

# ARMENIAN VOICE



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CENTRE FOR  
ARMENIAN INFORMATION  
AND ADVICE

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## PROMINENT PHILANTHROPIST VISITS HAYASHEN



The CAIA was honoured to have Mr Gagik Tsarukyan take time out of his private schedule to visit *Hayashen* on the 20th June 2017 for the purpose of meeting with members of the UK Armenian community.

Mr Tsarukyan who is President of the *National Olympic committee of the Republic of Armenia*, a prominent MP and the founder of the Gagik Tsarukyan Charitable Foundation was welcomed by CAIA's Chairman Richard Mourad Anoushian who spoke about the work of the CAIA in addressing the various social and cultural challenges UK Armenians face and the work of CAIA in supporting the community. Mr Tsarukyan in response thanked the CAIA and 100+ people who were in attendance and answered questions on a wide range of issues concerning Armenians both in the diaspora and Armenia.

The event ended with the opportunity to personally meet and talk to Mr Tsarukyan and everyone was supplied with some vintage wine and cognac that Mr Tsarukyan had generously supplied and a buffet meal hosted by CAIA.

As a final charitable act, Mr Tsarukyan made a generous donation to CAIA which will enable us to continue to make improvements to the *Hayashen Centre* for the common good of UK Armenians.



## UK ARMENIANS & WW1 PROJECT

Not one but two outcomes of the *UK Armenians & WW1* project took place at the *Wiener Library* on 12 October 2017 – screening of Athena Mandis' film *Testimonies of War* and display of the exhibition based on the project research findings. It was very exciting and moving to share our work for 18 months with public, and we are humbled by everyone's positive and encouraging response. People mentioned the importance of this research for the younger generation in their feedback; some of those present said it motivated them to go and conduct research into their family history; some had excellent suggestions how to continue the project further, etc. We want to thank everyone for their comments and the *Wiener Library* for hosting this event.



The premiere of *Testimonies of War* took place on 6th August 2017 at *Hayashen*, (below) followed by Q & A with filmmaker Athena Mandis and networking opportunity during an enjoyable buffet reception by all those present.



The CAIA wishes to thank everyone who attended these events and all those who contributed to the project including those whose interviews were not included in the final film. We will be sharing these stories and other researched materials on our newly-built website in due course. There will be further screenings in early 2018, so keep an eye on our social media for this. To become involved, please contact Project Coordinator Tatevik at [HLF\\_Project@caia.org.uk](mailto:HLF_Project@caia.org.uk)

# CAIA NEWS



On Saturday 18th November 2017, the CAIA held its 31st Annual General Meeting at *Hayashen*. During the 90 minute long meeting, CAIA chair, Richard Anooshian, Treasurer, Diane John and CEO, Misak Ohanian spoke about the challenges and achievements over the past year as well as the future plans of the charity. Near the end of the meeting, the following were elected as CAIA Board Members, Raffi Varoujian and Karine Alexanian. Congratulations to both and thank you to everyone who took part in the AGM in person or via their proxy representatives.



The *Anahid Association* celebrated its 43rd annual Mother's day on Sunday 14th May 2017 at the *Doubletree Hotel Hilton, Ealing*. The guests of honour were Miss Hayarpi Drmeyan, Attaché consular affairs, Armenian Embassy and His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Primate of all Armenian Church in the UK and Ireland. The chairperson, Mrs Odette Bazil welcomed the guests and invited His Grace to bless the tables. This was followed by a very emotional presentation by Miss Drmeyan who also recited a poem dedicated to mothers. Mrs Bazil, informed the audience that the *Anahid Association* was donating £2000 to the CAIA and after having praised the charitable work it carries out, invited CAIA CEO Misak Ohanian to receive the cheque and address the audience. This was followed by a short cultural programme with recitations and songs. In a very jovial atmosphere the drawing of raffles took place with the prizes generously provided by Mr & Mrs Edward Sahakian, *Davidoff* and others.

## EASTER SUNDAY 2017 AT HAYASHEN



On Sunday 16 April 2017 over 80 people of all ages enjoyed Easter Sunday at *Hayashen* with live music, food and dancing. There were also games and face-painting for children. Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the celebration including local MP Rupa Huq.

## ARMENIAN STREET FESTIVAL 2017



CAIA took part in the annual Armenian Street Festival on 16th July 2017 outside St.Sarkis Armenian Church in the RB of Kensington & Chelsea. Thank you to everyone who visited our stall.



The CAIA welcomed the Most Reverend Father Jirayr Tashjian, (photo above) Director of the *Library of the Armenian Apostolic Church* in Paris, France on 20th October 2017. The library is maintained as an open resource to people wishing to acquire knowledge and consult books on many aspects of Armenian cultural life. The library has more than 7,000 titles in Armenian, French and English. It also holds periodicals, posters, maps, calendars, music scores, documents, catalogued for use by students, researchers and the general public. Since 2012, an extensive catalogue is on display via its website at [www.bibliotheque-eglise-armeniennne.fr](http://www.bibliotheque-eglise-armeniennne.fr) During his 3-hour visit, the Reverend Father learned about the work of the CAIA, visited the *Hayashen Library* and met CAIA staff, volunteers and enjoyed the company of those attending the *Hayashen Seniors club*. ■



The CAIA organised a Basic Risk Assessment training on 9th October 2017 at Hayashen for the benefit staff and volunteers from various community groups. Total of ten people benefited from the 3-hour course delivered by the London Hazards Centre.



CAIA took part in the March for Unity event at Ravenscourt Park, LB of Hammersmith & Fulham on July 17th 2017 as part of the Refugees & Minorities Forum West London.

### CULTURE OF GIVING & APPRECIATION



Volunteers are not paid, not because they are worthless but because they are priceless.

Thank you to all our volunteers who contribute to CAIA's diverse services and activities at Hayashen throughout the week.



