

If you are interested in finding out more about the Olympics read on!

You may have noticed that certain words in the text appear in blue.

In the pages that follow, you can find out more details about these words and their meaning. After all, they are the people Despina and the Dove met, and the places they visited.





AETHLIOS – ENDYMION

Aethlios was the first legendary king of Elis. According to tradition, his son, Endymion, became father to three sons, Paeon, Epeius and Aetolus. Because Aethlios could not choose which of his grandsons should become heir to the throne, he decided to organise a footrace, and the one who won would be crowned king.

Epeius won the race and so was crowned king. Paeon, feeling embittered, fled to Macedonia. However, a short time later, Epeius died and was succeeded by his other brother, Aetolus. Unfortunately, Aetolus was banished into exile because he was involved in an accident for which he was considered responsible. The throne of Aethlios remained empty yet again, so the nephew of the three unfortunate brothers was crowned king. His name was Elis, and Elis got its name from him.



ALYTAI - ALYTARCH

The Alytai and their leader, the Alytarch, were entrusted with helping the [Hellanodikai](#) in ensuring the smooth running of the Olympic Games in keeping with the rules. Together with the staff-bearers, they were responsible for executing the sentences meted out by the Hellanodikai.



ANAFIOTIKA

This is a small part of the old city of Athens perched on the north side of the [Acropolis](#) hill, where builders and technicians from various islands settled when they came to Athens after it became capital of the Greek state. They built small houses similar in style to those on their own islands, lending the area a Cycladic touch. The neighbourhood got its name from its first settlers, who came from the small island of Anafi, in the Cyclades.



THE ANCIENT AGORA

The Ancient Agora was the hub of the Ancient City of Athens. During ancient times, it served as an administration, justice, and cultural centre, as well as a forum for commerce and financial transactions, as the etymological origins of the word Agora prove (>*ageiro* means collect, gather). Few buildings of the Ancient Agora have been spared by time. Only the temple dedicated to **Hephaestus (Theseion)** and **Attalus's Colonnade** survive to remind us of what used to be the most important site of the Athenians' public life.



ANTWERP 1920

(7th Olympic Games, August 14th – September 2nd) 29 countries and 2,607 athletes (2,543 men, 64 women) participated. Twenty-one sports and 154 events took place. The Antwerp Olympics were frugal, because of the post-war lack of funds. Russia, heavily ravaged by War World I, did not participate, whilst the countries defeated in the Great War were not invited. The **Olympic flag** flew for the first time at the Antwerp Games. No gold medals, but only silver-plated ones were awarded.

The Greek delegation included 43 athletes.

The USA, Sweden, Great Britain, Finland and Belgium won the most medals.



APOLLO

Apollo was the god of moral order, music and divination, the latter being his most prominent attribute, as it can be attested by the innumerable oracles spread in various parts of ancient Greece. The most famous oracle dedicated to Apollo was the delphic oracle of Phokis.

Apollo is often portrayed as a shepherd god. He guarded flocks from wolves. He was also worshipped as the patron god of harvest and was supposed to have healing powers.

ARDETTUS



A thickly forested, 133 metre-high hill in central Athens. The Panathenean Stadium, which hosted the first modern Olympics, is built in its natural ravine. Its name is attributed to legendary hero, Ardettes, who managed to bring peace to Athens, by reconciling the differences between the Athenian clans and putting an end to hostilities amongst them. In earlier times, Ardettus hill was called Helicon, because Heliconian Poseidon was worshipped in the area. To the right of the entrance of the stadium, there was a temple to Tyche, the goddess of good fortune whilst on the left side, according to certain archaeologists, ruins of the funereal altar of the tomb of [Herod Atticus](#) can still be seen.

ATHENA



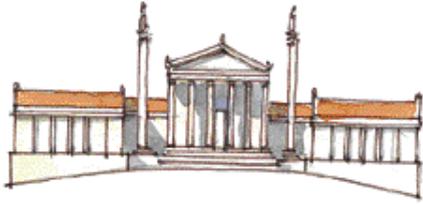
This goddess was born by springing miraculously out of [Zeus's](#) head. She was a warrior goddess, a fact that is attested by her numerous depictions bearing arms already since prehistoric times. Athena, or Minerva, as the Romans called her, favoured sensible war tactics in contrast to her belligerent brother, Ares, or Mars. She was also patron of handicrafts, spinning, weaving, and pottery. She was rumoured to be a healer goddess, as well as goddess of land fertility. According to myth, she was the one who introduced the olive tree in Athens.

ATHENS 1896

(1st Olympic Games, March 25th – April 3rd)

13 countries and 311 athletes (all men) participated. Nine sports and forty-three events took place. In spite of the almost complete lack of infrastructure and the scant financial resources, the Olympic Games managed to take place and were successfully revived, thanks to private efforts and the Greek sense of honour. The first Greek to win a gold medal in the Olympics was Leonidas Pyrgos, at fencing. On the day when the Marathon race took place, 70,000 Greeks watched on enthusiastically as [Spyros Louis](#), a 25-year-old athlete from Maroussi, a suburb of Athens, entered the stadium seizing the victory. The USA, Greece, Germany, France and Great Britain won the most medals.





ATHENS ACADEMY

Construction of the magnificent edifice of the Athens Academy started in 1859 under the reign of King Otho. The Academy was inaugurated in 1885, but the Academy as an institution was founded only in 1926, following the passing of a law by the Minister of Education, D. Aiginitis. The Academy's aim was to promote and cultivate the fine arts, sciences and letters, and it was built thanks to money provided by Simon Sinas. Architecturally, the Academy consists of a central building with two wings. The columns on the front façade are Ionic, whilst in front of the building there are two tall pillars bearing the statues of god [Apollo](#) and goddess [Athena](#). There are also statues of Socrates and Plato, the two most renowned philosophers of Greek antiquity. The edifice was built and decorated based on plans by Theofilus Hansen, but the construction was carried out under the supervision of the famous architect, Ernest Ziller.



ATHENS ACROPOLIS

The Acropolis of Athens is a sheer rock unreachable from all directions apart from the western side. During the 5th century BC, several magnificent edifices were built on the rock, most of which were designed by the famous sculptor [Pheidias](#). A temple dedicated to goddess Athena, the Parthenon, is the jewel of the Athens Acropolis and still commands over the modern city of Athens. The temple is built in the Doric order and is made almost exclusively of Pentelic marble. It is peripteral, with eight columns on each of the narrow sides and seventeen columns on each of the long ones.

BARCELONA 1992

(25th Olympic Games, July 25th – August 9th)

10,563 athletes of both sexes participated. 24 sports and 257 events took place. The city of Barcelona changed radically following construction of numerous new sports facilities. The Olympic flame was kindled with an arrow shot from a great distance. The Greek delegation consisted of 77 athletes. The united team of athletes from countries of the former Soviet Union, the USA and Germany won the most medals.





BEAMON, BOB

He was born in Jamaica YO, in 1946. On October 8th, 1968, at the Mexico Olympics, he succeeded in setting a world record that immortalised him for all time. His famous long jump measured 8.90 metres, and remained unbroken for 23 years. He managed to improve his initial record by a full 55 centimetres with his first jump. Unfortunately, during the rest of his career he never made any jumps of this calibre.



