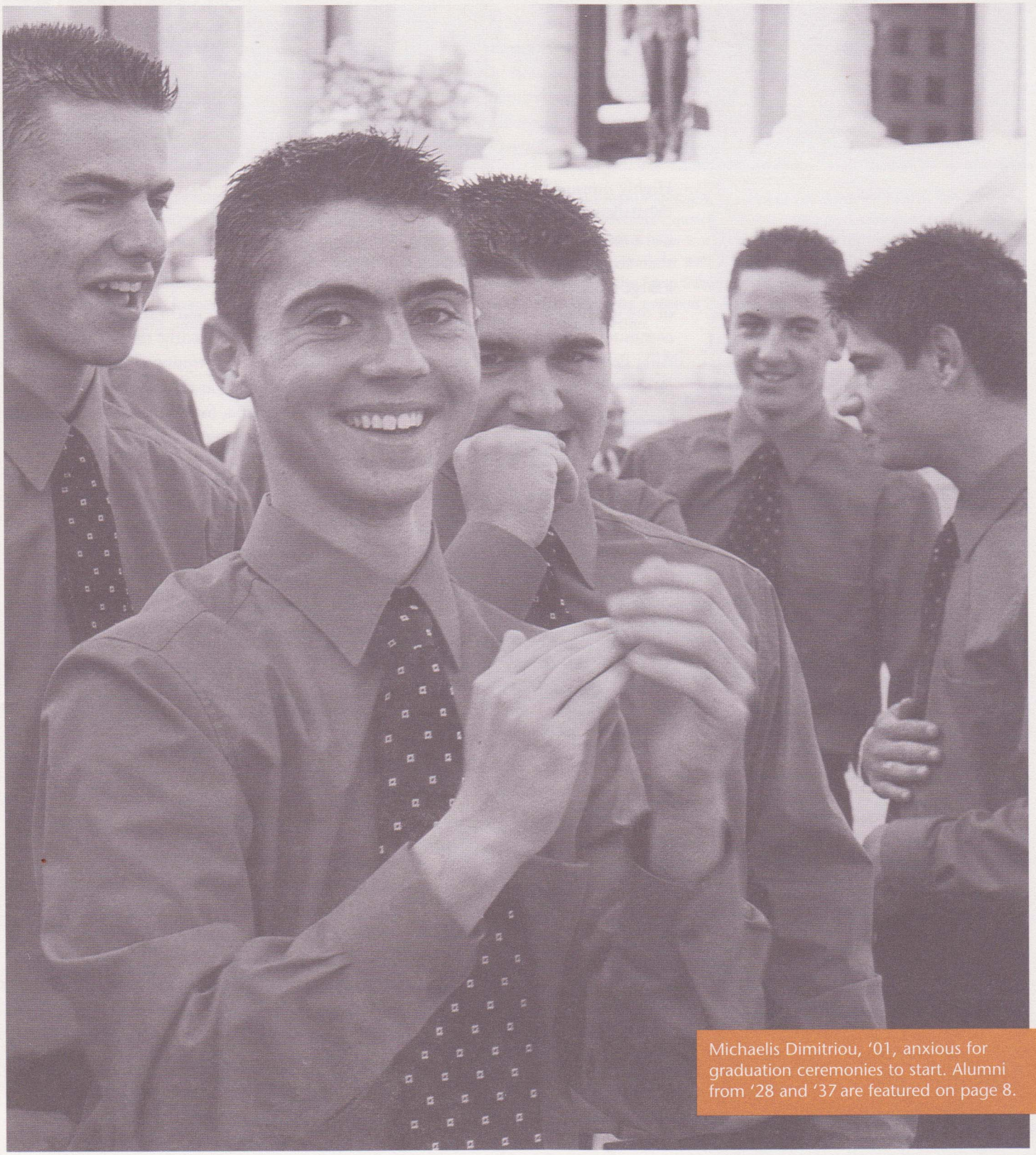
The Sower

The American Farm School
Thessalonica Agricultural & Industrial Institute
Thessaloniki, Greece

Fall/Winter 2001

Issue 151



Michaelis Dimitriou, '01, anxious for graduation ceremonies to start. Alumni from '28 and '37 are featured on page 8.

