

# Modern History

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Faliro, until around 1920, was a small seaside village. The houses were few and far between while there were infinite stretches of wheat, barley and oats as well as many vineyards. Some of the people were fishermen but most of them were farmers, shepherds and stock breeders

In 1883 the first transportation vehicle was inaugurated, connecting P. Faliro with Athens, named "Horse-ridden Railway". Later, in 1890 horses were replaced by a steam machine, able to pull a few wagons at low speed. In 1910 the electric machines were introduced and the – familiar to us – TRAM.

In 1900 the first Greek zoo was created in Faliro but closed down in 1916 during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, due to financial problems.

Around 1910 – 1915, many rich families, inspired by the natural beauty of Palaio Faliro, built their mansions and villas by the sea, thus changing radically the city's image. Some of these buildings (e.g. the "Kouloura" mansion) are preserved until today.

In 1914 the first aviation school was transferred from Elefsina and the first school for aviation technicians was established in Faliro, whereas in 1925 the first state aircraft factory (KEA) was created by the English "Blackburn". In the Delta area the first hydroplane airport was created, introducing, on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1926, the first international airline Brindisi – Faliro – Istanbul.

At the same time and until 1918 the first school of P.Faliro operated in the backyard of Nikos Skordaras' house.

Until 1920, the streets of Faliro were lighted by gas lanterns which looked like small art pieces. Made of iron, 3-mtrs tall and elegant, they carried underneath the embossed image of goddess Athina, standing with her casque, shield and spear.

In 1925 the Community of Palaio Faliro was established with the Presidential Decree 27/8/1925. At the same time, the Vourlopotamos area changed its name to Amfithea.

In 1942 Palaio Faliro becomes a Municipality (including the community of Kalamaki until 1945) with K.Toufexis as its first Mayor and in 1961 became an independent Municipality. From 1946 P.Faliro stands out because of its geographical position and becomes a suburb with many country houses made by rich families.

Later on, the city developed commercially as well because of the population moving towards the southern suburbs, winning a distinguished position in the inhabitants' preferences until today (according to the real estate rates). P. Faliro is one of the areas in Athens with the highest prices per square meter.

The history of modern Palaio Faliro begins in 1/9/1942 with K.Toufexis as Mayor following the Presidential Decree (1465/1942) changing the community of P.Faliro into a Municipality.

At the time (census 1940) P. Faliro had 1.570 buildings and 8.302 citizens.

In 1951, there were 1.988 buildings and 12.894 inhabitants. The rapid development of the city had begun.

In 1961 there were 22.157 citizens, 35.066 citizens in 1971, 53.273 in 1981, 61.371 in 1991, while during the last census, in 2001, the citizens in our Municipality were 64.579.

Especially after 1974, a great number of Greeks from Istanbul

came to live in Palaio Faliro, forming a very active and lively community.

Hereafter there is a list of all the Mayors of Palaio Faliro, from its establishment until today:

- **K. Toufexis** (1/9/1942 – 28/1/1945)
- **K. Dais** (29/1/1945 – 11/2/1946)
- **A. Magriplis** (11/2/1946 – 11/4/1946)
- **K. Dais** (11/4/1946 – 17/6/1946)
- **J. Davaris** (17/6/1946 – 9/8/1950)
- **G Sakellariou** (17/8/1950 – 24/5/1951)
- **J. Lappas** (24/5/1951 – 9/6/1959)
- **N. Psarakis** (9/6/1959 – 25/5/1970)
- **E. Zisimopoulou** (29/5/1970 – 13/7/1970)
- **S. Blahopoulos** (13/7/1970 – 17/9/1974)
- **G. Hronopoulos** (17/9/1974 – 24/9/1974)
- **D. Bavarezos** (24/9/1974 – 6/4/1975)
- **D. Kapsanis** (6/4/1975 – 31/12/1986)
- **G. Chrisoveridis** (1/1/1987 – 31/12/1998)
- **D. Kapsanis** (1/1/1999 – 31/12/2002)
- **D. Hatzidakis** (1/1/2003 – )

Through the years, all the Mayors have contributed to the complete change of P.Faliro. The city streets were covered by asphalt and were lighted, playgrounds and lovely squares were created. The coast changed without losing its beauty and glamour while sport fields and shopping malls were constructed.

In 10/2/2008, on a 13.000m<sup>2</sup> area between Flisvos and the marina on Posidonos Avenue, the biggest playground of the Balkans was inaugurated, giving the opportunity to children and their parents to enjoy a few hours of fun, so close to the seaside.

The Municipality also has a wonderful marina, the old battleship “Averof” which is a historical museum of priceless value while the “Planetarium” is considered as a unique

cultural center.

Today, Palaio Faliro is an “Olympic Municipality” completely transforming the area with all the Olympic works, thus creating an enormous heritage for Palaio Faliro with new sport fields, renovations, new streets and transportations