

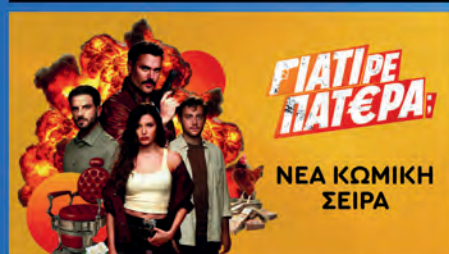


The Greek-Australian Society

5th Anniversary Gala Ball

ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ 5 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ
THE FIRST 5 YEARS

The Grand, Alpha
Sydney
Friday 17th October 2025



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land across Australia on which we gather:

The Gadigal people of the Eora nation in Sydney,
The Ngunnawal country across Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory,
The Turrbal and Jagera people in the Brisbane city area,
The Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin nation in Melbourne,
The Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains,
The Whadjuk Nyoongar people in the Perth city area,
The Palawa people of Lutruwita, today's Tasmania, and
Traditional owners and custodians of country across Australia.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The Greek-Australian Society acknowledges that this land is, was and always will be traditional First Nations land.

This land has provided a home for our Greek-Australian community, and we recognise the mutual understanding between us and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to historical trauma, spirituality and relationship to home and land.

ΑΝΑΓΝΩΡΙΣΗ ΠΡΩΤΩΝ ΕΘΝΩΝ

Αναγνωρίζουμε τους παραδοσιακούς κηδεμόνες της γης σε όλη την Αυστραλία, πάνω στην οποία συγκεντρωνόμαστε:

Τον λαό Γκαντίγκαλ του έθνους Εόρα στο Σύδνεϊ,
Τη χώρα Νάνναουαλ σε όλη την Καμπέρα και της Επικράτειας Πρωτεύουσας Αυστραλίας,
Τους λαούς Τούρμπαλ και Τζάγκερα στην περιοχή της πόλης της Βρισμπάνης,
Τους λαούς Γουρούντζερι και Μπούν Γαράνγκ του έθνους Κούλιν στη Μελβούρνη,
Τον λαό Κόρνα στις πεδιάδες της Αδελαΐδας,
Τον λαό Ουάντζουκ Νιούνγκαρ στην περιοχή της πόλης του Περθ,
Τον λαό Παλάουα του Λουτρονίτα, της σημερινής Τασμανίας, και
Τους παραδοσιακούς ιδιοκτήτες και κηδεμόνες της γης σε όλη την Αυστραλία.

Αποδίδουμε τον σεβασμό μας στους Πρεσβύτερους του παρελθόντος και του παρόντος.

Ο Ελληνοαυστραλιανός Σύνδεσμος αναγνωρίζει ότι αυτή η γη είναι, ήταν και πάντα θα είναι παραδοσιακή γη των Πρώτων Εθνών.

Αυτή η γη προσέφερε έναν τόπο για την ελληνοαυστραλιανή μάς κοινότητα, και αναγνωρίζουμε την αμοιβαία κατανόηση ανάμεσά μας με τους Αβορίγινες και τους Κατοίκους των νήσων των Στενών Τόρες σε σχέση με ιστορικό τραύμα, πνευματικότητα και σε σχέσεις πατρίδας και γης.

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

It is with real emotions of joy and a deep sense of responsibility that I welcome you to the Greek-Australian Society 5th Anniversary Gala Ball.

It is with joy that I welcome community leaders and distinguished guests, but also friends, family, supporters and of course, GAS Members to our table, to celebrate our first half-decade of accomplishment, of effort and of impact.

It is with the responsibility of φιλοξενία and of φιλότιμο that we strive to uphold our age-old traditions to welcome as Greek-Australians, to include in our Greek-Australian experience, to share bravely of ourselves and to accept all as fellow κοσμοπολίτες.

My journey with the Greek-Australian Society has been deeply personal.

What was borne out of a will to break down historical barriers, for a group of young people to participate in social and civic structures established by our parents' and grandparents' generations, and ensure their stewardship, is today a fledgling community organisation, a real-time cultivation of what might one day endure as an historic, influential and pertinent cultural institution.

με αγάπη και
σεβασμό για τη
στήριξή σας,
και με ελπίδα για
το μέλλον,
Γιώργος

The Greek-Australian Society is a new way of thinking about ourselves in the world.

Its energy is a common desire to explore our identities in this context: ethnic, local, regional, national, religious, social, professional, sexual, traditional, modern, parental, inherited, spiritual, political and ultimately human.

What I am proudest about at GAS is how we have so purposefully cultivated the fertile intersections between these identities, the nuance that goes beyond historical labels and that bears new and exciting forms of expression as its fruit.

My wish is that your Greek-Australian journey continues, as personal for you as it may be valuable and timely for the world around you.



George Mpliakas
Co-Founder and 4th President
Greek-Australian Society



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EDITOR'S NOTE

An organisation can do a lot in a short space of time if the goals and initiatives are shared and celebrated. Putting this booklet together gave me a chance to look at the achievements of the Greek-Australian Society from a bigger picture perspective. From all the GAS programs, to the vast and outstanding support and array of sponsors and media channels, you can clearly see an organisation that is understanding and meeting the needs of Greek Australians in the 2020s.

We may well come from different walks of life, we definitely have different opinions and viewpoints on a range of issues, however the love of Hellenism and being of Greek extraction in Australia is the absolutely binding force that keeps this growing strongly. Congratulations George and previous Presidents and Board Members of GAS; enjoy the book, read the articles, engage with the ads and enjoy the evening!



Arthur Sarlas
Board Member
Greek-Australian Society



† ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS OF AUSTRALIA

Protocol No.: 2710

MESSAGE

**by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia
on the occasion of the 5th Anniversary Gala Ball of the
Greek-Australian Society Inc.**

Dearly Beloved President, esteemed members, and distinguished friends of the Greek-Australian Society Inc.,

It is with heartfelt joy and paternal pride that I extend my warmest congratulations to you all on the celebration of the 5th Anniversary of the Greek-Australian Society. Today's milestone is not only a commemoration of the years that have passed, but also a testimony to the vision, commitment, and tireless service which your organisation has offered to the Greek-Australian community both here in our beloved homeland of Australia and abroad.

In the short span of five years, the Greek-Australian Society has made a significant contribution to strengthening the bonds of our Hellenic heritage, nurturing the values of our Orthodox faith, and fostering the advancement of our people, particularly the younger generations. Through your initiatives, you have become a beacon of service and a unifying presence, embodying the spirit of *philotimo* and the love of community which are hallmarks of our people.

Particular acknowledgement must be given to your exemplary mentoring programme, which this year celebrates its fifth edition. By guiding young professionals and students to grow in confidence, ability, and service, you not only equip them for personal success but also ensure that the richness of our Greek-Australian presence will continue to flourish in the years ahead.

At the same time, your leadership in launching the **Strategic Plan for the Pharos Alliance NSW** marks a forward-looking and visionary effort to revitalise the learning and daily use of the Greek language within our schools and families. This

initiative touches the very heart of our identity, for language is not simply a tool of communication but a living vessel of our Hellenic culture, Orthodox faith, and history. It is my fervent prayer that this endeavour will inspire many and bear lasting fruit.

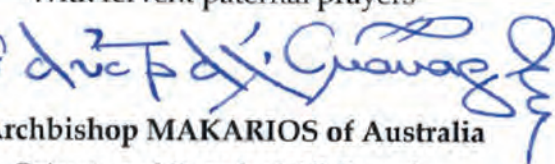
As you celebrate this significant occasion at your Gala Ball, may you rejoice in your achievements while also looking to the future with confidence, unity, and renewed dedication. Be assured that the Holy Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia stands beside you and supports your mission, praying that God may bless the work of your hands and strengthen you in every good undertaking.

