

FORMER 'HELLSOC', 'NUGAS' PRESIDENT TALKS WITH OLYMPIC ULTRAS

The Olympic Ultras met on Wednesday with former university student leader and radio show host Harry Mavrolefteros in an exclusive interview to discuss his journey and the challenges in engaging the latest Greek-Australian youth, both in Sydney and across the country.

Despite having completed his tertiary studies in 2008, the energetic Mavrolefteros acknowledged that both the challenges and highlights of university life were too attractive to let go just yet, with the big man himself regularly found at a number of campuses at a number of events.

"From my first 'O-Week', there were a lot of people involved and I was blown away," Harry admitted.

"There weren't many Greeks at my high school, and to suddenly find a group of like-minded young people, it really was awesome.

"From then and there I knew that getting involved would be something that I'd really enjoy."

Elected as 2007 President of the University of New South Wales Hellenic society, 'Hellsoc', Harry quickly went to work, and it was from here that his reputation as an approachable and respectful university figure really shot off.

"While at Hellsoc, I was always surrounded by a great group of people," said Mavrolefteros,

"and I have former Presidents George Moraitis and Greg Chronopoulos to thank in particular."

After forging himself as an ever-present figure of Sydney's Greek uni s-

tudent scene, Harry kept himself busy by joining the committee of 'NEPO-MAK', the World Organisation for Young Overseas Cypriots, and was elected the 2010 President of the National Union of Greek Australian Students, 'NUGAS'.

Discussing some achievements while at NUGAS, Mavrolefteros mentioned, "With everybody's help at NUGAS we were able to put together a weekly online publication called 'Hermes' with event updates and student contributions.

"We were also able to publish a national magazine for NUGAS members that we could send out, with both then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull contributing," Harry said.

"It was very important that we could provide something tangible for those members."

Harry admitted however that the battle is far from over, adding, "We need to do more of the same to bring the commonalities between young Greek-Australians to light.

"We should be getting involved in things that others around us will be both willing and proud of, to bring out the emotions of pride and joy that came out of all Greeks during Euro 2004!"

And it's exactly these emotions that Mavrolefteros feels the Olympic Ultras have brought to the fore.

"The Ultras are a very passionate and growing body that are really engaging people," Harry pointed out,

adding that "their focus may be the soccer as Sydney Olympic fans, but they really are standing up to support the Greek-Australian community in Sydney as a whole.

"'Being Greek' needs to be seen by Greeks and non-Greeks as something attractive, something cool, and the I really think the Ultras are working positively towards that."

Discussing the barriers to youth engagement and activity, Mavrolefteros saw overcoming the fractionalised elements of Sydney's Greek-Australian cultural and religious organisations as one of the real challenges in uniting the community.

"There has been a historic lack of unity," Harry mentioned, "with too many groups at 5 or 10 per cent instead of one unit operating at 100 per cent.

He did, however, have nothing but praise for Canberra's Hellenic Club and its setup.

"I've been to Canberra quite a few times, there's one Hellenic Club and it's just about the most attractive spot in town.

"It would be fantastic to have an awesome nightclub or bar for us in Sydney, something that the whole community could take ownership of and be proud of."

While no longer serving on the university student committees, Harry Mavrolefteros, Nick Galanopoulos and Petros Galanis have teamed up with 2mm radio station to present Xamos, a Friday night show for Sydney's young Greek-Australians.

"With the radio show," Harry explained, "the radio stations were contacted and 2mm came back to us saying that they'd love us to start the show.

"We all felt that the radio show would be a good opportunity to make people feel that they are involved in something bigger, that people are listening, and so far it's been fantastic."

The Xamos crew have brought another 'Greek option' to 5pm Friday nights, to the delight of the growing number of listeners and supporters.

"It was important to provide another avenue for younger guys to listen to the latest Greek music," Harry mentioned, "with it all being a bit of fun to bring young Greek-Australians together."

