

SOWER



American
Farm School

Thessaloniki
Greece

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GS '84 Director, Christine Lansdale, and her Assistant, Geoff Sather relieved to have gotten everyone, including themselves, to the top of Mt. Olympus!

GREEK SUMMER 1984

"What I would give to be in Aghios Panteleimonas laying concrete with the rest of the group. It was a wonderful summer. It was a period of experience, growth, friendship and love, and I remember the trip often and read my journal. I'm so glad I kept a journal; I am constantly reliving the moments of Greek Summer," wrote Taddy Hall as he returned for his senior year in high school.

Those "moments" were many that the whole group of 44 American teenagers created, enjoyed and will never want to forget from their 6 week living/working experience in Greece last summer. They arrived somewhat shy, nervous, and tired from their long flight only to be whisked off to a 3 day orientation at a YMCA camp at the foot of beautiful Mt. Pelion by the sea. It was not long, however, before they pulled together as a group and impressed

everyone with their eagerness to learn and experience new things. Perhaps it was most evident that first night in their village, Agios Panteleimonas, when they tried out their freshly mastered Greek songs and dances and were welcomed with open arms by their families.

So began a summer full of hard work, fresh air, music and dance. Certainly every moment was special to those who took part, but there were some definite highlights that are worth mentioning. When they were not laying cement or feeding the pigs and chickens, the group was busy creating individual projects or group activities such as "the happening" which involved the whole campus as a stage and everyone's involvement. On Hunger Day, they took part in a hunger banquet, saw slides of Somalia and Asia and held a U.N.-style debate on the issues of

world hunger. There was the week of touring Greece with its beach nights, Athenian shopping and the race at the site of the first Olympiad. And none will forget the breathtaking views from the home of Zeus, Mitikas Peak, the highest on Mt. Olympus.

It all culminated in 2 days of almost non-stop work finishing the road they had begun 6 weeks earlier in Agios Panteleimonas, an effort the villagers will always remember. At the farewell dinner in a seaside village, a graduate of the Farm School, Andoni Oussounzoglou, passing by the restaurant sensed that it was a Farm School gathering, and upon confirming it decided to treat the whole group for their final party!

"The unity of the group, the successes we enjoyed, and the challenges we accepted are so vivid . . . so meaningful . . . I am living in the memories."

Notes from the Farm and School

Thanksgiving dawned sunny, clear and crisp at the Farm School where friends, students and staff gathered in the Assembly Hall for the annual Thanksgiving Day Pageant organized by the English Department. There were songs and square dances, Indians and Pilgrims, "modern Americans" who spoke wonderful English and even a real live Farm School turkey! The tale of America's colonization and why we have a day of thanks dynamically and colorfully came to life before all assembled guests, including representatives of the Consular Corps, heads of local businesses and government officials. It was followed by a group photo on the bleachers of Theo Litsas' playing field and a traditional feast in the School's dining hall.



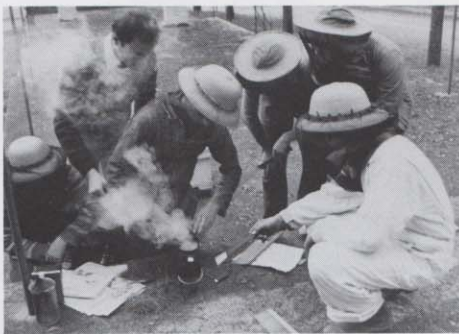
Andoni Stambolides, Associate Director of Education with the Square Dancers.

Leo Koyias, the School's resident pianist, is a 2nd year student in the Lyceum program from near Athens who never misses an opportunity to put his fingers to the ivories. He is seen here practicing songs with other students for the Oxi Day celebration which commemorates the famous refusal of General Metaxa to the invasion of the Italians on October 28, 1940.



Leo Koyias

Panos Miserlis works with students making smoke that they use to calm the bees while they work among the hives. Every Saturday morning Panos, himself a Farm School graduate, holds beekeeping classes with about 20 students. They hope to upgrade their facilities so they can produce even more of that delicious Farm School "meli".



Panos Miserlis



Christina Spiranasou with Texaco District Manager Dimitris Kalogiannis.

