

GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MILTON KEYNES AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

TRUSTEES: Mrs A E Anthi
Mr C Tzallas
Mrs D K Beales
Capt D Christoulakis
HE Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira & GT Britain

PRINCIPAL OFFICE: London Road
Stony Stratford
Milton Keynes
MK11 1JA

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1118744

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS: Tearle & Carver Limited
Chartered Accountants
Chandos House
School Lane
Buckingham
MK18 1HD

GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MILTON KEYNES AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2016

The Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 November 2016

Structure, Governance and Management

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1) The Trustees: | Mrs. Despina Kyriakica Beales | - Vice Chairman |
| | Mrs. Anne Elizabeth Anthi | - Member |
| | Mr. Christos L. Tzallas | - Treasurer |
| | Cpt. Dimitris Christoulakis | - Secretary |
| | His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira & Great Britain | - Ex Officio Chairman |

The Charity was registered with the Charity Commission as Number 1118744 on 10th of April 2007. The contact address for the Charity is c/o Mrs. Despina K. Beales, 33 Overn Avenue, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire, MK18 1LU.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 2) The Committee Members: | Mrs D. K. Beales (Niki) | - President |
| | Cpt. D. Christoulakis | - Minutes Secretary |
| | Mr. Chr. Tzallas | - Treasurer |
| | Miss A. Tracoshas | - Member |
| | Prof. P. Pilidis | - Member |
| | Mr. S. Athanasiou | - Member |
| | Mrs. A. Anthi | - Member |
| | Mrs. A. Biniou (Demopoulou) | - Member |
| | M. Diakostephanis | - Member |
| | M. Panourgia | - Member |
| | Mr K. Alexandridis | - Member |

3) School: The Academic Year is from September to July.

Mrs D.K. Beales: - President - Public Relations
Christos Tzallas: - Treasurer

Teachers Appointed in September 2016- for the Academic Year 2016-2017

Mrs Chara Orthodoxou: Head Teacher (Appointed by The Cypriot High Commission)

Miss Eleonora Zervou: - Teacher, (paid by the hour by the Cypriot High Commission)

Miss V. Martzakli: Teacher

They are assisted by: Mrs Anna Anthi,
Mrs Angeliki Biniou

4) Ladies Charity "St. Demetrios: President: Mrs Angeliki Bibiou

5) Independent Examiner: Tearle & Carver
Chandos House
School Lane, Buckingham

6) Management:

The Community is governed by the Constitution of an Unincorporated Association to which the Trustees are elected every two years. The Trustees are responsible for managing the Charity through a Committee appointed by them and meet at least once a year but more often if need arises.

GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MILTON KEYNES AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2016 (Continued)

The main income of the Charity came through donations from members, friends of the Community, membership subscriptions and interest from the bank deposits and from hiring the Church Hall on hourly basis to local townfolk (mainly) and beyond. In addition and very importantly, income was derived from the Gift Aid Scheme, social events, functions and collections at Church services. Donations from the parents and adult pupils of the School, were gratefully received but we made it our duty (as always) to welcome all children regardless of the parents' ability to donate. In the same spirit, and although we were in great need of funds, we made it clear that "fees" for Baptisms, Memorials, Funerals or Wedding Services will be waived if we believe that the interested party do not have the resources.

The expenditure of the Charity, apart the loan repayments, was mainly for Insurance, Electricity, Water and Gas, the inevitable utility and maintenance expenses, some immediate needs, also, for the provision of Priests, purchase of Liturgical/Chanting Books and the inevitable photo-copying, plus materials for the school.

7) Objectives, Organisation, Aims, Activities : The aims and objectives of the Charity remain as before and briefly, are:

- a) to advance the Greek Language and Culture,
- b) to support, maintain and expand the activities of the Greek School,
- c) together with the St. Demetrios Ladies Charity (to be re-activated) we organise and arrange visits and care for the religious needs of people in hospitals, prisons and homes in the area,
- d) to advance the Orthodox Faith,
- e) to promote the Hellenic Traditions,
- f) to assist whoever has the need to understand various aspects of Orthodoxy and help to understand better the ways of practising
- g) to welcome newly arrived compatriots and other Orthodox Christians, help them as much as we can to adjust in their new environment and assist them to find the appropriate information they need.

