

= Alexander Onassis =

Alexander Socrates Onassis (Greek : ?????????? ?????? ; April 30 , 1948 ? January 23 , 1973) was an American businessman . He was the son of the Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis and his first wife Tina Livanos . He and his sister Christina Onassis were upset by his father 's marriage to Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy , and he was credited with attempting to improve the relationship between his father and Stavros Niarchos .

Born in New York City , Onassis was not formally educated and worked for several years for his father at his Monaco headquarters . The relationship between Onassis and his father experienced tensions as a result of his secret relationship with Fiona Thyssen , and he was later appointed the head of Olympic Aviation , a Greek regional airline owned by his father . Onassis died in hospital as a result of injuries sustained in an air crash at Ellinikon International Airport at the age of 24 . The Alexander S. Onassis Foundation was established in his memory .

= = Early life = =

Alexander Socrates Onassis was born at the Harkness Pavilion , a private clinic in New York City 's NewYork ? Presbyterian Hospital . He was the elder child of the Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis (1906 ? 1975) and his first wife , Athina Livanos (1929 ? 1974) , herself a daughter of a Greek shipping magnate , Stavros G. Livanos . Onassis was named after his father 's uncle , who was hanged by a Turkish military tribunal during their sacking of Smyrna in September 1922 . Onassis 's sister , Christina , was born in 1950 .

Onassis had no formal schooling , but had been provided with a personal tutor and his own apartment from a young age . Onassis failed his exams at a Paris lycée aged 16 , and began working for his father at his Monaco headquarters in 1965 . Onassis earned a modest salary of \$ 12 @ , @ 000 working for his father despite his father 's great wealth . Onassis was not an enthusiastic employee . A fellow employee said that he seemed in no " great hurry to prove himself an Onassis " . Onassis also described himself as never having spent a day not " intimidated by the old man 's wealth " . In the mid 1960s , Onassis began a relationship with the French model Odile Rodin , a woman several years his senior . Rodin was the widow of the Dominican playboy and diplomat Porfirio Rubirosa , and Rodin and Onassis lived together in Monaco .

= = Family tensions = =

In October 1968 , Aristotle Onassis married Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy , the widow of John F. Kennedy , the 35th President of the United States . Onassis and his sister Christina were greatly upset by the union . They had hoped that he might remarry their mother , which had seemed possible towards the end of their father 's relationship with the Greek opera singer Maria Callas . Onassis said : " My father loved names and Jackie loved money " . Despite never liking their stepmother , Onassis and his sister were friendly with her children , Caroline and John , and Onassis would occasionally let his stepbrother ride at the controls of his plane . Aristotle Onassis 's friend , John W. Meyer , credited Alexander with persuading his father to stop publicly accusing his business rival and former brother @-@ in @-@ law , Stavros Niarchos , of involvement in the death of Niarchos 's former wife , Alexander 's aunt Eugenia Livanos . Niarchos later married Onassis 's mother , the sister of his former wife .

= = Relationships = =

Aristotle Onassis 's second marriage exacerbated the tensions already inherent in his relationship with his son . He also disapproved of Alexander 's secret relationship with Fiona Thyssen (née Campbell Walter) , a British fashion model some 16 years his senior and the former wife of industrialist Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen @-@ Bornemisza . Onassis had first met Fiona Thyssen when he was 12 , and as an 18 @-@ year @-@ old had surprised his mother by inviting her to a

dinner party , as she was one of his mother 's friends .

Following the dinner party , Onassis and Thyssen went to a disco where she punched a fellow dancer in the face (who then fell to the floor) after he suggested that she was only with Onassis because of his father 's wealth . Onassis wanted to have a committed relationship with Thyssen from their first meeting , which she initially resisted , but the deep relationship which eventually developed between the pair was resisted by Onassis 's mother , who constantly sought to sabotage it . Onassis 's father also sought to undermine his son 's relationship by buying him a \$ 2 million villa outside Athens , a gesture that Thyssen felt was an attempt to mold her into just another " Onassis object ... to be manipulated , brutalised and treated on any level and on any terms he chooses " . Thyssen only accepted gifts from Onassis if they were paid from the small amount that he earned .