Christina Spiranasou, a third year Lyceum student from Kilkis, showed her aptitude right from the beginning. She would come into the library and just play with the various small computers available until gradually she felt comfortable enough to join the group of enthusiasts that Tasso Pougouras, the School's librarian, was teaching as an extra-curricular activity. She began to use the computers to help her translate various Greek authors into English and then taught others how to. **Texaco**, as Christina's scholarship sponsors, had followed her progress and were so impressed that they gave her her own small computer. (In the photo, **Mr. Dimitris Kalogiannis**, Texaco's Thessaloniki District Manager, presents Christina with her compu-

ter.) Knowledge of computers could be useful in combination with their practical agricultural training in running an agricultural supply business or livestock farm. Classes are held twice weekly with more time available on Saturdays.

The staff who built the School's lovely stone church in 1955 knew what they were doing naming **St. Chrysostomos** as its patron saint. Chrysostomos means "golden mouthed", an apt title for the saint known for his eloquence, great knowledge and scholarly works. And as the patron saint of learning, he is well suited to look after an educational institution.

Each year the School has a "Panigiri" a celebration, to honor its saint on his name day, November 13. Weeks before, staff and students begin preparations for the day. The grounds are spruced up and the church is scrubbed from top to bottom. All Farm School wives gather in different groups to work on handicrafts: macrame, pottery, knitting, lace, toys, baked goods and Christmas cards.

The result of the hard work and enthusiasm is a festive occasion highlighted by the procession of the church's icon, Greek dances by the students, loukoumades (fried donuts and honey), and tables laden with the cleverly crafted items made by the staff. This year's "panigiri" was a great success, raising substantial sums for the up-keep of the church.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: Our heartfelt thanks to all those friends who have responded to our Fall appeal — and to all those still considering their gift, please do join us! Your help in restoring the earthquake-damaged Princeton Hall, our "Parthenon", will be so very important.

NOTE FROM THE NEW YORK OFFICE: A new computer has arrived — and with it plenty of problems! It's called an "AT" and whether this is an abbreviation for the Greek "atimo" (rascal) or "atsidha" (very clever), we're not yet sure. Apologies to all those whose mailings and replies have been delayed.

Another First at the Farm School

As the American Farm School has done in the past with the first pasteurizer in 1933, the first cotton picker in 1958, and the first teaching packages for agricultural education, the School is again introducing new technology to Greece. Experience has shown that these introductions have done well in the past and it is hoped that this innovation will also contribute to agricultural development in Greece.

In September 1983 construction began on the Biogas Plant — the first of its kind in Greece. Just over a year later the work has been completed and the closed digesters are ready for loading with manure from the School's 360 head dairy herd, 12,000 laying hens, and hog project. All of this will yield a gas similar to natural gas, methane, usable as fuel, and a deodorized sludge good as fertilizer.

The process in simple terms, involves making a mixture of the waste products and water which is placed in the airtight digesters for a period of approximately 17 days. The digesters must be heated to 35° C for the process to be completed in good time. The heat will at first come from an oil fired furnace but will use the waste heat of the process itself once it all gets going. The gas produced will be funnelled to a storage tank and the sludge to settling beds.

After a trial period to determine the amount of gas produced and any problems with the process, the biogas will be used in 3 power units. One will be an electrical generator which will satisfy some of the power requirements of the farm. Another will be a heater located in the milk bottling department to produce steam for the sterilizing of the bottles. And the third will be in the new 1,000 sq. meter greenhouse where the free heat in winter will lower the cost of the plants grown in the School's nursery.

This alternative energy will reduce the School's dependence on oil by as much as 56 tons or 1.4 million drachmas (\$11,200) a year! In addition

to these energy savings there will be other benefits. The residue liquid has great fertilizing potential and we can distribute it through our drip irrigation system over our fields. Residue solids, in peat-like form, also retain their fertilizer value but none of the traditional barnyard odor. They will be used around the campus and perhaps sold in bags along with plants from the nursery.

One of the most exciting developments at the School in recent years, the Biogas Plant is the result of several years of detailed planning by the School's resident engineer, Harry Theocharides, with the help of



Another First . . . Harry Theocharides explaining the new biogas system to an English visitor.

Greek and American engineers. Now that this technology is here in Greece we hope all those interested will come to see it and start similar projects of their own.

