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## Australian Marathon Coin goes 'home'

*The Perth Mint has marked the 2500th anniversary of the Battle of Marathon with the issue of a commemorative coin. Three of these coins are now on permanent display in Hellas, thanks to the efforts of the Greek Australian Professionals' Association (GAPA) and the Australian Hellenic Educators' Association (AHEA NSW-ACT-QLD).*

These joint donations by GAPA and AHEA are a contribution to international celebrations surrounding the Hellenes' victory at Marathon and the remarkable long-distance running feats of Pheidippides. In recognition of the respect shown by Australia, GAPA and AHEA have donated coins to the Museum of the Marathon Run, the Municipality of Marathon, and to the Zappeion Exhibition Centre.

A fourth coin has been presented to ultra-marathon runner Maria Polyzou, in recognition of her recreation of Pheidippides' runs, last month.

The commemorative coins were presented to the Mayor of Marathon, Mr Spyridon Zagaris, by GAPA President Kathy Kouvas during a recent visit to Marathon. In his capacity as Mayor, as



GAPA President Kathy Kouvas with Marathon Mayor, Spyridon Zagaris.

well as Curator of the Museum of the Marathon Run, Mr Zagaris stated that the Pheidippides coin would become an integral part of the Museum's Australian exhibit.

Ms Kouvas stated that "it was an honour, as an Australian Hellene, to place these coins into the hands of Mr Zagaris, the present custodian of this historic site. I was proud to represent GAPA and AHEA in contributing to the Australian-Hellenic relationship".

### NENIKHKAMEN

According to tradition, this year marks the 2,500th anniversary of Pheidippides' run to Athens with news of

the triumph over the invading Persians on the Plain of Marathon. His achievement inspired the introduction of the Marathon race at the inaugural Modern Olympic Games in Athens in April 1896. Pheidippides has also influenced countless ordinary joggers to attempt the gruelling 26.22 miles at one of today's many high-profile marathon events, including the Sydney Marathon each September.

Aimed at all those who have dared to follow in Pheidippides' footsteps, this commemorative is struck from one ounce of 99.9 per cent pure silver. The coin's high-relief reverse portrays Pheidippides' arrival in Athens at the

end of his famous run, where legend suggests he proclaimed victory with the phrase "NENIKHKAMEN" (we are victorious) before expiring. As well as The Perth Mint's 'P' mintmark, the design incorporates a scroll with the inscription NENIKHKAMEN.

AHEA President Dr Panayiotis Diamadis stated that it was an honour for AHEA to collaborate with GAPA on this project. "2010 marks not only a historic victory in Hellenic history. It is a memorable victory in Western civilisation. Many students of Ancient History would be able to tell you of the importance of Marathon and the legacy that victory produced". The Persian Wars of 500-480BCE are a very popular option for study within the NSW matriculation qualification, the Higher School Certificate.

Dr Diamadis especially thanked Ms Diana Fatseas for bringing the commemorative coin to the attention of AHEA and GAPA, as well as coordinating the presentation of the coins to Mr Zagaris.

One of the main roles both GAPA and AHEA see for themselves is the cultivation of the bonds between Hellenes and Australians. Being Australians of Hellenic heritage, the members of both organisations bridge the two worlds.

They will continue working on developing these ties, especially when one considers how many Australians live permanently in Hellas and Cyprus – some 150,000 according to the 2006 Census.

### WAGGA WAGGA

## Greek Orthodox Church donating Henry Pavitt \$3000

*(back L-R) John Stathopoulou (secretary), Kellie Ligakis (treasurer), Kosta Papaioanou, Hariklia Ligakis and Maria Ligakis. (front L-R) Lee-Anne and Henry Pavitt, 2, and Archie Papaioanou (President of Greek Community)*

\*\*\*Henry Pavitt has been fed through a tube for the majority of his life and needs to be taught how to eat properly and the only way to achieve this is to attend a hospital in Austria. Fundraising for the treatment has been difficult for the Pavitt family.

"Kosmos" newspaper would like to thank Laura Suckling for providing photo and caption.