With paternal blessings, I convey my wholehearted congratulations and paternal blessings to the leadership, members, and friends of the Greek-Australian Society, and I pray that you may continue for many years to serve as a radiant example of what it means to live faithfully, generously, and with vision as Greek-Australians.



In Sydney, on the 4th day of October 2025,

With fervent paternal prayers


Archbishop MAKARIOS of Australia

Primate and Exarch of All Oceania



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

**GREEK-AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY
5TH ANNIVERSARY GALA BALL**

Congratulations to all members of The Greek-Australian Society as you celebrate your 5th anniversary.

Australia has been enriched by generations of Greek migrants who have settled here, raised their families here, and built strong communities here - all the while adding to this nation's story with their hard work, aspiration, and love of country.

Today, young Australians of Greek heritage carry this story forward – preserving history, language and customs for new generations, and ensuring the special ties Australia shares with Greece endure.

The Greek-Australian Society makes a valued contribution to these aims. Your efforts to unite the community through professional, social, and cultural activities is a powerful tribute to shared identity and to the dynamic and diverse society that makes all Australians proud.

Congratulations once again as you celebrate your connection to an ancient history, a powerful heritage and a living culture.

Have a wonderful evening.

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia

October 2025



New South Wales
Australia

Premier of New South Wales

Re: The Greek-Australian Society 5th Anniversary Gala

I extend my best wishes to members of the Greek-Australian Society as they celebrate their fifth anniversary with a Gala Ball.

In just five years, your organisation has become one of the fastest growing Greek community organisations in Australia.

Driving this growth has been your commitment to connecting and mentoring young professionals within your community.

Today, there are more than 141,000 people with Greek heritage in NSW. Greek Australians have made an enormous contribution to our State.

Events like tonight's Gala are a chance to celebrate your achievements and those of the wider Greek Australian community.

Thankyou for your energy, dedication and community spirit.

Kalí diaskédasil

The Hon Chris Minns MP
Premier of the State of New South Wales
in the Commonwealth of Australia



OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL



MESSAGE FROM THE HON. STEVE KAMPER MP

Minister for Multiculturalism

**5th Anniversary Gala Ball
hosted by the Greek-Australian Society
17 October 2025 at Sydney**

The Greek-Australian Society's 5th Anniversary Gala Ball marks five years of dedication, growth and community spirit.

Since its founding the Greek Australian Society has emerged as one of the newest Greek community organisations in Australia.

This 5-year milestone is a testament to the Society's commitment to fostering a modern and philanthropic community that embraces fosters cross generational mentoring.

By focusing on young people, professional development and community engagement, and through its support for the Greek language, arts and culture, GAS plays a role in ensuring the Greek heritage remains dynamic and relevant in contemporary Australia.

Congratulations to the Greek-Australian Society and its supporters I wish you continued success and may everyone taking part in its 5th Anniversary Gala Ball enjoy the evening.

The Hon. Steve Kamper MP
Minister for Multiculturalism

OFFICIAL



Dear Members of the Greek-Australian Society,

On the occasion of your 5th Anniversary Gala Ball in Sydney, I warmly congratulate you on this milestone. Over the past five years, the Society has become a vibrant forum for young Greek-Australian professionals, whose dedication and vision have enriched community life in New South Wales and beyond. Your efforts demonstrate the value of networking as a source of collaboration, and collective achievement.

The aspiration you have shown for a quality-driven and impact-oriented community sets a standard for the future of Greek-Australian engagement. At the same time, we are mindful of the challenges ahead—preserving your links with Greece for younger generations, promoting the Greek language and culture, and fostering cooperation with organizations in Greece, while also representing the best of Australia abroad.

Your work gives me confidence that these goals will be met with energy and success.

With warm regards and congratulations,

Stavros Venizelos

Ambassador of Greece to Australia



Distinguished guests, dear friends,

It is widely accepted that Australians of Greek origin have managed to excel in every field, business, culture or politics.

The first generation of Greek immigrants in NSW often faced challenges in adapting to Australian life, particularly in terms of language and cultural differences. However, they played a key role forming the foundations of the community. The second and third generations of Greek Australians, born in Australia, are more integrated into Australian society but still maintain strong connections to their Greek heritage. These generations are also increasingly involved in shaping the future of the community, balancing cultural preservation with Australian identity. The Greek-Australian community in NSW has also embraced Australian culture. Over time, Greek Australians have become an integral part of Australia's multicultural society, with many participating in Australian life while still holding on to the values and customs of their Greek ancestors. Over time, Greek-Australians have become influential in a variety of fields, including politics, entertainment, academia, and the arts.

I would also like to refer to the support of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia which serves the spiritual needs of the community, as Sydney is home to many Greek Orthodox churches in numerous parishes.

By virtue of your very existence, the Greek-Australian community in New South Wales is a perfect example of how Greeks can enrich the national culture, offering a blend of the old and new, while thriving in various sectors of the Australian society. You are waving the path for the new generations to get in touch with the Greek language, tradition, culture as well as the mentality. With that said, this event is also an indication of the positive and joyful way of life that our communities have brought with them upon their arrival. I have to also admit that I am really proud to see the progress made because of your own activities, programs and relevant initiatives here in NSW. This is why we are proud of you, proud of all you have achieved so far, in this country, which is located thousands of kilometres far from Greece.

I would also like to mention your stance as well as the continuous contribution of all Greeks and Cypriots in Australia and their ongoing support in finding a just and viable solution to the Cyprus Problem, which is of utmost significance for all of us. It is important to keep cooperating with the Cypriot community in order to further promote our national problem throughout Oceania. This is why we are more than grateful to all of you.

I wish the board of the Committee and all those who worked voluntarily for this event an enjoyable evening and all the best in your future endeavours.

H. E. A. Sammoutis
High Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus



18 August 2025

RE: 5th Greek-Australian Society 5th Anniversary Gala Ball

To the President and Organising Committee of the Greek-Australian Society,

On behalf of the Greek Community of Melbourne, I extend my warmest congratulations to the Greek-Australian Society on the occasion of your 5th Anniversary Gala Ball.

Your organisation has made a remarkable contribution to fostering unity, cultural pride, and professional connections among Greek Australians. Your dedication to preserving our heritage while creating opportunities for the next generation is truly commendable.

This milestone is not only a celebration of your achievements, but also a testament to the strength, resilience, and vision of the Greek-Australian community. The bonds you have nurtured enrich both our cultural identity and our contribution to the broader Australian society.

I wish the Greek-Australian Society continued success in all its endeavours, and I look forward to seeing your influence and impact grow in the years to come. May this evening be a fitting celebration of your journey so far, and an inspiration for all that lies ahead.

Yours faithfully

Bill Papaslergiadis OAM
President GCOM



Dear George, dear colleagues and friends of the Greek Australian Society (GAS) and Pharos NSW,

On behalf of the Pharos Alliance in Victoria I extend my warmest congratulations to the Greek Australian Society on the splendid occasion of its 5th Anniversary Gala Ball.

