

Discussions in collective bodies

As is known every year on the last Sunday of January, members of the Association are called to a General Assembly to evaluate the progress and plan the actions for the new year. Every two years, the General Assembly is an electoral and accountability assembly, with elections and the appointment of members to the new Board of Directors. The issue of the "Mill" was discussed for the first time in 2002, and the General Assembly, following the "Mallionta" Association, also set as a goal the restoration of the watermill. Since then, at every General Assembly, an assessment of the effort was made, and specific actions were planned. In some years, our collaborating researchers, Mr. Michel Rosier and Mrs. Ioanna Vallina, were present to have direct contact and inform our members.

On May 14, 2018, a meeting of executives took place in the hall of the "Anagennisi" Association. photo caption pg236

Board Meetings - Executive Meetings

The Board of Directors of the Association meets every Monday from 6:00-8:00 pm, since its founding in 1975. Throughout these years, from 2002-2020, the goal of restoring and operating the Katachanas watermill in Mallionta was a key topic of discussion. In the context of better organization and smooth collective operation, the Board of Directors would occasionally call for a broader gathering of executives, both new and old, who had served in various positions to promote the collective ideal. At these gatherings, opinions, views, and ideas were expressed, always with the goal of uniting the Association, and proposals were made for designing future actions. In all the Executive Meetings held from 2002 onwards, the main topic was the evaluation of the "Mill" project. Particularly in recent years, meetings were held where this topic was the sole focus. One such meeting was on May 14, 2018, when the Board of Directors and President Panagiota Plomaritou convened an extraordinary meeting in anticipation of submitting an improved proposal for funding the effort to the Leader Community Program. Once again, the gathering proved constructive, with thorough information and submission of thoughts and proposals for the future course of the effort.

In August 2018, the Study was enriched, and its title was expanded to: "Study for the restoration and utilization of the Katachanas Watermill - Mallionta Stream - Mesotopos, Lesvos & Proposal for a Protection and Conservation Program for the Agricultural Heritage of the Mallionta Area". A notary deed was also signed for a 20-year transfer of the "Mallianta" Association's rights to the "Anagennisi" Association, and the file was submitted to ETAL in August. On January 14, 2019, the scoring was announced (67/100, rank 4/20) with an approved amount of 240,000 Euros. An

objection was submitted to ETAL, which was rejected. On March 7, 2019, the final ranking table was announced by ETAL, with an increase in funding and inclusion of our proposal.

On April 8, 2019, the Region of North Aegean announced the decision to include the project in the Leader Program. "As of April 2019, the restoration of the watermill is no longer a vision. The cooperation agreement between the Mesotopos Association 'Anagennisi' and ETAL, the implementing body of the project, is signed. On August 2, a meeting takes place. A meeting at the ETAL offices in Mytilene, where the necessary instructions and clarification for the implementation of the project were given. During August of the same year, two visits took place on site. In the first, the President of the Association, Mrs. Plomaritou, the Vice President, Mr. Voyatzis, the President of the Mallianta Association, Mr. Pitsas, the Treasurer, Mr. Voyatzis Char., and George Evstr. Vasilas were present. Later, additional executives of the Association who were in the village visited the mill, along with the architect, Mrs. Vallina, the civil engineer, Mr. Dem. Pipinis, and the village president, Mr. Gavriil Pipinis. A difficult but creative journey began... (Panagiota Plomaritou)

On October 21, 2019, a meeting took place in Mallionta, at the Mill site, with the purpose of assessing the condition of the building after so many years had passed since the study was conducted. In attendance were the President of the Association, Giota Plomaritou, the Vice President, Vasilis Voyatzis, the Secretary of the Mallianta Association, Charalampos Voyatzis, the tireless worker and member of the project monitoring committee, George Evstr. Vasilas, Messrs. M. Rosier, K. Laskaris, and Mrs. I. Vallina from the consulting firm, with whom we collaborated to submit the proposal, as well as our fellow villager, Civil Engineer Dimitris Pipinis. This meeting was necessary to document the current condition of the building and to plan the course of action and priorities for the restoration of the building. From the inspection, it was found that there was an urgent need for support of the courtyard area to prevent further erosion. It was also found that there was a need to support the kolethra until the detached stonework was restored. An assessment was also made of the type of interventions needed for the restoration of the wall.