Ft. Shnork from the Armenian Church playing backgammon during a recent visit to Hayashen Seniors club. Not sure who won.

## INTRODUCTION TO ARMENIAN HISTORY, CULTURE & HERITAGE

### What does this course offer?

- + A better understanding of Armenian history, culture and heritage
  - + An opportunity for families to learn together about their past
  - + Improve prospects into further learning
  - + A chance to ask questions & interact with others in a friendly & welcoming environment.
- This is a free course in English. However, you must register & complete and feedback evaluation form.

### 2018 Dates at Hayashen

**Sunday 18 February** – *Saving Armenia? British Responses to Armenian Refugees during and after the First World War* - Dr. Jo Laycock

**Sunday 25 February** – *Armenian Civil Servants in the Ottoman Empire* – Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian

**Sunday 4 March** – *The Armenians of Ethiopia and an Introduction to the Work of B A Sevadjian* – Rubina Sevadjian

**Sunday 11 March** – *Traumatic Art: The Visual Manifestation of Inherited Trauma in Contemporary Diasporan Armenian Art* - Elizabeth Collier

**Sunday 18 March** – *The enduring power of images on stone: from ancient Armenian rock art to the khachkars of today* - Dr. Tina Walkling

**Sunday 25 March** – *Empires and Nations: Russian-Armenian relations in Postcolonial Perspective* – Dr. Kevork Oskanian

**Time:** 1.30pm–4.30pm - Light lunch/refreshments. ■

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# ARMENIAN SENIOR CITIZENS

## DAY TRIP TO EASTBOURNE



Despite the atrocious weather over 50 older people/Carers travelled to the seaside town of *Eastbourne* on 2nd August 2017 in the luxury of a brand-new coach, with on board Wi-Fi, etc.

Despite the rain and wind throughout the day during which four umbrellas were laid to rest according to rumours, everyone shone to each other with lots of humour and kindness.

## NEW CAIA PROJECT FOR HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM RESIDENTS

The CAIA has launched a new project funded by *NHS Hammersmith and Fulham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)* via *SOBUS* which is the umbrella body for the voluntary organisations in the borough.

The project targets Armenians and those connected with them living until July 2018 to:

- Empower the vulnerable such as older/disabled people/Carers to make healthy choices and look after themselves to stay mentally and physically well.
- Help reduce social isolation and barriers to health services due to language, lack of information and other barriers via outreach/home visiting service .
- Ensure the vulnerable improve health, well-being, independence, and ability to live at home by access to the right care in the right place at the right time, reduction in hospitalisations and access to support.

There is also an opportunity to benefit from weekly drop-in advice sessions at *CAIA's* lunch club and further information can be obtained from *CAIA's* Advice Worker in relation to entitlements and housing issues, which have an impact on the health of individuals. The lunch club seeks to reduce isolation by creating the opportunity to network and build new friendships who share the same cultural background.

For further information and home visit by project co-ordinator, *Scarlet Sarksan*, please telephone 0208 992 4621 (Monday, Tuesday & Fridays) or email us directly at [info@caia.org.uk](mailto:info@caia.org.uk)

Keeping fit at Hayashen Armenian Seniors club on Fridays



## CHEST PAIN WORKSHOP AT HAYASHEN

On 5th May 2017, the *CAIA* welcomed *Dr. Shahan Tamrazian* (Cardiologist) who led an interactive workshop about causes of chest pain, understanding it, how to manage the pain and getting help. *Dr. Tamrazian* said that chest pain can be caused by anything from muscle pain to a heart attack and should never be ignored. During and after the discussion those present asked questions and demonstrated some level of awareness and understanding about this vital topic.

## BOWEL CANCER AWARENESS



*Jane Stanton-Humphreys*, (above) a qualified nurse and a volunteer from "*Bowel Cancer UK*" delivered a workshop on 18th August 2017, organised by *CAIA's* Health & Care Support Worker, *Scarlet Sarksan*. Ten people, mainly Carers, benefited from the one hour presentation.

## FALLS AWARENESS WEEK

During Falls Awareness Week on 29th September 2017, *CAIA* delivered an interactive informal session with Seniors and Carers at *Hayashen*. One of the seniors, *Mrs Rahanian* demonstrated gentle movements and exercises before getting out of bed to prevent dizziness and fall. Topics covered during the session included:

- Regular sight and hearing checks
- Looking after feet, choosing proper shoes
- Having a torch at night
- Checking tiles & carpeting/Using bath mat

## NATURAL AGING

On 6th October 2017, *Mrs Julietta Melkonyan*, a retired GP and medical university lecturer presented an interesting topic entitled '*Natural aging*' at *Hayashen Seniors Club*. Her talk was about:

- How to adapt to living environment
- The aging process is a continual adaptation
- The impact of healthy eating, sleeping and stress free life on ageing
- Cultural factors affecting the relationship between new and old generation. ■

# ARMENIAN COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL GROUP



The ACPG organised its annual summer project during August 2017. The highlight was an enjoyable fun day out for 60 children at Chessington World of Adventure on 31st August supported by the John Lyon's Trust. (See photo below) We are grateful to Elena Roganyan who was kind enough to make a short film about the trip which can be viewed via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0lklfZnY-PQ&feature=share>