The establishment and successful launch of Pharos NSW is a most commendable initiative. It represents foresight, dedication, and vision in ensuring that the Greek language and culture are sustained, vitalised, and expanded across Sydney and New South Wales. This achievement will stand as a lasting contribution to the cultural and educational life of our community and as a beacon for the promotion of Hellenism in Australia and of intercultural relations across the entire community. Your work exemplifies the highest commitment to heritage and identity, and it will inspire generations to come. The Pharos Alliance salutes this accomplishment and looks forward to the fruitful outcomes that will flow from Pharos NSW in the years ahead. The work of GAS extends further and reaches into the most important dimensions of our shared citizenship in multicultural and socially cohesive Australia, for which I also commend you very warmly. I regret that I cannot join you on this occasion but take this opportunity to wish a very successful and enjoyable evening.

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on this milestone and every good wish for the future.

Professor Joseph Lo Bianco, AM, FAHA
President, Pharos Alliance
Pharos Alliance, Revitalising Modern Greek

Dear Fellow GAS Members, Friends and Generous Sponsors,

As we gather to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the Greek Australian Society (GAS), I find myself in the fortunate position of writing this address to you with equal measure of gratitude, pride, amazement, and hope. Five years ago, my fellow Co-Founders and I set out with a bold vision: to create a dynamic, inclusive, and forward-looking community organisation that would empower Greek-Australians, especially our younger and future generations, to connect, collaborate, learn, and thrive.

For the benefit of understanding GAS's history, I outline our origins.

GAS formed in 2020 in response to addressing a legacy issue that appeared to permeate itself throughout our community quite systemically.

How do we close intergenerational professional, community and social connectivity gaps in our community; especially when uptake, engagement and interest in existing Greek-Australian institutions, appeared to be on the decline more broadly?

A variety of sentiments traversed our initial discussions. How do we generate individual and mass buy-in into a noble, albeit idealistic thought-bubble? What will prevent us from failing not just ourselves but our future? How do we reverse the gargantuan tide of COVID-inspired social isolationism that encroached on virtually of all humanity at the time, including our community.

In response, my Co-Founders and I set out about ensuring that our foundations and core principles were fundamentally responsive to the interests and dreams of our future generations.

We enshrined two ever-present objectives in our founding document, the GAS Constitution: to promote the work of Greek-Australian professionals, and to connect younger Greek-Australians with our broader community.

Fast forward five years, and that vision we crafted in the hypothetical world of make-believe is not only alive—it is flourishing and travelling in places beyond our initial comprehensions.

From our humble beginnings, GAS has grown into a vibrant network of professionals, students, community participants, and leaders who share a deep commitment to heritage, excellence, community, and hope. Together, we have built more than an organisation—we have built a movement. One that honours our rich cultural legacy while embracing the wonders of what we can achieve.

One of my proudest contributions was creating and leading the GAS Mentoring Program as its founding Convenor; from a humble program of 5 mentors and 6 mentees in our inaugural round in 2021, to today where we have 27 mentors and 39 mentees participating across the globe.

The GAS Mentoring Program is our bedrock. It is our flagship initiative that continues to inspire and guide the next generation of Greek-Australians. Through mentorship, we have fostered meaningful relationships, nurtured talent, and strengthened the bonds that unite us and traverse generations.

This milestone is not just a celebration of five wonderful, albeit founding years—it is a celebration of the people that have etched their mark into our common history. To every member, mentor, supporter: thank you. Your energy, ideas, and generosity have shaped GAS into what it is today.

To our benevolent sponsors who have demonstrated their commitment and belief in not just words of encourage, but financial substance as well; thank you for your endorsement of both our past achievements as well as our ambitions for the future.

To my fellow Co-Founders and the current Executive and Board: your commitment, hard work, creativity and persistence ensures that our society remains a beacon of excellence, unity and hope.

Congratulations on organising this amazing Ball that is rightfully appropriate to celebrate for this momentous milestone. It is safe to say that the time and emotional sacrifice that you have undoubtedly invested in making this Ball a reality, is not lost on any of us.

As we look ahead, let us continue to build on this rich and promising foundation with courage and innovation. Let us champion the values that define us—*filotimo*, resilience, and community—and let us ensure that GAS remains a source of pride for generations to come.

Χρόνια Πολλά GAS. Here's to the next five years—and beyond.



George Psihoyios
Co-Founder and 1st President
Greek-Australian Society

Congratulations to the Greek Australian Society and all involved on a remarkable first five years. In a relatively short time, GAS has grown from an ambitious idea into a vibrant and welcoming home for those who both cherish our Hellenic heritage and are proud of our shared Australian experience.

Since its inception, GAS has brought people together across generations, occupations and interests, fostering collaboration and creating opportunities to celebrate our culture, exchange ideas, and build enduring friendships. Through events, discussions, initiatives and advocacy, GAS has embraced the idea that to be Greek Australian means something different to each of us, and our community is stronger for it.

As a former President, I feel privileged to have played a small part in these early chapters of the GAS story. I have witnessed firsthand the dedication of Board and Committee members over multiple terms, and the commitment of our membership. These efforts have laid a strong foundation that will see GAS continue to thrive for years to come.

Once again, congratulations to current President George Mpliakas, his Committee, and all those who have been involved with GAS to date. I look forward to watching GAS continue to grow from strength to strength over the next five years and beyond.



Ellie Stamatelatos
2nd President
Greek-Australian Society

I'd like to pay tribute to the current GAS President, Executive and Board for their outstanding work in delivering this gala event. It illustrates how far GAS has come in a relatively short period of time, and its success in being able to connect Greek Australians from across the country.

Today's generation of Greek diaspora are facing a major challenge. The challenge of maintaining connection with their cultural identity. While we may have seen a surge in Greek citizenship applications of late this does not serve to address the problem.

Maintaining cultural identity in a modern, globalised world is much more difficult. As the migrant generation becomes more distant from today's youth, as do their stories of the past and what it was like to live as a Greek in Greece. This generation cannot draw upon yiayia or pappou's account of life in the 'xorio' (village), which has seen the culture slowly start to seep out of our lives and homes. While many possess a Greek surname and possibly even a Christian name, they are increasingly becoming foreigners to the Greek language and the country. Without relatives to visit in the motherland or the language to form new connections, their trips are beginning to resemble that of tourists rather than diaspora fostering 'epafi' (connection) with the 'patrida' (motherland).

We must act to ensure our Greek culture survives for future generations, we must not take it for granted. I am thankful that GAS came into existence, and believe it's been already largely successful at pulling the youth in closer. I am grateful to have been selected as a mentee in 2022 and 2023 and connect with mentors from Sydney and Melbourne. I am even prouder to have served as GAS President and contribute to the project of reigniting our culture in the Greek youth of today.

But this is only the beginning. Much more must be done if we want to sit here and legitimately call ourselves Greek Australians let alone Greeks. We must do better; we must do more. We should not be content with simply going to church twice a year, dancing at a paniyiri or eating pastitsio at yiayia's house. Those who fought to protect Greece's sovereignty would have asked for that. So we must do all we can to honour them and maintain connection with our heritage. It's time to draw closer to our as Greece now reaches out to connect with its diaspora as it births rate plummets and its population stagnates.

So, if you are going to take a trip to Greece make sure you visit the best Greece. When you pack your bag, put Duolingo on your phone, learn some phrases and do not shy away from using them. Dare to venture off the beaten path and explore mainland Greece and not just the Cyclades. Most importantly, seek out your roots ('rizes') in the villages of your ancestors, go to a museum, read Greek news, listen to Greek music, watch a Greek movie or a Greek football match. Be more than a visitor. Instead build your connection with modern-day Greece so you learn to feel what it's like to live like one.



Peter Dracakis
3rd President
Greek-Australian Society





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ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ 5 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ THE FIRST 5 YEARS

George Mpliokas

The Greek-Australian Society was founded in 2020 when a group of young Greek-Australians sought to create a new paradigm for community engagement and cultural stewardship.