= = Death = =

Onassis had taken his first flying lesson in 1967 and had accrued 1 @, @ 500 flying hours by the time of his death . Possessing a professional pilot 's license , he was appointed the President of Olympic Aviation , a regional Greek subsidiary of his father 's Olympic Airways , in 1971 . Onassis ' poor eyesight meant that he could not hold an air transport license , but could possess an air commercial license , allowing him to fly light planes and air taxis for emergency medical cases .

Onassis died on January 23 , 1973 , at the age of 24 , from injuries sustained the previous day when his personal Piaggio P.136L @- @ 2 amphibious airplane , in which he was a passenger , crashed at Ellinikon International Airport in Athens . Onassis was instructing a potential new pilot of the plane , Donald McCusker , at the time of the crash , in his role as President of Olympic Aviation . Onassis and McCusker were accompanied by Donald McGregor , Onassis 's regular pilot , who was recovering from an eye infection . A few seconds after takeoff from runway 33 , the plane 's right wing dropped and stayed down , and the plane crashed shortly after losing balance , in a flight lasting no more than 15 seconds . McCusker and the other pilot both suffered serious injuries in the crash . The trio had planned to practice amphibious landings between the Saronic Gulf islands of Aegina and Poros after takeoff .

The day after the crash , Onassis 's father and stepmother arrived from New York at the hospital where Onassis was being treated . The couple were accompanied by an American neurosurgeon . Onassis 's mother arrived from Switzerland with her husband , Stavros Niarchos . Aristotle had also flown the English neurosurgeon Alan Richardson from London to Athens , but Richardson later told Onassis that Alexander had no chance of surviving his injuries . Aristotle Onassis considered having his son 's body cryogenically frozen with the Life Extension Society , but was persuaded against it , and it was embalmed by Desmond Henley . Alexander Onassis was buried next to the chapel on his father 's private Ionian island of Skorpios .

Reports into the crash by the Greek Air Force , and an independent investigator hired by Onassis , the Englishman Alan Hunter , concluded that it had occurred as a result of the reversing of the aileron connecting cables during the installation of a new control column . This cause was disputed by McGregor who believed that the wake turbulence from an Air France Boeing 727 that had taken off before them had caused the crash .

Less than a month after Alexander Onassis 's death , McCusker had manslaughter proceedings initiated against him by the public prosecutor of Athens in connection with the crash . Six people were also charged over Onassis 's death in January 1974 , with their indictment indicating that faulty controls had been fitted to his plane .

In December 1974 , in a paid advertisement , Aristotle Onassis announced his offering of a \$ 1 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 reward (equivalent to \$ 4 @. @ 798 million in 2015) for proof that his son 's death had been as a result of " deliberate action " as opposed to the cause of negligence , the conclusion reached by the official inquiry . All charges relating to the crash were later dropped , and McCusker was awarded \$ 800 @, @ 000 in 1978 by Olympic Airways , three years after Aristotle Onassis 's death . Onassis had refused to believe that his son 's death was an accident , believing it was due to the machinations of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the leader of the Greek military junta , Georgios Papadopoulos .

Onassis 's death had a profound effect on his father , who never fully recovered from the loss of his son . Aristotle Onassis sought to sell Olympic Airways after his son 's death , and died two years later in March 1975 . Onassis was buried alongside his son on Skorpios .

= = Alexander S. Onassis Foundation = =

Aristotle Onassis 's will established a charitable foundation in memory of his son , the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation , based in the tax haven of Vaduz in Liechtenstein , and headquartered in Athens . The foundation received 45 % of his fortune , with the remainder left to Alexander 's sister , Christina . The foundation consists of two parts ; a business foundation which runs various businesses including shipping , and a public benefit foundation which is the sole recipient of the business foundation . The public benefit foundation funds the world wide promotion of Greek culture , funds the Onassis International Prizes for achievement in various fields , and the funding of scholarships for Greek university students .