

The Battle of Crete: May 20-31, 1941

On May 20, 1941, thousands of German paratroopers and gliders began landing on Crete. Hitler felt this was to be an easy victory, yet he is quoted to have said shortly after the invasion, "France fell in 8 days. Why is Crete free?" The invasion of Crete took eleven days. It resulted in more than 6,000 German troopers listed as killed, wounded, or missing in action.

This valiant fight by the Cretan people began in the first hour of the Nazi airborne invasion, in contrast to the European underground movements that took a year or more after being invaded to begin. Young boys, old men and women displayed breathtaking bravery in defending their Crete. German soldiers never got used to Cretan women fighting them. They would tear the dress from the shoulders of suspected women to find bruises from the recoil of the rifle. The penalty was death. On July 28, 1941, The Times (London) reported that "five hundred Cretan women have been deported to Germany for taking part in the defense of their native island."

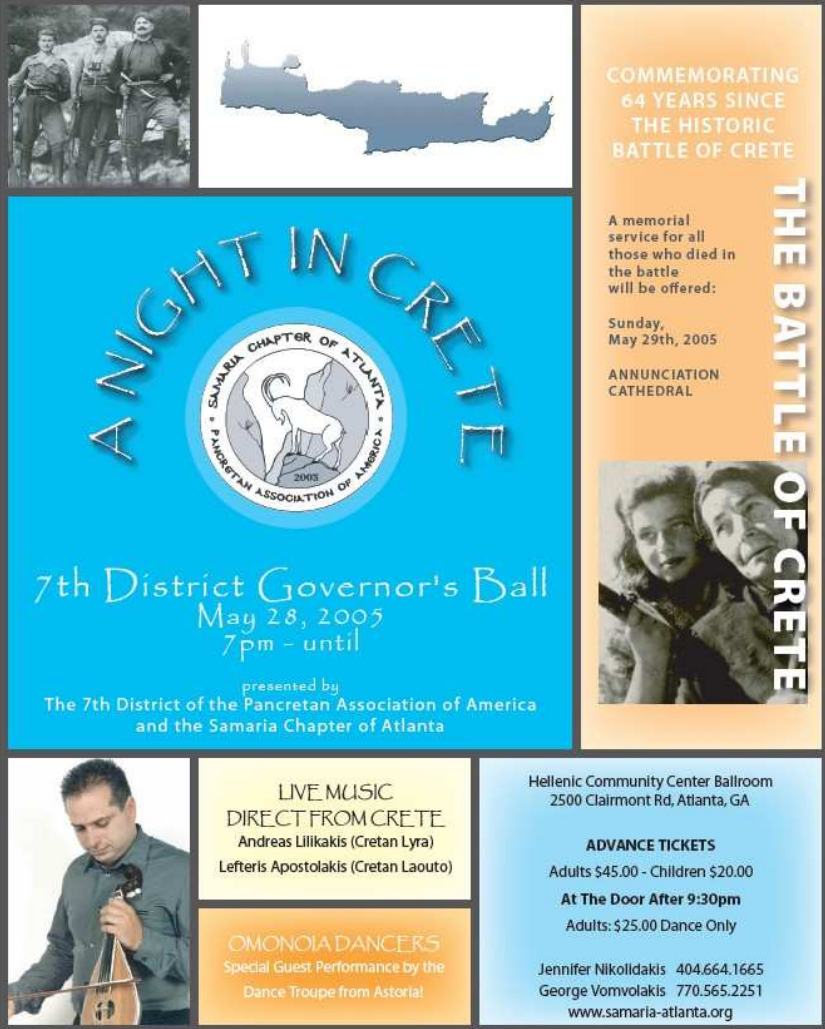
Another surprise for the German soldiers who invaded Crete was the heroic resistance of the clergy. A priest leading his parishioners into battle was not what the Germans anticipated. At Paleochora, Father Stylianos Frantzeskakis, hearing of the German airborne invasion, rushed to his church, sounded the bell, took his rifle, and marched his volunteers toward Maleme to write history.