Four consecutive, contemporary Presidents of the Macquarie University Greek Association, MUGA, spearheaded this initiative and were among our founding Members: George Psihoyios (2016), George Mpliokas (2017), John Georgaklis (2018) and Dean Ohtaras (2019).

At a meeting held at Pron Prohm Thai Restaurant on 19th November 2020, a draft Constitution was approved and signed by George Psihoyios, Constance Piperides, Nikolaos Skondrianos, John Georgaklis and George Mpliokas.

In our application for registration, our Objects were detailed as follows:

- i) unify Greek-Australians,*
- ii) acknowledge, embrace and nurture Greek-Australian identities,*
- iii) organise fundraising events,*
- iv) promote and encourage the participation of Greek-Australians in professional and cultural events,*
- v) promote the learning of Greek language,*
- vi) foster communication, collaboration and cooperation between associations, and*
- vii) provide a framework for advocacy relevant to Greek-Australians.*

At our Inaugural General Meeting, held again at Pron Prohm on Thursday 25th February 2021, the first Board was elected, to each position unopposed;

President: George Psihoyios
Vice-President: Vasiliki Bouladaki
Treasurer: Nik Skondrianos
Secretary: George Mpliokas
Committee: John Georgaklis
Dean Ohtaras
Constance Piperides

Our first public event was held at the Four Seasons Hotel Sydney on Thursday 8th April 2021. This event coincided with the Launch of the GAS Mentoring Program. The first GAS Mentors, all from Sydney, were:

- i) Emmanuel Alfieris, Executive Director, Banks, Government & Education, Commonwealth Bank,**
- ii) The Hon Courtney Houssos MLC, Member of the Legislative Council, Parliament of NSW,**
- iii) Paul Nicolaou, Director, Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry,**
- iv) George Karagiannakis, Executive Director, Government Relations, IAG, and**
- v) Stella Drivas, Senior Managing Consultant, IBM iX.**

ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ 5 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ | THE FIRST 5 YEARS

Approximately 50 guests attended our first event. Paul Kougias was the first non-Board Member to join, while Emmanuel Alfieris made the successful bid of \$1,000.00 at auction to become GAS Member #0001.

Sadly, Emmanuel passed away in 2024, aged just 53. Alongside the Kytherian Association of Australia, GAS was proud to successfully nominate him for the NSW Multicultural Honour Roll, and he was officially inducted at the Premier's Harmony Dinner on 12th March 2025. From 2025, GAS will honour Manny's memory by awarding the annual Emmanuel Alfieris Award. This will be presented at the conclusion of the GAS Mentoring Program each year to a mentee who has shown initiative, growth, and a genuine commitment to our Greek-Australian community.

Shortly after our Launch in 2021, Sydney and much of Australia was locked down by the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this new reality, GAS delivered the first intake of our Mentoring Program completely remotely with 6 Mentees: Harry Mavrolefteros, Michael Aroney, Constance Piperides, Anastasios Zervopoulos, David Richey-Lowe and Ari Paraskakis.

After the end of COVID lockdowns, GAS held our first Melbourne event on Friday 27th May 2022 with Networking Drinks at the Corner Hotel in Richmond, and our first Brisbane event with a Roundtable Lunch at Nostimo Restaurant, West End on Friday 11th November 2022.

In 2024, we formed a working group based in Sydney to expand on the work of Pharos Alliance Victoria, establishing Pharos Alliance NSW as an initiative of GAS. On Thursday 15th May 2025, we launched our initial Strategic Plan to revitalise Modern Greek language in New South Wales with an even in the Parliament of NSW, with Konnie Zagrimanis as Convenor and with the support of the Consulate General of Greece in Sydney and the NSW Department of Education.

In 2023 and 2025, GAS elected a new Board for our second and third terms, respectively. In 2023, Ellie Stamatelatos was elected our first female President, before stepping down mid-term to focus on her new senior role at Sydney Airport Corporation. In 2024, Peter Dracakis was elected to fill the vacancy, becoming our first President from Brisbane and outside of Sydney. In 2025, George Mpliakos was elected our fourth President.

2021-23	2023-25	2025-27
George Psihoyios Sydney	Ellie Stamatelatos Sydney	George Mpliakos Sydney
Vanessa Boultaadaki Sydney	Peter Dracakis Brisbane	Bill Maloukis Sydney
George Mpliakos Sydney	George Mpliakos Sydney	Stella Drivas Sydney
John Georgaklis Sydney	Bill Maloukis Sydney	Prof Vasso Apostolopoulos AM Melbourne
Nik Skondrianos Canberra	Apollonas Karakaidos Melbourne	Paul Kougias Sydney
Dean Ohtaras Sydney	John Georgaklis Sydney	Mersina Hristeff Sydney
Constance Piperides Sydney	George Psihoyios Sydney	Paul Kaletsis Canberra
Denise Serdenes Melbourne	Eleni Tatsis Sydney	John Georgaklis Sydney
Eleni Nzifas Melbourne	Constance Piperides Sydney	Arthur Sarlas Sydney
Dean Kotsianis Melbourne	Stella Drivas Sydney	

ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ 5 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ | THE FIRST 5 YEARS

To date, a total of 21 Members have served on the GAS Board: 4 Members have served across two terms (George Psihoyios, Constance Piperides, Bill Maloukis and Stella Drivas), while 2 Members have served for three terms (George Mpliakas and John Georgaklis). As of September 2025, GAS has 669 Members, of which 391 were financial within the past 12 months.

Over the past five years, we have hosted more than 40 events, from networking drinks sessions, luncheons, webinars, taverna nights, brunches, book presentations, art exhibits, and program kick-offs. We have supported numerous community initiatives, partnering with, providing cultural consultancy for and supporting organisations including the Greek Community of Melbourne, the Athens University of Economics and Business, the Consulate General of Greece in Sydney, the Combined Universities Greek Association, NUGAS Victoria, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, Greek Youth of South



the Australian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Heartbeat of Football, Macarthur Greeks, the Worldwide Confederation of Thessalians, the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, Multicultural NSW, the Greek Democritus Workers League, the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia, Manassis School of Greek Dance and Culture, Hellenic Volunteer Firefighters Association, Greek Orthodox Youth Australia – Brisbane, the Kytherian Association of Australia and the Greek Returned Servicemen League of NSW.



Australia, Pharos Alliance Victoria, Greek Fringe, the Modern Greek Teachers' Association of Victoria, the Greek Community of St George – Brisbane, Meteora NSW, the Cyprus-Hellene Club – Sydney, the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW, Syndesmos: Connecting People and their Stories, O Kosmos Greek-Australian Newspaper, SBS Greek, Greek City Times, Neos Kosmos, PASEKA – Pan-Australian Justice for Cyprus Committee,

Over the next five years, our Board and our Members are committed to building on this platform to reach our Members at events across Australia, to extend our GAS Mentoring Program further across the world, to fight for the revitalisation of Greek language learning and use in Australia, to create new programs to empower young Greek-Australian community leaders, to connect with fellow multicultural communities, to deepen relationships with Greece and Cyprus, to learn from fellow Greek diaspora communities, to explore our own identities as Greek-Australians and to ensure our culture, our language and our ideals ensure into the future.

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FIVE YEARS OF GAS MENTORING:

Guiding the Next Generation of Greek-Australian Leaders

Natalie Martin | Editor in Chief, Greek City Times

Now in its fifth year, the Greek-Australian Society (GAS) Mentoring Program is connecting Greek-Australians worldwide. Two of its mentors - The Hon. Arthur Sinodinos AO, former Australian Ambassador to the United States, and Bill Karagounis, global technology executive and entrepreneur - reflect on heritage, leadership, and helping guide the next generation.

