



# Olive Press

Newsletter of the Kefi Club



End of season BBQ 20/07/2018



Thank you to all the cooks, organisers and helpers who gave us the lovely BBQ last night. The food was super and the drinks first class as usual!

It was a good opportunity to enjoy a lengthy chat with people, perfect!  
Murray & Mary

Many thanks to super-chef Gordon for cooking the lamb chops, sausages and haloumi cheese.

Out of shot are the vegetarian kebabs.

The weather was slightly against us and threatening rain, so although we were able to do the important cooking outside, we had to eat inside.

24 people had a lovely evening and it was a great way to end the year.





Great salads prepared by Sally and David and Nick.

Thanks to Yvonne, Diane and Ann who cut up industrial amounts of melon and made a lovely display with grapes to finish the meal.



## Oil wrestling practiced with devotion in Greece



In this Saturday, June 30, 2018 photo, wrestlers covered in olive oil fight in an annual traditional oil wrestling competition in the northern Greek village of Sochos. Massive men walk around the lawn turned into a wrestling ring to the tune of traditional music, their torsos slathered in olive oil, for an annual festival that blends the traditions of ancient Greece and more modern times. [Giannis Papanikos/AP]

Massive men with olive oil-slathered torsos saunter around a grass sports field that becomes a wrestling ring with religious overtones during an annual festival in northern Greece blending traditions both ancient and modern.

Many of the strutting athletes on display compete in regular tournaments. But every year on June 30, fighters assemble in the field in Sochos, a small town about 60 kilometers northeast of Thessaloniki, for a different kind of match.

Here, the competitors wear knee-length leather trousers known as a "kiouspeti," which can weigh up to 10 kilograms (22 pounds).

The oil covering their upper bodies has the dual purpose of minimizing injuries from holds and making it harder to throw a rival back-down on the ground, the goal of the game.

The practice of wrestling clad in leather trousers and oil dates to the Ottoman Empire, and the largest event these days takes place in northwest Turkey.

In Sochos, where matches are held on the Orthodox Christian saint's day dedicated to the Apostles, the contenders prepare for bouts by seeking blessings at icons of Christ's disciples.

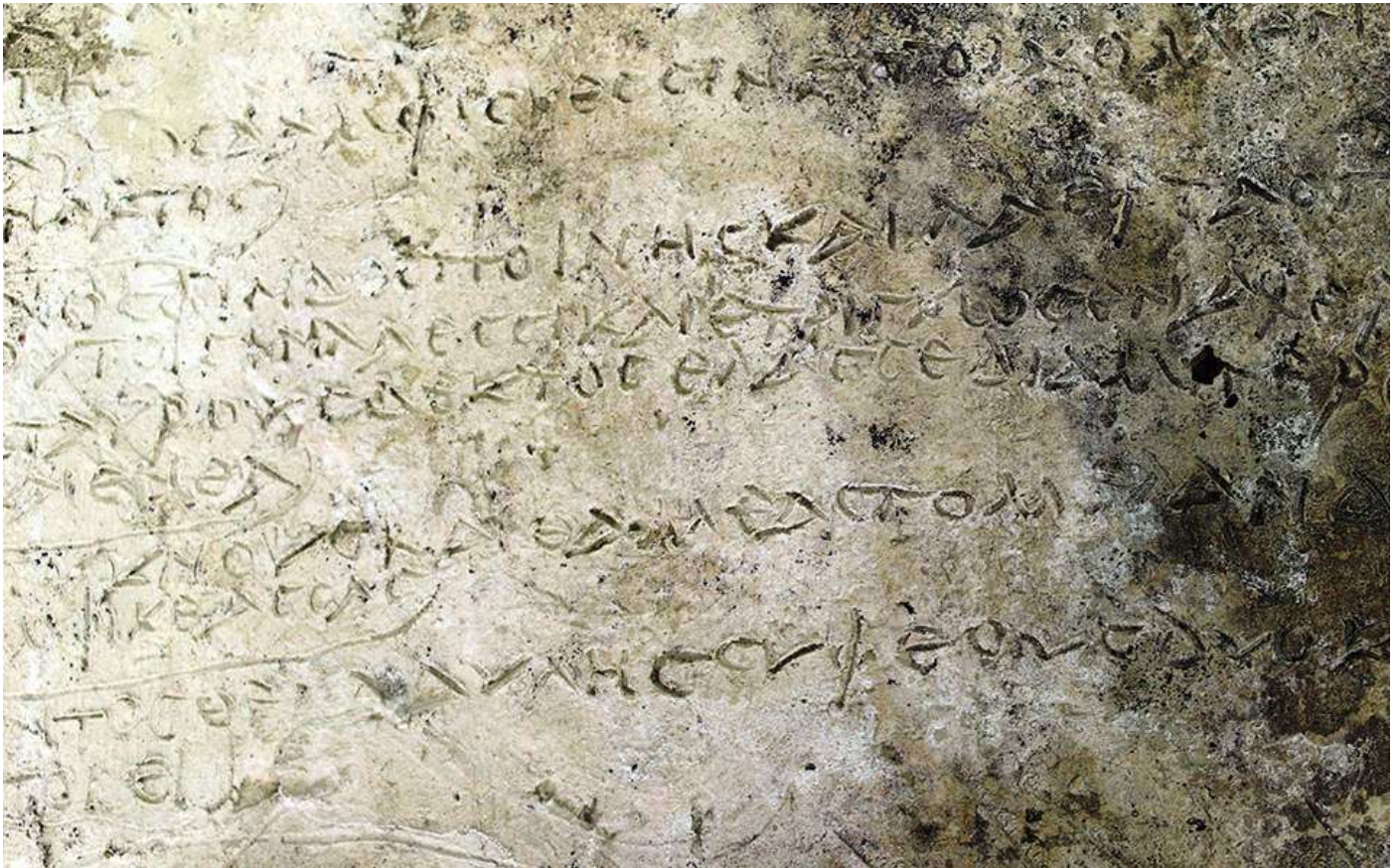
Parading in front of thousands of spectators and then coating themselves with olive oil is another tradition observed by the Sochos wrestlers. The matches begin simultaneously and opponents wrestle in pairs side-

by-side for 20 minutes.