BERLIN 1936

(6th Olympic Games, August 1st – August 16th)
49 countries and 4,066 athletes (3,738 men and 328 women) participated. 19 sports and 129 events took place. The Games were a huge success both from an organisational point of view as well as in the sports field. For the first time, there was a **torch relay run**, with the Olympic flame transported from Ancient Olympia to the host city. The first Olympic torchbearer was Kostas Kondylis. Non-Caucasian athletes triumphed, forcing Hitler to leave the stadium in indignation. The emblem of the Games was an enormous, 14,000-ton bell. For the first time, a closed circuit television system was used. The Greek delegation included 42 athletes and was accompanied by **Spyros Louis** who paraded as flag-bearer. Germany, the USA, Hungary, Italy and Finland won the most medals. In 1937, the Olympic Movement mourned the loss of **Baron Pierre de Coubertin**. With respect to his wishes, his heart was interred in Olympia where it rests to the present day.



BIKILA, ABEBE

A Marathon-runner with incredible willpower, he was born in 1932 in Ethiopia. He finished first in the Marathon race of the Rome Olympic Games in 1960, thus winning the first gold medal for Africa. A month before the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, he had to undergo surgery for appendicitis. Nevertheless, not only did he finish first, winning another gold medal, but he also set a new world record. In 1969, Abebe Bikila was involved in a car accident that left him paralysed the waist below for the rest of his life. He died in 1973.

BLANKERS COHEN, FANNY



She was born in Amsterdam in 1918, and is considered to be the greatest female athlete of all time. In 1936, when she was eighteen, she participated in the Olympics without winning any medals. During World War II, she continued training, breaking several international records. At the 1948 Olympics, when she was already thirty and a mother of two children, she won four gold medals (100 and 200 metres dash, 80 metres steeple chase, and 4 x 100 metres relay race), a unique record for any woman.

BOULEUTERION



The Bouleuterion was the building where the Olympic Council met and where official documents and decrees were kept. Inside the Bouleuterion, there was an open-air space where the altar of Horkios Zeus, guardian of oaths, and his statue with thunderbolts in its hands stood. It was before this altar that the athletes and their trainers took the official oath.

COLONNADE OF ATTALUS



The Colonnade of Attalus is the only ancient building in Athens that has been fully rebuilt. It is situated on the eastern side of the Athens Agora and it was built by Attalus II, a descendant of the Attalidae family from Pergamum, in Minor Asia. Attalus II studied in Athens. When he became king, he wanted to honour his spiritual mother –the city of Athens– so he built this superb colonnade. The Colonnade is a two-storey building. In ancient times, it had 43 rooms that were rented out to Athenian merchants as shops.

CLOSING CEREMONY



The Closing Ceremony includes the following:

1. The athletes enter the stadium but, to symbolise the unity and friendship of the Games, they are not separated into nations.
2. Three flags are raised to the accompaniment of the national anthems: the flags of Greece, the host country and the next host country.

3. The President of the International Olympic Committee makes a speech.
4. The Olympic flag is passed to the next host city.
5. The President of the International Olympic Committee declares the closing of the Games.
6. The Olympic flame is extinguished.

COMANECI, NADIA



Born in Romania in 1961, she impressed the whole world with her grace and achievements in gymnastics at the Montreal Olympic Games. She was the first athlete in the history of gymnastics to win a perfect score, not once but seven times. In total, she won three gold medals, one silver and one bronze and went down in the history of world sports as the queen of gymnastics. She went through difficult times in her country because she was a political dissident during the Ceausescu regime. She managed to defect and move to the USA, where she lives today.

THE EXPEDITION OF THE ARGONAUTS



Jason ventured on a quest to seize the [Golden Fleece](#) from Colchis. His boat was called Argo, so his comrades got the name Argonauts and his quest was called the Expedition of the Argonauts.

A lot of famous demigods and mortals from all over Greece took part in the Expedition of the Argonauts. Amongst the most renowned were Hercules and Theseus, Castor and Polydeuces (or Pollux), Zetes and Calais, Lynceus with his amazing eagle-like sight, and Orpheus with his magic lyre. Atalanta, a wood nymph, also joined the Expedition.

FIELD HOCKEY



Hockey is a team sport very similar to football in relation to the number of players, the field and the tactics involved. In its present form it was developed by the British, who compiled rules about it in the late 1800s. However, the origins of the sport date all the way back to Ancient Egypt, where it seems hockey was the favourite sport amongst the inhabitants of the Nile valley.

Ancient Greek depictions on relief show us that the Ancient Greeks used to play a game with bats called “keritizein”. Perhaps that game is the ancient predecessor of today’s hockey.

Countries with a long tradition in field hockey are India, Australia, Pakistan, and the Netherlands.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE



According to mythology, the land of Thebes had become infertile. Phrixus and Helle, queen Nefele’s children, were considered to be the cause, so they were in danger of being sacrificed in order to appease the gods. Nefele gave Phrixus and Helle a golden ram so that they could escape the danger. The ram vaulted into the air with the children on its back, but during their escape from Thebes, Helle, the girl, fell into the sea that was given the name Hellespont (now the Dardanelles), in her memory. Phrixus, the boy, continued his journey till he reached the kingdom of Colchis, where he sacrificed the ram and gave its Golden Fleece to the king of the land, Aëetes, as a present. Aëetes placed the golden fleece in the Sacred Grove of Ares, on top of an oak that was guarded by a dragon that never slept. The golden fleece, however, was seized by Jason during the Argonauts’ Expedition.

HELLANODIKAI



The Hellanodikai were umpires in charge of ensuring adherence to the athletic rules of conduct during the Games. For a ten-month period prior to the Games, they would stay at Elis, at the Hellanodikeion, where they were taught the stipulations and regulations of the Games by the legislators. The Hellanodikai were citizens of Elis elected by ballot for a period of one Olympiad, i.e. four years. During the time of their office, they wore scarlet robes, a fact that suggests that, at least initially, only the kings of clans could become Hellanodikai. They were aided in their duties by the [alytai](#), the whip-bearers and the staff-bearers.

HELSINKI 1952

(14th Olympic Games, July 19th – August 3rd) 69 countries and 4,925 athletes (4,407 men and 518 women) participated. 17 sports and 149 events took place. The Finns' long tradition in sports and an impeccable hosting made the 15th Olympic Games the best until then. The Games took place without the slightest hitch, and there were only great moments and remarkable feats to remember. After forty years of absence, the Soviets made a comeback. The Greek delegation included 53 athletes. The USA, the Soviet Union, Hungary, Sweden, and Italy won the most medals.



HERA

Also called Juno by the Romans, she was the most important and most ancient female deity, sister and spouse of Zeus. Her sisters were Demeter and Hestia, her sons Ares and Hephaestus. She was worshipped all over Greece, but her chief cult centre was at Argos. She protected marriage and nuptial vows.