Since launching in 2021 with just five mentors in Sydney, the GAS Mentoring Program has grown into the organisation's flagship initiative, bridging generations and linking participants across Australia, Greece, the United States, and the United Kingdom. This year, GAS counts 27 mentors worldwide and has accepted 39 mentees into its latest intake, helping to address what GAS President George Mpliokas calls "the generational gap in our community."

"We formed the Mentoring Program to help facilitate connections between generations of Greek-Australians, from young graduates and students through to successful businesspeople and community leaders," explains Mpliokas. "It's been a platform to build our membership - now over 650 worldwide - and a way to nurture and grow future leaders of our community."

To mark this milestone, GAS is shining a spotlight on two of its most distinguished mentors: The Hon. Arthur Sinodinos AO, former Australian Ambassador to the United States, Senator, and Minister; and Bill Karagounis, former Microsoft executive and now CEO and Co-founder of Xhilon - PrivateAI. Their stories reveal the power of mentorship and the enduring importance of staying connected to one's roots.

Carrying Heritage Abroad

For both Arthur and Bill, being Greek-Australian is not just a background detail - it is a defining element of who they are.

"Being Greek-Australian means a pride in a heritage that goes back thousands of years fused with being born in one of the true 'lucky' countries of the world," says Sinodinos. "My heritage has shaped how I view people - that ethnic origins, while important, are not as significant as the things that unite us as fellow humans."

Bill echoes this sentiment, saying: "Being Greek-Australian is at the core of who I am. From my family I inherited a strong work ethic, the value of *filotimo* - doing what's right - and a deep sense of community. Growing up in Australia gave me opportunities to explore and to dream big. That mix has been powerful: it grounded me in heritage while giving me the drive to embrace the world."

Both leaders see their identities as something to be celebrated, not compromised, when living abroad. Bill made a pivotal decision to move his young family back to Australia so they could grow up closer to their grandparents and absorb the stories of migration that shaped his own childhood. "When we returned to the U.S., they weren't just American kids anymore - they carried roots, perspective, and a heritage that gave them a broader worldview."

Lessons from a Life of Service

Arthur Sinodinos' career spans four decades, from his early days in the Australian Public Service to serving as Chief of Staff to Prime Minister John Howard, Cabinet Secretary, Minister for Industry, and finally Ambassador to the United States.

"Whatever else I do in life, my association with John Howard was a highlight of my professional career," he reflects. "We established a relationship that endured through the following decades, and it set me on a course that led to other opportunities I would never have foreseen growing up in Newcastle."

Arthur is proudest not just of the titles he has held but of the way he has treated people. "I would hope a general achievement has been the way I treat people and put myself in their shoes - to be remembered as a trusted adviser." His work guiding the Washington Embassy through COVID-19 and shaping key initiatives such as AUKUS and the Quad reflects a career built on trust, relationships, and service.

From Canterbury Boys' High to Silicon Valley

Bill Karagounis' path took him from Sydney to the heart of the global tech industry. Over 16 years at Microsoft, he led teams delivering Windows and Cloud technologies used by hundreds of millions worldwide.

FIVE YEARS OF GAS MENTORING: Guiding the Next Generation of Greek-Australian Leaders



"Delivering products at that scale means leading very large teams on projects that involve thousands of people, all while working under intense pressure and tight deadlines," he says. "Through those experiences I learned three lessons: collaboration is everything, leaders grow leaders, and autonomy fuels innovation."

Those lessons now underpin his leadership as CEO of Xhilon - PrivateAI, where he is focused on building technology that makes AI safe and efficient for enterprise customers.

The Power of Mentorship

Both Arthur and Bill see mentoring as a natural extension of their careers and their commitment to giving back.

"I want to give back to emerging leaders in our community," says Arthur simply. "Mentoring helps young people clarify what they want to do and how to get there. You can get a lifetime's worth of experience distilled into a few hours of dialogue that may make all the difference to your life's trajectory."

Bill describes mentorship as "the bridge I wish I'd had early in my career."

"My own journey - from Canterbury Boys' High to an engineering leader at Microsoft - was shaped by perseverance, luck, and the few mentors who invested in me. GAS gives the next generation the guidance I once lacked. Watching mentees grow in confidence and achieve things they once thought impossible is a constant reminder of why mentorship matters."

Strengthening Community Across Generations

Both mentors agree that organisations like GAS play a crucial role in keeping Hellenism vibrant and relevant for future generations.

"Absorption into the broader culture can impact staying connected," notes Arthur. "But giving young people a sense of their heritage gives them pride in who they are - and I would argue, makes them better citizens too."

Bill adds that mentoring transforms cultural identity from a nostalgic idea into something lived and active.

"A program like GAS creates community, preserves our culture, and gives young people a safe place to talk openly about challenges with people who've walked the same path."

As GAS celebrates its fifth anniversary, both men see the Mentoring Program as a cornerstone of the Society's future.

"I see GAS becoming the leading platform in Australia for Greek-Australian professionals to connect, collaborate, and support one another," says Bill. "No young Greek-Australian should ever feel they have to walk their path alone."

Arthur's vision is equally clear: hoping for the Mentoring Program "to grow and become an important fixture of community life."

Asked what advice they would give to young Greek-Australians, both Arthur and Bill encourage boldness and connection.

"Take risks when you are young," Arthur says. "There is time to rectify mistakes. Going overseas works best when you are young and unattached. And always compare yourself to your past, not others."

"Be bold, have courage but stay grounded," Bill echoes. "Don't be afraid to take your career abroad and aim high. But never lose touch with your heritage - it will keep you centred no matter where you go."

Five years on, the GAS Mentoring Program reflects the strength and vision of a community determined to invest in its future. It continues to keep Greek heritage alive while opening doors for the next generation - connecting people, sharing experience, and helping the next wave of Greek-Australian leaders find their voice.

This article was written by Natalie Martin, Editor in Chief of Greek City Times - the world's largest English-language Greek publication. Visit www.greekcitytimes.com for more stories celebrating Greek culture, community, and achievement.





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On behalf of the Kytherian Association of Australia, we extend our warmest congratulations to GAS on the remarkable occasion of your 5th anniversary.

As a fellow organisation committed to fostering leadership, community spirit and Hellenic heritage, we commend GAS for its vision and dedication over these past five years. Your work continues to inspire and uplift our Greek-Australian community.

We also take this moment to honour the memory of our esteemed Past President, Emmanuel Alfieris. Emmanuel was immensely proud to be GAS Member #0001 and to serve as an inaugural mentor in your Mentoring Program in 2021. His passion for mentoring and supporting the next generation was unwavering. We are deeply moved by the establishment of the Emmanuel Alfieris Award, a fitting tribute to a man whose legacy continues to guide and inspire.

May GAS continue to grow, thrive, and positively impact our community for many years to come.



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Reimagining Greek Australia: How GAS is shaping a new generation

With mentoring, dialogue, and a new vision, the Greek Australian Society is bridging generations and redefining what it means to be Hellenic in Australia

BY FOTIS KAPETOPOULOS

The Greek Australian Society (GAS), or 'Ελληνοαυστραλιανός Σύνδεσμος, according to George Mpliakas its president and one of the co-founders, was created as an opportunity to connect different generations of Greek Australians and help guide the community into the future. They wanted to challenge "preconceptions" about the community—its composition today and its trajectory going forward.

