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The Sun

DAILY AT DAWN

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P.O.W. weds the girl who helped



There he is!



Reunion —after 9 years

The romance you see in the pictures to left and right of this story had its beginnings in Greece nine years ago during the war.

Xanthoula Papadopoulou—at left she is looking down from the migrant ship *Cyrenia* for a sight of her future husband—was 15 when it all began, but by the time she left Greece recently she had become a school teacher.

She met Herbert Wrigley, of the A.I.F., when he was left behind in Athens Hospital in the Allied retreat from Greece. (In the picture at right he stands proudly behind her after their reunion.)

Wrigley, taken prisoner by the Germans, escaped when his foot injury healed and was sheltered by the Papadopoulou family in Katerini, near Salonika.

After fighting with the British Military Mission, he became ill with pneumonia, and in 1943 was sent back to Australia, via Turkey. Then he went on with his soldiering at Balikpapan.

Yesterday he said: "We did not really get to know each other until we began corresponding after the war—I learned to speak Greek fairly well—but 12 months ago I asked her to come out and marry me."

"She will stay with my family in Yarraville till she settles down a bit—but we won't even talk of a wedding date for a while."

..here we are!



Here to Wed Man She Hid from Enemy



A small vivacious girl who, in 1942 when only 15, helped to hide an Australian soldier from the enemy in Greece, arrived yesterday in the migrant ship, Cyrenia, to marry him.

The girl is Xanthoula Papadopoulou (pictured above), now 22, and her fiance, 24-year-old Mr. Herbert Wrigley, of Yarraville. He was then only 17.

The fact that they had not seen each other for nearly five years brought a certain shyness to their meeting yesterday.

However, soon they were chatting happily about Xanthoula's voyage and of their plans to marry as soon as possible.

The romance began soon after Mr. Wrigley escaped from the Germans who had taken him prisoner while he was in a Greek hospital.

Later he fled to the tiny village of Katerini, where his fiancée's family sheltered him for more than six months.

During this time 15-year-old Xanthoula was his constant companion. However, he

joined the Greek guerrillas and, later, a British military mission which had been dropped into Greece by parachute.

This "cat and mouse" existence gave him little time to think much about Xanthoula, until he developed pneumonia and was evacuated to Australia by way of Turkey.

Then Herbert Wrigley remembered the little Greek girl and her family who had saved his life.

He began a correspondence with Xanthoula which reached its climax 12 months ago, when he proposed to her by letter and she accepted.

Now Xanthoula and Herbert want to forget those anxious war days.

Yesterday they were more keen to talk about Xanthoula's excitement in being chosen Miss Cyrenia during the voyage from Europe.

P.O.W., a girl—and a happy ending

IT took one month and six days for one of the newest Australians to be perfectly satisfied for life that her new country was all that it was said to be—and more.

She was Xanthoula Papadopoulos, the young Greek girl who came to Melbourne last month to marry Herbert Wrigley, of Yarraville.

She had befriended him when he was a prisoner of war and her father was betrayed to the Nazis and executed for sheltering him.

On Sunday she and Mr. Wrigley will be married in the Greek Orthodox Church in Melbourne.

When an *Argus* reporter visited her last night she was ironing her fiance's shirts (picture above with him) in readiness for their honeymoon next week in Eastern Gippsland.

Since she arrived in Melbourne Xanthoula had been staying at the home of her future father-in-law, Mr. Tom Wrigley, at Yarraville.

"And we're glad she'll be living here after she is married, too," said her brother-in-law to be, Ernie Wrigley.

"We were a bachelor household of three until she came," he said. "She's taken a lot off our shoulders."

Apart from washing and ironing, Xanthoula has taken over the cooking. Her future in-laws like her Greek variations on familiar dishes.

She has decided views on Australian cooking. In the excellent English which gained her a teacher's diploma in Salonika, she said: "You people cannot cook at all. You have the best of everything in the world in the way of food, but you spoil it in the way you cook it."

Xanthoula did not bring her trousseau from Greece. It is being made in Australia with those of her two blonde bridesmaids, the Misses Fay and Marcelle Ramsay, of Blackburn, who will be her nieces after the ceremony.

HERBERT WRIGLEY, of Yarraville, and Xanthoula Papadopoulos, who befriended him while he was a prisoner of war in Greece, leaving the Greek Orthodox Church after their marriage yesterday.

For her wedding she wore a flowing lace gown with a full, billowing train. Her tulle veil was caught with a coronet of orange blossom. Two bridesmaids — her future nieces — Marcelle and Fay Ramsay — followed her to the altar.

They were dressed in pink and blue organdie ballerinas, offset with deep bands of lace.

Bells chimed and a priest chanted as the bride and her attendants were led to the altar by the Rev. G. Patsoyannis for the 35-minute Greek Orthodox ceremony.