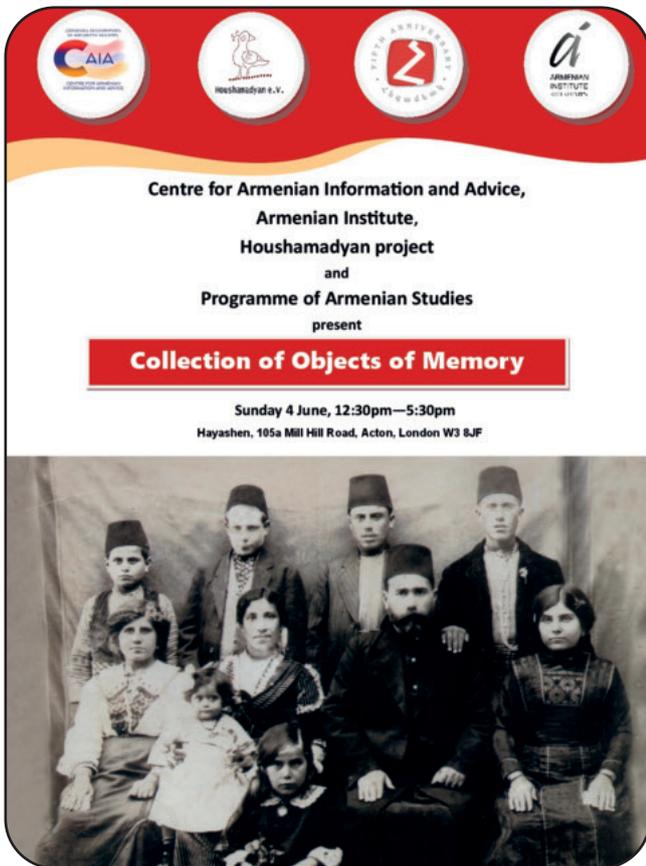
ACPG operates Monday & Thursdays each week from 10:00am -12:30pm and welcomes children under 5 years of age. The attendance fee is £3 per session payable on the day inclusive of snacks.

## HAYC GO KARTING FUN DAY



On 24 July 2017, 42 young people enjoyed a great day out of Go-Karting at Brentwood Leisure Centre. The day started from 9am with full of energy and excitement, travelling by coach with laughter and music. On our arrival, the youth were greeted by the Centre staff who delivered a health and safety presentation before the youth wore the special driving uniforms. The youth competed against each other several times safely and securely over the next five hours. 16 Pizzas were shared at lunchtime by the youth. At 4pm, the fastest (and safest) young drivers were announced to the delight of their friends. By 6pm all returned back to Hayashen tired and happy into the arms of their parents. The day was organised by CAIA's Hayashen Armenian Youth Club supported by the BBC Children In Need.





### THE HOUSHAMADYAN PROJECT

Within the field of Armenian Studies and among the general political, cultural and social milieu of Armenians throughout the world, there has been a predominant focus on the events of the Genocide and the political developments that occurred thereafter. There has, however, been a stark lack of work and investigation into the lives of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire prior to the Genocide. If Armenians are to lament a lost past, are they not required to have some knowledge of what was actually lost? Established in 2011, the *Houshamadyan Project* seeks to fill this enormous gap in knowledge and memory. The aim of the *Houshamadyan Project* and its website is to reconstruct the daily lives of the Ottoman Armenians and their social environment in all its facets. Alongside articles, the *Houshamadyan* website uses a great variety of multimedia tools, such as musical recordings of historical value, oral histories, photographs, pictures, film footage, maps, podcasts, and so on. *Houshamadyan* has also published a book/album called *Ottoman Armenians: Life, Culture, Society*, which includes academic articles and hundreds of illustrations.



With this in mind, an all day event took place at *Hayashen* on 4th June 2017 co-organised by *Houshamadyan*, the *Programme of Armenian Studies*, the *Centre for Armenian Information & Advice* and the *Armenian Institute*.

The aim of the event was to encourage UK Armenians to bring old family photographs, memoirs, religious objects, household items of all kinds from dowry items to cooking utensils, and materials pertaining to Ottoman Armenians inherited from their ancestors in order to digitise them.



Many thanks to everyone who attended and shared their family archives and family micro-histories on the day. You helped to reconstruct the life of all our ancestors. CAIA was very pleased to host this event we keen to find stories, letters, images and any other materials from the 19th Century to the early 20th Century, which could be related to its *UK Armenian & WW1 Project*.



Many thanks to our colleagues at *Houshamadyan*, the *Programme of Armenian Studies*, the *Armenian Institute* and several volunteers who contributed to the successful day. We are particular grateful to award winning film maker Seda Grigorian who was kind enough to make a short film about the event which can be viewed via following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5liYUCLsN7c&t=21s>

### ACTON HIGH SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL DAY



On 11th July 2017, CAIA's *UK Armenians & WW1 project* held a stall at the annual international day held at *Acton High School*, opposite *Hayashen*. We are very grateful for young volunteer Venetia Abrahamian for assisting us in raising awareness about the UK Armenian community and Armenia in general. ■

## THE ENIGMA OF ARMENIA'S NATIONAL EPIC: DAVID OF SASSOON

This was the title of a talk on 13 August 2017 held at *Hayashen* by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian, Director of the *Center for Armenian Studies at Fresno State, USA*. The talk was organised as part of *AGBU London Summer Lecture* series.

At the end of the talk an interesting Q & A took place, followed by copies of the publication, "*David of Sassoun: Critical Essays on the Armenian Epic*", co-edited with Dr. Dickran Kouymjian available for purchase.



## ARMENIAN IDENTITY FOCUS OF AGBU LONDON TALK WITH DR. DANA WALRATH

by Anoush Melkonian



Dr. Dana Walrath, the American-Armenian anthropologist, was *AGBU London's* guest at a talk organised at *CAIA Hayashen* on 12 Nov. 2017. Entitled "*Art, Scholarship and Political Action in the Construction and Preservation of Armenian Identity*", Dr. Walrath discussed her Armenian heritage, her development as a scholar and activist, and her academic work from the medicalisation of childbirth in the United States to the Armenian Genocide.

An eloquent and compelling speaker, she explained how her background in anthropology has been pivotal for her understanding of social change. Dr. Walrath also discussed her ancestral links to *Van* and *Palu* and her position in debates concerning the Armenian Genocide. Her work in this regard has ranged from articles in the periodical press to her highly successful versified book, "*Like Water on Stone*," based on the plight and survival of her family members from *Palu*.