When asked about those who have questioned the continued relevance of Greek-Australian initiatives and organisations, youth and otherwise, Harry responded in a frank manner.

"You can't blame them!" Harry exclaimed. "People need to be inspired, it's up to people to rise up and bring that inspiration to the table, to make it clearer than ever that these groups are as relevant today as they have ever been."

Confident though of the exciting times ahead for the Greek-Australian youth of Sydney, Harry was sure to encourage everyone to read up, look out and participate.

"To the people that might not know about these groups, I'd tell them to find out and get involved because you won't regret it."

Olympic Ultras

Cycladic Art Museum exhibition on 'Lost World of Old Europe'

The 'forgotten civilisations' of Neolithic Europe and their ties to ancient Greece are the subject of a temporary exhibition that opens its doors to the public on Thursday at the Cycladic Art Museum in central Athens.

Entitled "The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley, 5000-3500 B.C." the exhibition will be inaugurated by Deputy Foreign Minister Spyros Kouvelis on Wednesday evening.

Organised by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University in collaboration with the National History Museum of Romania in Bucharest and with the participation of the Varna Regional Museum of History in Bulgaria and the National Museum of Archaeology and History of Moldova in Chisinau, the exhibition brings together more than 200 Neolithic artifacts owned by 22 museums in Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova. (ANA-MPA)

Parallel with the main exhibition, the Museum of Cycladic Art and the ministry of culture and tourism have organised a second exhibition

on "The relations between Neolithic Greece and the Balkans" presented alongside the first for comparative reasons. This includes 90 exhibits from Greek Neolithic sites of the same period and explores the similarities and differences between Greece and the Balkans during the 5th and 4th millenniums BC.

The organisers explore a little-known period of human history, noting that the area of southeastern Europe had seen the growth of highly sophisticated societies with advanced technology that disappeared abruptly and mysteriously at around 4000 B.C. for reasons as yet unknown.

Among the most impressive of the exhibits are remarkably modern-looking figurines with human form, some excellent quality, brightly coloured ceramic vases, various metal objects and the world's largest single store of Neolithic gold objects found in an ancient cemetery in Varna.

Goulandris Foundation president Sandra Marinopoulou stressed in a press conference on Tuesday that visitors to the exhibi-

tion will gain a fascinating insight into the history of SE Europe 7,000 years ago. According to Cycladic Art Museum Director Nikolaos S-tambolidis, Greece's closest neighbours were "participants" in the cultural product arising from this part of the world from the Neolithic period and onward.

"These two exhibitions come to shed light on the rich past of a region around the Danube and the northwestern coast of the Black Sea during the 3rd and 4th pre-Christian millennia. (ANA-MPA) This exhibition presents a forgotten part [of history] that we must remember without borders but only on geographic terms," he noted.

According to Dr. Dragomir Nicolae Popovici of the National History Museum of Romania, it also marked the first time that such an exhibition "that is a major chapter of European history" was organised, while Dr. Aleksander Minchev of the Varna Archaeological Museum Ancient Art department stressed that it was a chance to view "the birth of European culture". (ANA-MPA)

Lady Gaga Spotted on the Greek Island of Crete

Currently the most popular pop singer, Lady Gaga has been spotted in the island of Crete. Gaga arrived at the island with her own private jet two days ago. The airport of Heraklion was extremely crowded with fans that came to see her for the first



time!!! The 25 year old artist was dressed casually and in a very friendly move. She was constantly followed by one of her bodyguards.

Stefani, as her real name is, is currently staying in the city of Elounda at the Elounda Bay Palace one of the best hotels of the Mediterranean. Gaga is relaxing and tasting the traditional Cretan cuisine. The Kaltsounia have been reported to be her favourite. Also, she has already visited Spinalonga, the island of lepers that became famous through the best sellers "The Island". Lady Gaga seems to be a great fan of the book. Some media outlets rushed to announce that she is thinking to film one of her new videoclips there.