

Vrachori ... Agrinio ... Our city!

A city with a rich history which travels through time. Ancient Agrinio, according to the English traveler Leake, was located 3 km northwest of the city, near modern day Zapanti. There are records of its existence that date back as far as the end of the 4th century : the year 321 BC is the time when the Aetolians emerge as a major military power and a centre of resistance against the Macedonians. In 1294 the area is part of Epirus, while in 1450 and for 120 years Agrinio is under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. It gains its independence in 1821. Its inhabitants come from a variety of cultural and geographical backgrounds : refugees from the mountainous regions of Aetolia and Evrytania, Epirus and Souli. This mosaic was further enriched with the refugees from Asia Minor in 1922. Today Agrinio is one of the fastest growing cities of western mainland Greece and is the commercial, economic and political centre of Aetoloakarnania. Until the late 20th century tobacco production was the main local industry. The Archaeological Museum, the municipal library, the park, all donated by Papastratos Bros, the Folklore Museum, the Christos Kapralos Glyptothèque St. Christopher's wood in the northwest of the city, are all places well worth a visit.

So are its several squares.

Agrinio The town's squares

The town's squares are multifunctional, or simply decorative, or just roundabouts !
Their names are reminiscent of local and national history. Let's get to know them !

The *Square of Democracy or Main Square* took its present-day name after the fall of the military junta when the regime changed back to democracy in the mid 1970s.



The mosaic at the centre of the square depicts Hercules's fight with Acheloos (the mythological River-God that flows through Aetoloakarnania).

Panagopoulos Square is dedicated to the memory of local hero Sqdr Vassilis Panagopoulos who helped in the defense of Cyprus against the Turkish invasion in July 1974.



Panagopoulos had been missing for 35 years (after his plane was shot down) before his remains were identified using the DNA method.

Karapanehika or 28th of October Square takes its first name from the surname of many families coming from Souli whereas its present day name commemorates the day the Greeks refused to surrender to Italy's fascist leader Mussolini (28 October 1940). Before the war, open air markets were held here.



Melina Merkouri Square is a jewel for the city of Agrinio. It was named in honor of the artist / politician whose name is linked to the struggle for the return of the Elgin marbles to our country.

The building which is adjacent to it and which used to house the old railway station of Agrinio is a well-known landmark.



Andreas Panagopoulos Square or Fountain (Syndrivani) Square bears the name of a prominent personality from Agrinio. Andreas Panagopoulos served as the town's mayor from 1925-1934 and 1951-1952. Around this central square there are buildings of great architectural and cultural value.



Fleming Square is a rather small but distinctive square in downtown Agrinio dedicated to the Scottish physician and microbiologist Alexander Fleming (1881-1955), the discoverer of penicillin. The marble bust in the square is crafted by local sculptor Thymios Panourgias.



Square for the 120 patriots who were executed as an act of retaliation by the Germans on April 14, 1944.



The Square for Peace is located in the historic centre of the city. Ever since it was created it has changed several names but has always remained the centre of the town's commercial life. Hotels, banks, cafes and café chantants and various professional activities developed around it. During the interwar period the square became known as the "square of the workers' struggle" as for the tobacco workers it was the venue for their demonstrations and protests.



Today the Central Post Office is in the area as are several buildings that house the activities of many professionals (doctors, lawyers, insurance companies) and newly built stores.

Hatzopoulos Square was originally known as "Open Air Market", but as of 10 March 1928 it was named after local poet Konstantinos Hatzopoulos. His bust is the work of art of sculptor Vassilis Papasaikas.



The square used to be an important market place before WWII. Its trees are a distinctive feature of the square which is the venue for various cultural events among which the celebration for the commemoration of the town's liberation from the Ottoman Occupation (21 June 1821).

Aris Velouchiotis Square is named after the leading member of ELAS (guerilla fighters against the Germans during the German Occupation of Greece during WWII) and the Greek Communist Party.



Dimadi Square is named after Maria Dimadi, a local woman from a prominent family, who worked under cover for the Greek Resistance during WWII. The sculpture by local artist Thymios Panourgias is dedicated to all those who died fighting for the freedom of the Greek people. It is a venue for several different events : religious, political, cultural. During national holidays school students lay wreaths at the war memorial.



St. Constantine Square is located at the front of the Church of St Constantine and was once the courtyard of the Primary School. Both the church and the school, which now serves as the Cultural Centre of Saint Constantine, were funded by the tobacco merchant Elias Eliou from Asia Minor.



The monument featured in the square is by local sculptor Thymios Panourgias and is in memory of the refugees who fled Minor Asia in the 1920s during the persecution of the Greek population. It is the venue for many concerts and other cultural events and every year in mid May the local people, many of whom are descendents of refugees from Asia Minor and the areas on the south coast of the Black Sea, hold cultural events to commemorate May 19, 1919 the day of the massacre of the Greek population of Pontos (Black Sea).

