

Tony Abbott to be guest of honour at the Kytherian Association of Australia Debutante Ball

The Federal Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott has accepted an invitation to be the Guest of Honour at the 2011 Kytherian Association of Australia Debutante Ball. The 89th Annual Ball, will be held on Saturday 18th June at Le Montage Bay-side Events Centre, 38 Frazer Street, Leichhardt.

Politicians from both side of politics have acknowledged the immense contribution that Greeks, and Kytherian-Greeks have made to Australia over almost 200 years of involvement.

John Howard always hailed the Greeks as a "brilliant" example of ethnic integration. Howard pointed to the Greek community as a "mentor" on how an ethnic group, could maintain links to their original culture, while becoming part of mainstream Australia.

"The Greeks are just a wonderful example of how you do it. You integrate fully, you become part of the mainstream, your first loyalty is to Australia, but that doesn't mean you don't have a place in your

heart for your home culture, and that's how we want it."

Tony Abbott reiterated this sentiment recently, when he said that "Australians of Kytherian heritage have made a great contribution to our nation. Your Kytherian Association helps to ensure that this is not forgotten".

The first Greeks arrived in Australia in 1817, and the first Kytherians arrived in 1854. By 1916, as chronicled in the book, *Life in Australia*, the Greeks had established themselves, and integrated into Australia extremely well. In 1922, the Kytherian Association of Australia was established in the CBD of Sydney, and has flourished ever since.

Every year, since 1922, the Kytherian Association has conducted an annual Ball; and since 1952, it has been both a Charity and Debutante Ball. Tony Abbott is enthusiastic about "debutante" Balls, regarding them as "a time-honoured tradition and an enjoyable rite of passage". He applauds the Kytherian Association for choosing to perpetu-



ate the tradition.

This year, the Kytherian Association of Australia has decided to make a substantial donation to the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society of Australia. "MS Australia strives for a world without multiple sclerosis through quality research and for service excellence to people with multiple

sclerosis and their carers."

They are also committed to "enhancing the quality of life of people with MS and reducing the impact of MS on the families and carers of those with Multiple Sclerosis."

It is not too late to purchase tickets for the ball. Call Kathy Samios on (02) 9349 1849 or e-mail: samios@people.net.au

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