The American Farm School
Thessalonica Agricultural &
Industrial Institute

Thessaloniki, Greece

Office of the Trustees
1133 Broadway, Suite 1625
New York, NY 10010-7903
212 463 8434
212 463 8208 Fax
nyoffice@amerfarm.org

Farm & School
Post Office Box 23
GR-551 02
Thessaloniki, Greece
011/30/31/492-700
011/30/31/492-710 Fax
www.afs.edu.gr

The Sower

Published semi-annually
and sent free of charge to friends
and contributors everywhere
by the American Farm School.

President
David W. Buck

Chairman of the Board of Trustees
Alexander E. Drapos

Executive Director
Office of the Trustees
V. Serena Joyce

Editor
Nancy E. Walton

Contributors: AFS Archives, Sarah Burke, David Buck, Vasilis Gougousis, Jennifer Lilly, Mary-Vicki Papaioannou, Pelagia Voutsa, Nancy Walton, Randall Warner.

Photo Credits: *Cover:* Paris Petrides; AFS Archives, Oliver Baily, V. Serena Joyce, Yiannis Kouitzogiou, Mary-Vicki Papaioannou, Randall Warner.

Design
Doris Halle Design, NYC

Printing
Benchmark Graphics

Farm School staff work on *The Sower* as part of their normal staff duties and no fees are paid for their contributions to it.

Portions of this issue may be reprinted without permission provided attribution is made as follows:
Reprinted from Issue 151 of **The Sower,** *the newsletter of The American Farm School in Thessaloniki, Greece.*

Printed on recycled paper.

From The President

Building for Education

Visitors to the American Farm School campus later this academic year will be struck by the sleek appearance of one of its best-loved buildings, James Hall. Constructed in 1906 to provide classrooms and the residence of Dr. House and his family under the same roof, James Hall was destroyed by fire in 1916 and by a bomb explosion in 1944, but rebuilt each time. Today major reconstruction of James Hall for earthquake protection and to modernize three floors of classrooms and faculty offices will give our students an up-to-the-minute learning environment in a building hallowed by nearly a century of Farm School history.

Highly unusual for Greece and the Balkans, the Farm School has a residential campus of more than sixty acres, accommodating a large student body and much of the teaching and other staff. This residential life fosters a warm sense of community among our high school and college students. Recently, the Dimitris & Aliki Perrotis Library and other campus locations have been equipped for distance learning programs, ready to be used with remote sites such as the Zannas Farm, Anatolia College and the American University of Bulgaria, for example. As important as this new educational dimension is, however, it will not replace face to face classroom learning and the fellowship of campus residence.

"Thanks to the generosity of friends and donors, the Farm School is building for the future."

The Farm School has a long tradition of flexibility and renewal in the use of our campus structures. Massachusetts Hall will soon expand to house additional classrooms for the high school. In the AMAG (American Mission Aid to Greece) complex built after World War II, a dormitory now serves students of the Dimitris Perrotis College of Agricultural Studies. The advantage of living on campus is an important draw for Greek and international students who select our college over other programs.

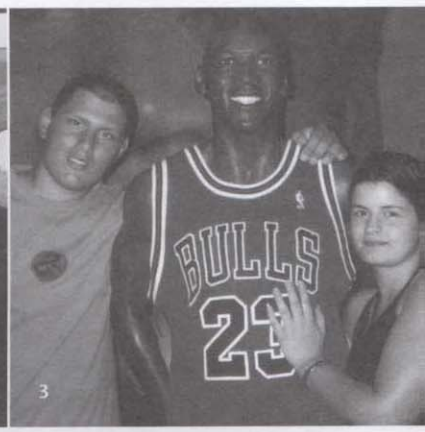
Thanks to the generosity of friends and donors, the Farm School is also building for the future. Through a major gift this year from the Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation, a new dormitory to house 100 high school students is to be constructed, and renovation of the existing Charles and Ann House dormitories will ensure that the existing buildings harmonize with the new.

David W. Buck
President

All of us associated with the American Farm School are deeply saddened by the tragic events of September 11th, and extend our sincerest condolences to the families and friends of the victims.

Here at the School we believe, now more than ever, that our historic mission can, in a small way at least, contribute to world peace. We are grateful for the support of friends of the School everywhere who join us in this conviction, and we look to this support and the strength that it brings to continue our work.