October 21, 2019, visit to the Mill and assessment of its condition. photo caption
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wall and the other parts of the mill. A preliminary placement of the lemma tanks and support mechanisms of the mill was made, as well as the determination of the route for the pipes and cables that will support them. A preliminary assessment was also made of the method and location for connecting to the electrical network, and details for the restoration process were generally discussed and partially clarified. The

meeting ended early in the afternoon, having provided enough material for the decisive council on October 30, 2019, where important decisions would be made regarding the project's progress. (Vasilis Voyatzis)

The President of the Board of Directors of "Anagennisi", Panagiota Plomaritou:photo caption pg239

On Saturday, December 14th, in the "Anagennisi" hall, located at Ethnikis Antistasis 33-Dafni, the 44th anniversary of the Association's founding was celebrated. In a packed hall, the chairperson of the Board of Directors, Panagiota Plomaritou, delivered a substantial speech, reflecting on the collective journey, focusing on the Association's projects, and discussing the Rural Clinic in the village, this "common project" of all Mesotopi residents. Finally, she bridged the past with the present and the future, talking about the ambitious project to restore and operate the "Giannis Katachanas" mill, which is about to begin! It's worth remembering the president's words...

The vision, action, and prospect

IF YOU DON'T DREAM IT, YOU WON'T ACHIEVE IT. A lot of time has passed since we first talked about the mill. Many people have shouldered the responsibility, and an entire collective has trusted the Boards of Directors, who have tried with patience, persistence, and consistency to create the right conditions for the project to be implemented. We are all happy today to announce the inclusion of the restoration of the watermill in Mallionta in the Leader program and its funding. At the same time, we feel a heavy sense of responsibility for the proper construction, according to transparency rules, prudent and proper management of the funds, adherence to regulations and studies, and mainly for the implementation of the action to target the future.

It may sound paradoxical how a pre-industrial technology monument can inspire young people and children today and tomorrow. It is certain that the older generation will be moved, seeing one of the mills that operated in the past come back to life. periods when the world was fed. A handful of flour during the Occupation kept a baby alive. The craftsmen will find the operation of the mechanism interesting. Environmentalists will rejoice at the proper management of water and protection of the area. But will children and young people be inspired? This is the big challenge. However, this was the goal and vision from the beginning.

In a short time, the watermill will stand proud and alive, will work, and will be able to host us under the thick shade of the plane trees. This in itself is extremely important. However, the most important thing is that it can and should become the center for the development of educational, cultural, and environmental activities. We want to see children's voices filling it. Schools will organize educational visits. Children will be trained in observation, discover knowledge, and be initiated into the utilization of the ideas of people who left their mark on this land before us. New technologies will be an ally and supporter in this effort.

We believe that the watermill should function as a living cell that produces culture. With the development of various activities that will embrace all ages. By highlighting the unique character of Mallionta, which once thrived with life and produced the most famous fruits in the wider area. By connecting it to the broader framework of the mills. By embracing it with all the village's agencies. By developing cooperation with the other museums of Western Lesvos and especially with the Natural History Museum of the Petrified Forest of Lesvos-Sigri.

And of course, by mobilizing the entire collective and Mesotopos dynamic in a spirit of unity and offering. The dynamic that can be developed is great. It's up to us to develop it in as many dimensions as possible and hand over to future generations a multi-space of "Culture and Creation", a living testimony to the eternal struggle of human beings to make their lives better and live in harmony with nature.

Good luck to us all.

"After the deadline had passed, on Saturday, December 21st, during an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Directors, the envelopes containing the proposals of the candidate architects-civil engineers were opened. These proposals were submitted for the drafting of the restoration project of the "Katachanas" mill, as well as for overseeing its execution. The offers were evaluated by the evaluation committee, and after discussion by the Board, the proposal of Mrs. Ioanna Vallina was deemed the most suitable. Following this, the Board accepted the specific proposal. Additionally, the Board received a single and unique proposal for technical support for the same project from Mr. Lambros, which was also accepted." (Angela Kontou)

As we had briefly informed you in the previous issue, following the publication of the call for expressions of interest for an Architect-Supervising Engineer, we received three proposals, which were evaluated by the 3-member evaluation committee, established specifically for this purpose, in an open session attended by the entire Board of Directors. The most suitable offer was deemed to be that of Mrs. I. Vallina. In parallel, for the call for Technical Support for the project, we had one proposal from Mr. Dimitris Lambros, which was accepted. Similarly, for the museological study, we had four proposals, of which the most suitable was deemed to be that of

Messrs. Vallina and Kilidou. It's worth mentioning the interest shown by the University of the Aegean, which submitted a proposal led by Professor Mrs. Chormouzidou.