WHAT IS SWAP?



SWAP on the Mt. minus Judy who had a bad ankle that day.

SWAP stands for Summer Work Activities Program. It is a program designed to give college age students with some agricultural experience a chance to work overseas gaining practical skills in agriculture and exposure to a different culture and way of life. Participants pay their own way, but they receive room and board and a small salary when they reach the Farm School. The work involves doing tasks in all the departments on the Farm and perhaps some special maintenance projects on the campus. On the weekends and at the end of the 6 week program the group visits various sights and makes a trip to a nearby island. The following report on SWAP '84 was sent by Sandy Gmur:

They all arrived at different times, but each one greeted me with such smiles and enthusiasm that I knew it

would be a great group. Four from Holland and three from the States plus their American director, Rod McSherry. All had had some agricultural experience, so with no trouble at all they dove into their various tasks which included milking, egg collection, chicken removal, tractor driving and nursery work. Some even worked over-time, baling hay at night, to earn extra drachmas.

On the social side, there were Greek lessons for those interested, taverna nights, visits to nearby sites, and of course the infamous climb up Mt. Olympus. A very special couple were responsible this year for many of the good times the SWAP'ies had. Leo and Vasso Chriis (Vasso is a member of our Committee for Student Services) became "Mom and Dad" of the SWAP '84 family. They took everyone under their wings and made them feel at home. Another

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Leo & Vasso Chriis before a picnic. They took all of SWAP on one weekend.

Propeller Club Honors Farm School for It's 80th Anniversary and Philip Morris Endows Scholarship



American Ambassador to Greece, Mr. Montague Stearns - far left (seated); Mr. John G. Cosby, Jr. PMO/Athens - left; Mr. John Santikos, President of the Propeller Club of the United States of America (Port of Piraeus - Greece) - center; Mr. Bruce M. Lansdale, Director, American Farm School.

On the 19th of December the Propeller Club had a luncheon for more than 200 people at the Hilton in Athens to celebrate the Farm School's 80 years of operation. Bruce Lansdale, invoking the wisdom of Nasrudin Hodja throughout his talk, reviewed the development of Greece, the Greek village, and the Farm School over these years. The highlight of the occasion was a presentation by John Cosby on behalf of Philip Morris, of an endowed scholarship to provide in perpetuity a scholarship for a boy or girl from a tobacco village.

"We at Philip Morris are proud and honored to be here today to join all of you in the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the American Farm School in Salonica.

"What began as a vision by a dedicated American missionary, John Henry House has become over the years a unique educational institution. By training rural youth in modern agricultural and managerial methods, the American Farm School plays an important role. It provides vitality to a major sector of the Greek economy by encouraging young people to work in agriculture with confidence and pride. And, by extension, the School helps to improve the competitive position of Greek agriculture in the European common market.

"Philip Morris has a long and productive association with the Greek agricultural world. For over 40 years, Philip Morris has been present on the Greek tobacco market and is today the largest buyer of Greek tobacco. And ten years ago, we entered into a license agreement with Papastratos for the manufacture of Marlboro, the largest-selling cigarette in the world.

"Philip Morris has always given importance to those who supply our

basic raw materials. Our support of the American Farm School here in Greece began 25 years ago, in 1959, and is a clear example of our interest in the development of the agricultural sector in this country.

"The impressive accomplishments of the American Farm School over the past 80 years could not have been achieved without dedicated people like Bruce Lansdale. I first met Bruce in 1964 in the basement of the Greek Orthodox Church in Richmond, Virginia where Philip Morris has a manufacturing facility and an R+D center.

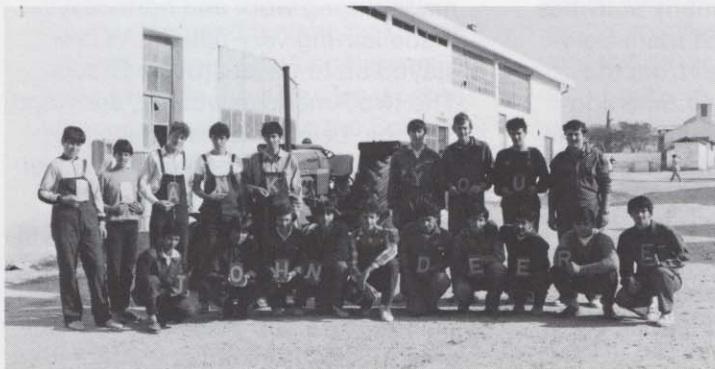
"Bruce was hosting a Farm School fund-raising dinner and showed a film of the Farm School. This was my first introduction to Greece.