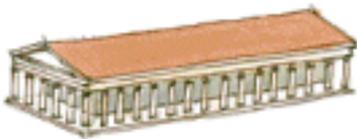
HERAIA

Heraia were a racing contest in which only women could participate. They were held in Olympia in honour of goddess Hera, and virgins from Elis raced not the full length of the stadium, but for about 160 metres. They wore a short tunic that left their right shoulder and right breast bare, and had their hair loose. The prize was a wreath from a wild olive tree and a piece of meat from the cow that was sacrificed in honour of Hera. The Heraia Games took place either a month before or a month after the men's Olympic Games.



HERAION

The Heraion was a temple dedicated to goddess Hera. It was a peripteral temple, of the Doric order, built around 600 BC. The temple was 50 metres wide by about 19 metres long. The cult statue of goddess Hera sitting on a throne, was placed at the far end of the temple, whilst next to it was a statue of Zeus, standing upright dressed as a warrior. In the back yard of the temple, various holy and valuable objects were kept, as well as a gold and ivory table on which lay the victors' wreaths.





HERMES

Hermes is more widely known as the messenger of the gods. He had the role of herald, and enjoyed many epithets, including *psychopompos*, which meant guide of souls to the underworld. His cult seems to have originated from the *hermaion*, the Greek word for a pile of stones used to mark tombs, or boundaries between plots of land, or served as landmarks erected to guide travellers. As well as being a patron of travellers and merchants, Hermes, or Mercury in Latin, was worshipped as protector of profit. Moreover, since he was considered to be the god with the most perfectly proportioned body, he was also made patron of wrestling and training gyms and was greatly revered by all athletes. The cult of Hermes was spread throughout the Greek world amongst all social classes. The most famous depiction of Hermes is the world-famous statue of him by Praxiteles, displayed at Olympia.



HEROD ATTICUS

Herod Atticus lived between 101 and 176 AD. He was a very wealthy Athenian sophist philosopher, known for his remarkable education, his exquisite oratory skills and his great generosity. He was born in [Marathon](#), and during his early life he lived in Rome, where he held several high offices and acquired an enormous fortune. He made generous donations so that several public buildings could be constructed, such as the marble [Panathenean Stadium](#) and aqueducts in Rome, Greece, Corinth, Delphi and Olympia. The aqueduct (watertower) in Olympia was built in honour of his wife, Regilla, with whom he had four children.



THE HOLY GROVE OF ALTIS

The holy grove of Altis was a verdant forest in Ancient Olympia, lush with wild olive trees and plane trees. It was dedicated to god Zeus. Within the Holy Grove of Altis, there were three temples, dedicated to Zeus, Hera, and Rhea, as well as several other important buildings, such as the [Philippeion](#), the

Pelopeion, the Ippodameion, and scores of altars and statues. There were two gates to the Grove, one to the north and one to the south, which marked the border between the Holy Grove and the buildings used by the officials, the athletes and the priests during the Games. On the east side, the Echo Colonnade separated the Grove from the Stadium.



IDAEAN DACTYLS

The Idaean Dactyls were warrior gods associated with the working of metal, the first to discover the art of extracting iron from earth. They were called Idaean because they lived in the forests of mountain Ide, in Crete. According to myth, the Idaean Dactyls were five, the eldest being Hercules. His names of his brothers were Paeonaeus, Epimedes, Iasius, and Idas or Akesidas. The mother of all gods, Rhea, had entrusted the Idaean Dactyls to bring up the new-born Zeus.



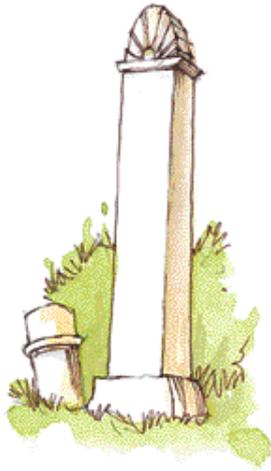
IDAEAN HERCULES

Hercules was the eldest of the five Idaean Dactyls, whom Rhea had entrusted to bring up the new-born Zeus. Idaean Hercules brought Zeus to Olympia, organised a foot race between his brothers and awarded the winner with a wild olive wreath. He himself marked the place and length of the track, and decided that, since his brothers were five, the races would take place every fifth year and would be called *Olympéia*.



JUDO

Judo is an individual sport, meaning “The Gentle Way”. It derives from Jujitsu, a martial art practised by the Samurai. Its philosophy is based on the supremacy of athletic skill over raw and brutal strength. Becoming skilled in defence and attack techniques purifies the athletes’ bodies and spirits and contributes to their overall improvement as human beings, which is the end goal of Judo. Judo became an official event at the Tokyo Olympic Games of 1964. Japan, France, Korea and the Netherlands are the leading countries in Judo.



KERAMEIKOS

Kerameikos was the most important cemetery in Ancient Athens. It was named either after the hero Keramos, or after the community of potters (*kerameis*) who occupied the area along the banks of river Heridanos. Well-preserved ruins of the stone walls that fortified the ancient city of Athens can still be seen today. The most important monuments of the site, apart from funeral monuments and the fortifications, are the two gates that were the official points of entry into the city and divided the Kerameikos area into two sections, the “inner” and “outer” Kerameikos. Another important monument is the Pompeion, a building where the sacral items used at the Panathenaean procession were kept and which also served as a starting point for the procession. Outside the two Kerameikos Gates, lay the ancient Athens cemetery, which stretched along the 39 metre-wide, 1.5 km-long Kerameikos Road. According to historian Pausanias, Pericles and his wife Aspasia were buried there.



THE LEONIDAION

The Leonidaion was a spectacular building, where the official guests stayed during the Olympic Games. On the outside, it was enclosed by a colonnade with 138 Ionic columns. Inside, the open court was surrounded by 44 Doric columns. Between the colonnade of the court and the outer colonnade, was a series of rooms used to accommodate distinguished visitors to the Olympic Games. It was built and dedicated to Zeus by a wealthy man from Naxos, called Leonidas, after whom it was named.



LOS ANGELES 1932

(10th Olympic Games, July 30th – August 14th)
37 countries and 1,408 athletes (1,281 men and 127 women) participated. 14 sports and 117 events took place. The Games were a huge success and many innovations were introduced. An Olympic Village was built to house the male athletes, whilst female athletes stayed at a hotel. For the first time, there was automatic timing, and use of

the photo finish method. A band played the national anthems and flags were raised when the medals were awarded to winners. Greece participated with 10 athletes, 4 of which were Greek Americans. The USA, Italy, France, Sweden, and Japan won the most medals.

LOS ANGELES 1984

(23rd Olympic Games, July 28th – August 13th)
140 countries and 6,797 athletes (5,230 men and 1,567 women) participated. 21 sports and 221 events took place. The Soviets and another thirteen politically affiliated countries refused to participate in the Games. There was heavy commercial exploit of the Olympic Flame. The hosting actually turned over a profit of US\$ 150 million. The Greek delegation included 63 male and 4 female athletes. The USA won most of the medals.