All the above mentioned, and as since the establishment of our Community, were of great importance and backbone of the Community.

8) Review of Activities and progress:

The Church Building's acquisition was completed in May 2009 (although we were using it since March of the same year, under licence) and the Church Hall's acquisition in August 2010, both in the conservation area of the town, a privilege, yes, but this comes with the prize tag of lots of permissions and consents by various official bodies regulating the "do's" and the "do not's" .

Acquiring two buildings in such a small period of fifteen months, needed tremendous courage, faith, strong beliefs and nerves made of steel. Both Buildings, especially the Hall, which was in serious condition of neglect, decay and almost dilapidation, need repairs. But we took the plunge and we went ahead knowing that we were embarking on a very copious project. We take pride that it is "us" who "re-gave life" to these tastefully designed buildings of the town and now are used for the purpose they were initially constructed.

With the necessary repairs of roof, floor, water supply, rewiring, plumbing, reconnecting gas and other very essential work carried out, the Church Hall started functioning as a Church Hall should. It is in the Hall we held our various events and celebrations of Church and School and concessions were made to charitable purposes, to members of the Community and to people with disabilities. The "gatherings" on Sundays after the Church Service became a very popular "tradition" by young and old alike, as they offer the feeling of "belonging". Being in our premises has given the opportunity to celebrate our heritage and customs better and more often.

It probably appears odd that we started this report December onwards but **Our Financial Year Ends on 30th of November. So:**

December 2015 – This month saw the dedication to St. Ambrosios with a Celebratory Holy Liturgy, (the actual Feast Day is on the 7/12), the School play in the Church Hall and as always we celebrated Christmas on the Eve, 24th December. After the Church Service we gathered for the usual joyous get-together and said our "good-byes" to 2015.

GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MILTON KEYNES AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2016 (Continued)

January 2016 We welcomed the New Year by Blessing the Waters on Epiphany, first in the Church then as we have done previously, Priest, Congregation and local people joining along the way, we walked down to the river for the ceremony of “throwing the Cross” into the water. A very welcome hot lunch, was ready on our return to the warmth of the Church Hall. The Blessing of the Vasilopitta and the Feast of the Three Hierarchs took place as a tradition has it in his Community, on the last Sunday of the month.

February, March, April. - A Greek Evening to mark the Carnival and other “get together” gatherings were organised. The Salutations to Panaghia and more church services in addition to the usual two monthly ones were held at Lent. RIK, the National Radio Television Corporation of Cyprus has visited and interviewed us about aspect of the Community aspirations and life, school, church, history and more. The School pupils performed plays, songs and poetry to mark the National Days of 25th March and 1st of April and The Doxology for the Feast of Annunciation, took place, as usual, in the Church and in the Hall. Palm Sunday morning and the evening Service of the Bridegroom set the beginning of the Holy Week. More services of Last Supper, The Crucifixion, The Apokathilosis, the Epitaphios Lamentations where the “Sepulchre” taken in procession to the Churchyard took place. On Saturday at the stroke of midnight the culmination of all the expectations, the Resurrection Service arrived. With candles lit and chanting, “CHRISTOS ANESTI” gathered at the churchyard. Next morning, PASCHA 2016, Sunday 1st May, at 11am, we were at our Church. The **Vespers of Love, (Εσπερινός Της Αγάπης)** was celebrated and the Easter Chapter of St/ John’s Gospel was read in many languages by members of the Congregation and older children of our school, a fact that made us very proud. The “real Greek Pascha” followed in our premises when members and friends from the vicinity and afar shared with us traditional food, lamb on the spit. Without the usual music and dance, as our very dear colleague, long standing member of the Community, chanter and member of the committee, former treasurer and our very good friend, **Symeon Athanasiou**, passed away, after a sudden and very short illness, his funeral took place on Holy Tuesday. He left a void and he will be sadly missed.