AN ANCHOR FOR THE FUTURE

For George Mpliakas, these "preconceptions" centre on the notion that young Greek Australians are disengaged, leading to "a predestined end, or finality towards Greek community participation."

"We were uni-students in Sydney and Melbourne primarily to begin with and it was difficult for us to connect with the broader community particularly after we graduated.

"Some of us have a proficiency in Greek, some of us speak at least some Greek however, many of our members do not, but that doesn't mean that they're not passionate about our culture and language," Mpliakas tells *Neos Kosmos*. Many members of GAS, 'Ελληνοαυστραλιανός Σύνδεσμος, come from culturally mixed families—Greek Australians partnered with non-Greek Australians. However, as Mpliakas notes, this does not mean that children of mixed families lack the spark of Hellenism.

THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW

Reflecting on the pre-digital era of the 1980s, 1990s and



President George Mpliakas with mentees. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

even the early 2000s, Mpliakas reflects on the inter-generational shift.

"Students then were engaging more with senior Greek community organisations immediately after university.

"But for us, growing up a Greek Australian in the 2010s, or 2020s we found a growing chasm between these senior Greek Australian organisations and young people, and we wanted to be able to fill that gap to help ease a transition between the generations," he says.

Mpliakas, believes the organisation provides a space for third- and fourth-generation Greek Australians.

"The GAS model was to turn the existing community infrastructure model on its head," he explains.

GAS has moved away from the traditional geographic focus of associations in Greece tied to

“Many of us who are third and fourth generation have a broader affinity with Greece and Hellenism as an ideal, not with a particular place, we may not have had firsthand have an experience with

ancestral villages.

"Many of us who are third and fourth generation have a broader affinity with Greece and Hellenism as an ideal, not with a particular place, we may not have had firsthand experience with."

IT'S NOT ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Being from Sydney, Mpliakas also recognises the differences between diasporas in different states.

"We wanted also to honour those differences and break up the idea we grew up in that Greek Australia that was a monolith, where all one size fits all."

He recalls a lecture by Professor Nikos Papastergiadis on "lateral engagements versus the horizontal" and reflected.

"We may have more in common as Greek Australians of Sydney, or Melbourne, with Greek diaspora in Buenos Aires and the Greek communities of Johannesburg than even perhaps some local Greek Australian communities."

The GAS president also highlights the importance of recognising the different waves of migration and the length of time communities have been



From left, GAS board members, Arthur Sarlas, Bill Maloukis, President George Mplokas, Vasso Apostolopoulos, Greek Community of Melbourne President Bill Papastergiadis, and GAS Secretary John Georgaklis. PHOTOS: STEPH ELEFTHERIADIS

in Australia, which “created different textures we should acknowledge.”

Moreover, he believes these differences and commonalities are vital when considering the “underutilisation of the diaspora more broadly in the efforts of Greece to be prosperous as a modern contributor to global society.”

“I think we have a common value regardless of the language barriers that limits our ability to collaborate or engage.

“At GAS in an Australian con-

text we insist on an inclusive environment, where people can connect with one another. If we don’t know each other then we can’t work together, and if we can’t work together then we won’t be able to assist our communities here or in Greece,” he states.

MENTORING THE FUTURE

Among its initiatives, GAS has developed a mentoring program, which Mplokas says gave the society “purpose.”

“We have been able to over five years grow exponentially.

We had five mentors and six mentees in our first year, and this year we have 27 mentors and 39 mentees in this current intake.”

The six-month GAS mentorship program pairs mentors established in their professions—who also have lived experience of Greek community engagement—with younger Greek Australians. The program emphasises that professional experience must be enriched by a Greek Australian upbringing and its values.

He is not interested in replicating industry training, noting that professional bodies already provide that. Instead, he wants to offer professional and cultural mentoring for emerging Greek Australian leaders and activists. “Industry bodies are better resourced to provide professional mentoring; what we offer is a space for mentors with experience in Greek engagement to assist meaningfully to younger generations of Greek Australians to plug-in and engage.

“We’re proud to have not only done it in our first year but been able to grow it every year since,” he says.

A WIDE CANVAS FOR ENGAGEMENT

Looking ahead, GAS is exploring forums, discussions, travel and more. Over the past five years, the organisation has been active primarily along the east coast—in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane—through events and mentoring. They also partner with the Pharos Alliance Greek language advocacy group, expanding from Victoria into New South Wales.

“We are looking to find any opportunity to collaborate and support the existing community ecosystems in Northern Territory, in South Australia and Western Australia.”

“Now though we have to focus on a young leaders’ program because our community needs people of all ages and genders, with professional lived experiences to take positions of responsibility in our community.”

For Mplokas, GAS is not about preserving the past, rather it is about engineering a future, by engaging new generations of Greek Australians that may shape the community’s future with purpose.



George Mplokas the president of GAS ‘Ελληνοαυστραλιανός Σύνδεσμος, with a new crop of Hellenes. PHOTO: KARMATOGRAPHY / SUPPLIED





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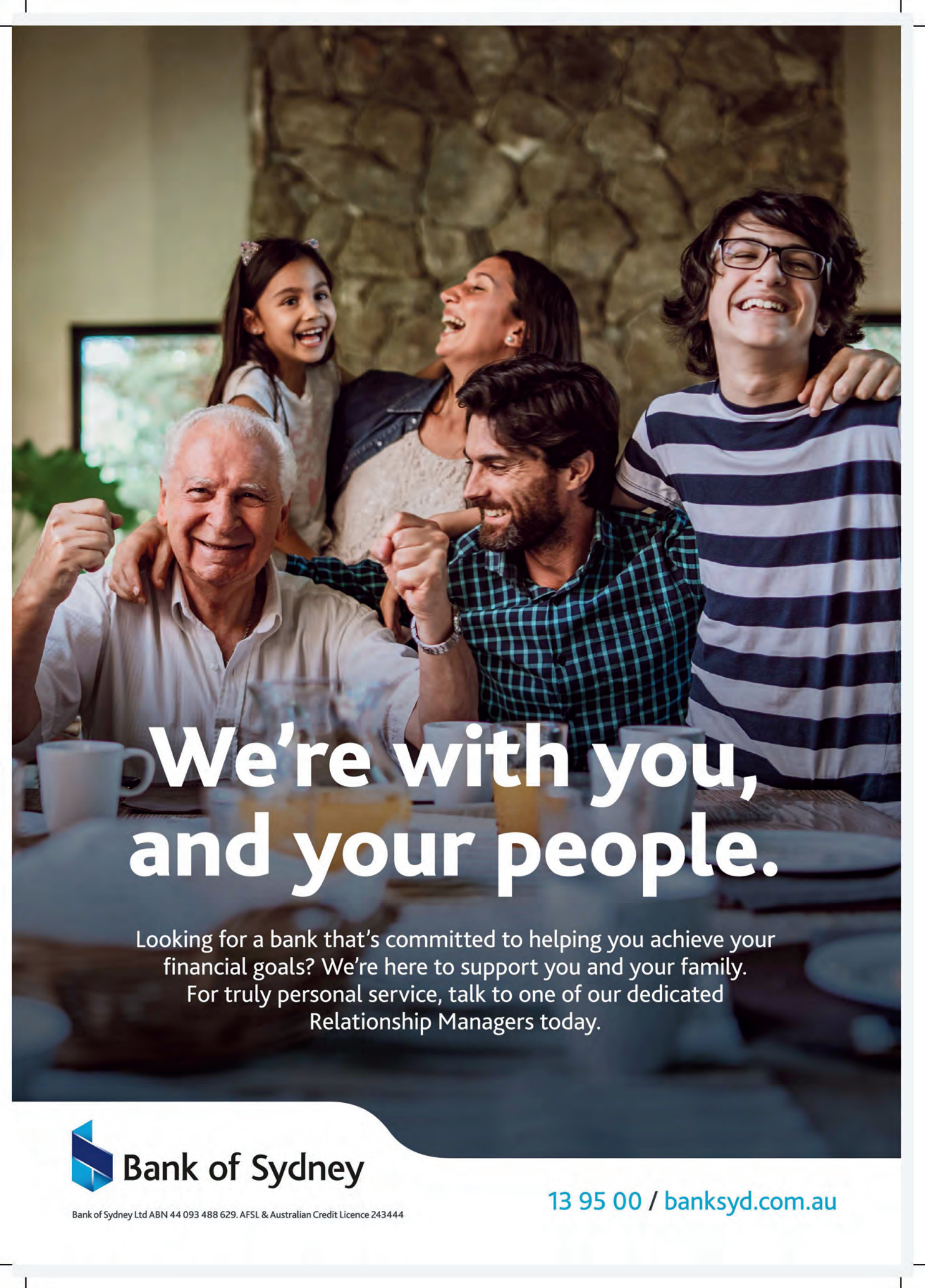
Launch of the
Mentoring Program