LOUIS, SPYROS

He was born in 1870 in Maroussi, a northern suburb of Athens. He was the first to win the Marathon race in the 1896 Olympics with 2 hours, 58 minutes and 59 seconds. He had become skilled in running thanks to his working as a water carrier. Spyros Louis never ran again after the 1896 Olympics. In 1936, he was given the honour to become flag-bearer for the Greek delegation at the Berlin Olympic Games. He died on March 28th, 1940.



MARATHON

In ancient times, Marathon was one of the most important municipalities of Attica, the greater Athens area. Hercules was greatly revered in the Marathon territory, where there is also a spring, called Makaria spring, dedicated to Hercules's daughter, as well as a lake that has become a swamp in modern times. The Marathon valley became world-known when the Athenians, under general Miltiades, fought the famous battle against the Persians, under general Darius. 100,000 Persians were defeated by only 10,000 Athenians. The battle took place in 490 BC. [Herod Atticus](#) was born in Marathon, where he spent most of his life. Marathon lies to the north east of the city of Athens. An artificial lake and a dam have been constructed in the area to provide water to Athens, Piraeus and suburbs.





MELBOURNE 1956

(16th Olympic Games, November 22nd – December 8th)
67 countries and 3,184 athletes (2,813 men and 371 women) participated. 17 sports and 151 events took place. This was the first time the Olympics were held in the Southern Hemisphere. The Soviets' invasion into Hungary resulted in the Olympic Games getting entangled in politics. The Olympic Flame was carried by aeroplane, and the Closing Ceremony was spectacular. There were 12 members in the Greek delegation. The Soviet Union, the USA, Australia, Hungary and Italy won the most medals.



MEXICO CITY 1968

(19th Olympic Games, October 12th – October 27th)
112 countries and 5,530 athletes (4,749 men and 781 women) participated. 18 sports and 172 events took place. The Games took place amidst student demonstrations and severe communication, transport and housing problems. The Olympic Flame travelled to Mexico City following Columbus's trail, and it was the first time that a woman athlete kindled the Olympic cauldron. The high altitude of Mexico City helped immensely in the athletes achieving amazing records. For the first time, there were gender and doping tests. The USA, the Soviet Union, Japan, Hungary and East Germany won the most medals.



MONTREAL 1976

(21st Olympic Games, July 17th – August 1st)
92 countries and 6,028 athletes (4,781 men and 1,247 women) participated. 21 sports and 198 events took place. The Munich tragedy had not been forgotten, and security measures were extremely strident. Though the Montreal Olympics were almost cancelled several times, in the end they took place, but expenditure was exorbitant, resulting in huge debts for Canada. Politics interfered yet again in the Games, and 21 countries from Africa and the Caribbean boycotted the Olympics. The Soviet Union, East Germany, the USA, West Germany and Japan were the countries to win most medals.



MOSCOW 1980

(22nd Olympic Games, July 19th – August 3rd)
80 countries and 5,217 athletes (4,043 men and 1,124 women) participated. 21 sports and 204 events took place. The Russian invasion of Afghanistan resulted in more political interference in the Games, and many athletically important Western countries boycotted the Games. In spite of this, the hosting was impeccable. There was a spectacular Opening Ceremony, with Greece, the birthplace of the Games, being given a prominent position. 42 athletes made up the Greek delegation. The Soviet Union and East Germany won the most medals.



MUNICH 1972

(20th Olympic Games, July 19th – August 3rd)
122 countries and 7,147 athletes (5,848 men and 1,299 women) participated. 21 sports and 195 events took place. The Palestinian terrorist attack against the Israeli athletes overshadowed the athletic events and immersed the Olympic family in mourning. Nevertheless, the ominous cloud of terrorism did not succeed in thwarting the athletic success of the Games.

Greece was represented by 61 athletes.

The Soviet Union, the USA, East Germany, West Germany and Japan were the countries to win the most medals.



NURMI, PAAVO

He was born in 1897, in Turku, a port town in Finland. During his career, he broke 22 world records and won 9 Olympic gold medals. He reached the apex of his glory at the 1924 Olympic Games, by winning gold medals both at the 1,500 and the 5,000 metre races. Two days later, he finished first both in the cross-country race, and the cross-country team race. But that was not all. He also won gold in the 3,000-metre team race. Nurmi Paavo got to kindle the cauldron in the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki as the last torch relay runner. He died in 1973.

THE NYMPHAION



The Nymphaion, or Exedra, was an imposing double cistern that received the water from an abundant freshwater spring, after [Herod Atticus](#) built the Olympia aqueduct in 160 AD.

This building had a semicircular shape, and its two levels had formed cisterns. The water came in on the upper semicircular cistern and then flowed down into the lower cistern, which was rectangular in shape. From there, the water was piped all over the Sanctuary.

OERTER, AL

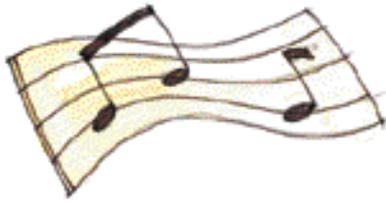


He was born in Astoria, USA, and succeeded in becoming an Olympic champion at discus throwing four times, in four consecutive Olympics. He began in 1956 and kept winning until 1968. He continued training and probably would have participated in the [Moscow Olympics](#) had the Americans not boycotted the Games. He is remembered as a great athlete and a symbol of fighting spirit.

OLYMPIA STADIUM



The ancient Stadium of Olympia was the place where the Olympic Games took place. In 1958-1961, following research by the German Archaeological School, the track of the ancient stadium was discovered, and the embankments of the stadium were restored the way they had been in ancient times. The track has a length of 192 metres and is about 30 metres wide. According to myth, Hercules defined the length of the track, the stade, after counting 600 strides. The start line was in the east, where a row of corrugated marble slates was found. The finish line was in the west, where a similar row of marble slates was also found. The embankments of the stadium did not have seats, and the stadium held between 30,000 and 35,000 spectators. On the stadium's southern slope, there was a stone platform that was reserved for the Hellanodikai, whilst directly opposite, on the northern slope, there was the altar of Demeter Chamyne.



THE OLYMPIC ANTHEM

Costis Palamas, a famous Greek poet, wrote the words to the Olympic Anthem, which was set to music by composer Spyros Samaras in the same year. The Olympic Anthem was first heard at the Athens Olympic Games and was made the official anthem of the Olympic Games in 1958. The lyrics of the Anthem go like this:

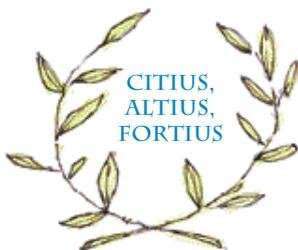
“Immortal spirit of antiquity,
Father of the true, beautiful and good,
Descend, appear, shed over us thy light
Upon this ground and under this sky
Which has first witnessed thy unperishable flame.
Give life and animation to those noble games!
Throw wreaths of fadeless flowers to the victors
In the race and in the strife!
Create in our breasts, hearts of steel!
In thy light, plains, mountains and seas
Shine in a roseate hue and form a vast temple
To which all nations throng to adore thee,
Oh immortal spirit of antiquity!”