U.S. Activities



1. Alexander Drapos, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, President David Buck and Arthur Dukakis, Trustee of the American Farm School and the Alpha Omega Council, paused for a photo at a dinner hosted by the Alpha Omega Council of Boston this past spring. David Buck, the featured speaker, introduced many new friends to the Farm School. 2. Kate Jainchill from Brookline, MA, Ben Stoff from Austin, TX, and Rick Lilly from Charlottesburg, VA at the Newark, NJ airport on their way to Greece. Kate, Ben and Rick are the 2001-2002 dorm interns. They will be English language teachers, role models, mentors and U.S. ambassadors at the Farm School while actively sharing in the secondary students' dorm life. 3. Ioannis Mavroforos and Evgenia Lafantari, Farm School students, enjoyed visiting Madame Tousseau's Wax Museum while visiting NYC this summer. They posed for a photo with a very lifelike Michael Jordon.

New Faces

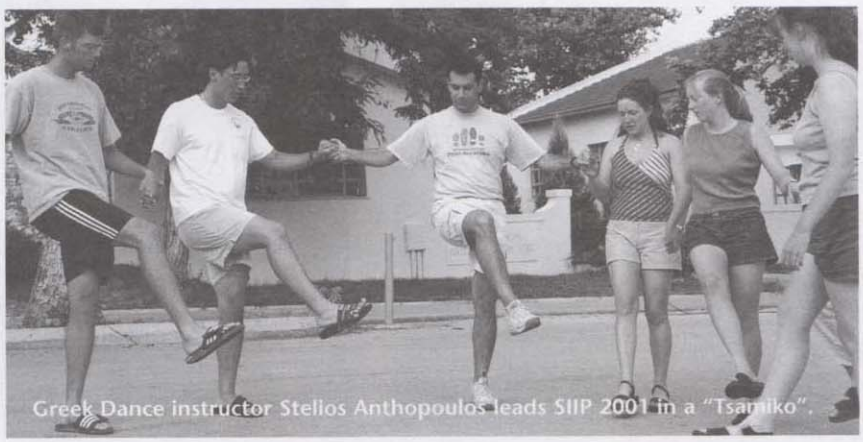
New York Office welcomes new staff member!

The New York Office is delighted to welcome Mary-Vicki Papaioannou, Greek Summer Coordinator. A graduate of Bowdoin College and a native of Princeton, NJ, Mary-Vicki comes to the Farm School with several years experience of summer programs to Greece.

Mary-Vicki Papaioannou, fourth from right, with fellow Greek Summer 2001 staff on top of Mount Olympus.

DPCAS hosts college interns from Europe and the U.S.

The Dimitris Perrotis College of Agricultural Studies' annual Summer International Internship Program (SIIP) featured participants from Albania; F.Y.R.O.M.; Queen's University of Belfast, Northern Ireland; Cornell University, Iowa State University, the University of Arkansas, and the University of Illinois. One of the program highlights was Greek folk dance instructor Stelios Anthopoulos (pictured here with the SIIP group) bringing out the "Zorba" in everyone! Applications for SIIP 2002 are available in the Post Secondary section of the AFS website (www.afs.edu.gr) and should be submitted before the March 29, 2002 deadline to Greece.



Greek Dance instructor Stelios Anthopoulos leads SIIP 2001 in a "Tsamiko".

Greek Springtime 2001

American friends visit Greece and the American Farm School Campus!

The American Farm School hosted twenty-four friends of the Farm School from the United States on a program called Greek Springtime. This was the second Greek Springtime hosted by the School. The trip began in 1998 born of the Greek Summer parents' and grandparents' desire to visit the Farm School and experience the unparalleled hospitality the School and Greece have to offer. Trustee Charles "Tom" Thomas, and his wife Joan, were immensely helpful in planning the trip in 1998 and again in 2001. Tom and Joan spent many hours talking to friends of the School about the trip, as well as working with Farm School staff to ensure the trip was a meaningful and enjoyable one.

The trip began on May 28th in Thessaloniki, Greece. Participants were welcomed to the Farm School by David and Patti Buck and the School's students and staff. A tractor tour of the campus allowed participants to gain a deeper understanding of the School and its mission. Participants were treated to a campus Souvlaki BBQ, and were able to have a dance lesson from the legendary Dimitris Pantazis. In true Farm School spirit the group learned to "Grind the Pepper".