2024

Overview: 2021 GAS Mentoring Program

- Mentoring Period to February 2022 requested by Mentors
- Mid-term event proposed for 22 October (TBC)
- Detail & workshop to assist GAS deliver next Mentoring Program round
- Talk to us! Give your ideas, share feedback, support our growth





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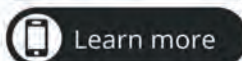
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Connecting People and Their Stories

For the last couple of decades, our Greek community has experienced an important transitory period with the ageing and passing of the post World War II migrant generation's community leadership, leaving the Australian-born with the decision as to whether to take up leadership positions to sustain the Greek culture and identity for the future. Ideally, we hoped there were succession plans in place in various Greek groups and associations that would ensure the Australian-born generation taking up these leadership roles. Realistically, however, there are so many cases where Greek associations and groups where the transition of leadership from one generation to the next generation has been successful- so many groups and associations have unfortunately have folded- for various reasons.

In all this flux within our Greek community, this is what makes the Australian Greek Society such a unique group. The Australian Greek Society may be celebrating its five-year anniversary since its establishment- relatively still in its infancy- and its aims and objectives' importance cannot be understated. Here is the Greek Australian Society's Australian-born leaders, in their respective fields, mentoring second- and even third generation- Australians of Greek heritage- under a banner that appreciates and respects both Greek and Australian identities.

For a number of years, my involvement with the Greek Australian Society has been to provide social media promotion and raising community awareness of its work. Already knowing individuals such as George and Gabriella Mpliakas, George Psychogios, Bill Maloukis and Eleni and Jim Tatsis within various roles within the Greek and Australian communities provided the familiar faces to make my relationship with the Greek Australian Society a lot easier.

Attending several Greek Australian Society events over the years, I have witnessed their growth first hand. The first networking gatherings may have been in some Inner City pub but it was clear the Greek Australian Society's leadership organized these nights with the long term vision of growth. These networking gatherings may be set in the relaxed setting of a pub where people have the opportunity to meet others- to spur networks- but the objectives clearly go beyond the introductions and conversations. At each of these gatherings are main speakers who weave the narrative of personal success in their respective fields and how such successful people may mentor young aspiring people in their own careers.

And it is the Greek Australian Society's Mentoring Program that provides an invaluable opportunity for young Greek professionals to gain insights, knowledge

and skills from people who have the experience and success to guide them to their own success. And these mentors come from diverse backgrounds, whether in the diplomatic corp, CEOs, entrepreneurs, academics and artists, which offer a wide range of advice, support and guidance. It must be emphasised that all this important work is undertaken within a Greek Australian context- it is a professional relationship of Greeks supporting other Greeks.

At this point, the Mentors of this Mentoring Program must be commended for their selflessness and belief that it is important to pass on their expertise and experience onto the next generation. Putting aside time for mentoring others epitomizes the underlying nobility of their willingness to support others.

Another admirable aspect of the Greek Australian Society is its own networking relationships, which adds to the kudos of its work. Its relationships with Business Sydney- who has incidentally hosted Greek Australian Society events- and the Consulate General of the Hellenic Republic in Sydney are just two examples to emphasise how institutions, whether at a local, national or international level, value the work of the Greek Australian Society and are willing to support it.

With the Greek Australian Society celebrating its fifth anniversary since its established, it is an opportune time to reflect upon its strong growth and success. What the increasing numbers of its Mentoring Program highlight is the program is of great benefit to all the mentees- they have experienced the opportunities to learn and grow first hand and all their positivity and enthusiasm merely ensures further growth of the Mentoring Program.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the Greek Australian Society for their invitations to cover their events; I have been to witness all the achievements and success first-hand. I wholeheartedly wish the Greek Australian Society greater achievements and success in all their future endeavours.

Vasilios Vasilas
September 28 2025



THE GAS MENTORING PROGRAM

It is a privilege to address you all at the 5th Anniversary Ball of the Greek Australian Society (GAS) — a celebration of community, tradition, and progress. Tonight marks not only five years of growth for our Society, but also a milestone for one of its flagship initiatives, the Mentoring Program.

When the Mentoring Program was first launched, it represented a bold vision: to create structured opportunities for young Greek Australians to learn from established professionals in their chosen fields, while strengthening the cultural and community bonds that unite us. In a short period, this program has become a cornerstone of GAS — a platform that has already changed lives and shaped careers.

This year, I had the honour of being appointed Convenor of the 2025 Mentoring Program, following in the footsteps of George Psihoyios, our Co-Founder and inaugural President,

who successfully led the program as its first dedicated Convenor. George set a high standard, and I am grateful for the trust he has placed in me to carry this legacy forward. I also thank President George Mpliakas and the Board for their confidence in my leadership of this initiative.

In 2025, the program reached a new peak, with 27 mentors and 39 mentees participating across Australia and abroad. This number represents more than statistics — it represents dozens of unique relationships, each built on trust, respect, and a willingness to learn from one another. For mentees, the program has provided guidance on navigating careers, building networks, and making bold decisions. Some have secured new roles, while others have gained the confidence to step into leadership positions or pursue further study. For mentors, it has been an opportunity to give back, to share lessons learned, and to see the next generation take flight.



Mentorship is more than professional advice. It is about shaping values, offering perspective, and walking alongside someone at a key moment in their journey. As Greek Australians, we draw on the concept of *filotimo* — honour, respect, and service — which sits at the heart of every mentoring relationship. This spirit reminds us that when one of us succeeds, our whole community rises.

The success of this program rests on the generosity of many people. To our mentors, I extend my heartfelt thanks. Your willingness to dedicate time, energy, and wisdom is shaping the leaders of tomorrow. To our mentees, I offer my admiration. Your courage to seek guidance, to ask questions, and to embrace growth is what gives this program its strength. To the GAS Board and volunteers, I share my gratitude. Your tireless work behind the scenes provides the structure and resources that allow mentoring to thrive.

I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of our members. In just five years, GAS has grown to a community of more than 650 members, making us one of the most dynamic Greek Australian networks in the country. The success of the Mentoring Program is a reflection of this collective energy, and it belongs to all of us.

For me, mentoring has been a constant thread throughout my professional life — from my beginnings as a civil engineer, through my leadership roles in industry, and now as Managing Director of Construction Specialties Australia. I have seen first-hand the difference that guidance, encouragement, and a timely piece of advice can make. As Convenor, I feel both humbled and inspired. Humbled, because

I stand on the shoulders of those who created and nurtured this program before me. Inspired, because I see in every mentor and mentee the potential of our community to grow stronger, more connected, and more resilient.