More recently, Dr. Walrath has also worked with "cartoons" as a key medium and pedagogical tool in understanding Alzheimers, as well as "*View from the High Ground*," a major installation exhibition on the link between racism, dehumanisation and genocide across the world.

Dr. Walrath is a preeminent American-Armenian intellectual and we hope to see more of her in the UK.

## AYA FC WINS FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Congratulations to the Ealing based *Armenian Youth Association FC* 1st team who won their league this year. This is the first time in the history of the club that they have achieved this with the 1st team. They played 16 games, winning 14 and drawing two, thus going the entire season unbeaten in the league, the only team to do so. They had also the best defence in the league, conceding only 13 goals all season, and with the second best attack. Garo Heath, son of Dalilah, scored 12 goals and would no doubt have claimed many more had he not missed 4 months of the season while travelling.

core consisted of the following players:

Alen Duvarciyan (captain), Matt Ohanian, Vatche Cherkhian, Alex Alteparmaki an, Norayr Djerrahian, Saro Djerrahian, Arek Djerrahian, Masis Sarakayan, Garo Heath, Mike Tamou.

And mention must be made of the honorary Armenians in the team for thier great contribution:

Rich Tooley, Gui Garcia, Ben Anderson, Gio Pilides, Pierre Pilides, Adam Percival, George Burda, Matt Catlin, Andreas Savvas and Ian Coetzee.

## REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE IN EALING



Once again this year in April, Armenians and local dignitaries gathered at *Ealing Green* where a Remembrance Ceremony took place by the side of the Commemorative Apricot Tree (*Prunus Armeniaca*) planted some years ago by *Ealing Council* dedicated in memory of the 1.5 Million victims of the Armenian Genocide.

At the ceremony over 100 local Armenians were present along with representative from the Armenian Church and Embassy, the Mayor of Ealing, Cllr. Dr. Patricia Walker, the Leader of the Ealing Council, Cllr. Julian Bell and Mr Stephen Pound MP, *Member of Parliament* for Ealing North. ■

# HAYASHEN YOUTH CLUB



The CAIA was grateful and excited to welcome world famous actor, Mr Vic Tablian (Varouz Aintablian) to the Hayashen Armenian Youth Club (HAYC) on 19th May 2017. Vic, who lives in London, was born in Palestine to Armenian Genocide survivors, is an actor, best known for classic adventure film, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in which he had two roles (Peruvian guide Barranca and the Nazi collaborator "Monkey Man"). Vic also starred in the *Midnight Express*; *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* ; *The Bill* (TV series) and many more.

During the visit, Vic met the youth, gave some acting tips, (see photo below) talked about his appearance in the recent Hollywood film, *The Promise* and enjoyed watching some of his memorable scenes from the classic adventure film, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Everyone loved his sense of humour and joyful personality. At the end, Vic kindly signed a large poster from *The Promise* and joined the youth for a bite to eat.



On 16th June, a Storytelling session took place with a view to encourage young people to speak and listen to each other, learn the art of storytelling at a time when they are so preoccupied consuming images from the TV and social media. Young people were asked in advance to bring with them an image - anything, something funny, memorable, important, a *selfie* or an old family photograph.

The evening was fun, as the stories they weaved took an unexpected turn leading to a cute cat and dog becoming friends and involved in the assassination attempt of an evil politician. Don't ask how and why. Everyone taking part was rewarded by some very tasty brownies.



On 30th June 2017, Haro Zakarian (above) from Ealing Youth Justice Service spoke at HAYC about "Safety from gangs and violence". The youth listened attentively and asked lots of questions which Haro was happy to patiently explain and answer. The questions and discussion focused on such issues as possession of drugs, carrying offensive weapons and punishment, child sexual exploitation, Internet offences and safety.

The youth were very grateful to Haro for coming and speaking to them from his busy schedule and gained a lot of knowledge from his presentation and experience of crime fighting.



At HAYC on 12th September 2017, Venetia Abrahamian (photo above) shared her experience of visiting Armenia as part of the *Homenetmen London Chapter*. Budding Dj Chris provided entertaining sounds during the session also.



A very exciting and thought provoking HAYC session took place 22nd September 2017, when Jaspal Gill from Ealing CVS run an interactive session on *Safeguarding*.

The young people were given different scenarios, and had to discuss about how they would react at each scenario when children were involved. It was fascinating to see how the young people picked up small details and how well they justified their answers.

It was a busy session, and after a nice meal together, we had a birthday to celebrate with a lovely cake! We also gave a well-deserved *Jack Petchey Youth Achievement* award to Michael Clayton-Jolly, whose impromptu performance of some classics (in German and Russian!) impressed all those present immensely.



Chloe Wadey, (above) a first year medical student from Kingston University kindly spoke at HAYC on 6th October 2017, about choosing medical profession and life at university in general.

Despite the days getting shorter and colder, it was an informative as well as fun-filled evening of games, food and socialising in a safe, warm Hayashen.

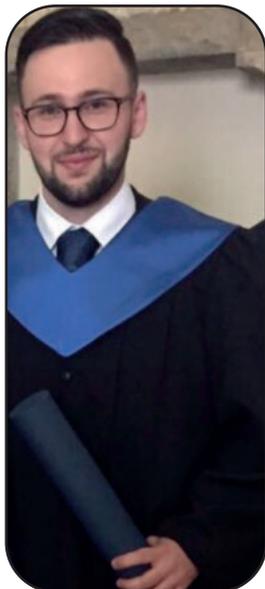


An exciting fun Quiz night took place on 24th November at HAYC with groups of young people exercising their brains to find the answers to such questions as which of the following is lighter? Gold, Silver or Bronze or what is the number of chromosomes in the body, what is the biggest export from India, etc. During the evening the youth ate a pasta meal and also celebrated a birthday by eating a large home made cake!

### CONGRATULATIONS TO TWO FORMER HAYC MEMBERS



Congratulations to two young Armenians who used to attend HAYC and have now progressed in their careers.