The reception was at the home of the bridegroom's father, Mr. Tom Wrigley, in Banool-ave., Yarraville.

Among the 200 guests were Elli and Anastasia Argyros, who travelled to Australia in the *Cyrenia* with the bride, and two friends, Mrs. D. Damianos and Mr. Sotiris Gerusis, from Salonika, her home town.

Greek girl comes to wed soldier she sheltered

A YOUNG Greek girl who befriended a fugitive Australian soldier during the early fighting in Greece nine years ago, arrived in the Cyrenia yesterday to marry him.



High in the mountains of Greece at Retini, near Salonika, Herbert Wrigley, of Yarraville, escaped from a German prison camp and, with the Nazis at his heels, met 16-year-old Xanthoula Papadopoulou.

Lovely, brown-eyed Xanthoula, now 24, was selected as Miss Cyrenia by nearly 1000 passengers on the voyage to Australia. Wrigley, now 31, had not seen her since he bade farewell to the Papadopoulou family nine years ago.

• The couple are pictured above just after they were re-united at North Wharf.

Their romance began when Wrigley, his ankle injured in the Greek campaign, was captured by the Germans. After escaping he came upon the mountain home of the Papadopoulous and with other Australians sheltered there.

Said Wrigley yesterday: "John Papadopoulou, a school teacher, was a typical

Greek hero of those days—and one of the finest gentlemen I ever knew."

The family hid Wrigley for six months. He and the young Greek girl enjoyed many walks through the mountains and forests when the local grapevine reported the area "all clear."

At this time there were many stories of the daring work of the British intelligence troops, dropped by parachute for intelligence, sabotage and guerrilla activities.

Wrigley and other Australians decided to join them. With his ankle fully mended, well fed and clothed, he bade farewell to Xanthoula.

Wrigley fought with the guerrillas until he contracted pneumonia. After a razor-blade operation, in the mountains, he was taken out of the country by the underground.

Since then, he and Xanthoula have corresponded regularly. Last January she decided to come out and marry him.

OF ASIA
Australia

Grecian
finale



HAPPIEST DAY of their lives—and this wedding has quite a story behind it. Beautiful bride is Greek Xanthoula Papadopoulus, who helped husband Herbert Wrigley, of Yarraville, when he was an escaped prisoner of war in Greece in 1941. They are leaving the Greek Orthodox Church in East Melbourne after their wedding vows had been made yesterday.

Wedding
day
Sunday



SIT-IN BRINGS CHARGES



Most of the demonstrators police evicted from the Commonwealth Centre in Melbourne yesterday were dragged out feet first, but the girl above got more gentle treatment from the Commonwealth police sergeant. One of the sergeant's colleagues is using a less considerate method in the picture below.

Eight university students were charged yesterday with wilful trespass after they staged an anti-conscription sit-in for two hours at the Commonwealth Centre in Spring Street.

Commonwealth police dragged the students out by the boot-heels when they refused to leave a seventh-floor corridor after 5 p.m.

The students — members of Students for a Democratic Society — went to the building to confront the Victorian Director of Labor and National Service (Mr. W. K. Allen).

Draft cards

They wanted to show him the remains of seven draft cards burned at separate lunchtime demonstrations at La Trobe and Melbourne universities yesterday.

Mr. Allen agreed to see representatives of the group, but the students refused the offer.

For about 1½ hours 12 students occupied the ninth floor planning and research department.

Nine of them moved to the seventh floor to conduct a corridor sit-in soon after 4 p.m.

A Department of the Interior officer (Mr. D. F. Tierney) told the students shortly before 5 p.m. that Commonwealth police would arrest them if they stayed.

Carried

One girl left, and police carried the remaining eight students to lifts and then took them to the City Watch House.

The students, who refused bail, will appear in the City Court this morning.

The officer in charge of Commonwealth police in Victoria (Inspector A. Jackson) said last night police would proceed on summonses against students who burned draft cards.

People who wilfully destroy or damage a National Service registration card can be fined up to \$200.



Προσωνυμίου
αξιωματικού
2ος Παρωδεστίας
συνταγματάρχου
α' Πορείου
Μαργαρίτου
Καλλιμάχου. ούκ
γένηται - 13-10-48
[Signature]

This certificate is awarded to
Ioannis Stefanos Papadopoulos (deceased)
as a token of gratitude for and
appreciation of the help given to the
Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen of the
British Commonwealth of Nations,
which enabled them to escape from, or
evade capture by the enemy.

H.R. Alexander
Field-Marshal,
Supreme Allied Commander,
Mediterranean Theatre

1939-1945

Yarraville Soldier Re-united With Greek Beauty

Seventy-three-year-old Mr Tom Wrigley, 9 Banool-ave., Yarraville, was a happy man this week. His own life had been composed of adventure and activity, and, on Monday came concrete evidence, in a lovely form, of the same qualities in one of his sons.

