

# DEDICATION OF THE BUST OF THE **FATHER OF DEMOCRACY**

AT THE OHIO CAPITOL

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Besides Founder and Chairman Aristotle Hutras the **Cleisthenis Project Committee** included Harry Michelakis **Meshel**, [the former President of the Ohio Senate and powerful chairman of the Finance Committee], current State Reps James **Aslanides** and James **Trakas** [who, by the way, declared his candidacy for the post of Secretary of State; hopefully will run **elections** the way Cleisthenis envisioned it, not like his Florida counterpart; he lost], plus Harry Barlos, Bryan Williams, Anna Christoforidis, Chris Bouzounis, Pauline Hesske, and Carl Icarus Hollister.



They had arranged with the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board, of which Senator R H **Finan** is the Chairman and Ron **Keller** is the Executive Director, to install the bust of Cleisthenis during a full session of the **Ohio House of Representatives**. So we all met on March 24, 2004, but first we had a magical lunch by the **Doric colonnade** inside the recently renovated Capitol Atrium [pic]. **AHEPA** national president and officers from Ohio chapters, the national president of the **Pan-Macedonian Association**, regional officers of Greek organizations, many prominent Greek Ohioans, plus the hierarchy of the

politicians in the State of Ohio participated in the festivities.

The galleries under the Corinthian columns [pic] in the chambers of the House of Representatives were full, and



so was the legislative floor not only because of the dedication but, also, because they had to cast a crucial budget vote, the way Cleisthenis had promulgated. It was the first time for me to observe the **rituals of a legislative session**, and I was enthralled. We as spectators were introduced after our former priest **Fr. Alex Papangikas** gave the invocation. When Senator **Meshel** got up to speak, everyone on the Floor and upstairs stopped what they were doing and listened to a master orator. **Hutras** explained the project, and Prof **Jusdanis** gave the salient points that he makes on the article he wrote on page 9 of this issue of Greek Ethos. **Anna Christoforidis**, who sculpted the bust, explained that she had checked with all the archives and found that there was no simile, statue, paintings, or even a brief description of Cleisthenis. So she had to invent his face, but sculpted it to fit the codes and styles of the period he lived.

**Anna** is a well known artist having moved here from **Thessaloniki**, Macedonia, in 1961 when she married Dr. **Anthimos** Christoforidis, OSU radiology professor. They have 4 sons, 3 of whom are doctors and one architect. She attended OSU from where she received the bachelor degree in fine arts in 1965 and Master of Arts in sculpture in 1970. Her works have been exhibited in both the USA and Europe. The bust in the hallway of our church of Dr. **Solomonides**, the benevolent doctor and president of our community for several years, was done by Anna.



In 1988, Chris **Bouzonis** raised funds to commission Anna for the bust of **Hippocrates**. He arranged with the then VP of the Medical College, Dr. Manuel **Tzagournis**, for a ceremonial enthroneing of the bust at the OSU Medical College campus, as a reminder to future doctors that **Hippocrates** of Greece was the **Father of Medicine**. The father of democracy joined the father of medicine in **Columbus, Ohio**, thanks to the initiatives of two local Olympian activists, **Hutras** and **Bouzonis**!

When the time came to unveil the busts, an anticipatory silence fell on both the legislative floor and the public galleries. Meshel and Anna pulled the cord that held the dark cloth over the bust, and *voila*, **Cleisthenis was revealed in the world for the first time after 2500 years [pic]** and he was welcomed with a thunderous applause in **Ohio**!

The same procedure, with the same speeches, followed in the unveiling ceremonies in the **Senate Chambers** where after Hutras and the 3 key speakers posed with the President of the Ohio Senate Doug **White**, with Hutras proud mother **[in the pink]**, wife and his 2 children.

In a joyful mood, we all gathered in front of the Capitol. An aid to the Governor read a proclamation praising Greece, the cradle of democracy. The **Greek flag** was



raised on the main flagpole [pic] and everyone went inside proud and fulfilled; drinks were being served, and they were most welcome.

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