On the left, Andre Balasian, gaining the Innovation Award 2017 and on the right, Stephan Baghdasarian qualifying as a dentist after 4 years of hard studies. Well done to the both of you. If you used to attend HAYC and have achievement something you are proud please let us know so that we can share in your joy.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR JACK PETCHY YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS



Michael Clayton-Jolly is an all-rounder, doing well academically and socially, who is at the moment preparing for 12 GCSE exams, singing at the Temple Youth Choir at the Inner Temple and is also a chorister at Southwark Cathedral singing at Monday evensongs. He's also a Yeoman of the Chapel Royal cross bearing and helping out with Sunday services. Michael is also volunteer locally at an asylum seekers centre run by New North London Synagogue. He has a keen interest in politics and current affairs. A pleasant and outgoing young person, Michael is an excellent role model for his peers and now a regular at HAYC.



Venetia Abrahamian (above right) receiving her Jack Petchy Youth Achievement Award for her contribution to HAYC and volunteering with CAIA in June 2017 from Youth Worker, Tatevik Ayzvazyan.

### WELL DONE TO EMILY LUCINE-PHILLIPS



Congratulations to 14-year old Emily and skating dance partner, Jayin Panesar from Woodley in Reading.

Emily is an ice-skating champion, who has won a number of very prestigious national and international accolades, both in solo and doubles ice-skating from an early age.

Emily is coached by her ice skating parents, David Phillips and Lucine Chakmakjian, daughter of long time CAIA member Mr. Krikor Chakmakjian.

## COPYING MASTERS THEN MASTERING OWN ART

by Prof. Khatchatur I. Pilikian

I was just becoming a teenager, in 1952, when we arrived in Beirut from *Nineveh – Mosul* with all my family, father, mother, three sisters (one, my twin) and a younger brother. My twin sister and I were enrolled at an Evangelical High school which was well accredited by the *American University in Beirut*. One sunny afternoon, coming back home from school I visited a local bookshop. There were, at a corner bank, post-cards of famous painter's masterpieces. I bought a large post-card of Murillo's *Annunciation* for my mother.

She loved it and challenged me saying "you are scribbling here and there with sketches and colours, let me see if you can reproduce this on a large canvas, then I will call you a real painter". I did not answer with "I will try". My courage nudged me to say "I will do it, mother". I worked during the summer recess. It was done. You should have seen my parents' feeling of Eureka...

Few months later, in autumn 1952, I passed the tests and entered the Fine Arts Academy, enrolled in the early evening studio sessions. There we had a female nude — the one and only in town. The moment I entered the studio Mariam (her name) covered her body. The Professor of painting was quick to remind her "Mariam, please uncover, the young man is officially permitted to sketch your nude figure". From *Virgin Mary to Mary the Nude*, my journey into the world of art proceeded with a rabbit's pace.

My mother, Tefarik, born in *Khaskal-Izmit (Nicomedia)*, had survived the genocide and lived as a child with her mother. Her father Hagop was dragged to serve the Ottoman army as hard labourer (*amele tabourou*) in Jerusalem. Knitting to survive with her mother in Thessalonica, my mother was 'found' by my father when she was in her twenties. My father, Vahan/Israel, born also in *Khaskal*, survived the *Der el Zor* hell on earth in the Syrian Desert. As an orphan in Baghdad, he decided to find his childhood beloved come rain or sunshine. He did. They stayed together for over 65 years – now buried together in London (father 95, mother 87). Both parents had very beautiful voices – I have learned many songs first from them. I remember vividly my father's singing to raise funds for the families of the Armenian soldiers fighting against the Nazis...

After copying Murillo's *Annunciazione*, it was the turn of my father to ask me to reproduce from a unique photograph, a memento he treasured for more than a half century. It showed, in black and white, an impressive wooden mansion on-a-hill, in his and my mother's birthplace, the Armenian village of *Khaskal* in Ancient *Nicomedia*. The picture was of 'our ancestral mansion', as my father called it. Not rushing with his loving request, my father, being a passionate believer in academic studies that he and my mother never had the chance to indulge in, he waited until my High School graduation in 1954 (with my twin sister), then my enrolment to the *American University in Beirut – AUB*. He waited for me to be a student of Architectural Engineering, only then to tackle 'reproducing' our 'ancestral home', albeit as a pictorial image. I tackled my labour of love during the Christmas and New Year 1957 festive days. I signed my copy of 'our ancestral mansion' on January 13.

As a child of ten, my father Israel-Vahan Pilikian had "helped" his own father Hovhanness, a master builder, to build the new family house his father designed and planned, in their home village, *Khaskal*, during 1912-1913. The village, mostly inhabited by Armenians numbering few thousand, was not far away from the



K. I. PILIKIAN AMORE ETERNO, 1960. Oil on Canvas – International Exhibition GENTES ARS Prize, Rome, 1961, graced the cover of the Vatican's biweekly, *Crocifata* (no. 23).

Pilikian's copy (1952) of MURILLO'S "Annunciazione", 1670–1680

celebrated Armenian Monastery of *Armash*, in *Izmit (ancient Nicomedia)*.

After the large and extended Pilikian family was driven away from the new paternal home, the enormous three story wooden building was confiscated by an officer of the Central Powers and used as army barracks. Surviving the bombardments of the Allied Powers, the Pilikian mansion was subsequently occupied by the Kemalist forces of nationalist uprising.

After the Great War, having survived the Genocide of the Armenians (1914-1918), Israel-Vahan, a teenager in a Baghdad orphanage in 1919, decides to go back and find his paternal home in *Khaskal*. Accompanied by his eldest, surviving sister Srбуhi and her husband, they start their odyssey travelling through deserts, hills and valleys, pastures and sea (reversing their march of death), finally reaching their destination.