THE OLYMPIC FLAG



The Olympic Flag shows five interconnected rings, three on top and two below, on a white background. The colours of the rings are blue, black, red, yellow and green, the reason being that the flags of every nation in the world include at least one of these colours. The union of the rings symbolises the 5 continents and the meeting of athletes in a spirit of noble camaraderie and friendship. The flag was first presented by Baron de Coubertin in 1914, at the International Olympic Committee summit, and it waved for the first time at the Antwerp Olympics, in 1920.

THE OLYMPIC MOTTO



The Olympic motto was created by a Dominican friar called Henri Didon. It consists of three Latin words, “Citius, Altius, Fortius”, which mean, “Faster, Higher, Stronger”. This motto, used for the first time in the Olympic Games that were held in [Paris](#) in [1924](#), urges athletes all over the world to try and excel, surpassing themselves.



OLYMPIC GAMES (ANCIENT)

The Olympic Games were the most important sports event of the Ancient World. They were consecrated to god Zeus and took place every four years. The winners were awarded a kotinos, which was a wreath plaited from a branch of the sacred wild olive tree “Kallistephanos” (Beautiful crown). According to legend, that olive tree had been brought to Olympia from the land of the Hyperboreans (Far North) by Hercules.

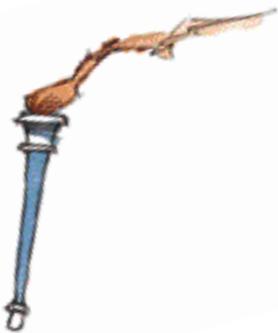
Only free Greek citizens were allowed to take part in the Games as long as they had not committed any murders or sacrilegious deeds and had paid the fine stipulated by the citizens of Elis in case the truce had been broken. The Ancient Olympics included the track and field events that took place in the **Stadium** and the equestrian events that were held in the Hippodrome.

All Olympic Games winners were considered to be symbols of virtue and bravery, and were showered with honours by all Greeks.

The Ancient Games were held for the last time in 393 AD, and one year later, in 394 AD, they were abolished by Emperor Theodosius the Great.

OLYMPIC GAMES (MODERN)

Towards the end of the 19th century, the French Baron **Pierre de Coubertin**, while participating at the International Conference for the Study and Promotion of the Ideals of Athletics that was held in Paris, proposed to organise International Olympic Games. His proposal was unanimously accepted, and the first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896. Since then, the Olympic Games have been supervised by the International Olympic Committee and have taken place in the summer every four years, with the exception of 1916, 1940 and 1944, when they were cancelled because of the two world wars.





THE OLYMPIC OATH

The athletes' oath was first taken by Belgian fencer Victor Boin at the 1920 Antwerp Games. The oath is always taken on behalf of all athletes by an athlete of the host country, who, raising her or his right arm and holding the flag of her or his country in the other hand, solemnly pledges:

“In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams.”



THE OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY

Through the Olympic Torch Relay, the Sacred Flame is transported from Ancient Olympia to whichever city is hosting the Games. The German professor Karl Diem, an associate of Baron de Coubertin, conceived the idea of an Olympic Torch Relay. He organised the first Torch Relay for the Olympic Games in Berlin. In a solemn ceremony, the Olympic Flame is lit by the sun's rays, and then a series of runners holding a torch carry it from Olympia to the stadium of the host city, where it remains burning night and day in the Olympic cauldron until the Games finish. The torch used for the sacred flame serves as a symbol of the ancient origins of the Games. The first Olympic Torch Relay runner was the Greek athlete Kostas Kondylis.

OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games includes the following:

1. A parade of all athletes, alphabetically by nation, with Greece leading the procession and the host country at the back.
2. The Head of State of the host country declares the opening of the Games.
3. The Olympic flag is raised.
4. The Olympic hymn is played.



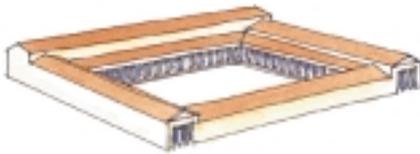
5. The Olympic torch is used to light the Olympic flame.
6. The Olympic oath is taken by athletes and umpires.
7. Cultural entertainment is provided by the Organising Committee.



OWENS, JESSE

He was born in 1913 in Alabama, USA, one of eight children. His parents had been cotton-pickers. In 1935, in less than an hour, he accomplished one of the most awesome feats in track and field, breaking five records and evening up on a sixth. In the 1936 Olympic Games, he succeeded in winning four gold medals (in the 100 metres, 200 metres, 4 x 100 metres relay and the long jump). He became a living legend when, owing to his remarkable feats, Hitler was forced to leave the Olympic Stadium. Jesse Owens died in 1980.

THE PALAESTRA



The Palaestra was built in the 3rd century BC. It was a square building with sides approximately 66 metres long, and inside there was an open square court used for training by wrestlers, boxers and competitors in the Pankration. The courtyard was surrounded by Doric columns. Behind the colonnades, there were various rooms such as the *Elaiothesion*, where athletes rubbed their bodies with oil, the *Ephebeion*, where they received instruction from trainers, etc.

PALAMAS, COSTIS



A poet and author, Costis Palamas was born in the port town of Patras in 1859. After graduating from high school there, he moved to Athens with the intention of studying law. Soon, however, he gave law school up in favour of poetry and literature. For many years he worked as a journalist and also held a secretarial position at the University. Costis Palamas's most famous poem collections include: *Songs of my Country*, *Life Immovable*, *Tomb*, *Eyes of my Soul*, *The Twelve Words of the Gypsy*, and *The King's Flute*. His greatest works in prose are the following: *The Lad's Death* and *Trisevgeni*.



THE PANATHENEAN STADIUM

The Panathenean Stadium is situated in the pine-clad hill of Ardettus in central Athens. In ancient times, it was the location where the Panathenean Games were held every four years. It was built by the orator Lycurgus after the area was donated by its owner, Deinias. The stadium had the same shape as today, but without the marble seats. The stadium was decked with marble between 134 and 137 AD by [Herod Atticus](#). It could seat 50,000 spectators and was comprised of two landings. Over the years, the Stadium was stripped of its marble. Its restoration started after it was bought by king George I, and new marble was laid, thanks to funds donated by Greek statesman George Averof on designs by architect Anastasios Metaxas. The Stadium was inaugurated in 1896 on the occasion of the first modern Olympic Games.



PARIS 1900

(2nd Olympic Games, May 14th – October 28th)
26 countries and 1,330 athletes (1,319 men and 11 women) participated. 24 sports and 166 events took place. These Olympic Games were incorporated in the International Trade Fair instead of being an independent sports event in themselves. The result was that they lost in prestige, and a number of problems were caused. [Pierre de Coubertin](#) resigned from the Games Organisational Committee, so very disappointed that he even stated that, “it was a nice try, but one cannot really call that Olympic Games.” The Greek consisted of 4 athletes. France, the USA, Great Britain, Belgium and Switzerland won the most medals.



