

Irish Hilton being sought to inherit six-figure sum

GENEALOGISTS are trying to track down an Irish woman who could receive a six-figure fortune following the death of her half-brother.

Finders International, the company behind the BBC TV show *Heir Hunter*, is searching for a woman called Marie Hilton to come forward and claim the estate of her half-brother Michael P O'Hanlon. According to the company, Ms Hilton was born on May 17, 1943, in north Dublin but could be now living in Co. Louth, possibly in the Drogheda or Dundalk area.

Speaking on the Anton Savage Show on Today FM yesterday, Pádraic Grennan of Finders International said Ms Hilton could be in for a windfall of around €700,000. He said: 'A man by the name of Michael P O'Hanlon

By Sandra Mallon

passed away in Southampton in 2008. We were working away on the case but came to a dead end, until recently.'

The estate appeared on the Bona Vacantia list of unclaimed estates in the UK.

Mr Grennan told listeners that Ms Hilton is one of three children born to Phyllis Veronica Hilton from Dublin's Mountjoy Square.

Phyllis, who was born in 1924 and died in 1979, gave her three children up for adoption or perhaps fostering.

Ms Hilton's siblings Phyllis Hilton and Michael P O'Hanlon, who owned the estate in question, have both since passed away.

Mr Grennan said none of the three siblings had been aware of

each other's existence. Baptism certificates for Ms Hilton could not be found although Finders International did track her birth certificate.

Mr Grennan believes Ms Hilton's younger sister, Phyllis Jr, married a man called Patrick O'Driscoll from Ballyfermot in Dublin.

Ms Hilton's potential brother-in-law Patrick can remember travelling to Drogheda years ago with his wife to meet her sister.

Mr Grennan said: 'We don't know if she is still alive, we don't know if she goes under the name Marie Hilton or an adoptive surname, she might have married, but we can't find a marriage certificate.' He added that if Ms Hilton has passed away, she could have children who would be entitled to inherit the estate.

Dr Mark Dooley



MORAL MATTERS

What did the Greeks do for us? Everything

WHAT have the Greeks ever done for us? It has been said repeatedly in recent weeks that Greece is the 'cradle of democracy'. Much more than that, it is the cradle of civilisation.

It is hard to believe that such a small Mediterranean country was once a powerhouse of science, mathematics, politics and philosophy. It is difficult to comprehend that Athens was once the intellectual capital of the world. It gave us our political system, but it also shaped our cultural and scientific outlook.

My first lectures at university were in Greek philosophy. I remember sitting awestruck at the majesty and beauty of concepts which remain beyond compare. In those unforgettable moments, everything about our world suddenly made sense.

What would we know of tragedy, of love and courage were it not for Homer? Our greatest literature flows downstream from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. Homer shaped the way we speak and the way we write.

They call Hippocrates the 'father of Western medicine', and so he is. Today, the 'Hippocratic Oath' is still the foundation stone of medical ethics. 'Thou shall not harm' reminds all doctors that they have an indissoluble moral obligation to care for their patients.

For me, however, Hippocrates's greatest insight was captured in his beautiful maxim: 'Walking is the best medicine.' Every day, as I take to the hills, I repeat those words and know that, with each step, I experience new life. And when I return, refreshed and renewed, the truth of that timeless maxim is clearly obvious.

The expression 'know thyself' was inscribed in the portico of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. It was adopted by Socrates and Plato as the basis of their thought. The question of self-knowledge is still the principal theme of Western philosophy.

To know the self meant distinguishing opinion from truth. It meant practising wisdom, justice, courage and temperance. In so doing, you would begin to lead a good or virtuous life.

Socrates preached virtue to the youth of Athens. He taught them that the moral life was not something we could neglect and still flourish. It was part of our nature and the only way we could acquire a true knowledge of ourselves. Those beliefs brought him into conflict with the Athenian authorities, who accused Socrates of corrupting the young. They imprisoned him and, although he was offered a chance to escape, he refused on principle. It is, he said, 'better to suffer wrongdoing than to do it'.

Socrates was poisoned in 399BC, but not before giving the world an example of heroism in the face of death. He gave us a moral theory

which remains as powerful today as it was in antiquity. A martyr to his principles, Socrates and his disciple Plato were the fathers of Western thought.

The current Greek finance minister is Euclid Tsakalotos. He is a Marxist but one who is named after the 'father of geometry'. Euclid of Alexandria wrote the *Elements*, a book that contains the Euclidean algorithm that serves as the basis of his geometry.

That we all learned Euclid's geometry at school more than two millennia after it was first devised proves just how phenomenal these thinkers were. They opened up pathways of thought along which we are still walking today. From the far reaches of the Mediterranean, there rose a voice of virtue, wisdom and insight so profound we are still coming to terms with it. And above them all stood the towering figure of Aristotle, teacher to Alexander the Great, and the world's first truly systematic thinker.

Aristotle wrote on everything from philosophy to rhetoric, zoology and politics. To my mind, he remains the greatest philosopher that ever lived.

When I first read him, it was like sipping from a silver spring. The scales fell from my eyes and I saw everything in a dazzling new light. His writings on morality still leave me speechless.

To have happiness, he taught, is to live a virtuous life. However, virtue does not mean abstaining from all earthly delights. It means practising moderation in all things.

NEITHER too much, nor too little, for both are extremes and extremism is always dangerous. The good life should not involve misery, but neither should it involve gluttony. Always strike a balance and you will always be happy.

It is simple yet compelling wisdom that our world could really do with rediscovering. At a time when people take everything to extremes, that ancient old voice cries out from Athens imploring us to look for the midpoint. For it is only there that we will find a way to flourish and be at peace.

What have the Greeks ever done for us? They gave us medicine, mathematics, music, great literature, philosophy, classical architecture, morality, science, democratic politics and philosophy. It is no exaggeration to say that the modern world, the world as we know it, was born in ancient Greece.

It was born in their temples, their academies and in books like Homer's *Odyssey*, which still speaks to the soul. They are all ruins now, but amid those beautiful remnants you can still see the glory of a place to which we owe so much. You can still hear that wonderful wisdom as it is whispered across the millennia.

That successive Greek governments have denied those whispers is, however, a tragedy worthy of Homer himself.

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