They reclaim their paternal home, albeit derelict and completely depleted of household furniture and all. After a few months of sustained and determined efforts of survival, their mansion too breathes new life. But the atmosphere of fear, rekindled by ultra nationalism, poisons the life of those groups who dared outlive the Genocide. To continue surviving, my father and his sister's family had to leave their paternal home yet again, but not before procuring a photo-memento (taken by a soldier of the retreating Greek armies), of their beloved mansion—a "miraculous" feat, indeed.

During the summer of 1963, Israel-Vahan Pilikian, then 60 and a father of a large family with five children residing in Beirut, Lebanon, revisited his birthplace in *Khaskal*. No traces of the house were found. There the locals told him, that 'that impressive mansion on the hill' was finally burned down during the nationalist upheavals...

Based on that "miraculous" photograph of 1920, I sketched with pastel-crayons, on January 13th, 1957, an enlarged (cm. 61.5 x 46.5) picture of our ancestral 'mansion on the hill' in *Khaskal*. The Armenian inhabitants of the region *Agn*, in Historical Armenia (*Egin*, now *Kemaliye*, in Turkey), were mostly descendants of *Ani*, the ancient capital of Armenia captured by the Mongol invaders in 1236. The *Aniites* having become *Agnites* for three centuries were uprooted anew, this time by the Ottoman Turks, during the 16th century. Hence the name *Khaskal* of the original village in *Agn*, was given by the Armenian immigrants from *Agn* to their new settlement in *Izmit-Nicomedia*, neighbouring *Constantinople* in Anatolia. The new *Khaskal*, meaning "good-fields", proved worthy of its name. It soon became the 'Paradise' of the region, especially for the pilgrims of the celebrated Armenian Monastery of *Armash*. (S. M. Dzotsikian, *Arevmdahay Ashkharh [Western-Armenian World]*, New York:

*Dzotsikian Jubilee Committee, 1947, p.484*). Centuries passed, then most of the *Khaskalites*, those great grand-grand-children of *Aniite Agnites*, were uprooted yet again, this time to become victims of the 'first final solution' of the 20th century—The Genocide of the Armenians, perpetrated by the proto-Nazi government of the Young Turks.

The only belonging our large Pilikian family had of my parent's ancestral material positions was that photograph of our ancestral mansion. During many upheavals in the Middle East, culminating in the Lebanese civil war, our large Pilikian family was already fragmented in various parts of the world; Europe – my sister Margaret and her family in Paris; UK – my younger brother Hovhanness and his family in London; Canada – my twin sister Arsineh and children in Montreal (having lost her husband during the Lebanese civil war), while my eldest sister Mary and her family in Toronto. Mary was already a prominent pharmacist in Beirut, while my brother Hovhanness had become a prominent theatre director in London. After studying and residing in Italy for ten years, I was in USA as a *Fulbright* scholar, while the Lebanese civil war was on, and the Vietnam war seemed to drag the USA into its own civil war yet again. My father and mother were still in Beirut, helped by my twin sister before she too left to join her son and daughter in Montreal. I was already in London in early 80's when my parents left Beirut for good and came to live with us, brothers, in London. The havoc of emigration caused enormous losses, not the least of which was my father's treasured memento – the visual, photographic image of our 'ancestral mansion on the hill'. Notwithstanding all, my copies of *Annunciation* and the *Mansion on the Hill*, miraculously survived the traumatic conditions in all the fields of existence during the fifteen years of the Lebanese civil war that caused 150,000 lost lives and all.



My reproductions of *Annunciation* and *Mansion on the Hill* worked 'magic' in late 1950s. They convinced my parents that Italy is where I should be, especially when I also performed as a solo tenor with Maestro H. Berberian's orchestra and chorus, at *UNESCO Hall*, celebrating the 100th Anniversary of *AGBU*, (founded in 1906). My parents' conviction had the enthusiastic support by the Headmaster of the *Department of Architectural Engineering of the AUB*, Dr Ghoseyn, who was, alas, brutally assassinated during the civil war. I was in Rome in the summer of 1957. As a full teenager and beyond, I opened my eyes, mind and soul in Rome, in various Fine Art and Music Academies, while continuing my studies at the Architectural Faculty, University of Rome. When the National Gallery had among others Murillo paintings exhibition in mid 80's, I was hoping to see the original of the *Annunciation* (1679-1689). But there I found many other paintings closely related with it. I was happy that my copy was not so alien to the original 'atmosphere' I witnessed at the exhibition.

But then, my own artistic style was already formed in early 60's. My *Amore Eterno* is a good example of that. ■

## MARC BALAKJIAN

22 April 1938-10 August 2017

Two months before his death at the age of 79, the artist Marc Balakjian visited Armenia for the first time to discover his cultural inheritance. His parents had fled to Lebanon from the genocide of Armenia, started by the Young Turks in 1915. The Armenian diaspora has lived with a sense of unfinished business and injustice ever since, and this history influenced Marc's work.



He usually used a restricted palette of black and white, whether in small mezzotints or larger drawings and watercolours. His subject matter was enigmatic: a recurring theme was that of anonymous packages tied with knots of rope; sometimes there are prison bars in the background or piles of planks leaning against each other. The images are disturbing in their ambiguity. He was born Mardiros Yacoub Balakjian in the village of *Rayak*, near Beirut, son of Hagop, a cobbler at the nearby French military base, and his wife, Haigoui. After finishing school at *Djemeran college* in Beirut, Marc intended to train as an architect, but a young friend returned from Italy with some etchings that he found intriguing. Marc visited Paris, Rome and London, seeking out more examples of printmaking. He decided to take a fine art degree at *Hammersmith College of Art*, where there was a good department of printmaking. He went on to postgraduate studies, specialising in printmaking, at the *Slade*. There he found some discarded *mezzotint rockers* used to prepare copper plates, as well as old manuals that described this obscure, but once popular, method of reproducing works by *Constable*, *Turner* and many other well-known artists. It had fallen out of fashion when later artists, such as *Gauguin* and *Munch*, made their own printed graphics. Marc determined to resurrect this subtle, but fading printmaking method, constructing his own tools where none could be found. He became known for his knowledge and demonstrations about the varieties of intaglio printing.

