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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Travel back to the first Olympics at the National Hellenic Museum**

*New exhibition commemorates the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the modern Olympics*

**CHICAGO, IL** - *Olympic Revival: The 1896 Olympic Games*, a compelling interactive exhibition that traces the journey of the Olympic games from its ancient roots through its modern revival, is now open for public viewing at the National Hellenic Museum.

On loan from the renowned Benaki Museum in Athens, the exhibition showcases images by Albert Meyer, the official photographer of the 1896 Olympic games, providing an intimate glimpse of the events and athletes.

The exhibition traces the Olympics back to its beginnings in Athens, highlighting the ancient athletic events and ceremonies.

Included in the exhibition are photographs of the first U.S. Olympic team; 14 pioneers who went to Athens amid complete indifference from the United States and stunned the world by winning 11 championships, essentially creating the U.S. Olympic movement.

“The museum is honored to present this exhibition in Chicago during an Olympic year,” said Elizabeth Martin, Executive Director of the National Hellenic Museum. “We are incredibly grateful to have this mutually beneficial working alliance with the Benaki Museum, which is the oldest and one of the most significant cultural centers in Greece.”

The mission of the Benaki Museum is to safeguard and promote Greek culture, to study the links

between periods of Hellenism and their interaction with neighboring cultures, and to provide visitors, students, and scholars with a comprehensive narrative of the Greek impact on world history.

Pavlos Yeroulanos, director of the Benaki Museum and Greece's former Minister for Culture and Tourism, will speak at the National Hellenic Museum's Gala on May 14 at the Chicago Hilton. He is the great-grandson of the Benaki Museum founder Antonis Benaki and the great-grandson of Georgios Streit, who served as Foreign Minister of Greece on the eve of World War I.

The exhibition was made possible by the generosity of the Benaki Museum in Athens with support by sponsors, Dr. George and Penny Korkos and John and Martha Cannis.

Photo 1:

21 athletes from nine countries participated in the 100-meter race in the Panathenaic Stadium. Image courtesy of the Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece.

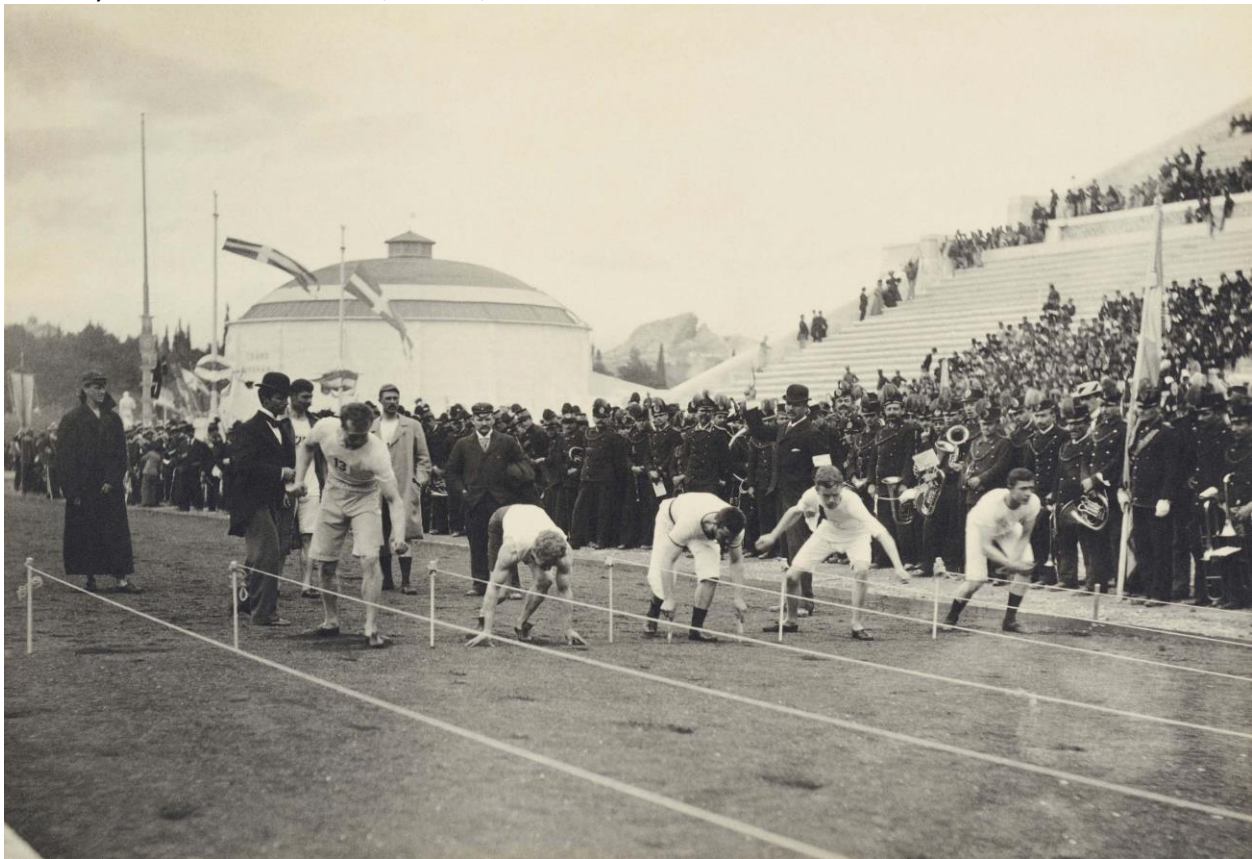


Photo 2:

Spyridon Louis, the first Olympic marathon champion. Image courtesy of the Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece.



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*Located in Chicago's Greektown, the sleek 40,000-square-foot National Hellenic Museum at 333. S. Halsted St. is both contemporary and timeless, connecting all generations—past, present and future—to the rich heritage of Greek history, culture, art and the Greek American experience. The National Hellenic Museum, previously known as the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center, has been fulfilling this mission since 1983.*

For more information, visit <http://www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org> or call 312-655-1234.

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