



THE GREEK GARDEN ASSOCIATION OF CLEVELAND

Proud Sponsor of the Greek Cultural Garden



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

A BLOSSOMING LEGACY

*“I woke with this marble head in my hands;
it exhausts my elbow and I don’t know where to put it down.”*
- George Seferis, Nobel Laureate. “Mythistorima”

It is both an honor and a challenge to steward an important cultural legacy like the Greek Cultural Garden. With its Gilded Age origins in a park established by John D. Rockefeller, Sr., to its Jazz Age development, and to its official dedication in 1940 to the City of Cleveland by Archbishop Athenagoras, later Patriarch of Constantinople, it has a truly storied history.

The Greek Cultural Garden is the premier national monument dedicated to the Hellenic heritage of the United States, whether through art, literature, science, or philosophy, and is recognized in the National Register of Historic Places. But that grandeur is tempered by the humility of the founders, who were immigrants to America from that ancient realm. Their vision, industriousness, and generosity helped establish a public space that is cherished by residents and tourists, students and newlyweds, hikers and academics.

The Greek Garden Association of Cleveland was established in 2023 to restore the Garden to its glory, as well as fulfill the vision of the founders with the creation of a monumental stone frieze entitled “The Gift of Greece to Civilization.” This frieze depicts 34 of the most important Greeks, flanking the enthroned winged Lady Liberty.

We are grateful for the support we have received from the State of Ohio, organizations, foundations, companies, and of course the many individuals who have dedicated their time, talent, and treasure.

May the torch of ancient Greece continue to illuminate our great Republic.



Louis A. Frangos
President of the Board



Pascalis Papouras
Executive Director

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission Statement

The Greek Garden Association of Cleveland bestows the gift of the Hellenic cultural legacy for the benefit of all Americans.

Vision Statement

The Greek Garden Association of Cleveland seeks to illuminate the modern world with the light of ancient wisdom.

Commitment and Context

The Greek Garden Association of Cleveland is the proud official sponsor of the Greek Cultural Garden, a founding member of the Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation. GGAC collaborates with the Federation and its sister gardens to achieve a vision of peace through mutual understanding.

Inspiration

“*Philotimo* is the deep-seated awareness in the heart that motivates the good that a person does.”

- Saint Paisios of Mount Athos

Motto

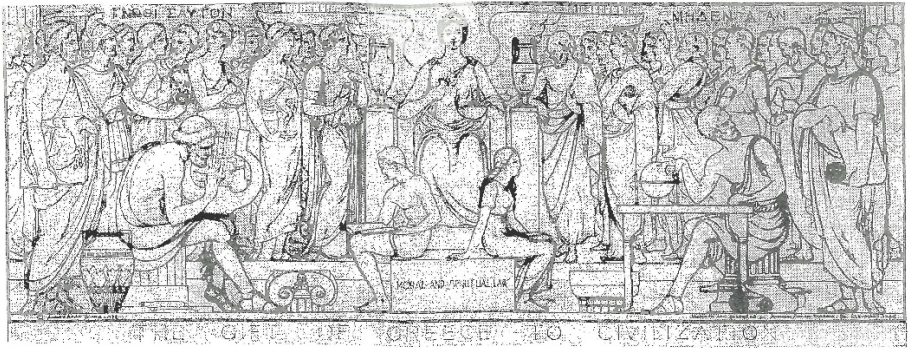
“Φῶς ἐκ Φωτός” [Light from Light]



Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, “The School of Athens” (1511)

HERITAGE WRITTEN IN STONE

In 1930, the City of Cleveland allocated a space in Rockefeller Park for the Greek Cultural Garden to take its place among its sister Cultural Gardens. Maurice Cornell, Landscape Architect, S. Clyde Merrell, Architect, and Andrew A. Tagaris, Sculptor, worked together to design the allocated space. From a westward vista, at the entrance on East Boulevard stand two colossal Doric columns leading down into a sunken garden in the shape of a Greek cross. At the head of the cross stands the Parthenon Wall, behind which stretch two curved staircases leading down to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.

