

# ARMENIAN VOICE



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CENTRE FOR ARMENIAN INFORMATION AND ADVICE

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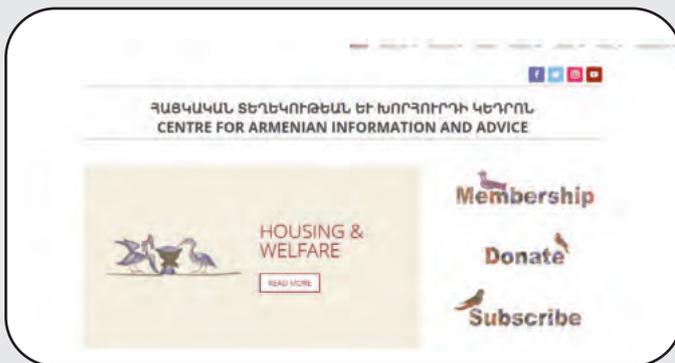
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THE WORK OF CAIA IS SUPPORTED BY VARIOUS CHARITIES & THE LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING - NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED SINCE 1987



The UK Armenians & WWI project accomplished its objectives earlier this year by producing /displaying its exhibition and accompanying film several times in London and Manchester. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to this project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. (Read more inside this newsletter)

## CAIA LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE



The CAIA is pleased to announce that it has launched its new website produced by Tatevik Ayvazyan supported by Diane John which now incorporates information about its diverse services, projects and archives.

While there are some final touches to be made, you can view the website at [www.caia.org.uk](http://www.caia.org.uk) as well find out more about The UK Armenians & WWI project research/archives, where you can watch the film, *Testimonies of War*. ■

## CONDOLENCES

It is with deep sorrow that CAIA announces the passing of two of its most respected and influential veteran members and former trustees John der Parthog and Ovannes Koundarjian. John and Ovannes sadly passed away peacefully within days of each other in May 2018. (Read more inside pages)



CAIA is proud to announce that during May 2018 a series of refurbishments were successfully carried out to improve the experience of people visiting *Hayashen* thanks to support from benefactor Gagik Tsarukyan, The National Lottery Awards for All, and The London Legal Support Trust. There was minimal disruption for the installation of a new kitchen, a new office partition to provide private and confidential advice and library extensions. We are incredibly grateful to all our funders for the generous support for these new and improved facilities. ■



On 18th January 2018, CAIA screened the "Testimonies of War" documentary and accompanying exhibition "UK Armenians & WW1" at Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation - UK Branch's beautiful offices in Shoreditch. It was very exciting to share our research with over 40 invited guests, and hear their feedback and views. The film was followed by a lively Q&A and discussion with the film Director Athena Mandis. A buffet reception took place at the end with the guests viewing the exhibition. Many thanks to those who attended, contributed to the evening and especially *The Gulbenkian Foundation UK* for being wonderful hosts.



On Sunday 4th February, CAIA screened the "Testimonies of War" film and accompanying exhibition at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Manchester. (above) Over 60 people across Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and North England attended the screening which took place following the church service and community meal. The film was introduced by CAIA CEO Misak Ohanian, who also talked about the work of CAIA and answered questions about the project. The CAIA is grateful to the Armenian Church wardens in Manchester for enabling this event to take place.



Ealing is a place of diverse narratives where communities come from all over the world to make their home. They bring with them their distinct cultures and expressions that are unified in a common desire to create a home for themselves and their families. Migration, settlement and home are universal themes for life in the city of London.

The CAIA took part in a collaborative event between local artists, residents and community groups entitled @ Home in Ealing - Shaping Identities through the Arts to celebrate these themes through music, poetry, stories, exhibitions, crafts and film. The CAIA contributed to the event by screening its Heritage Lottery Fund supported film "Testimonies of War" and an exhibition about Armenians refugees/genocide from the early part of the 20th century. The 4-hour long event was held at Dominion Centre & Library, Southall, on 2nd December 2017, with over 100 people attending, including Dr Rupa Huq MP for Ealing Central and Acton. (See photo above standing alongside Rachel Pepper, Director, Artification and CAIA members)



A Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony took place on 27 January 2018 at St. Mary's Church in Acton organised by Ealing Council in collaboration with various local communities.

Armenians were well represented at the commemoration with the participation of CAIA, Gomidas Institute, the AGBU and the Armenian Church. One of the highlights of the whole commemorative event was an exhibition on the Armenian Genocide, alongside other genocides that followed it in the 20th century.

