



DIGGERS AND GREEKS

The Australian Campaigns in Greece and Crete

Dr. Maria Hill
in conversation
with David Hill

Dr. Maria Hill is a historian and currently Visiting Fellow at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra.

Her new book "Diggers and Greeks" focuses on the Australian campaigns in Greece and Crete during WWII.

David Hill is a former Chairman of the ABC and is current President of the International Association for the Reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures.

Their discussion will be illustrated with rare photographs from the Greek and Australian archives and original film footage of the Australian campaigns in Greece. Audience comments and suggestions will be welcomed. www.mariahill.com.au

www.diggersandgreeks.com.au

Date Sunday 16 May

Time 4.30pm

Venue Museum of Sydney, Corner Philip & Bridge Sts, Sydney

Cost Free Entry (Bookings Essential)

Language English - Contact 02 97500440

www.greekfestivalofsydney.com.au

Falconera: One Greek story of love and adventure

The remote, uninhabited island of Falconera half-way between Athens and Crete is the focus of daring exploits in the last months of World War II. If the German munitions convoy succeeds in reinforcing Hitler's army on Crete, the occupation will continue, prolonging the war.

The British Navy can stop the fleet only if they can locate it. That task is given to a customised caique and her brave crew, one of the ships of the Greek Schooner Raiding Flotilla.

The story is fiction but the setting is real. The author, Alexis Ladas, was a 24 year-old captain of a Greek Raiding Schooner in World War II. The little known Schooner Raiding Flotilla; its bases in Alexandria, Egypt and Deremen, Turkey; its only slightly disguised commander; and the feelings of the book's hero in war, were very real indeed.

The author wrote what he lived. In the foreword, Patrick Leigh Fermor paints a picture of the extraordinary times Lada and his fellow mariners witnessed, fighting the German occupation in the Aegean.

"Wild parties and love affairs in Alexandria, Cairo and Beirut – the bright intervals of dark undercover warfare and

island resistance – the setting for a strange and marvelous collection of figures...the dazzling Greek contingent; a tall, charming, sophisticated, highly literate, romantic-looking and very amusing silhouette leaps to mind. A narrative of great vividness, fraught with tension and drama in an atmosphere – for anyone who was afloat in those waters at the time – that is completely authentic."

Fermor's validation of Falconera is proof, if proof were needed, of the writer's inside knowledge, and testimony to Lada's gifts as scribe in translating the romance, chivalry and courage of the real men and women who lived the story.

Falconera is the latest labour of love from Athens' Lyabettus Press, a small publisher whose own story began in 1968, when Philadelphia born, and now honorary Athenian, John Chapple, edited and published his first title. John worked closely with the author until Alexis Lada's death in 2000.

At the book's launch in Athens last week, Chapple shared the story Lada had told him, of the manuscript being previously rejected by a British publisher, on the grounds that the publisher could not believe junior Greek naval

officers would have been able to communicate in fluent English. How Falconera dispels the myth of that kind of blinkered cultural pre-conception, and reveals in its fiction, truth and authenticity, is one of the book's great strengths.

At the heart of the Lycabettus Press mission, is to work with writers (inside and outside Greece) to present new stories about Greece's history and politics. 'There's no verb 'to edit' in Greek' says Chapple. 'That's part of our mission. Our titles are always produced as a cooperative editorial undertaking with the author.'

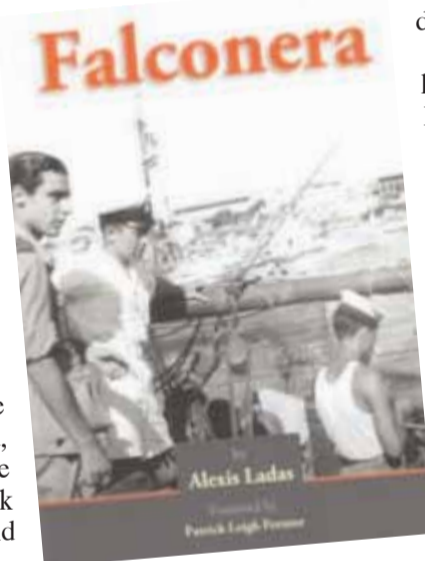
Falconera certainly benefits from this, and the pleasure Chapple takes, in 'clear declarative sentences'; its writing style is hugely readable. Falconera is a gripping romance and a suspense-filled tale of action. It is also a fount of information about the Aegean and Greek sailing lore. This is an enthralling story, beautifully told, that reveals a rich and little known chapter in the story of Greek resistance in WWII.

The protagonists, their actions and feelings come alive on the page; betraying the author's remarkable experiences as a captain with the Flotilla. The characters are exquisitely drawn; their dialogue so obviously faithful to the courageous sailors the author knew so intimately.

This is an important book and a better of a story. If you're looking for a category to put Falconera in, I'd suggest 'un-put-down-able'.

Falconera is available from Lycabettus Press, PO Box 65101, Psychiko 15401, Athens.

(source Neos Kosmos)



Harmanis rejects Rudd's mining tax

Greek Australian former mining magnate Kerry Harmanis has come out strongly opposing the government's proposal to tax mining companies a super tax of 40 percent.

The proposal was one of the many recommendations outlined in the Henry Tax Review that was announced a fortnight ago. The government adopted this recommendation while rejecting a number of others.

"Whatever way you look at this... 40 per cent tax is 40 percent tax," Mr Harmanis pointed out emphatically.

He explained that he didn't approach the matter through political prism but rather with common sense as a former active mining executive and a current investor in the field. Kerry

Harmanis was the founder and CEO of Jubille Mines a major nickel producer based in Western Australia which was bought out in 2007 by Xstrata in a deal worth more than \$3 bil-

lion.

He predicted that this announcement will have a major impact on future mining projects resulting to a loss of jobs. Mr Harmanis was also critical of the government not clarifying details of the proposed scheme and how it's going to take effect.

The government has announced that the tax will take effect in 2012 but at the same time has indicated that it will negotiate its implementation process

with mining companies.

Mr Harmanis noted that the government is creating a climate of uncertainty in the industry as mining projects take years of planning involving

great risk.

"Most mining exploration projects don't turn up to be mining [opportunities]. This tax doesn't recognise all the pre production risks and all the wasted money in the ground looking for projects, developing them, assessing them..." He further argued that the government appears to be targeting the mining companies with a heavy tax in a populist attempt.

"Why single out the mining compa-

"Whatever way you look at this...

40 per cent tax is 40 percent tax."

Mr Harmanis pointed out emphatically.

nies why don't you pick on the banks...because politically mining companies seem to be an easy target," Mr Harmanis said.

(source: neos kosmos)