After signing a private agreement, architect Vallina proceeded to divide the work into smaller contracts, for which a call for expressions of interest was posted on the Association's website. These contracts include the following categories of work:

- *Construction Works:*
- *1. Fencing, scaffolding, concrete, grouting, waterproofing*
- *2. Earthworks with mechanical means*
- *3. Masonry-stone paving*
- *4. Roofing*
- *5. Plastering, cementing, painting*
- *6. Gypsum board*
- *7. Carpentry*
- *8. Tiles, marble*

Additionally, on Sunday, February 9th, a meeting was held with the study team led by Mr. Rosier, where technical and construction details were clarified. The meeting was attended by President Panagiota Plomaritou, Vice President Vasilis Vogiatzis, and Giorgos Vasilas. On February 22-23, the President and Vice President visited the village to inform interested contractors.

After the visit to Mesotopos by the President and Vice President of the "Anagennisi" Association, where an information session was held for potential contractors and village stakeholders regarding the restoration of the Katachanas watermill, another meeting was held with potential contractors at the watermill site. There, the architect-supervisor of the project Mrs. Ioanna Vallina informed the potential contractors about the technical aspects of the project and answered their questions. The association then received two bids, one from Mr. Emmanouil Konstantidellis, who was appointed as the project's contractor, and another from Mr. Giannis Vlotidellis, whom they thanked for his interest. Contracts have been signed for:

- *1. Fencing, manual earthworks, scaffolding, concrete, and waterproofing*
- *2. Earthworks with mechanical means*
- *3. Stone constructions, masonry, and stone paving*

Additionally, contracts were signed for the museological study with Mrs. Vallina and Mrs. Krelidou as the responsible parties.

The work began on March 23rd and continues to this day. So far, the following tasks have been completed ¹:

- *Site cleanup*
- *Building cleaning*, including collecting metal tools and objects found to be used as exhibits

- *Repair of the southern facade* using mortars by a team led by Mr. Stelios Voudouris
- *Restoration work on the water tower*, which is nearing completion

The association acknowledges the difficulty and sometimes hazardous nature of the work, as well as the dedication and technical expertise of the workers. Access to the construction site is granted through neighboring properties of the landowners (Pitsa Nikolao, Konstadideli Georgio and filippa Evag. Gougifor their permission. We warmly thank everyone! Due to pandemic-related difficulties, the association requested and received an extension for submitting the first disbursement request.

So far, 8% of the approved budget has been paid. Despite the challenging circumstances, the association managed to pay the invoices and tax obligations. A big thank you to everyone who helped the association during this difficult time ².

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Despite the difficulties arising from the pandemic measures, the restoration work on the watermill continues normally. The restoration work on the water tower (kolethra) has been completed. The construction of the mylaulakas (a structure) up to the boundary of the property has also been completed. Work has already begun on the restoration of the auxiliary buildings.

Regarding the issue of the river waters at the boundary of the property, a letter was sent to the Municipality of Western Lesvos for information and assistance, and we hope for a prompt response. The president of Mesotopos, Mr. Gavriil Pipinis, was informed about the issue, as well as the "Mallionta" association.

We also inform you that the "Anagennisi" Association has decided to insure the project against all risks, civil liability, and employer's civil liability.

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The restoration work on the mill continued on the retaining walls and the surrounding area. The wall towards the river has been almost completed. The scales for ascending to the levels of the surrounding area have also been determined. With the lifting of travel restrictions, President P. Plomaritou and Vice President V. Voyatzis traveled to Mesotopos, where they visited the construction site. There, they were briefed on-site by the supervisor, Mrs. Ioanna Vallina, the contractor, Mr. Manolis Konstantidellis, and Mr. Stelios Voudouris. They discussed issues related to the project's progress. The president and vice president also had a meeting in Mytilene with Mr. Lambrou (technical advisor for the project), where they handed over the necessary documents for submitting the first payment request...