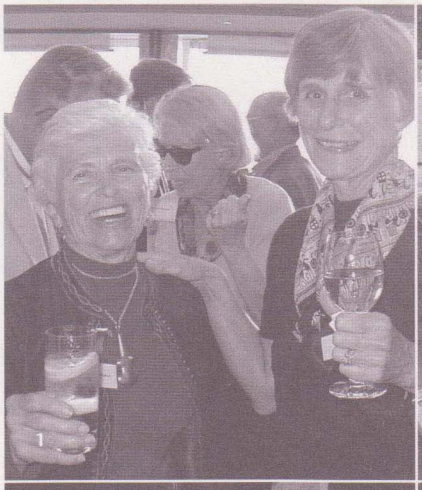
"Extraordinary! Greek Springtime brought me closer to my heritage while enabling me to experience firsthand the special character of the American Farm School. The hospitality, genuineness and heart larger than life of the resident Trustees and friends, students and administrators, and villagers touched by the School made this trip unforgettable." Bill Tsacalis

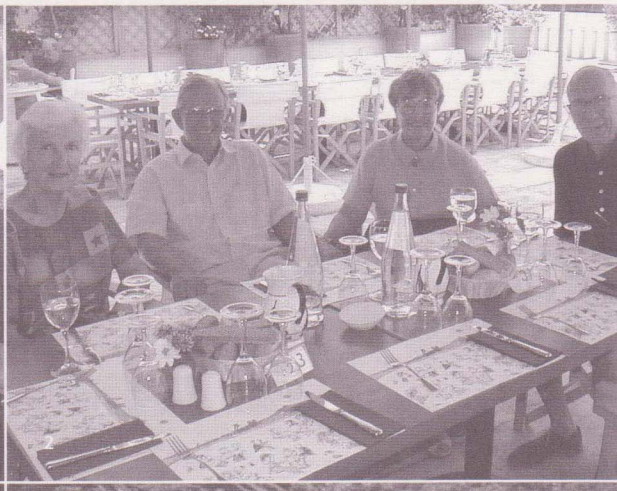
The group visited such historical sites as the monasteries of Meteora, Vergina (the tomb of Philip II of Macedonia), the historic Mt. Pelion village of Markinitsa, and of course the Parthenon in Athens. There were many other stops along the way such as the visit to Metamorphosis, the seaside home of former President Bruce Lansdale and his wife, Tad. The group's trip to Greece would not have been complete without a visit to Mount Olympus, "home of the Gods".

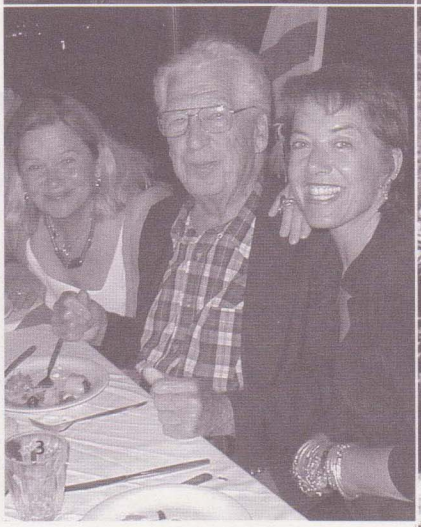
Greek Springtime was welcomed into the homes of friends of the School, as well as Trustees, all throughout the trip. This unique trip facet allowed the group to experience the warm hospitality that Greece is so famous for. These personal touches, as well as the guided tours of the historic sites combined to make this a truly once in a lifetime experience.

"Who can forget dancing the pepper, the enthusiasm of the AFS students, Bruce Landsdale's words from the heart, Manita's haunting melodies and fascinating stories, the scent of jasmine, the glorious Parthenon at sunset, and the smiling eyes that welcome us everywhere." Anonymous

1. Tad Lansdale and Mimi Dozier at a cocktail reception at the Macedonian Palace Hotel in Thessaloniki. 2. Nancy Young, Tom and Joan Thomas, and John Young enjoying lunch at the Benaki Museum's rooftop restaurant. 3. Manita Scocimara, Trustee of the Farm School, Muff Gale and trip organizer Eva Kanellis, sample the local Greek cuisine at a taverna in Athens. 4. Bud and Joan Baily pause for a photo at the bottom of Mt. Olympus.