The Armenian Primate of GB and Ireland, Bishop Hovakim Manukyan was a participant in the ceremony itself. One of the sharpest comments made by Mrs Lewis, (a Holocaust survivor) was the fact that the Final Solution was not committed by the riff-raff. The Holocaust was organised and carried out by accountants, doctors, lawyers and other professionals, led by a madman. The rabble and riff-raff who carried out killings were a manifestation of a well organised, criminal act. One could have said the same for the Armenian Genocide.

Other speakers and commentators at the ceremony included The Rev. Pete Broadbet, Bishop of Willesden and acting Bishop of London, Mayor of Ealing Cllr. Simon Woodroffe, leader of Ealing Council Cllr. Julian Bell, and Dr Rupa Huq MP. They all made sensible comments on the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide - and the need to hold such ceremonies so that we do not forget the lessons of the past. All credit to the organisers for a particularly moving and reflective ceremony.

## CAMPAIGN FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROVISION

CAIA took part in a major consultation event on 12th June 2018 which enabled communities to voice their opinions on mental health services and called for equality.



The meeting included an introduction from Andy Gregg, Executive Director of *Race on the Agenda*, short showcase of community led mental health and wellbeing projects, group discussions on the experiences and visions for mental health provision by those present.

The event was the latest initiative by the *Mental Health Equality Campaign*. Members of the campaign group is composed of various *Black, Asian and Minority, Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER)* groups such as CAIA, ILAYS, Council of Somali Organisations, the Tamil Community Centre, Network of Eritrean Women UK, HEAR and Race on the Agenda - ROTA

Feedback from the consultation meeting can be read via following link <https://rota.org.uk/content/submission-mental-health-equality-north-west-london-response-clinical-commissioning-group>



On 15th May 2018, the *Ealing Advice Forum* (serviced and chaired by CAIA) organised a *Health and Safety Essentials* free training for community group, voluntary sector workers and volunteers. (Photo below)

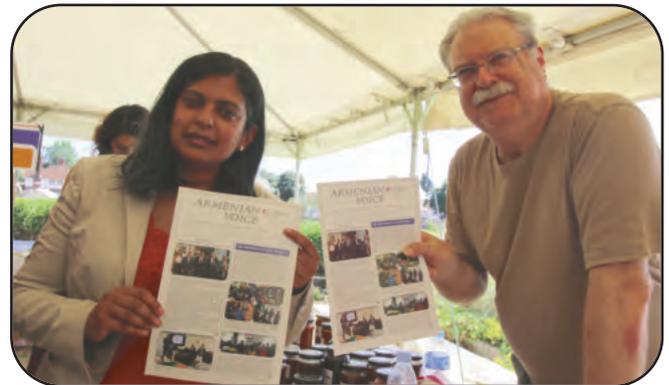
The training was delivered by the *London Hazard Centre* who during the day explained the main UK health and safety laws, who is responsible for health and safety at work? who enforces health and safety, basic risk assessment and sources of information and support. Every taking part received a certificate of attendance.



## ARMENIAN FESTIVAL LONDON

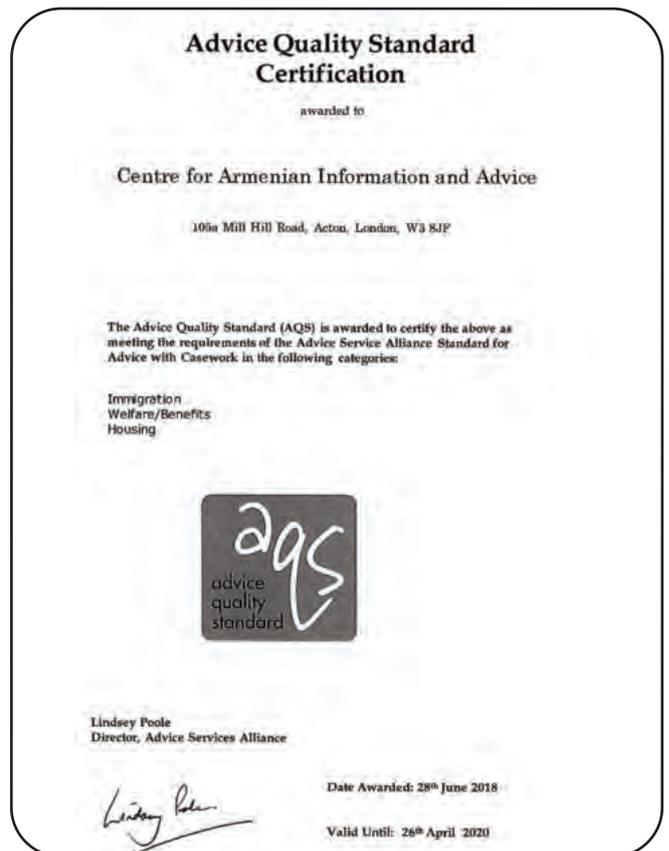


CAIA took part in the *Armenian Festival* held in Ealing for the first time on 15 July 2018. We were honoured to welcome various dignitaries to our stall, including Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Stephen Pound MP for *Ealing North* and Dr. Rupa Huq MP for *Ealing Central and Acton* (and an avid reader of CAIA's Newsletter 'Armenian Voice')