When he finished his master's, he met, by chance, Dorothea Wight, another former *Slade* student, who had opened an editioning workshop in 1968 to print artist's work. *Studio Prints* had moved to new premises in Kentish Town, north London, and she needed another printer because interest in original artist's prints was booming, both in Britain and for export to the US.

Marc became a partner in *Studio Prints* in 1974 and three years later, he and Dorothea married.

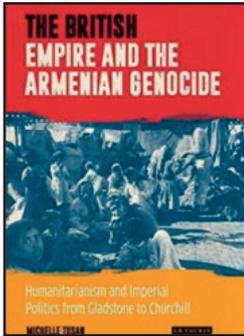
The couple produced their work and exhibited widely in Britain and at international shows, won prizes, taught printmaking and lectured. Their work was acquired by public collections including those of the *British Museum*, the *V&A* and the *British Council*.

In 2009, Dorothea fell ill and the workshop closed. She died in 2013.

Marc is survived by their son, Aram, and daughter, Tamar. ■

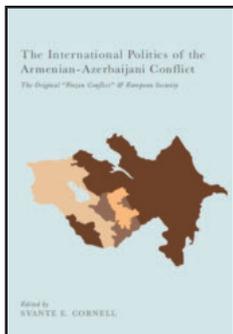
## BOOK REVIEWS

***The British Empire and the Armenian Genocide: Humanitarianism and Imperial Politics from Gladstone to Churchill*** by Michelle Tusan; 320 pp. Hardback, ISBN 13: 978-1784533854, Published by I.B.Tauris



An estimated one million Armenians were killed in the dying days of the Ottoman Empire in 1915. Against the backdrop of World War I, reports of massacre, atrocity, genocide and exile sparked the largest global humanitarian response up to that date. Britain and its empire - the most powerful internationalist institutional force at the time - played a key role in determining the global response to these events. This book considers the first attempt to intervene on behalf of the victims of the massacres and to prosecute those responsible for 'crimes against humanity' using newly uncovered archival material. It looks at those who attempted to stop the violence and to prosecute the Ottoman perpetrators of the atrocities. In the process it explores why the Armenian question emerged as one of the most popular humanitarian causes in British society, capturing the imagination of philanthropists, politicians and the press. For liberals, it was seen as the embodiment of the humanitarian ideals espoused by their former leader (and four-time Prime Minister), W.E. Gladstone. For conservatives, as articulated most clearly by Winston Churchill, it proved a test case for British imperial power. In looking at the British response to the events in Anatolia, Michelle Tusan provides a new perspective on the genocide and sheds light on one of the first ever international humanitarian campaigns.

***The Original "Frozen Conflict" and European Security*** - Edited by Svante E. Cornell - Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-137-60004-2 Published by Springer Link



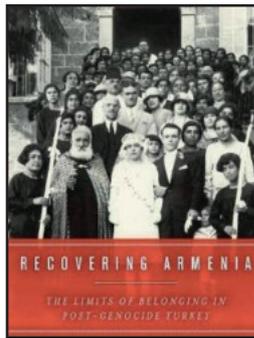
This book frames the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh in the context of European and international security. It is the first book to focus on the politics of the conflict rather than the dispute itself. Since their emergence twenty years ago, this and other "frozen conflicts" of Eurasia have been affected by transformations in European security, and many ways absorbed into an ever-fiercer geopolitical struggle for influence. The wars in Georgia and

Ukraine brought greater attention to some unresolved conflicts, but not to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. As the contributors to this volume argue, the conflict merits much greater European attention, for several reasons: it is on a path of escalation, existing mediation regimes are dysfunctional, and as both Georgia and Ukraine have showed, any outbreak of serious fighting will force the EU to respond. This book thus explains the interlocking interests of Russia, Turkey, Iran, the EU and United States in the conflict, and analyses the negotiation process and the conflict's international legal aspects.

***The Armenian Genocide Legacy*** - Edited by Alexis Demirdjian - 369 pp. Hardback, ISBN13 9781137561626 Published by Palgrave Macmillan UK

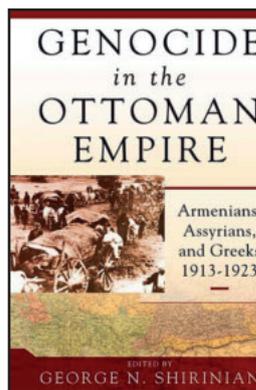
This volume focuses on the impact of the Armenian Genocide on different academic disciplines at the crossroads of the centennial commemorations of the Genocide. Its interdisciplinary nature offers the opportunity to analyse the Genocide from different angles.

***Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*** by Lerna Ekmekcioglu; 222 pp. Paperback, ISBN 978-0-8047-9706-1 Published by Stanford University Press,



Recovering Armenia offers the first in-depth study of the aftermath of the 1915 Armenian Genocide and the Armenians who remained in Turkey. Following World War I, as the victorious Allied powers occupied Ottoman territories, Armenian survivors returned to their hometowns optimistic that they might establish an independent Armenia. But Turkish resistance prevailed, and by 1923 the Allies withdrew, the Turkish Republic was established, and Armenians were left again to reconstruct their communities within a country that still considered them traitors. Lerna Ekmekcioglu investigates how Armenians recovered their identity within these drastically changing political conditions. Reading Armenian texts and images produced in Istanbul from the close of WWI through the early 1930s, Ekmekcioglu gives voice to the community's most prominent public figures, notably Hayganush Mark, a renowned activist, feminist, and editor of the influential journal *Hay Gin*. These public figures articulated an Armenianness sustained through gendered differences, and women came to play a central role preserving traditions, memory, and the mother tongue within the home. But even as women were being celebrated for their traditional roles, a strong feminist movement found opportunity for leadership within the community. Ultimately, the book explores this paradox: how someone could be an Armenian and a feminist in post-genocide Turkey when, through its various laws and regulations, the key path for Armenians to maintain their identity was through traditionally gendered roles.