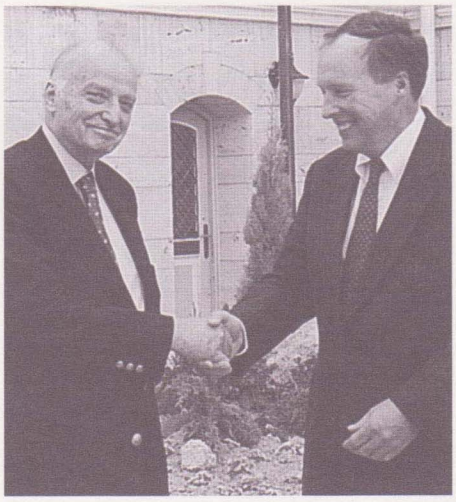






Stavros S. Niarchos Dormitory

The Athens-based Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation has made a major gift to the American Farm School for the construction of a new dormitory for secondary school students. Currently the 240 students from all regions of Greece are housed in the Charles and Ann House dormitories, built in 1978, and in the Kostas Zannas wing, opened in 1981. The new Niarchos dormitory will accommodate a total of 100 students with two or four students to a room with bathroom. Renovations to the existing dormitories will replace rooms with as many as six students each and shared baths with floor plans similar to those intended for the Niarchos building. Thessaloniki-based architect Christos Kouloukouros won the competition for design of the building, and construction is expected to begin during the 2002-2003 school year.



President David Buck, right, thanking Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation representative Mr. K. Drakopoulos, for the foundation's generous gift.

Seminar on Conflict Resolution Brings Turkish and Greek Students to AFS Campus

The new Dimitris and Alikis Perrotis Library was the site of a week-long Seminar on Conflict Resolution organized by WINPEACE (Women's Initiative for Peace), a grassroots non-profit organization of Greek and Turkish women seeking to enhance women's roles in conflict resolution and to develop non-violent solutions to problems from a woman's point of view. Forty university students and facilitators, both women and men, and representing fifteen different institutions of higher learning in Turkey and Greece, immersed themselves in lectures covering the history of the Balkan peninsula from prehistory to the present, and in particular the several centuries of Greek-Turkish coexistence; intensive Turkish and Greek language instruction; and role playing on political and other stubborn issues traditionally considered to make antagonists of the two peoples.

The seminar coordinator, Professor Irini Lagani of the Democritus University of Thrace, explained that WINPEACE brought Greek and Turkish students together in Istanbul last year to focus on cultural subjects and environmental issues. This year, however, they have "dared to face the hot topics, the real problems" confronting these future leaders of their respective countries. Greek participant Georgia Karkali was thrilled by the speed at which participants discovered "what open minds we all have— minds that will work together to promote what is vital for society."

The most unforgettable experience took place during the *glenti* (party), given by the American teenagers of the Greek Summer program to honor their village host families, to which seminar participants were also invited. After the feasting and the traditional Greek songs and dances, Mement Savas of Galatasaray University in Istanbul, mesmerized and made as one the audience of Greeks, Turks and Americans by delivering in a stunning voice–and in the Turkish language–songs of the beloved Greek singer Haris Alexiou.

1

2

1. Seminar participants on the steps of Princeton Hall. 2. Greek and Turkish partners in dance: Georgia Kakali, Greek, and Nilay Ozok, Turkish.

Written by Vasilis Gougousis
Greek Language and History Teacher

"A Teacher is Like a Candle"

"They say a teacher is like a candle. The more the candle burns and melts, the greater is the flame that shines. I don't know how much I have burned and melted, and especially I cannot say how much I have shone. What I do know is that I have shared so much of my heart with thousands of young people who have passed through the Farm School."

With these emotional words, **Nikos Papaconstandinou** put all of us in tears at the graduation ceremony for the high school class of 2001.

A school's success is not really based on facilities or on programs. Amazing people who work there are the indispensable factor. Nikos is one of these people. He retires this year after half a century at the American Farm School, first as a student, then as staff, then for most of the past two decades as head of the Boarding Department.