During the time of all the above said, a number of our school pupils and after studying hard sat the GCSE Examination in Modern Greek.

May, June, July passed with the occasional “Greek Gathering” and Niko Efthimiou’s sale of salads, greens, plants and fruit to raise funds. Mrs Maria Papalouka, Inspector of the Cypriot Education Mission – KEA – in London (Cyprus High Commission) came to inspect our school during lesson times. We celebrated the Feast of St. Mary of Vlacherna, and the “End of the School Year Ceremony” when all pupils and teachers entertained us with poetry, songs, all reminding us that summer and holidays were beginning. The pupils received their Progress Certificates. We said “good bye” to Mr Ilias Kanetounis, our teacher for years and former headmaster as he could not be with us on next Academic Year. We were sad to lose him as he has served this school with dedication and love.

After the long Summer break **September** sees the start of the Academic Year, and the 2016 –2017 one arrived. We were very pleased to welcome again the previous year’s teachers, Mrs Chara Orthodoxou, (head) and Miss Eleonora Zervou. Mrs Vivi Martzakli joined the team and an other class was added for pre-school age little ones, so our School operated on Tuesdays and Thursdays 5 to 7pm, (7 – 8.30pm adults on Thursdays) as well as Wednesdays 4.30-6.30pm, the Hall’s cosy (multifunctional) Backroom providing the space. The classes run smoothly and the “faithful” and more adult pupils joined our school again. Our premises provided the venue for the “Stony in Bloom” annual party in September. The AGM to present the **Report and the Accounts** of the year took place. Having settled well in their school routine, the pupils read various poems, performed plays etc. for the 28th **October** Festivities in the Hall and the Doxology took place in the Church marking the Commemorations. **November**, dedicated, as ever to St. Stylianos, our Patron Saint, Guardian of children and His Eminence Archbishop of Thyateira & Great Britain Gregorios, officiated at the Church Service and later chaired a meeting with the Trustees and Committee of the Community, followed by lunch. Again the opportunity for the children of our Community, to participate in local affairs, was given as two of our pupils placed a Wreath at The Memorial Monument of the town on Remembrance Sunday.

So, an other financial year, 1st December 2015 – 30 November 2016 of the Community ended. To all who assisted us in any way, material, financial, practical, the parents and the adult pupils, teachers, KEA and KES who encourage us to run the school, the members and non members, spouses and families, we say Thank You. We offer sincere gratitude to the Ex-Officio President of this Trust, our Archbishop Gregorios and the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, Bishop Athanasios. Of course we thank the spirit lifting presence of the children and young adults, they are the torch bearers of the future to

GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MILTON KEYNES AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2016

(Continued)

come.

We have been told that our Church Hall –named Swinfen Harris-, with its spacious and landscaped grounds, accessible to people with disabilities, well equipped kitchen and the little “quiet” Backroom, provided an all year round facility and became an asset to the town as a venue for many and various occasions, as well for our Community needs. It has also provided an income towards its running costs, , but the needs for continuous maintenance and improvements arose too.

After ailing health and long stays in Milton Keynes Hospital, the ardent supporter of this Community, our dearly loved and widely respected parishioner, Androulla Kanaka, passed away on 23rd of November, she will be sadly missed.

In this year, we warmly welcomed “new arrivals”, mainly from Greece, coming to this country and this area with hope for a better future or study. We had Blessings of babies, Baptisms, Greek Gatherings, Dances and Music, but sad moments too, the passing away of friends, Memorial Services and Funerals but all these formed the Community’s Life. We were here to SERVE a challenge, but an honour too.

D. K. Beales
Vice Chairman

August 2017

Date.....