan trireme -- an ancient oar-powered warship.

The ancient man-o-war is part of a permanent exhibition of ancient and traditional boat-building that also features conventional vessels and ship-building tools. A total of 10,000 adults and 5,000 children visited the museum last year, the majority of them foreign tourists.

*Caption: A Minoan trireme among the exhibits of the ancient shipbuilding museum in Hania, Crete, on Friday 10 April 2009.*

## Greek police hunt helicopter fugitive

Police say several hundred officers are searching a mountain forest west of Athens for a gunman believed to be a convict who broke out of prison in a hijacked helicopter.

Police say the man evaded a police roadblock in an SUV but later stopped his vehicle and fled on foot when police shot out his tires. An automatic rifle and five mobile phones were found in the abandoned vehicle. Vassilis Paleokostas, a 42-year-old convicted armed robber, escaped from an Athens jail in a helicopter on Feb. 22 with another convict. The pair staged an almost identical escape from the same prison in 2006.

## Blast-A-Nit a hit

A local product that keeps head lice out of homes for good has not only found a following in the community, but also interstate and overseas. The Kingsford-born and independently-owned Blast-A-Nit shampoo — an everyday-use, natural, lice repellent — is now being distributed in Cyprus. Creator **Gloria Papayianakis** made the shampoo as an alternative to other head lice treatments. "When my daughter was three years old she came home with head lice from preschool. I realised what I was using to treat her was very toxic, and I thought 'I'm never using this on my daughter ever again,'" she said. She then made her shampoo and sold it in her Maroubra hairdressing salon for 10 years, where people came from near and far to buy it after hearing about it through word-of-mouth.

Mrs Papayianakis even attracted attention at the Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club nippers on a Sunday with her kids. "Everyone started identifying who we were and what we were doing and started coming up to us," she said.

The natural shampoo works by coating the hair to repel lice, Mrs Papayianakis said. It's safe enough to use on babies and on people who have psoriasis.

And the response from stockists (30 outlets to date) and buyers of the shampoo has been also been good. "One pharmacist said that Blast-A-Nit was the best he could recommend in his pharmacy," Mrs Papayianakis said.

A Blast-A-Nit shop will open soon in Kingsford, the company is in the middle of rebranding the product and is developing a conditioner and de-tangler to be used in conjunction with the shampoo.

Blast-A-Nit also donates \$1 from each bottle (\$16 per bottle) of shampoo it sells to the Oncology Children's Foundation, which raises money to fund research into a cure for childhood cancers.



## PHILHELLENISM AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY

April 19, the date on which the poet and great Philhellene of the 19th century Lord Byron died has been declared by the Hellenic Republic as "Philhellenism and International Solidarity Day" and its first celebration this year, coincides with 200th anniversary of the poet's first visit to Greece in 1809.

"Lord Byron's memory remains alive and his message is still contemporaneous. He fought and sacrificed his life for Greece's national independence and at the same time, called himself "a citizen of the world," combining philhellenism with the advocacy of universal values", Interior Minister Prokopis Pavlopoulos said in a message for the occasion. This year's the celebration will be moved to April 26 due to the Greek-Orthodox Easter.

### **Pavlopoulos on Philhellenism and International Solidarity Day**

Interior Minister Prokopis Pavlopoulos on Wednesday signed a circular calling for the observance of April 19 as the Philhellenism and International Solidarity Day in compliance with a Presidential Decree signed last year. The circular mentions that this year the celebration will be moved to April 26 due to the Easter Holiday.

April 19 has been proclaimed Philhellenism and

International Solidarity Day commemorating the anniversary of the death of poet and philhellene Lord Byron, a human rights advocate and among the first to voice opposition to the looting of the Parthenon Marbles by Lord Elgin. Pavlopoulos also stated that this year's celebration coincides with the 200th anniversary of Lord Byron's first visit to Greece.

Lord Byron was a great philhellene and his early poetry had contributed to sensitizing the Europeans to the plight of Greece under the Ottoman Turks. In 1824, he joined the Greek liberation fighters at Messolonghi, where he died of malarial fever on April 19.

### **The life of Lord Byron**

George Gordon Noel Byron, 6th Baron Byron, was born 22 January 1788 in London and died 19 April 1824 in Missolonghi, Greece. He was among the most famous of the English 'Romantic' poets; his contemporaries included Percy Shelley and John Keats. He was also a satirist whose poetry and personality captured the imagination of Europe. His major works include Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812-18) and Don Juan (1819-24). He died of fever and exposure while engaged in the Greek struggle for independence.

# Are honeybees dying from advances in science?

Without honeybees, many of the crops America plants would never



make it to harvest. Pollinating crops is so important that farmers are importing bees from outside the country.

According to Evaggelos Vallianatos in Truthout, about 60 percent of a honeybee populations are being lost each year due to a type of pesticide used on crops the bees are expected to pollinate. The pesticide is actually a nerve gas that was developed for possible chemical warfare and was licensed for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 1974.

The pesticide is actually a nerve gas, parathion that is "trapped into nylon bubbles the size of pollen particles." These "bubbles" are time

release capsules similar to time release medicine that people take. In this case, the parathion is released over a period of days rather than hours.

When honeybees land on plants that have been sprayed with microencapsulated parathion, several things can happen. The honeybees may die immediately or may pollinate other plants with the toxic pollen. The bees can become disoriented and not find their way back to their hive.

If the honeybees do make it back after contact with the parathion, they carry it into the hive and it gets into the wax and honey. When the parathion gets into beeswax and honey, it can get into products that we buy from our local food store.

Vallianatos quoted several disturbing statistics.

Bees are trucked all over the country to pollinate farm crops. In 2006, the US National Research Council warned about the decline in bee populations. That decline has led farmers to rent imported bees to pollinate their crops and has caused beekeepers to purchase bees even from Australia.

Without bees, farmers would lose about 90 different crops that depend on bee pollination. Parathion is not only having a damaging affect on the bee population but may be affecting the food we eat and us in ways we haven't yet discovered.

*Evaggelos Vallianatos, former EPA analyst, is the author of "This Land Is Their Land" and "The Passion of the Greeks."*