This struggle became an example for all Europe to follow in defying German occupation and aggression. The price paid by the Cretans for their valiant resistance to Nazi forces was high. Thousands of civilians died from random executions, starvation, and imprisonment. The Germans burned and destroyed entire communities as a reprisal for the Cretan resistance movement. Yet this resistance lasted for four years.

The Battle of Crete changed the final outcome of World War II, and significantly contributed in delaying Hitler's plan to invade Russia. The invasion was delayed from April to June of 1941. The 2-month delay in the invasion made Hitler's forces face the Russian winter. The Russian snowstorms and the sub zero temperatures eventually stalled the Nazi invasion before they could take Moscow or Leningrad. This was the beginning of the downfall of the Nazi reign of terror.

This significant battle and the heroic drive of the Cretan people must always be remembered and honored. Democracy came from Greece, and the Cretan heroes exemplified the courage it takes to preserve it.

*Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-14)
House floor statement on 5/20/05*



COMMEMORATING
64 YEARS SINCE
THE HISTORIC
BATTLE OF CRETE

THE BATTLE OF CRETE

A memorial service for all those who died in the battle will be offered:

Sunday,
May 29th, 2005

ANNUNCIATION
CATHEDRAL

A NIGHT IN CRETE

7th District Governor's Ball
May 28, 2005
7pm - until

presented by
The 7th District of the Pancretan Association of America
and the Samaria Chapter of Atlanta

**LIVE MUSIC
DIRECT FROM CRETE**
Andreas Lillikakis (Cretan Lyra)
Lefteris Apostolakis (Cretan Laouto)

OMONIA DANCERS
Special Guest Performance by the
Dance Troupe from Astoria!

Hellenic Community Center Ballroom
2500 Clairmont Rd. Atlanta, GA

ADVANCE TICKETS
Adults \$45.00 - Children \$20.00
At The Door After 9:30pm
Adults: \$25.00 Dance Only

Jennifer Nikolaidakis 404.664.1665
George Vomvolakis 770.565.2251
www.samaria-atlanta.org

*Χίτλερ, να μη το καυχηθείς πως πάτησες την Κρήτη,
ξαρμάτωτη την ήρρηκες, κ' έλειπαν τα παιδιά τση,
στα ξένα επολεμούσανε, πάνω στην Αλβανία,
μα πάλι επολεμήσανε.*

Samaria Chapter of Atlanta, Pancretan Association of America
www.samaria-atlanta.org

PROGRAM

Welcome – Social Hour

Prayer
Clergy

Dinner
Traditional Hellenic Cuisine

Welcome Messages
The Battle of Crete: May 1941
Slideshow and video: Crete throughout the ages

Dance Performance
Dancers from “Ομόνοια” in Astoria, NY
Dancers from “Λόκειον των Ελληνίδων” in Atlanta, GA

Live Music
Andreas Lilikakis – Cretan lyra, vocals
Lefteris Apostolakis – Cretan laouto

Dancing
The floor is open to everybody!

*Until now, we knew that Greeks were fighting like heroes.
From now on we shall say that the heroes fight like Greeks.*

- Winston Churchill

MENU

Appetizers
Spanakopitakia, Tiropitakia, Dolmadakia, Feta Cheese

Salad
Traditional Greek Salad

Entrees
(Please choose one)
Roasted Leg of Lamb
Or
Roasted Chicken Breast

Greek Oven Potatoes
Green Beans (olive oil and lemon dressing)

Drinks
Refreshments and Cash Bar Drinks

Dessert
Selection of Greek Pastries, Coffee

Raffle

\$1 = 1 ticket! \$10 = 15 tickets!

1st prize: \$100 cash
2nd prize: Tsikoudia serving set
3rd prize: Traditional Cretan aprons
plus camera, coffeemaker, luggage, wines, and more!