"Twenty years later, Bruce Lansdale is still working for the same worthy cause. Philip Morris is happy on this special day to respond to the School's capital campaign. Our donation endows an annual scholarship for a student from a tobacco village in northern Greece to attend the School. I cannot think of an institution more deserving of this contribution, nor an individual to whom I could be more pleased to make this presentation on behalf of Philip Morris."

THANK-YOUI!

This year the School was the lucky recipient of two tractors and the promise of a third. John Deere has pledged 2 for the price of one, and the first has already arrived. Mrs. Linda Noe Laine originally of Louisi-

ana, pictured with her daughter Christel, has matched this contribution with a cash donation. International Harvester gave the School a 105 horse power tractor that has already been put to much good use in the fields. Here the students thank both companies for their generous gifts.



New Faces at the Farm School



James C. Warren, Jr.



Christine Mahairas



Sandy Gmur

in New York: James C. Warren, Jr.

Jim Warren has joined the Farm School as Associate Director for Trustee Affairs, replacing Sally Livingston who has left the Farm School to move to Turner's Falls, Massachusetts and to travel with her opera singing husband. Jim, a 1950 graduate of Princeton, began his career as an Economic Analyst with the Marshall Plan Mission to Greece. He spent 18 years with Exxon Corporation, working with the company's affiliates in Asia and Africa, and then as General Manager of its marketing interests in Greece. Most recently, he was Director of Development at Bates College in Maine. He and his wife Gail, a travel agent with Thomas Cook, raised their five children abroad and now live in Morristown, NJ.

In its search for a new Associate Director, the School was looking for a person with experience in Management, Development, Marketing, Capital Campaigns and Greece. Jim has extensive experience in all these areas, (and speaks fluent Greek to boot!) and we welcome him and his family to the Farm School family.

and in Greece: Christine Mahairas and Sandy Gmur

Christine Mahairas, an English major with degrees from the Aristotelion University in Thessaloniki and New York University, has taken over the position of Nancy Worcester in charge of Public Relations and Fund Raising. Ms. Mahairas spent most of her childhood in New York where her father was in business as

a florist. In recent years she has been living and working in Greece.

Her main responsibility is coordinating the Athens and Thessaloniki Development Committees which have undertaken to raise 15,000,000 drachmas (\$120,000) in Greece this year. She is also working with visitors, publishing the "Sporeas" (Sower in Greek), preparing public relations materials, and maintaining correspondence with all contributors.

Sandy Gmur, an anthropology major and graduate of Vassar College, originally came to the Farm School in 1975 on the Greek Summer program. She returned in 1983 as a counselor for Greek Summer followed by 6 months doing volunteer work in an orphanage in Somalia. She has returned to the Farm School as an intern in the Public Relations Department. Along with taking care of Cincinnati Hall with its many visitors, she has undertaken responsibility for coordinating the activities of the scholarship program, photographing events and activities around campus, and writing articles for the Sower.

Together, Christine and Sandy help organize and run the many activities of the Committee for Student Services, a group of women from the area who volunteer their time and energy to help with extra-curricular activities for the students, the School library and the Academic Department.

Christine and Sandy extend a warm invitation to anyone to come and visit them and become acquainted with the American Farm School.

Ladenis Letter

Many individuals in the United States ask the question, "What are the Greek people doing for the Farm School?" The first letter received by the School in the New Year from Basil Ladenis, the Managing Director of "Minerva" in Thessaloniki provides an interesting response.

Dear Mr. Lansdale,

I was indeed amazed at the dynamic way in which the School continues to face the future.

The School has been operating for several decades now as a model in the area of agricultural education. I believe its most important contribution in the development of Greek Agriculture has been in educating people. It has provided them with the scientific and technological know-how, which has enabled them to cultivate the land more efficiently and effectively.