As we celebrate five years of GAS, our vision for the future is bold. We will continue to expand opportunities for mentees across industries, to strengthen global connections with Greek professionals abroad, and to equip young leaders with the confidence and skills they need to thrive in an ever-changing world. The next phase of our program will be about building sustainability — ensuring that mentorship remains not just a yearly initiative, but a permanent pillar of what it means to be part of GAS.



Tonight's Ball is more than a social gathering. It is a reflection of what we achieve when we work together, when we pass on our wisdom, and when we embody the values that have carried our community across generations. As we raise a glass to five years of the Greek Australian Society, let us also raise our sights to the future. May the next five years bring even greater opportunities, even stronger connections, and an enduring legacy of mentorship that will continue to inspire generations to come.

Βασίλειος (Bill) Maloukis
Vice President
2025 Mentoring Program Convenor
Greek Australian Society



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Pharos Alliance NSW

Keeping Greek Alive: Our First 6 months of Action



The Pharos Alliance NSW is a cross-community, volunteer-led initiative working to revitalise Modern Greek as a living language in New South Wales. Pharos Alliance NSW is an initiative of the Greek-Australian Society, in partnership with Professor Joseph Lo Bianco AM.

Since the public launch of the *Pharos Alliance NSW Strategic Plan* in May, we have made strong progress towards revitalising Modern Greek in NSW as a living language for future generations. Guided by our vision and the COD model **building Capacity, creating Opportunity, and inspiring Desire**, our first six months have laid critical foundations to ensure Modern Greek learning and usage can flourish across our community.

Delivering on our vision

We believe that learning Modern Greek enriches students' cognitive, social, and emotional development. To bring this belief to life, we have:

- Built deep political engagement – securing bipartisan support at our launch in NSW Parliament House, attended by senior leaders including Murat Dizdar PSM, Secretary of the NSW Department of Education, and followed by meetings with Matt Thistlethwaite MP, Sophie Cotsis MP, and Mark Buttigieg MLC, who spoke in Parliament about our work.
- Strengthened ties with faith and cultural leaders – meeting with His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia to share the Pharos vision and seek his blessing and support for our efforts to revitalise Modern Greek across schools and communities.
- Raised awareness locally and internationally – with Dr Patricia Koromvokis presenting the Pharos vision to postgraduate students of the University of Western Macedonia, Greece. Locally, our work has been featured in *Neos Kosmos*, *The Greek Herald* and *Greek City Times*, extending our message across the diaspora community and beyond.
- Engaged the community at scale – achieving more than 30,000 people reached through Instagram, increased website visits, and downloads of our strategic plan.
- Activated community capacity – receiving expressions of interest from across the community, including young students, parents, teachers, and professionals eager to volunteer their time and expertise.
- Embedded the COD model in practice – following our successful launch at NSW Parliament, attended by politicians, consular representatives, media, and government bodies, we have begun extensive community consultation. The first stage of this is our newly launched bilingual (Greek and English) digital survey for parents, which will directly inform next steps.

Pharos Alliance NSW Keeping Greek Alive: Our First Six Months of Action

Acknowledgments

This work would not be possible without the generous patronage of GAS members, whose support has helped us turn vision into action. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to every member of the Pharos Alliance NSW for their dedication, hard work, and commitment to revitalising Modern Greek for future generations.



Your role in the movement

Right now, we are at a pivotal moment. The problem is clear: without collective action, Modern Greek risks fading as a language of everyday use in NSW. But there is a solution: through the COD model, we can create a thriving ecosystem of learners, teachers, and families who bring the language into daily life.

Here's the call to action: please take a few minutes to complete our online survey and just as importantly, share it with parents, carers, family, and friends in your network. Every voice matters. Together, we can ensure that Modern Greek is not only preserved but revitalised as a living, breathing language for the next generation.

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OlympusTech is honoured to celebrate five remarkable years of the Greek-Australian Society. As a Silver Partner, we proudly support GAS' mission to foster cultural connection, community engagement, and professional collaboration across Australia's vibrant Hellenic diaspora.

Our partnership with GAS reflects shared values of integrity, innovation, and inclusivity. We commend the Society's dedication to enriching the lives of Greek-Australians and promoting excellence in every endeavour.

Congratulations to GAS on this milestone anniversary! We look forward to continuing this meaningful journey together.





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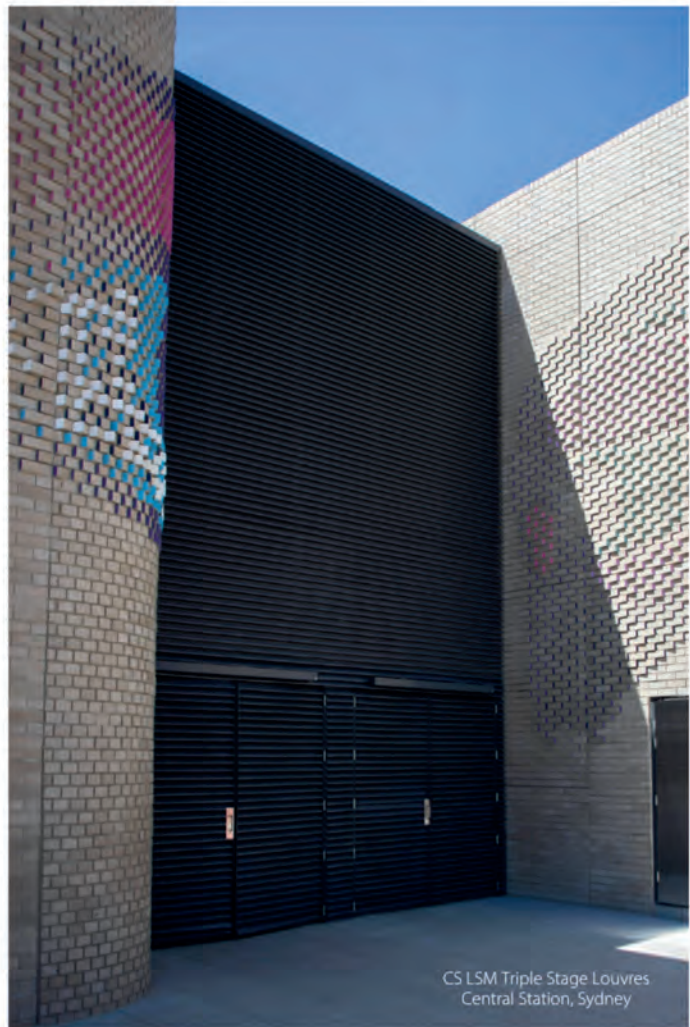
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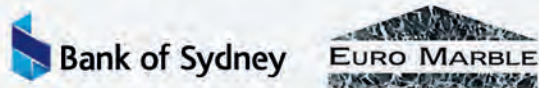
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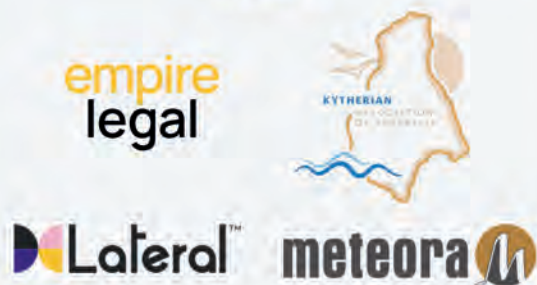
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