PARIS 1924

(8th Olympic Games, July 5th – August 4th)
44 countries and 3,092 athletes (2,956 men and 136 women) participated. 17 sports and 126 events took place. The French managed to make the most of the second chance they had been given by the International Olympic Committee and hosted the Olympics with great success. During these Olympics,

the national anthems of the hosting country, Greece and the country to host the next Games, were played for the first time. The Olympic motto was also presented for the first time in Paris.

The Greek contingent included 45 athletes.

The USA, Finland, France, Great Britain and Italy won the most medals.

PARALYMPICS



The summer and winter Paralympic Games are the most important athletic meeting for people with physical disabilities. They offer a unique opportunity for these people to prove that they can overcome the challenges posed by their disabilities thanks to willpower and positive thinking. The Paralympics were organised officially for the first time in 1960 in Rome. The Games were the brainchild of Sir Ludvig Guttman, who in 1948 organised the International Wheelchair Games at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Aylesbury, England, for World War II veterans. The Paralympic Games always take place in the same year as the Olympic Games, and since the Seoul 1988 Games, they are held at the same installations two weeks after the Olympic Games finish.

PELIAS



Legendary king of Elis, who, according to a certain tradition, was the founder of the **ancient Olympic Games**. Elis was one of the most important city-states of antiquity in the Peloponnese. There were numerous sports facilities in Elis, since a lot of athletes travelled there to train a month before the Olympic Games took place.

THE PELOPEION



The Pelopeion was a temple built in honour of king Pelops and his wife Hippodameia. Inside the temple, there was an altar, where a black ram was sacrificed each year. Originally, the building was circular in shape, but in the 6th century BC it became pentagonal.



PENTATHLON (ANCIENT)

According to Aristotle, the event of the ancient pentathlon was the perfect exercise for athletes. It included the following five athletic contests: long jump, discus, javelin, running (stade) and wrestling. The athlete who won in three out of the five events was the winner, and was called *pentathlos* in ancient Greek. Tradition has it that Jason, the legendary hero, was the one who came up with the idea of pentathlon. The pentathlon was included in Olympic events in 708 BC.

PHEIDIAS



Pheidias was born in Athens shortly after 500 BC and lived almost into his eighties. He was a student of the sculptor Hageladas of Argos, and the most active and ingenious artist of antiquity, expertly skilled in sculpturing, painting and architecture. He fathered numerous important works of art. Amongst the greatest are:

1. The great statue of goddess Athena Promachos. This was a colossal bronze statue placed near the Parthenon. It was so enormous that it was said that the tip of her spear could be seen as far as Cape Sounion, 50 km away.
2. The Athena Areia at Plataia. This was a gilded wooden statue, whose limbs and face were hewn in marble from Mount Penteli, outside Athens.
3. The gold and ivory statue of Athena Parthenos, which stood 12 metres tall and was placed in the Parthenon.
4. The gold and ivory statue of Zeus, which stood in Olympia. It was so beautiful that it was considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

THE PHILIPPEION



The Philippeion started being built during the reign of Philip II of Macedonia, after the battle of Chaeronea (338 BC), and was completed by his son Alexander the Great who honoured his father by naming it after him. It was a circular building, and inside, on a semicircular pedestal, stood five gold and ivory statues of the family of the Macedonian kings, all works of the sculptor Leochares.



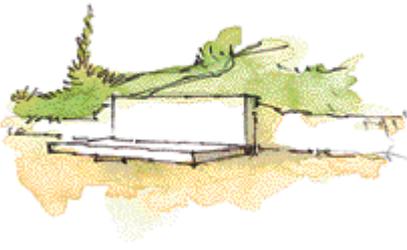
PIERRE DE COUBERTIN

The founder of the modern Olympic Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin was a French nobleman, born in Paris on January 1st, 1863. From an early age he showed keen interest in literature, education and sociology, and devoted himself to education and comparative study of educational systems. He travelled to the United States of America and visited several universities and colleges, where he came to the conclusion that introducing sports in education improved overall learning. In 1889, he began efforts to introduce athletics in French schools. Soon, however, he realised that in order to promote the ideals of physical fitness and amateur sports, there was a need for an independent body that would be free of national or personal strife. Deeply influenced by the ancient Olympic Games and Greek philosophy in general, he came up with the idea of reviving the Olympic Games. In order to achieve this goal, he organised at the Sorbonne University of Paris in 1894 a World Athletics summit, which was a complete success. De Coubertin's proposal for the revival of the Olympic Games was met by the participants with great enthusiasm. All his life, De Coubertin kept on fighting against political exploitation, professionalism, and commercialisation of the Olympics. He resigned from the International Olympic Committee presidency in 1925, and died in 1937 in Geneva. His heart is resting in Ancient Olympia, the place that inspired him and gave birth to the idea for which he fought.

PLAKA

A section of Athens, north-east of the Acropolis, where the original town of Athens was confined at the time it was liberated from Turkish rule in the early nineteenth century. Plaka is known as the old town, with buildings from various historic periods and architectural designs. There are numerous museums and archaeological sites there, as well as Byzantine churches and other places of interest. Between Plaka and the [Acropolis](#) lies a small neighbourhood, [Anafiotika](#), built in an architectural style that is typical of Cycladic islands.





THE PNYX

On this hill, the Assembly of the ancient Athenians held its meetings. These meetings took place only during the Golden Age of the City of Athens, i.e. 5th century BC.

Pnyx is located between the hill of the Nymphs and the St. Demetrius Loubardaris Church and looks like a semicircular theatre on the rocky hill. An immense rostrum, where orators stood and spoke, and an altar were carved into the rock face. Pnyx could seat 18,000 people, but its capacity rose to 25,000 when the crowd was standing.



POSEIDON

Poseidon was one of the twelve Olympian gods. He carried a trident (the three-pronged fisherman's spear) and held dominion over the sea, rivers, springs and wells. He was also worshipped as god of vegetation, fertility and earthquakes.

He was mainly worshipped in areas near the sea and on capes. At his famous shrine on the island of Tinos, a famous festival was held in his honour. Similar festivals were held on other islands, such as Delos, Syros, Kos, Rhodes and Lesbos. However, Poseidon's chief festival was the *Isthmia*, in Corinth, where the Isthmian Games were held and all Greeks participated. He was called Neptune by the Romans.



THE PRYTANEION

The Prytaneion, a building of the 5th century BC, was the place where the celebratory feasts, in honour of the winners and official guests, were held during the Games. It housed the officials who were in charge of the shrine and responsible for the sacrifices. Inside, there was an altar to Hestia (Vesta in Latin), on which the "eternal flame" burnt night and day.

The western rooms in the Prytaneion served as a place of gathering for athletes and officials, as well as for cooking.



ROME 1960

(17th Olympic Games, August 25th – September 11th) 83 countries and 5,346 athletes (4,736 men and 610 women) participated. 17 sports and 150 events took place. The seventeenth Games went down in history as the most successful so far, in that they were efficiently organised, the athletic spirit prevailed and was linked to the ancient ideals of the Games. The fact that there was a huge participation of athletes also contributed to making the Games a success. The only negative event was the death of an athlete due to taking illegal substances. The Greek delegation had 51 athletes. The Soviet Union, the USA, Germany, and Australia won the most medals.