Thank you to everyone who visited our stall during the day as well as our volunteers who assisted at the stall. ■

## CAIA'S INFORMATION & ADVISORY SERVICE SUCCESSFUL IN ADVICE QUALITY STANDARD



# ARMENIAN SENIOR CITIZENS & CARERS



On 15th December 2017, CAIA organised its annual thanksgiving party for Armenian senior citizens, Carers and those connected to them at *Hayashen*. Over 90 people attended including guests the Worshipful Mayor of Ealing Borough, Cllr. Simon Woodroffe, (above) Rupa Huq, MP for *Ealing & Acton*, His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, the Primate of the Diocese of The Armenian Church of GB & Ireland.



As can be seen by the photographs, great time was had by all which included delicious food, singing, poetry recitals and gifts to everyone including the several volunteers who assist with CAIA's weekly Seniors club.



During January and February 2018, CAIA organised a series of six workshops supported by *BME Health Forum* via *Hammersmith & Fulham CCG* to raise awareness about the *NHS CHOICE* website and other health information sources. The issue of possible digital exclusion of older and/or isolated Armenian people and Carers and therefore the need for such a project was identified during home visits and health assessment carried out by Scarlet Sarksan, CAIA's Health & Care Support Worker.

The first two sessions on 9th and 16th January 2018 were used to introduce the *NHS Choice* website and provided one-to-one practical support on how to navigate the website on smart phones and laptops. This enabled participants to understand and gain confidence about how to use the *NHS* website, including how to make/cancel GP appointments online, request repeat prescriptions, and much more.



On 23rd January, the workshop was led by Dr Shahen Tamrazian who spoke about viral infection mainly influenza including the symptoms, mode of transmission, complications of the infection, how the risks of spreading the virus can be minimized, when to seek medical advice, when to use antibiotics as a treatment and the dangers of sharing antibiotics with others.

On 30th January, the focus of the workshop was about physiological ageing and in particular what is generally known as dementia. The symptoms of dementia were covered, including certain treatable conditions that can mimic dementia such as depression, an under-active thyroid gland, or B12 and Folic acid deficiencies.



The 6th February 2018 workshop led by Dr Shahen Tamrazian was about optical hygiene and common eye diseases. The session covered eye infections, cataracts, glaucoma and retinal degenerative problems as well as the importance of regular eye checks. The final workshop on 13th February covered gynaecological problems and the types of cancer that affect the female reproductive organs; also, prostate problems and other diseases specific to men. At the end of each workshop very interesting group discussions took place and the *NHS Choices* website was used to illustrate how more information can be found about a specific health issue.



The CAIA thanks Dr Shahen Tamrazian (*above*) who gave a comprehensive talk on 15th June 2018 at *Hayashen* about hearing and looking after ears. He explained in detail the anatomical connection of the ears and throat and nose. He talked about the necessary hygiene and common diseases of the ears, concentrating on the most common causes of hearing loss in older people. He explained the symptoms of *Meniere's* disease, then talked about the treatment of certain ear problems and when to seek medical advice. He went on to give some detailed information about the hygiene of the nose and throat because problems there can also affect the ears. ■

### MARKING CARER'S WEEK



CAIA took part in a major *Carers Week* Event at the *Dominion Centre, Southall* on 13 June 2018.

The 4 hour long event consisted of information stalls, short presentations and speeches, yoga, music entertainment and free refreshments

The event attended by over 100 Carers and older people was organised by "Support4 Carers Ealing", consortium which consists of *The Asian Health Agency (TAHA)*, *Southall Day Centre*, *ECIL (Centre for Independent Living)* and CAIA. The Consortium is funded by *Ealing Council*. ■

### SEASIDE OUTING TO HASTINGS



Over 50 Armenian senior citizens and carers spend a great day out at the seaside town of *Hastings* on 24th July 2018. The day was spend visiting the beach, the pier, the Armenian owned *NUR* restaurant, eating fish & chips and much more. The trip was organised by CAIA.