***Genocide in the Ottoman Empire Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks, 1913-1923*** - Edited by George N. Shirinian; 444pp. Hardback, ISBN 978-1-78533-432-0 Published by Berghahn Books

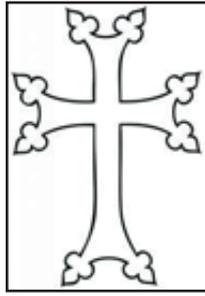


The final years of the Ottoman Empire were catastrophic ones for its non-Turkish, non-Muslim minorities. From 1913 to 1923, its rulers deported, killed, or otherwise persecuted staggering numbers of citizens in an attempt to preserve "Turkey for the Turks," setting a modern precedent for how a regime can commit genocide in pursuit of political ends while largely escaping accountability. While this brutal history is most widely known in the case of the Armenian genocide, few appreciate

the extent to which the Empire's Assyrian and Greek subjects suffered and died under similar policies. This comprehensive volume is the first to broadly examine the genocides of the Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks in comparative fashion, analyzing the similarities and differences among them and giving crucial context to present-day calls for recognition.

George N. Shirinian is Executive Director of the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, a division of the Zoryan Institute. His publications include *Studies in Comparative Genocide and The Asia Minor Catastrophe and the Ottoman Greek Genocide: Essays on Asia Minor, Pontos, and Eastern Thrace, 1913-1923*. ■

## CONDOLENCES



The CAIA extends its deepest condolences to the families and friends of its following members/service users and supporters who sadly passed away since the last issue of this newsletter. They will be sorely missed by everyone who knew and loved them.

- + *Vivienne Minassian,*
- + *Hovhanness Boudakian*
- + *Lala Colton*
- + *Vartouhi Anmahouini*
- + *Hampartsoum Boghossian*

### *Christopher J. Walker (1942 – 2017)*

It is with deep sorrow that we have to report the death of the renowned British historian and author, Christopher J. Walker.

Christopher Walker was educated at the *Lancing and Brasenose Colleges* at the University of Oxford, and among other positions, held positions in the editorial department of *Penguin Books* and the department of historical and literary manuscripts at *Sotheby's*.

An abiding interest in the later Ottoman empire led him to culture a deep interest in Armenians and their history, and after winning a *Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship*, he visited *Van, Kars, Ani, Yerevan* and *Holy Etchmiadzin*, and embarked on the research and the eventual publishing in 1980, of his book "*ARMENIA; Survival of a Nation*" which was received by historians as an authoritative and pioneering work of modern history.

In 1975 with the support of the *Minority Rights Group (MRG)* he co-authored together with Professor David Marshall Lang, the Report entitled "*The Armenians*".

He was the author of numerous publications and articles including "*Life of Oliver Baldwin – A Life of Dissent*", "*Armenia and Karabagh*", "*Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*". ■



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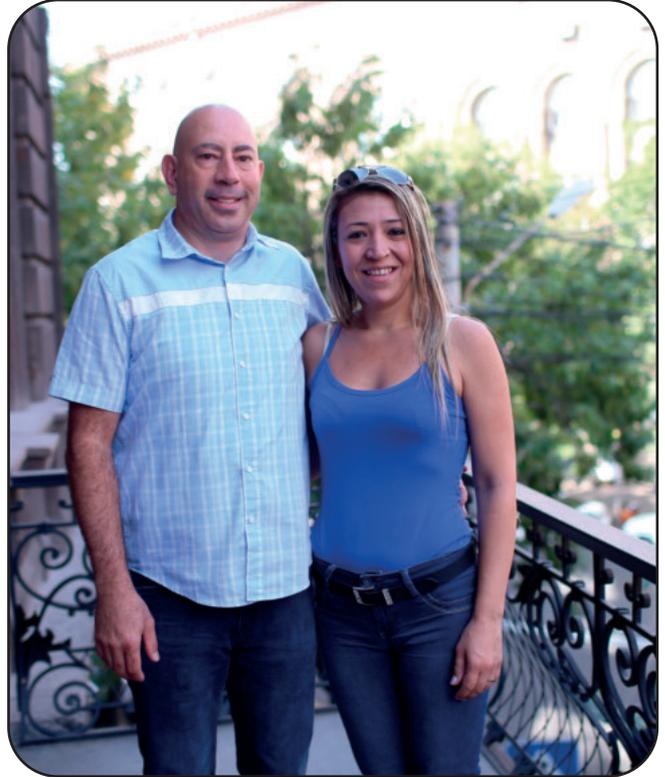
**WHY VOLUNTEER AS A COUPLE? DISCOVER EACH OTHER & ARMENIA TOGETHER**

A winning proposal to his employer helped to make Hratch's dream of visiting Armenia a reality. AVC recently welcomed Hratch and Zara Kelian from Canada.

An Electronics Technologist, Hratch works for a firm that periodically offers employees the opportunity to volunteer abroad for one month. Having never considered volunteering in Armenia, Hratch thought this could be a great way of finally discovering his homeland. He submitted a proposal for four weeks of volunteering in Armenia through AVC - and was one of three lucky winners! As soon as his win was confirmed, his wife Zara also applied to AVC so they could experience Armenia for the first time together.

Both Zara and Hratch are active within the Armenian community in southern Ontario and with the *Armenian Relief Society (ARS)*. In Yerevan, they are also working with one of the ARS programs that supports wounded soldiers in rehabilitation by teaching them English and other skills in order to help them re-integrate into society.

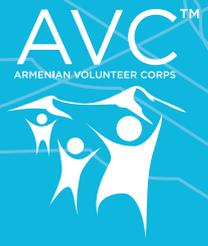
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