During his career Nikos has had the singular pleasure of knowing many individuals who have determined the School's history, and he very much identifies with that history himself. Nikos' enormous contribution to the School is known by one and all, and especially by the ranks of students who have benefited from his wisdom and character throughout the years.

Students, staff and friends of the School will never forget Nikos' expression of his philosophy of life and work throughout his career: "The most precious thing we have in life is to be able to give without expecting a single thing in return."

A graduate of the Class of 2001 presents Nikos Papaconstandinou with flowers. Nikos as Valedictorian at his graduation ceremony in 1959.

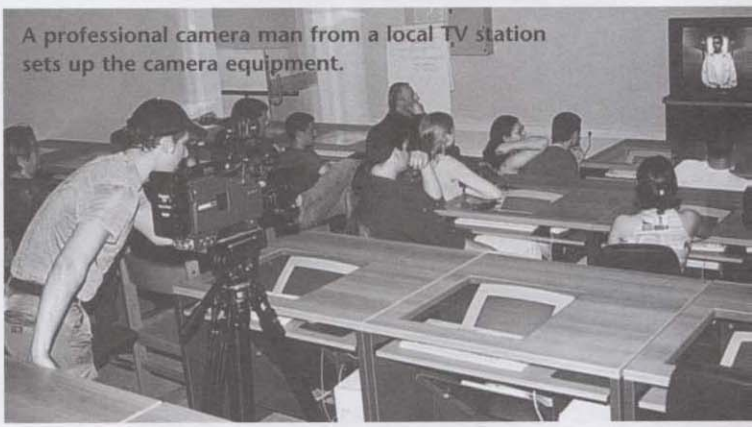
Written by Pelagia Voutsa
Physics Teacher

"Let's Catch a Flick"

Thessaloniki Film Festival National Program

Farm School students were thrilled to take part in a national program called "Let's Go to the Movies" organized by the Thessaloniki Film Festival and supported by the Ministries of Education and Culture with the goal of giving high school age students direct contact with the art of filmmaking.

First, students in participating high schools in Thessaloniki and Athens viewed two classic films, *The Magnificent Seven* and *Seven Samurai,* and using these as examples were instructed in the basic principles of putting a film together. Then, student teams aided by professional advice and equipment provided by the festival organizers, created ten-minute video shorts for entrance in the festival competition. One Farm School entry is an intimate view of dormitory life, influenced by and taking its name from the techno music hit, Freestyler. The second is a salute to the work of Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy called *The Careless 71/2* , in which Farm School students go though silent misadventures during their afternoon practical projects in the gardens, olive grove, tractor shed and piggery.



A professional camera man from a local TV station sets up the camera equipment.

Mt. Olympus The Backdrop for Greek Summer 2001

Mt. Olympus is where it occurred to me that every moment of this trip is beautiful in its own unique way, but all are necessary to create the final memory that each one of us will carry with us forever. – Caroline Hargrave

It was here indeed, at the top of Mt. Olympus, where we realized our individual and our collective "metamorphoses". The GREEK SUMMER 2001 experience, which began and ended on the shores of Halkidiki, undoubtedly peaked on the apex of Mt. Olympus. This is where it became clear to all of the 37 participants who had struggled up the mountain that their summer in Greece was one full of physical, interpersonal and spiritual accomplishments.

A four-day orientation kicked off our collective adventure. Filled with anxiety and excitement, we got to know each other and the country we would be calling home for the next five weeks. Much like the initial ascent at the foot of Mt. Olympus, GREEK SUMMER 2001 was filled with anticipation of things to come. We danced, we sang, we learned Greek phrases and even became stars on Greek television. The *kefi* was in the air as we walked down the beach to Bruce and Tad Lansdale's for an amazing day of stories, swimming and surprises.