## NEAR NEIGHBOURS PROJECT



On 10th February 2018, the CAIA and the *Iranian Association* organised an enjoyable communal multi-cultural supper evening at *Hayashen* attended by 40 people. The supper evening was the culmination of a project supported by *The Near Neighbours programme* which included organising three cookery workshops the week before.

In addition to the food, the evening included a short Quiz competition related to *Valentine's Day* to break the ice and a dance workshop led by acclaimed solo dance artist and choreographer Mrs Shakeh Major-Tchilingirian. The highlights of the project were also filmed for broadcasting by an independent Iranian Satellite TV station based in West London thanks to Mr. Adom Saboonchian.



*The Near Neighbours* is a charity set up to bring people together who are near neighbours in communities that are religiously and ethnically diverse, so that they can get to know each other better, build relationships of trust and collaborate together on initiatives that improve the local community they live in. *Near Neighbours* is administered by the *Church Urban Fund* and is funded by the *Department for Communities and Local Government*.



Young people learning how to cook from Master Chef Mr. Johanes Farhadian at *Hayashen*. ■

## INTRODUCTION TO ARMENIAN HISTORY, CULTURE & IDENTITY

For the 9th consecutive year, thanks to Ealing Council Adult Education Department, CAIA organised its "Introduction to Armenian History, Culture & Identity" series of 6 talks over six Sundays during February-March 2018 at Hayashen.



The series started on 18th February with Dr. Jo Laycock speaking about "Saving Armenia? British Responses to Armenian Refugees during and after the First World War". Dr Laycock is Senior Lecturer in History at Sheffield Hallam University and the author of 'Imagining Armenia: Orientalism, Ambiguity and Intervention' published by Manchester University Press in 2009. To coincide with the lecture the exhibition supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund about UK Armenians & WW1 was displayed. (Dr Laycock above and below)



The next session was on 25th February 2018 with Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian. B.Sc., Ph.D. (below) speaking about "Ethnic Armenian Civil Servants in the Ottoman Government before the Genocide". Dr. Kouyoumjian provided a comprehensive background of these people, their locations, roles and questioned as to what happened to these professionals who had held such diverse and pivotal positions within Ottoman society. Following Q & A, copies of the publication by Dr. Kouyoumjian about the subject was available for purchase in aid of CAIA and other charities.



The Armenians of Ethiopia and an Introduction to the Work of B. A. Sevadjian was the title of the next talk held on 4th March 2018 by author Rubina Sevadjian (photo below) who gave an outline

of the once vibrant Armenia community of Ethiopia, who had a pivotal presence in that country for more than a century, dispersed after the revolution of 1974. The Armenians of Ethiopia were influential in the modernity of the country under Emperor Menelik II which continued to thrive under Emperor Haile Selassie I.

Rubina Sevadjian was raised and educated in Ethiopia before she left for the UK for her further education, staying there after the Derg Revolution of 1974.

She is the author of "In the Shadow of The Sultan" a novel for young adults set during the Hamidian Massacres of 1896, and its sequel titled "The Darker Shadow". She is working on the final part of the trilogy which she hopes to publish in 2019.



Traumatic Art: The Visual Manifestation of Inherited Trauma in Contemporary Diaspora Armenian Art was a lecture by Elizabeth Vartanian Collier held on 11th March 2018 who discussed the visual representation of inherited trauma in the modern and contemporary art of the Armenian diaspora.

Elizabeth (photo below) began by speaking about the status of the 1915 Armenian Genocide, and acknowledging the fact that the lack of recognition is probably why the event continues to be addressed by descendants of survivors more than 100 years later. Before discussing the artwork, she spoke about the moment when Armenians first collectively used the word 'Genocide', in 1965, the same time as the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, when groups that had previously struggled to be heard first began to discover identity politics. She then spoke about the notion of trauma that included Lucian Freud's idea of belatedness and Jacques



Lacan's suggestion of an act of passing on to others. In addition to this she discussed historical trauma: an event that has been recognised as traumatic by specific groups of people, which subsequently becomes part of its collective identity. She also acknowledged similarities to holocaust study and the idea of 'post-memory', where secondhand memories of holocaust survivors are adopted by their children.

The artwork discussed touched on the medium of photography acting as evidence, as well as an educational tool that transforms audiences into witnesses (Ara Oshagan and Levon Parian). Elizabeth also spoke about the inclusion of children in artwork, which shows how orphans were affected (Sophia Gasparian).

She then discussed an Armenian sense of uprootedness (Krikor Momdjian and Jacques Aslanian), pain (Paul Guiragossian), and a sense of a fragmented identity (Tina Bastajian).