RUDOLPH, WILMA

She was born in 1940 in St. Bethlehem, Tennessee, and was the seventeenth of nineteen children. At an early age, she survived polio and scarlet fever, only to be left with the use of one leg until the age of eleven. In the 1956 Olympic Games in **Melbourne**, she won the bronze medal in the relay race, at the age of sixteen. At the 1960 Games that were held in Rome, she won three gold medals (100-metre dash, 200-metre dash, and for anchoring the 400-meter relay). Despite her standing 1.83 metres tall, she could run with amazing grace, and the Italians dubbed her the Black Gazelle. She left sports at the age of twenty-one.



SEOUL 1988

(24th Olympic Games, September 17th – October 2nd) 159 countries and 8,465 athletes (6,279 men and 2,186 women) participated. 23 sports and 237 events took place. Seoul, boasting new and state-of-the-art sports facilities, impressed everyone. With regards to sports, the Seoul Games were marked by the breaking of several records as well as the high number of cases of doping, in which even famous athletes were involved. The Greek delegation included 57 athletes. The Soviet Union and East Germany won the most medals.

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World were considered to be the following:

1. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon
2. The pyramids of Egypt
3. The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus
4. The Temple of goddess Artemis at Ephesus
5. The Colossus of Rhodes
6. The Lighthouse of Alexandria
7. The gold and ivory statue of Zeus



SIDNEY 2000

(27th Olympic Games, September 15th – October 1st)
200 countries and 11,084 athletes participated. 28 sports and 300 events took place.

The Sidney Games were successful both from an organisational and an athletic point of view. The invaluable help of 47,000 volunteers, state-of-the-art technological support and an increase in the percentage of women participants (38,3% of all athletes) were factors that contributed to their success. The Greek contingent was the largest so far, and Greek athletes managed to win thirteen Olympic medals. The USA, Russia, China and Austria won the most medals.



THE SOUTHERN STOA

The Southern Stoa, or Colonnade, was probably used as an agora or as the official entrance to the Sanctuary of Olympia. It was built during the 4th century. It had an external colonnade of Doric columns and an internal colonnade of Ionic columns. The Sacred Way, which started from Elis and ended at the Hippodrome of Olympia, south of the Stadium, passed in front of the Southern Stoa.



STADE

This foot race is the oldest athletic event, in which the athletes sprinted the length of Olympia's stadium, which was approximately 192 metres long. It was the only event of the ancient Olympic Games until 728 BC, and later



was also included in the pentathlon events. The athletes who participated in the *stade* were called *stadiodromoi*, whilst those who won were given the name *stadionikes*.

STATUE OF ZEUS



The gold and ivory statue of Zeus, a work by the sculptor Pheidias, was considered to be the grandest, most spectacular statue in all antiquity. It showed Zeus sitting on an imposing throne, holding a gold and ivory statue of the goddess Nike (Victory) in his right hand, whilst in his left he wielded a sceptre that was surmounted by an eagle, a symbol of the god's authority. The parts of the statue not covered by the god's robe were carved in ivory, whilst his clothes, sandals, hair and beard were made of gold. The god was crowned with a silver olive wreath. The throne, constructed of copper, gold, ebony and ivory, was decorated with precious stones. Zeus was portrayed as benevolent and full of love and compassion for humans. The statue remained in its place in Olympia until 393 AD. It was later transported to Constantinople, where it was destroyed in a great fire. Owing to its sheer perfection, it was considered to be one of the [Seven Wonders of the Ancient World](#).

ST. LOUIS 1904

(3rd Olympic Games, July 1st – October 29th)

687 athletes (681 men and 6 women) participated. 16 sports and 104 events took place. The long duration of the Games and the high travelling costs limited participation. Similar mistakes to those made in Paris were repeated here, as the Games were associated again with the International Trade Fair. The Greek delegation had two athletes. The USA, Germany, Cuba, Canada and Hungary won most of the medals.



TAE-KWON-DO

Tae Kwon Do is a sport that owes its origins to an ancient Korean martial art. Literally translated, TAE refers to the lower limbs (feet) and the physical skills of the athlete; KWON refers to the upper limbs and

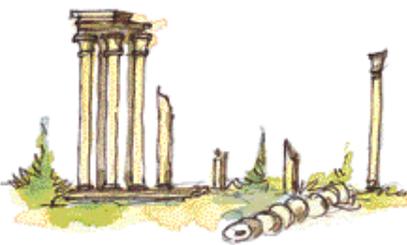


the torso, and has to do with self-defence postures; and DO refers to the athlete's mind, which controls the whole body. Its philosophy lies in combining the strength of one's limbs with the power of one's mind. Tae-Kwon-Do became an Olympic sport at the [Sidney](#) Games in 2000. Mihalis Mouroutsos, a Greek athlete, won the gold medal in the [Sidney](#) Olympics.



THE TEMPLE OF HEPHAESTUS (THESEION)

The Temple dedicated to god Hephaestus (Vulcan, as the Romans called him) is the most well preserved of classical antiquity and can be seen on the highest spot of the Ancient Agora. There, the god of fire was jointly worshipped with goddess Athena, as both were considered to be patron gods of forgers and potters. The temple consisted of three parts, and the opisthodomos (back yard). Inside the temple, there were statues of Hephaestus and Athena Ergane, both sculpted by Alcamenes. On the frieze, there were depictions of Hercules and Theseus' exploits. During early Christian times, the temple became a church consecrated to Saint George the Tireless. After King Otho's arrival in Greece, the last service was held and the temple was turned into a museum following a decree of the Holy Synod.



THE TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS (ATHENS)

In 515 BC, Peisistratos began the construction of a monumental temple in honour of Zeus. The temple, however, remained unfinished for many years and only much later, in 125 AD, was it finally completed by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. It was the largest temple dedicated to Zeus. The temple had a total of 104 Corinthian columns. Inside there were several statues of Hadrian, the most beautiful being the one commissioned by the Athenians. During the Turkish occupation of Greece, there were only 17 columns left standing. The seventeenth was torn down and used by voivode Gistarakis to build a mosque, whilst the sixteenth fell during a terrible windstorm on October 1st 1852. Athenians believed the fall of columns to be a bad omen, and associated it to the plague epidemic of 1792 and the cholera outbreak of 1853.

THE TEMPLE OF ZEUS



In the very centre of the Holy Grove of Altis are the ruins of a temple dedicated to Zeus. A model of harmony and symmetry, this temple is built in the Doric order, and measures 64 metres by approximately 27 metres. The pediments of the temple were decked out with sculptures, which are now displayed in the Museum of Olympia. On the last day of the Games, the gold and ivory table, normally kept in Hera's Temple, was brought into the Zeus's Temple, and on it the wild olive wreaths were laid. While the crowds watched, the winners were crowned. The metopes on the frieze displayed sculptures with scenes from the Labours of Hercules, whilst at the back of the Temple stood the gold and ivory statue of Zeus. Nowadays, little remains of the once majestic temple, as it repeatedly suffered heavy damages over the years. The temple was used to be surrounded by numerous statues, the most prominent of which being that of Nike by Paionios. Near the west side of the temple, was the altar of the *Kallistephanos* Nymphs, next to which grew the sacred wild olive. The victory wreaths were plaited with twigs cut from that olive tree.