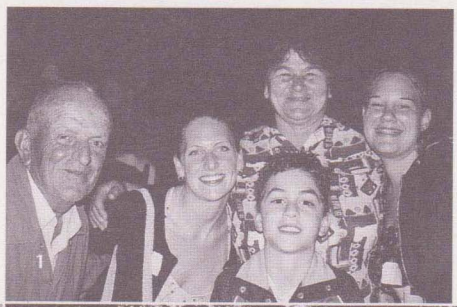
It has already been five weeks since we began our stay in the village. What at first seemed a bit scary and surreal now seems like a second home we will always be able to come to. – Eli Nagler

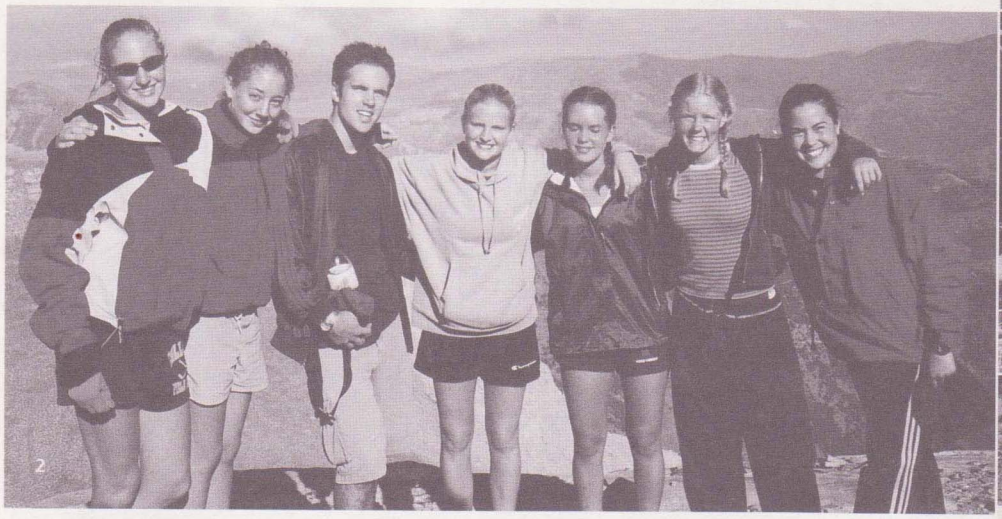
GREEK SUMMER's host village of Rizohori welcomed us with open arms, each family choosing their favorite "son" or "daughter". Many were lucky enough to steal two or three. This year's village was unique in that there were constant crowds of young Greek children who danced with us nightly and gathered around us daily to cheer us on as we worked to complete our project – a memorial park situated at the foot of Greece's northern mountains. We returned the *philoxenia* (hospitality) by inviting our host families to our home at the Farm School, sharing with them the beautiful campus and telling them about the many programs the Farm School has to offer Greece. We ate and danced the night away!

Meteora, the Palamedi fortress, and Mt. Olympus swept over me with a sense of tangible spirituality. – Ariel Gruber

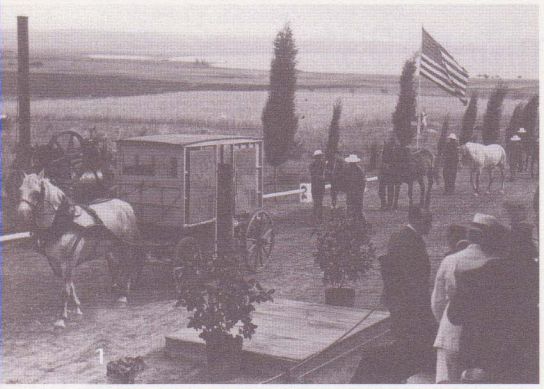
The Big Trip was a huge success! We made our way to Greece's most amazing landmarks, including Delphi, the Athens Acropolis, Mycenae, Epidauros and the breathtaking seaside town of Nafplion. Three days on the island of Skiathos brought us rest and relaxation and an opportunity to enjoy Greece's most valuable resource, the ocean. We also picked up a few sunburns.

With the ascent of Mt. Olympus, our GREEK SUMMER came full circle as we drew parallels of our journey up the mountain to our five-week odyssey through Greece. We gathered on the last day, miserable to part, but content with the knowledge that we were bringing the gift of Greek Summer home for a lifetime of metamorphosis.





1. Caroline Hargrave, second from left and Jennifer Antognazzi, right, with their Greek host family. 2. On top of Mt. Olympus, left to right: Stephanie Potter, Noni Pittenger, Karl Scholz, Heather Smock, Lisa Morse, Serena Foehr and Elizabeth Trenga. 3. Getting ready for another hard day at the worksite. 4. GS participants on the boat to a Skiathos beach.



