



## Antique vases pulled up from seabed

DIVERS on marine digs in the Aegean Sea discovered a cargo of antique ceramic vases from a shipwreck, the Greek culture and tourism ministry said.

The vases from the fourth and fifth century BC were pulled up from depths of between 25 to 49 metres off the coast of the Polyaiagos island, southwest of the Cyclades archipelago, located between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean Sea.

The finds by the aquatic archaeologists, including vases used for transportation and two small table vases, all intact, as well as fragments of the vessel's anchor, shed light on commercial routes during the period.

Greek authorities have been mapping its seabeds for a few years, sometimes cooperating with international institutes, and have so far located several dozen old shipwrecks.

# Victoria Celebrates Australia Day

*Premier John Brumby joined thousands of people in Mornington to celebrate Australia Day and recognize the contribution Victoria's Greek and other multicultural communities have made to our nation.*

Speaking at Australia Day celebrations staged by the Association of Greek Elderly Citizens Clubs of Melbourne & Victoria, Mr Brumby said Australia Day was a time to honour the many different communities that make our state and Australia such a great place to live.

"Australia Day is also a time to reflect on our beginnings and remember that we are a multicultural community made up of migrants from all over the world," Mr Brumby said.

"It is amazing to think that Victorians come from more than 200 countries, speak more than 230 languages and dialects and follow 120 faiths.

"Forty four per cent of Victorians are born overseas or have one parent who is born overseas."

Mr Brumby said the state's Greek community had made a great contribution and had long been recognised as a significant influence on Victorian culture and diversity.

"Our Greek community has played a very important role in shaping the



thriving and cosmopolitan society Victoria is today – we are immensely proud of our large and dynamic Greek community," Mr Brumby said.

"Today, at celebrations such as this, we acknowledge that Australia is a proudly multicultural country where we come together to give thanks to a national spirit of inclusiveness that crosses cultural, religious and linguistic barriers."

More than three thousand people from many different backgrounds enjoyed the event, with entertainment ranging from Greek folk dancing to In-

igenous performances and a traditional Aussie barbecue.

The Association of Greek Elderly Citizens Clubs of Melbourne & Victoria has offered its services to the elderly Greek community for more than 25 years and now represents over 25,000 members from various clubs throughout Victoria.

Mr Brumby said the Greek Senior Citizens Australia Day celebration was a great opportunity for people to celebrate our heritage and look to the future.

*Source: Government of Victoria*

# What Australia Day means to a wog

**JAMES ADONIS**

As the son of a Greek father and a Cypriot mother, both of whom immigrated to Australia in the 1970s, Australia Day means just one thing to me: gratitude.

Gratitude for living in a country that has one of the most impressive economies in the world, at a time when Greece is on the verge of federal bankruptcy, while others, like the United States and Japan, are struggling to manage trillions of dollars in debt.

Gratitude for living in a country that has one of the most stable political establishments on the planet, unlike Cyprus where the dead body of a past president still hasn't been found since it was dug up and robbed from his grave in December. Add to the list, nations like Pakistan and Zimbabwe, where politics has become a blood sport, while in Australia, the bloodiest political scandal of the past year has been over a used Ute.

Gratitude for living in a country that, despite enduring the horrendous Victorian bushfires in 2009, has luckily escaped some of the most tragic environ-

mental disasters the world has faced. Think Haiti. Think Hurricane Katrina. Think the Asian tsunami.

Gratitude for living in a country that offers its citizens universal health care and subsidised prescription medicine, resulting in the fifth-highest life expectancy in the world. Compare this to the 46 million Americans still without health coverage and the people in Swaziland who can realistically expect to survive only until the age of 31.

Gratitude for living in a country that is breathtakingly beautiful, containing nature's most magnificent wonders. Few nations have a bit of everything

like we do: stunning beaches, majestic reefs, towering mountains, an expansive outback, gorgeous towns, and world class cities. Of course, many countries aren't fortunate enough to have even one of these attractions. Places like Sudan welcome more aid workers than tourists.

Gratitude for living in a country with a standard of living that is the second-highest in the developed world. At the bottom of the ladder are states like Sierra Leone (which is still recovering from a decade-long civil war), Afghanistan (where a third of their GDP comes from opium), and Niger (where 63 per cent of people live below the poverty

line).

Gratitude for living in a country where freedom of speech means people aren't persecuted for being outspoken. In North Korea, there are 200,000 political prisoners. In China every year, almost 1,000 people are locked up for speaking up. And during Iran's election protests in 2009, hundreds of people craving a change of government were detained and tortured for doing nothing more than voicing an opinion in public.

Gratitude for living in a country where everyone can access a world-class education at a cost that's affordable – and sometimes free. In Saudi Arabia, certain subjects are illegal for women to study, such as journalism and architecture. Mexican kids have one of the lowest rates of reading comprehension in the OECD. Students and teachers in those nations have greater things to worry about than the publication of school league tables.

Gratitude for living in a country that fundamentally values human rights instead of valuing fundamentalism. In Somalia, girls are still being circumcised. In Uganda, a bill was introduced

this month seeking the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality". In Syria, the Kurdish minority suffer from restrictions on their language and culture.

Gratitude for living in a country where crime is decreasing and isn't a pressing issue for a lot of us. The number of homicides and robberies in Australia, for example, are both lower than those in the UK and the US. We feel safer here than the places we commonly visit for a holiday.

And yet, read a newspaper's letters page or peruse a blog online, and you'd think we were living in a third world country, beset with problems and developmentally inferior. No, we're not perfect, and yes, there are plenty of areas requiring improvement, but Australia Day, more than any other, should be a time for us to lighten up and be thankful.

*Article from the Sydney Morning Herald*

*James Adonis is a Fairfax blogger and the author of 'Corporate Punishment: Smashing the management clichés for leaders in a new world'.*