THESAURI



These were treasuries, that is small buildings that served as elaborate storehouses for valuable objects, many of them votive offerings which were given by people or cities to honour and thank the gods for blessings. Today there are remains of the treasuries built by the city-states of Syrakuse, Megara, Metapontium, Byzantium, etc.

THESEION



Theseion was an open-air space, dedicated to the hero of Athens, Theseus. It was there that his bones were buried after they were brought back from the island of Syros.

The area was considered to be holy and an asylum both for slaves and free citizens. Today, in the area of Theseion, the most well preserved temple of ancient times can be seen, the temple of Hephaestus.



THORPE, JIM

He was born in 1888, in Oklahoma. He was mostly of Sac-Fox Indian heritage, and was given the Indian name of Wa-Tho-Huk, which translated to “Bright Path”. In the 1912 Olympics, not only did he win gold medals at both the pentathlon and decathlon, but he also came in fourth and seventh at the high jump and the long jump respectively. However, following a revelation that he had received payment as a baseball athlete, the Olympic Committee stripped him of both of his gold medals, though the runner-ups refused to receive them. In 1973, the American Amateur Athletic Union received a petition signed by 400,000 people asking for the restoration of Jim Thorpe’s honour. In 1982, the International Olympic Committee returned the awards.



TOKYO 1964

(18th Olympic Games, October 10th – October 24th) 93 countries and 5,140 athletes (4,457 men and 683 women) participated. 19 sports and 163 events took place. The new super-modern sports facilities and state-of-the-art technology along with the superb meticulousness of the Japanese contributed to the perfection of the 18th Olympic Games, from the organisational as well as the technological point of view. The Olympic cauldron was kindled by a Japanese student who was born in Hiroshima on the day the atom bomb was dropped. The “Fun Games”, as they were dubbed, ended in a spectacular Closing Ceremony. The Greek contingent included 18 athletes. The USA, the Soviet Union, Japan, Italy and Hungary won the most medals.

TRIATHLON

It is a multiple event, as its name implies. It comprises of the following sports:

1. Swimming (1,500 metres),
2. Cycling (40 km),
3. Running (10 km).

The triathlon was first included in the Olympic Games of Sidney in 2000 (27th Olympic Games, September 15th – October 1st) and about 500,000 spectators thronged to watch it during its two-day course.





TSIKLITIRAS, KONSTANTINOS

He was born in Pylos, in 1888, and he was one of the leading figures of Greek sports. As a young athlete he trained with the Panhellenic Gymnastic Association. Standing at 1.92 metres tall, he was incredibly physically strong and well-built, particularly for his time, so much so that the foreign press wrote about him at the time that he was “such a perfect image of an athlete that in ancient times he would have been used by sculptors as a model”. At the age of twenty, he took part in the London Olympic Games, and came second at high jump without impetus, jumping 1.55 metres, and also second at long jump without impetus, jumping 3.25 metres. At the next Olympics that were held in Stockholm, Tsiklitis was the flag bearer for Greece. He won gold at long jump without impetus (3.37 metres), and bronze at high jump without impetus (1.55 metres). He is the only Greek Olympic champion to have won four medals. Apart from his feats at the Olympics, he also excelled at football, as a goalkeeper, and at water polo. In 1912, he was conscripted into the army to fight for his country in the Balkan Wars. He died of meningitis at the age of 25.



VIKELLAS, DIMITRIOS

A poet and a writer, Dimitrios Vikellas was born in Ermoupoli, on the island of Syros, in 1835, and died in Athens in 1908. He spent more than twenty years living in Paris and London, where he was involved in commerce, but later settled in Athens. He was a great philanthropist, and several intellectual and charitable institutions owe their existence to his generosity. This enlightened author participated in the International Sports Congress in Paris and through that capacity he was successful in securing the hosting of the **first Olympic Games of modern time** in Athens. He became the first chairman of the International Olympic Committee. His most famous works include a series of short-stories drawing on the Greek Revolution of 1821, entitled *Loukis Laras*; *Papa-Narkissos*; *The Ugly Sister*, and a collection of poems, *Verses*.



ZAPPAS, EVANGHELOS

Evangelos Zappas (1800-1865) was born in Labovo, a small village near the town of Yannina in northern Greece. He fought valiantly in the Greek Independence Revolution in 1821, and in 1824 he became a brigadier. In 1831, he moved to Bucharest, where he became a practical surgeon and acquired great wealth. In the following years, he rented land owned by the Greek monasteries in the area and increased his fortune. After 1844, he began buying large expanses of land and leasing them out. In one of those plots of land he built a grand mansion where he lived with his cousin Konstantinos Zappas, who had also moved to Romania. The Zappas cousins acquired a huge fortune in a very short time through commerce and agriculture.

Evangelos Zappas was the first man to come up with the idea of reviving the Olympic Games. In 1865, he sent a letter to King Otho of Greece, proposing the revival of the Olympics and offering 400 shares of his Steamboat Company to that effect, so that there would be enough funding for the Games to take place every four years in Athens.

ZAPPEION HALL



The Zappeion Hall is situated on a small rise between the Royal Gardens and the Temple of Olympian Zeus. It is mainly used for conferences and exhibitions. It owes its name to the national benefactor [Evangelos Zappas](#), who provided funds for its construction. Its façade boasts a beautiful colonnade of Corinthian columns. The Hall was designed by Theofilus Hansen, and its construction was carried out under the supervision of Ernest Ziller. One of the most glorious moments for the Zappeion Hall was the International Exhibition of 1903. It was used as an Olympic Village during the interim Olympiad of 1906 and also served at different times as a provisions storehouse, military barracks, school, asylum, and hospital. It was inaugurated during the fourth Zappeian Olympiad of 1888.

Renovation work began in 1928, and from 1933 to 1938, it housed a permanent exhibition of Greek products. It was at the Zappeion Hall where, on May 29th, 1979, Greece signed the Treaty of Accession by which it became a full member of the European Community.

ZATOPEC, EMIL



Born in 1922 in the city Coprivnitche, in Czechoslovakia, he had the habit of running bobbing his head up and down, giving the impression that every breath he took would be the last one. He would run at a steady pace for a long time only to speed up suddenly, leaving all his co-athletes behind.

In the 1952 Olympics, in [Helsinki](#), he won three gold medals, one in the 5,000 metres one in the 10,000 metres, and one in the marathon race. He succeeded in setting eighteen world records. The last time he took part in the Olympic Games was in 1956, when he entered the marathon race and came in sixth. He also had the habit of moving his hands like pistons, which gave him the nickname “steam-locomotive man”.

ZEUS



He was the supreme Greek god and head of the Greek pantheon, father to gods and humans alike. He protected the family and everyone who lived within the house premises. With much wisdom and prudence, Zeus, or Jupiter as the Romans called him, ruled over the fates of men, and with great justice, he guarded the moral order of the world. The Ancient Greeks worshipped him as god of weather changes, fertility and good harvests.