I fully agree that the School should continue to adjust to new technology and follow developments in agriculture. I also know how difficult it is to invest in any activity which by its nature as a non-profit organization has no expectations of gaining financial profits. May you find joy in your courage then as you continue to fight the uphill battle!

In closing, I would like to inform you, that in response to your message on the School's needs we are increasing our contribution from 30,000 drachmas to 100,000 drachmas as per the enclosed check.

With our very best wishes for the New Year 1985.

Sincerely yours,

V. Ladenis
Managing Director

SWAP (continued from pg. 3)

special activity outside the Farm School was the few days that each member of the group spent with a family in a village. This opportunity added another dimension to their experience here.

All the good times and friendships made during work and homestays made leaving very difficult. A few stayed on to travel around Greece. The two American women, Judy and Shauna, being International Four-H'ers, stayed on for three months of visiting with different agricultural families all over the country, and our 1 woman from Holland has found herself a job in a plant nursery in a nearby town and plans to stay indefinitely. Beware of Greece's allure!

AFS GRADUATE: VANGELIS VERGOS '76

Now 27 years old and just through with university, Vangelis Vergos, or Van as they nicknamed him in the States, is still as able to deal with cows as he was when a student at the Farm School. In fact he is probably better equipped to do so, never having strayed from the path of animal husbandry since his first year when teacher Panayiotis Rotsios, "a man who really knows about animals", set him on this track.

As a boy growing up in the village of Yefira along with Axios River, Vangelis worked on his family's farm of 37 stremmas or 9 acres. They grew primarily wheat and grapes for making wine and had no animals. However, when he heard that the Agricultural Bank of Greece was offering scholarships for animal husbandry studies at the American Farm School, he visited the School and promptly made the decision that it was the place for him. At 16 he entered into a field that has become his life's work.

Vangelis says: "I love cows. They have personality." Clearly it is the cows that have won Vangelis' heart. While following a comprehensive course in animal husbandry, farm management, and technical skills as the School required, Vangelis was drawn towards the dairy. He worked extensively there during the School year and returned for summer work.

In 1975 he was sent to Holland for a 3 month experience in animal husbandry, working with dairy animals in that country. He went overseas again in 1976 as a member of the 4 man team chosen to represent



Vangelis Vergos, AFS '76 graduate.

Greece in the Agricultural Olympics in Kansas City, Missouri held by The Future Farmers of America (FFA). Against 15 other countries they competed in such events as animal judging, milking, and tractor driving. Though they didn't come out on top in any event, Vangelis is quick to say that it was really the experience and camaraderie that developed which really counted.

The week of the Olympics was only the beginning of Vangelis' stay in the U.S. The FFA exchange program was in its first year and he was to take part by spending a year in the homes of 2 American farming families. Due to his interest he was placed with dairy farmers in Pennsylvania and Minnesota. While the 2 farms were very different, one being highly mechanized with little pasture and the other much more dependent upon grazing, Vangelis felt that he easily adapted to their conditions. His exposure to a variety of techniques at the Farm School was an excellent preparation for what he encountered on these farms.

After his U.S. experience Vangelis returned to Greece to continue his animal husbandry studies first at a

junior college (KATE) and more recently at the University of Thessaloniki where he was admitted because of his record as top student in his KATE class. He has been concentrating on reproduction and was chosen by one of his professors to be an assistant over the summer in the laboratory doing work on the physiology of reproduction. He also plans to attend some courses in Roquefort, France on dairy sheep.

Vangelis exemplifies the qualities which the Farm School endeavors to instill in its graduates — an open mind and heart and the skills to make the most of their lives. He credits the Farm School and its staff with giving him these basics from which to grow and he has the desire to pass them on to others. "Someday I would like to come back to the Farm School to teach, because it is worth more than anything else to give what I have learned to others." He remembers the words of his teacher, Bruce Lansdale — "Every minute [that] passes is not coming back, so in that minute do what you have to do and don't let it go." With this thought as his guide, Vangelis is trying to make the most out of his life.

CLASSIFIED

Library needs: Books, magazine subscriptions, records, tapes, video cassettes of films (VHS system), and small computers. All cash donations much appreciated as well.

A Fringe Of Blue: If you have a copy of Joice Loch's book and would like to donate it to the School library, it would be greatly appreciated. It's out of print.