Commemorating the American Farm School Centennial

Part 2

Shedding Light on Alumni

An unimposing, pocket-sized pamphlet located in the American Farm School Archives is the focus of this second in a six-part series highlighting important aspects of the School's one hundred-year history. Printed in January 1938, it is titled: "American Farm School Directory of Graduates: 1) Alphabetical 2) Class 3) Geographical 4) Occupation."

Measuring 3 1/2" x 5", with fifty-seven numbered pages and a pale blue cover, a simple booklet published in 1938 brought together, probably for the first time, data about Farm School graduates, beginning with the first graduating class in 1911 through the class of 1937.

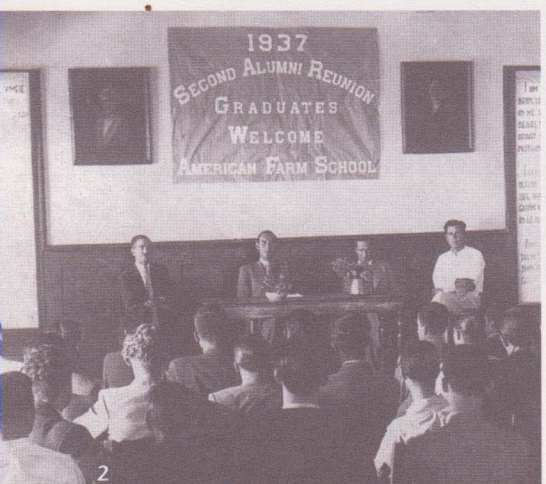
Written in English, it describes more than three hundred alumni, the majority of whom lived in Greece, but others scattered across three continents in fifteen different countries.

Who were the alumni of the first 26 graduating classes? A glance at family names shows the high percentage of Bulgarian and other Slavic students during the School's first decade, and the large number of Armenian students throughout the 1920s. We also see a handful of English or American boys who attended the School, including Edward H. Williams IV, a grandson of Dr. John Henry House. Taken as a whole, the alumni body by 1938 was predominantly Greek.

Where did alumni live after graduation? Three-quarters of the total lived in the northern half of Greece; 20 individuals in Athens or the Greek islands; 22 in Bulgaria, four in Yugoslavia, one each in Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Canada, Egypt, England, France, Jamaica, Palestine, Rumania, South Africa, Syria, and 23 in the United States.

What about their occupations? One of the Farm School's foremost goals has always been to promote careers in agriculture. Later alumni surveys conducted in the 1950s through the 1990s, show with remarkable consistency that close to sixty percent of graduates pursue agriculture-related careers. Even more remarkably, a look at the data from the 1938 directory indicates that fifteen percent farmed their own land; twenty-five percent farmed family land, and twenty percent worked for government or private agricultural agencies or enterprise, adding up to the same total of sixty percent of graduates devoting their lives to agriculture. As one example, this year's Distinguished American Farm School Graduate Award given by the dean and faculty of the Dimitris Perrotis College of Agricultural Studies recognizes Mr. Aris Tavridis of the class of 1934, who has been an outstanding farmer and horticulturalist for nearly seventy years. Others occupations listed in the 1938 directory include "running a fish-net factory," "employee of a chocolate factory," "vocal musician," "pianist", and "owner of a dog clinic and pet shop in Cleveland, Ohio."

Who compiled this modest yet informative document? We can speculate that it may have been Mrs. Ethel Bliss, née House, the youngest of the seven children of Dr. John Henry House and Susan Adeline House. Serving for many years as the executive secretary of the Farm School's office in New York City, her hand can be seen on several eloquent and tasteful brochures, reports and other printed pieces that were used to tell the American Farm School story to its large family of friends and supporters.



1. Graduation ceremony, 1937. 2. The second annual Alumni Reunion was held in 1937. Note the portraits of School founder Dr. John Henry House and Mother House. 3. Photo album caption from the 1930s reads: "One of the graduates of the School with his family (and poultry business)." 4. Photo album caption from the 1930s reads: "One of the graduates of the School with his grandfather, mother, brother and sister." He is identified as Pantelis Lakzenkas, whom the directory of graduates shows as a member of the Class of 1928, and cultivating a vineyard in the village of Ano Levoliani, Florina.