Mr Wrigley's son Bert brought to the Banool-aven. home as his future wife a sparkling beauty from Greece. She was dark-eyed Xanthoula Papadopoulou, 24 years, who befriended him while he was sheltering from the Germans in Greece during the war. Old Tom Wrigley was sorry that his wife was not there to welcome her future daughter-in-law, Mrs Wrigley having died last May. She had known of the Greek girl.

It was nine years after Bert Wrigley left his future wife that she arrived to live here. Mr Wrigley, senior, had himself been separated from his family twice in his lifetime. Firstly, soon after he was married in his native town of Lancashire, England, he answered the call to serve in the Boer War in South Africa. A little over a decade later he served in World War I.

Most of his eight children were reared after he settled in Australia. Bert, hero of this week, attended Francis Street State School and Footscray Tech.

Bert joined the AIF when the war started after being an army cadet before the war. He served in the famous sixth division in the Middle East. In Greece, he was being evacuated as a hospital patient, having injured his leg, when the Germans bombed the ship in port. Bert dived overboard and swam ashore not long before the ship was sunk.

He was later captured, but, when his leg improved, he escaped. One day, he, with other Australians, came upon the mountain home of Xanthoula's father. A schoolmaster, the father gave them shelter for some time and is described by Bert Wrigley as a "typical Greek hero and a fine gentleman."

The friendship which sprang up between the fugitive Australian and the schoolmaster's pretty young daughter had a new beginning this week.

A SCROLL IS HER TREASURE

Raven-haired Xanthoula Wrigley, of Yarraville, was yesterday given what she called her greatest treasure — a certificate of Australian citizenship.

Xanthoula was one of 75 New Australians naturalised at Footscray Town Hall.

During World War II, then as teenager Xanthoula Papadopoulos, she helped her parents to protect four Australians who

were hiding in enemy-occupied Greece.

After the war Xanthoula began corresponding with one of the Australians, Bert Wrigley, and in 1951 came to Australia to marry him.

They now have a son, John, 3½, who watched his mother receive her certificate from Mayor Cr. B. H. Bassett yesterday.

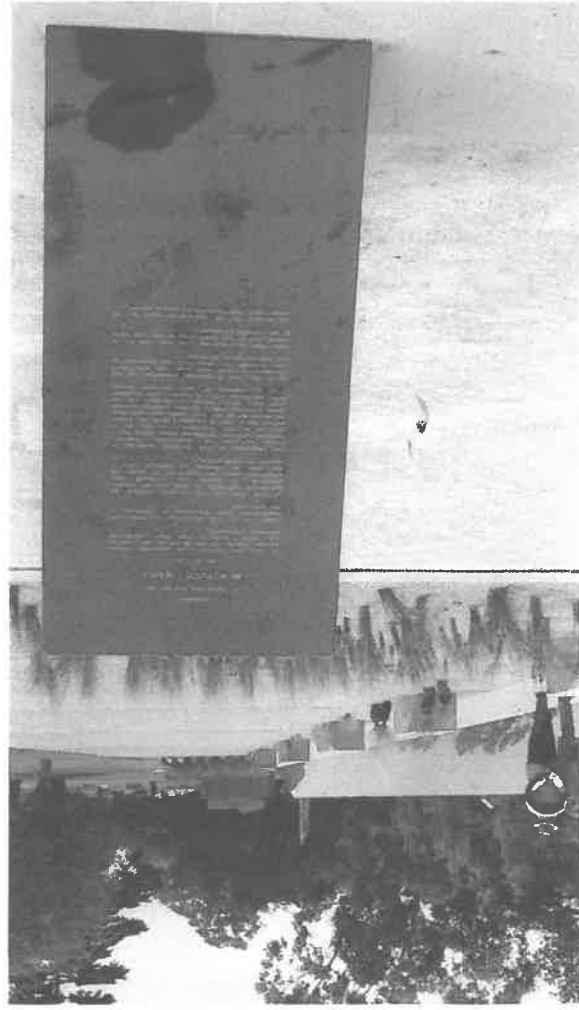
Xanthoula's three

sisters-in-law — Mrs. F. Christie, of Carrum; Mrs. E. Veitch, of Footscray; and Mrs. I. Ramsay, of Blackburn — also came to see her become an Australian citizen.

unpleasant
Asked at a
ment would am



● Cr. Bassett, Footscray's Mayor, holds John Wrigley, while his mother beams with pride.