If a match does not produce a winner in that time, referees grant extensions. Defeated fighters leave the field until only one remains: the winner.

Traditional wind instruments and drums provide a soundtrack for the action, the music rising and falling according to the intensity as the fighting. (Giannis Papanikos, Costas Kantouris 03/07/2018)

## Clay plaque found at Olympia hailed as oldest written record of Odyssey



Archaeologists in Greece have discovered what they believe to be the oldest known extract of Homer's epic poem "The Odyssey." A team of Greek and German researchers found it on an engraved clay plaque in Ancient Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic Games in the Peloponnese peninsula, the Greek culture ministry said on Tuesday. It holds 13 verses from the Odyssey's 14th Rhapsody, where its hero, Odysseus, addresses his lifelong friend Eumaeus. Preliminary estimates date the finding to the Roman era, probably before the 3rd century AD. The date still needed to be confirmed, but the plaque was still "a great archaeological, epigraphic, literary and historical exhibit," the ministry said. The Odyssey, 12,109 lines of poetry attributed to the ancient Greek poet Homer, tells the story of Odysseus, king of Ithaca, who wanders for 10 years trying to get home after the fall of Troy.

The Odyssey is the second major poem attributed to Homer after the "Iliad" and scholars date its writing to around 675–725 BC. It is widely considered to be among the world's greatest works of literature. (ekathimerini.com 10/07/2018)

## 'Classical Greek Oligarchy,' 'House of Names' share Runciman Award

It is said that Sir Steven Runciman fell in love with the Byzantine Empire as a young man in 1929, while on the deck of the family yacht. Looking out to Monemvasia on the eastern coast of the Peloponnese, he saw the castle town's walls and churches from afar and felt a strong affinity toward Greece. This affinity lasted

his entire life and compelled him to study Byzantine history and bring it out of international obscurity. He taught, wrote and forged friendships with important Greek literary figures, such as Giorgos Seferis and Angelos Sikelianos, becoming an important bridge between Greek and British culture. Today, one of the most respected awards in this field carries his name.

The Runciman Award was conceived in 1986 by the Anglo-Hellenic League, which was founded in 1913. In charge of this association is an individual particularly loved in Greece: John Kittmer, the former British ambassador to Athens, who was recently succeeded by Kate Smith.

The Runciman Award aims to showcase English-speaking publications that concern some aspect of Greece or the world of Hellenism. Past winners include highly respected writers such as historian Mark Mazower and Roderick Beaton, Korae Professor of Modern Greek and Byzantine History, Language and Literature at King's College London. The award's prestige is also reflected in the caliber of its committee. Led by Dr John Penney (Wolfson College), the panel included Dionysis Kapsalis (director of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation), Dr Stavroula Pipyrou (lecturer in the Department of Social Anthropology at St Andrews University) and Peter Frankopan (professor of International History at Oxford).

This year the judges had the difficult task of picking a winner from among 47 entries, with publications ranging from academic research to books aimed at wider audiences. The short-listed nominees were announced in April and the prizewinning ceremony took place last month at the Hellenic Center in London. The award was shared between two publications: "Classical Greek Oligarchy" by Matthew Simonton (Princeton University Press) and "House of Names" by Colm Toibin (Penguin/Viking). The awards were presented by Prince Michael of Kent, alongside Dimitris Paraskevas of Elias Paraskevas Attorneys, which provided the 10,000-pound award.

"This year's competition was remarkable, with excellent books submitted and short-listed. The strong field reflects the high quality of current writing in English about Hellenism and its many guises," Kittmer said. "The fascination of Greece, Greek history and Greek culture evidently remains undimmed, amongst scholars and laypersons alike, as this year's splendidly varied submissions for the Runciman Award clearly attest," said Penney.

"Given the overall quality of the field, all the short-listed books earned warm congratulations for their authors, and the judges had a hard time deciding between them... We decided to divide the prize this year between two books of quite different kinds," the panel's head added.

Other notable guests at the ceremony were Greek diplomat Dimitris Caramitsos-Tziras, High Commissioner of Cyprus to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Euripides Evriviades, Archbishop Gregory of Thyateira and Great Britain, and Lord and Lady Butler of Brockwell. Former director of the British Museum Neil MacGregor was one of the speakers. The event was attended by British Hellenophiles and members of the Greek and Cypriot diaspora in London.

## Useful Contacts

**Chair:** Bob Stone  
Email : stonebob@talk21.com

**Website Editor:** Sally Rees  
Email: rees.sallyjane@gmail.com

**Club Secretary:** Nick Kontarines M. 07837288887  
Email: nkontarines@btconnect.com

**Newsletter Editor:** Lindsay Kontarines

**Club Treasurer:** Sherod Williams  
Email: Sherod.williams@walkerthompson.co.uk

**Committee Member:**  
Yvonne Taylor: yvonnetaylor2007@hotmail.co.uk  
Celia Canham, e:celiacaham@tiscali.co.uk  
Judith Bates, e:batesjudithm@gmail.com  
Sally Rees e: rees.sallyjane@gmail.com



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