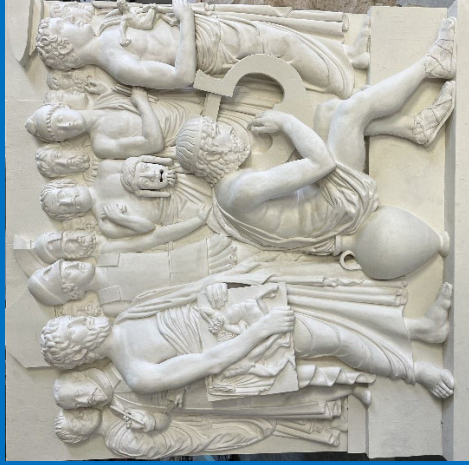


Andrew A. Tagaris, “The Gift of Greece to Civilization” (1938)

The crown jewel of the Greek Cultural Garden was intended to be a monumental stone frieze entitled “The Gift of Greece to Civilization,” designed by Mr. Tagaris. The outbreak of the Second World War in 1940 halted development of the work, and by the time the Greek Civil War ended in 1949, the design for the frieze had been all but forgotten to history.

Discovered again many decades later, Nicholas Fairplay, world renowned Master Stone Carver from the United Kingdom, was commissioned to actualize the frieze. He began by drafting an actual size sketch (15’ x 5’) from which he began to sculpt clay models of all 37 figures: the 34 historic Greeks, a boy and girl student, and Lady Liberty enthroned. While the clay is still wet, he made a rubber mold of the figures and then casted each in plaster.

Once these are all completed, he will begin the detailed carving in Indiana Limestone.



Left Panel

Featuring El Greco, Pericles, Xenophon, and Euripides



Center Panel

Featuring Sappho, Homer, Socrates, and Athena of Liberty



Right Panel

Featuring Archimedes and Euclid

THE GIFT OF GREECE TO CIVILIZATION

Nicholas Fairplay, Master Stone Carver
After the design of Andrew A. Tagaris, Sculptor

GARDEN DIPLOMACY

GGAC welcomed a diplomatic delegation from Greece in June 2025, led by Ioannis-Michail Loverdos, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Greeks Abroad, and Emmanuel Koubarakis, Consul General in Chicago. The diplomatic visit began with a reception hosted at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church and included song performances, poetry recitations, and youth folk dance performances and remarks from associations from Samos, Ikaria, Chios, Nestorio (Kastoria), the Hellenic Preservation Society (HPS), Sterea Hellas Foundation, Karpathos, and the Phoenix Pontian Society.

The diplomatic delegation was then hosted at a reception showcasing the Greek Cultural Garden on the 85th Anniversary of its dedication. His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh offered an invocation. GGAC was honored by the attendance of Chris Ronayne, Cuyahoga County Executive, and Kevin Conwell, Cleveland City Council Member for Ward 9.

Deputy Minister Loverdos spoke eloquently, in both Greek and English, congratulating Cleveland's Greek community and proudly noting that he is the first Greek government Minister to make an official visit to Cleveland.



(left to right) Consul General Emmanuel Koubarakis, Marjorie and Bert Moyar, Louis Frangos, Deputy Foreign Minister Ioannis-Michael Loverdos, Ann Frangos, Metropolitan Savas

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Annual Report 2025

ONE WORLD DAY

One World Day, held in August 2025, has been an annual premiere event of the Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation since 1946. The event showcased diverse ethnic groups through music, dance, storytelling, and included a naturalization oath ceremony for new citizens of the United States. GGAC prepared the Greek Cultural Garden, which looked magnificent, to showcase Hellenic culture.



(left to right) GGAC Board Members Marina Ermidis, Jonathan Cambouris, and James Trakas leading the parade for the Greek Cultural Garden

INVESTING IN CULTURE

Revenue

Government Grants	\$35,500.00
Private Donors	\$96,212.50
Total Revenue	\$131,712.50

Expenses

Program Services	\$59,623.83
Support Services	\$15,000.00
Total Expenses	\$74,623.83

Net Assets

Beginning	\$22,107.11
Ending	\$75,472.80

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Maj. James P. Trakas
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Pascalis Papouras, Executive Director

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† Gus Frangos (Founder)

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IN GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

The State of Ohio
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Stereia Hellas Foundation of Cleveland
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and the many private family foundations and individuals

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