Minister for Veterans' Affairs

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50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne
Victoria 3000
Telephone: (03) 9096 8830
Facsimile: (03) 9096 3611
DX: 210292

Mrs Xanthoula Wrigley
9 Marilyn Crescent
RINGWOOD VIC 3124

Dear Mrs Wrigley

THE VICTORIAN VETERANS DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROJECT

The Victorian Government understands the importance of passing Victoria's war history on to subsequent generations so the sacrifice of our veterans is remembered. The Veterans Digital Storytelling Project, being run by the Government in partnership with the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and the Shrine of Remembrance, is one way that we can preserve veterans' stories and their first-hand knowledge for future generations.

The project aims to record the experiences of Victoria's veterans, as well as civilians with relevant experiences of life during war-time. The stories that are collected will be made available for public viewing on the internet and are already being used as a resource for Victorian secondary school teachers and students.

I have been advised that you have been identified as someone who could make a valuable contribution to the project and that you have agreed to be involved in the three-day workshop being conducted at ACMI at Federation Square on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the 9th, 10th and 11th of May 2012.

The first day of the workshop will commence at 9.30am and ACMI staff will work directly with you and other veterans, to make sure that the process is both a productive and pleasurable experience for you. A short 4-5 minute DVD will be produced that attempts to capture a small portion of your experience and reflections on your service.

I would like to thank you for giving your valuable time to the storytelling project and for your service to our community. I trust you will enjoy the experience along with your fellow veterans.

If you have any comments or queries about the project, please contact Patricia Pollard of the State Government's Veterans Unit, on 9935 3037.

Yours sincerely

HUGH DELAHUNTY MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Date: 26.4.12



I have a love story to tell. But I have to start in 1940.

I was 14 years old. War was declared between Italy & Greece. Italy invaded Greece, so the Germans could concentrate on the other parts of Europe.

One morning on my way to school in Salonica I heard the sirens. We were all sent home, school was closed. My father was democratic and we made decisions as a family. My father knew what was coming and we had to leave immediately. The only time I saw my parents argue was when my father had to sell all the household items to buy provisions for the hard times to come.

We gathered a few belongings and got on a train to Katerini. We walked 24kms to a village near Mount Olympus. My grandfather had a house there, it's where my parents met and where I was born. We escaped the bombings and starvation, and we thought we'd be safe there.

Despite the dangers, my father also sheltered & helped Allied soldiers who were fugitives hiding in the hills. We saw it as our duty to help, even when there were locals collaborating with Nazi's.

It's war which turned my life upside down. Up until then life was fairly normal & happy. But these changes brought tragedy and unexpected gifts. And this is where my love story begins.

It was 1941 when I first remember seeing Slim. A shepherd found him in the hills and brought him to "the teacher," my father. It was night, there was a knock on the door and I saw a tall, young, frightened man. He knew from then on ours was a safe house to visit.

One time I remember Slim came by, his shoes had fallen apart. My grandfather gave him his Sunday boots.

My sister and I were boarding and studying in Salonica, so I didn't see much of Slim but I knew stories from my parents. He stayed in the area until he joined the Greek Resistance, the Partisans.

After 2 years of fighting alongside them, the Partisans organised his escape because he was sick. At night they smuggled him from Greece to Turkey by boat across the Aegean Sea. It was filled with bags of onions which nearly caught fire from an engine spark. They were lucky not to be noticed by a German patrol boat.

He returned to Australia in 1945.

It's 9 years since I first met Slim, and I'm 23 years old. It's a winter night. I'm sitting around looking at family photos and a small piece of paper falls out. On it was Slim's address in Australia.

I'd been studying English for a couple of years, and I wrote a simple letter. An answer came within a fortnight. We corresponded for an entire year. We became curious about each other and exchanged photos. In one of the letters Slim invited me to come to Australia. My mother didn't want me to go and hid my passport, but my grandfather was encouraging.

I sailed alone to Melbourne. The captain organised a ball the night before we landed. I was crowned the Belle of Cyrenia, which was the name of the ship.

The next day we docked. I met a photographer looking for immigrant stories. I told him I was coming to meet an Australian soldier I knew from the war. He made me pose for a photo leaning over the side of the ship pretending to see Slim. I was looking in the crowd for a tall, blue-eyed man. I found him, pulled his sleeve and said, "Herbert".

I had three months to decide if this was the man for me. Slim respected this time and I lived with his sister. The journalists followed our story all the way to the wedding.

At the service the church was filled with Greek people and the minister said to the crowd since this girl doesn't have family it is up to us to adopt her. They did.

With the passing of time, deep love came. We had a 2 sons and 4 grandsons. Slim & I shared 44 happy years together.

It took me 10 years to visit Greece again. I went with my boys and we stayed for a year. The city had grown and I had too. I only remembered Greece during the hard years and it was nice to see things had improved for my family. I feel like I belong to both countries now. Through tragedy I found happiness.

