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Setting sail for new horizons

Greece's tourism and exports lead recovery

> **NO, WE CAN'T (AGREE)**

New Democracy leader Antonis Samaras presents his party's economic programme



> **SUPPORTING GREEK EXPORTS**

Christina Sakellaridis says flourishing exports will help fuel economic recovery



> **TIME TO GET REAL**

Yiannis Stournaras talks about privatisation plans and their impact on Greece's debt



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New SETE head Andreas Andreadis wants Greece to become one of the top ten global destinations



> **GREEK SPIRIT OF LONDON**

Agatha Kalisperas promotes Hellenic culture and heritage in the United Kingdom



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Greek spirit of London

Seventeen years after its inauguration, the Hellenic Centre of London has been recognised by the Athens Academy for its many years successfully promoting Hellenic culture in the UK

Keeping the Greek spirit alive, but also nourishing it with a host of lectures, exhibits, concerts and cultural events which promote the exchange of ideas, the Hellenic Centre of London has been true to its vision since its inception in 1994 as a charity - when prominent London Greeks and Cypriots sought a home for Greek culture and thought in the UK.

Housed in an impressive Edwardian building in the heart of London's West End, in Paddington, the Hellenic Centre hosts a slew of exhibits, concerts, cultural events, lectures, Greek language courses and workshops, and is now an integral part of the West End as well as the Greek and Cypriot Diaspora communities.

"The objectives of the Hellenic Centre are twofold," says Agatha Kalisperas, the director of the Hellenic Centre since 1997. "To provide a home for the cultural activities of the Greek and Greek Cypriot cultural organisations and societies in London and to promote an awareness and appreciation of Greek culture for Greeks and non-Greeks alike."

To this end, Historians Mark Mazower, Richard Clogg and John Julius Norwich, authors Alki Zei and Panos Karnezis, professor Sir Basil Markesinis and Nobel winner Christopher Pissarides, are but a few of the intellectual heavy weights who have spoken about their work at the Hellenic Centre to eager crowds. Film screenings, art and photo exhibitions as well as a stream of Greek cultural activities have also found currency.

"The British public is always interested in classical Greece and Byzantium and lectures and exhibitions on icons," says Kalisperas,

To sum up

A home away from home for some, but also a place where the best of Greek culture and heritage - from the ancients to contemporary Greeks - as well as others making their mark in Greek-themed areas are showcased. This is the legacy of the Hellenic Centre in London which is now in its seventeenth year.

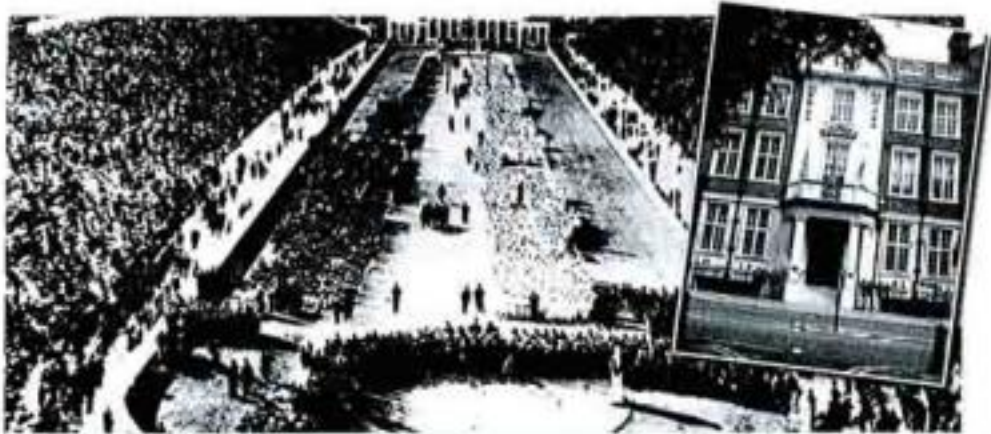
In recognition of its significant work over many years promoting Hellenic culture in the UK, the Hellenic Centre was presented with an award by the Athens Academy on March 24, 2011. *Business File's* Vanessa Alexakis speaks to the Centre's director, Agatha Kalisperas, and looks at the Centre's rich history and outlook.

who was born in Nicosia, Cyprus and moved to London for her university studies almost four decades ago.

She also notes that social events "like Greek evenings - two - three times a year with food and music are also popular with Greeks and non-Greeks alike. The Greek Language courses

for adults continue to be very popular. To boot, twenty Greek and Greek Cypriot organisations are members of the Hellenic Centre and have their events here plus many other Greek organisations consider the Hellenic Centre as their 'home.'"

The Centre is owned by the charitable body



Olympic revival: Together with the Benaki Museum, the Hellenic Centre of London (inset) is organising an exhibition of photographs from the 1896 Olympics in Athens, due to run from around the middle of July to the middle of August 2012, to coincide with next year's London Olympic Games.