

Classical Greek and Latin alive and well

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The Charles Tesoriero lectureship has been announced by the University of New England as a tribute to the past staff member.

Suffering from deep depression, the young classicist took his own life at the age of 32 in 2005. Friends and family say Dr Tesoriero never recov-

ered from the deaths of his parents from cancer - six weeks apart - when he was in his teens.

Yet a love of classics, first fostered at Sydney Grammar School, led him to provide two acts of philanthropy, bequeathing \$1 million to the University of New England and another \$1 million for the University of Sydney so the lectureships could be established. The outgoing University of New England vice-chancellor, Professor Alan Pettigrew, said the Charles Tesoriero lectureship would be the cornerstone of new teaching initiatives, including the development of online Latin and Greek units offered in Australia and overseas.

"We should recall Winston Churchill's dictum as

prime minister on the English education system: 'I would make them all learn English, and then I would let the clever ones learn Latin as an honour and Greek as a treat'.

"Classics [are] certainly still very much alive, and the University of New England will do all in its power to ensure that the study of Latin will be available to all in the 21st century."

From next year the School of Humanities will offer classical languages, especially Latin, to a wide range of Australian and international universities and to diverse cohorts, including students of theology and religion.

Article from The Sydney Morning Herald



Cyprus court adjourns Greek plane crash case

NICOSIA, - A Cyprus court on Thursday adjourned until June 4 a case against four people charged over a plane crash in 2005 that killed 121. The four executives and the airline, privately owned Helios Airways, are charged with manslaughter and causing death by negligence. Investigators say a lack of oxygen knocked unconscious nearly everyone on board the Boeing 737-300 flight from Larnaca, Cyprus to Prague on Aug. 14, 2005. The plane flew on autopilot for two hours before crashing into a hillside north of Athens, having run out of fuel.

The charges hinge on the allegation that the company hired incompetent pilots.

Relatives of the victims sat on the steps outside the court, holding photographs of their loved ones. "I'm not expecting them to do anything. They will just hush the whole thing up," a grief-stricken mother whose daughter and husband died in the crash told Reuters. Another woman, dressed from top to toe in black and clutching a photograph of her relatives, called the flight a "flying coffin". The individuals charged will not enter their pleas to court until the case has been referred to the court of assizes. It had previously been adjourned until April because the fourth defendant was seriously ill. Investigators believe the victims fell unconscious just minutes after take-off. Greek air force pilots, scrambled to trail the plane when it lost contact, saw a man, later identified as a flight attendant with a trainee pilot's licence, grappling at the controls while wearing an oxygen mask. It is believed he was the only one conscious on board. Failure to notice that a gauge regulating oxygen was on the wrong setting has been blamed for the crash after an inquiry by Greek authorities in 2006. Deficiencies in the safety culture of the airline were also cited. The individuals charged were escorted via a back entrance into court after a heated reception by angry relatives back in February.

Rebetika expresses many facets of refugee experience

CAFE REBETIKA! Fairfax Studio, The Arts Centre, St Kilda Road, city. Until May 9

Reviewer Katherine Kizilos

THE Greek musical style Rebetika — sometimes called the Greek blues — is also portrayed as a way of life and a state of mind in the new play Cafe Rebetika.

The cafe of the title and the set is a basement hang-out in the port city of Pireaus in the mid 1930s. It is a gathering place for Greek refugees from the Turkish city of Smyrna, which was burned in 1922.

Rebetika expresses many facets of the refugee experience — nostalgia, defiance, lament.

It was also the music of the outcast and the rascal, played in hash dens. The characters in the play include

refugees, communists, a junkie and a prostitute presided over by Stavrakas (played with authority by Tony Nikolakopoulos) who owns the cafe.

Stavrakas is a manga — a man who rejects society's norms, and yet acts honourably within his own personal code. Cafe Rebetika tells the love story between Stavrakas and refugee Areti (a strong and sensitive performance by Laura Lattuada). But the real star of the show is the rebetika music, which is played with great charm and feeling by the band Rebetiki. The Greek words to the songs are translated in surtitles.

The mostly Greek audience enjoyed the performance, but it would be a shame if the play did not reach a more diverse demographic. The music of outcasts tells a good story about tolerance and resilience in hard times: an uplifting lesson from a little-known episode in history.



Third Aussie in Britain has swine flu

An Australian journalist who has tested positive for swine flu in the UK says she's disappointed in the way the authorities have handled her case.

Kate Corbett is a third Australian living in the UK to have tested positive for the flu, after she returned from a trip with friends to Mexico for a wedding last week.

The former Australian Associated Press (AAP) journalist originally tested positive for the influenza A virus a few days ago.

In an email sent to AAP on Monday morning, Ms Corbett says she received word from doctors that she had tested positive for the H1N1 virus.

Feeling fine, she says she has been told to stay at home until she has no more symptoms and has finished her course of Tamiflu in about three days time.

Ms Corbett says the advice about whether or not she could leave home has changed over time.

"Initially I was told I wasn't allowed to leave home then I was told I was, then I was told I wasn't, so today I got the definitive feedback which was until you have finished the Tamiflu and until you've got absolutely no symptoms, you'll have to stay indoors," she told ABC radio.

Authorities have since asked her what airline she flew out from Mexico with, what her flight numbers were.

Those people sitting within a metre of her on the flights, will be notified.

Blood tests were also carried out on her boyfriend and her sister who she spent time with after arriving in the UK.

"My sister is actually at home herself, because she actually has quite bad flu symptoms, so yes they do think there is a risk."

Pop singer tested for swine flu

The band are due to play Radio 1's Big Weekend in Swindon. Singer Tulisa Contostavlos, from pop band N-Dubz, is being tested for swine flu after falling ill on board a flight to Greece, her manager has confirmed. The 20-year-old from north London was taken to hospital in Athens. Miss Contostavlos has undergone tests to determine if she has the virus, which has now been confirmed in 15 cases in the UK. The band's manager Jonathan Shalit has told the Press Association her band mates are "all very worried about her". He added that he had "no idea how she got ill" but "the nature of being a singer is that you meet and shake hands with a huge amount of people". The three-piece, which includes Miss Contostavlos's 21-year old cousin Dino 'Dappy' Contostavlos and their childhood friend Richard Rawson, 22, have enjoyed huge success this year. They currently occupy the top spot in the singles chart, featuring on Tinchy Stryder's hit, Number 1. The band are also due to play Radio 1's Big Weekend in Swindon next weekend but the appearance could be in jeopardy if tests prove positive.