To juxtapose looking towards the past, Elizabeth spoke about artists looking forward, in an act of healing. This part of the talk touched on the 2015 Venice Biennale. The artists who exhibited in the Armenian pavilion used their artwork to act as a method of reconciliation (Anna Boghiguiian, Melik Ohanian and Sarkis). I also discussed the seemingly controversial display at the Turkish pavilion (Sarkis), where a publication about the show that mentioned the word Genocide was blocked. The main work was supposed to reflect shared experiences. This exhibition also showed an act of reconciliation from the opposite side. The artist positioned a model of a Venetian girl carrying an antique silver belt from Van between the two pavilions. Unfortunately images of the figure cannot be found and it may have been removed.

To conclude, Elizabeth acknowledged that even the work in Venice was strongly centered on the Genocide and concluded that it is unlikely that this inherited trauma will disappear from Armenian art in the diaspora until the Genocide gains recognition. The talk finished by showing a film by Araz Farra, a young Armenian artist from London, whose work illustrates the identity of an Armenian man from Aleppo.



On 18th March 2018, Tina Walkling spoke about the prehistoric rock art of Armenia at Hayashen.

Tina, together with Anna Khechoyan (Institute of Archaeology & Ethnography, Yerevan), fellow co-director of the Ughtasar Rock Art Project, has been studying the petroglyphs within an extinct volcano in the mountains of southern Armenia since 2009. Tina started her presentation from the memorials of present-day Armenia by looking back in time, tracing how images on stone have been made and used over the centuries. Concluding that Armenia is home to a rich cultural heritage of rock art sites of international importance. Carving images in stone is still as important in Armenia today as it has been for five millennia or more.

Having completed the basic documentation of the site, the Project's team members are now preparing a monograph for publication.

All those present were mesmerised by this presentation which was followed by an interesting and lively Q & A which raised the questions as to how best to manage and conserve rock art sites and what did the various carving themes mean to the people who carved them.



Dr. Kevork Oskanian, a Lecturer at the University of Birmingham's Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLSI) was the final speaker on 25th March 2018.

Dr. Oskanian spoke provided a detailed examination of Russia's relationship to the various subordinate ethnic groups during the past 250 years through the prism of 'orientalism': in its various forms – Czarist, Soviet, Contemporary – Russia has always laid claim to a superior position within 'Eurasia', pursuing different 'civilising missions' in 'its' neighbourhood, in ways echoing those of Western colonialism. The changing position of Armenians (and other ethnic groups and nationalities) in the region was also discussed, as was the consequences for future relations within the former Soviet Union, and between Russia and the West.

There followed an interesting Q & A and networking by all those present over light lunch/refreshments. ■

## FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

- Many thanks for organising Sunday's lecture. Kevork's delivery was really engaging, informative and thought-provoking. I learned a huge amount. Kind regards, Vartouhie

- This has been an important and significant series of lectures organised by CALA. Although geographical distance allowed me to attend only one in the series (Dr Jo Laycock's presentation back in February) nevertheless I do appreciate the contribution CALA makes to the Armenian community and wider diaspora in holding onto (and in my case reclaiming!) our Armenian heritage. Helen

- I would like to thank you for putting on the Armenian History, Culture and Heritage course that just completed on Sunday. I was only able to attend the final three lectures and was very impressed with all of them. The speakers were all experts in their fields and had such valuable information to impart to us. It felt like each lecture brought about another piece of the jigsaw of Armenian identity, and indeed, the support in healing the ongoing journey that intergenerational trauma has generated.

I have been very inspired by each of the presented subjects, and have already been to an associated exhibition, and furthered my reading on some of the subjects introduced. I also appreciate how each speaker explained the past and brought it into the context of the present. It has really helped me.

I am also delighted at the additional benefit of getting to meet other Armenians who attended the course and finding out a bit about their stories and seeing how other Armenians live and thrive in diaspora. At the final session I was seated next to a man who comes from the same place as my grandparents (who I never got to meet). I have never met anyone from Kayseri before, and I know it is silly, but it felt very special moment to do so; he knows the land of my family. Thank you too for providing us all with food! And I particularly appreciate your inclusiveness at ensuring that I had vegan food as an option.

Just a lovely series of talks Misak, and I so wish I could have attended the first three; I have truly missed out there. So I thank you for providing a rich, varied, stimulating, educational, and IMPORTANT course. I very much hope that there will be more courses in the future. Best regards and thank you again. - Vanita ■

# HAYASHEN YOUTH CLUB



25 young people enjoyed *Hayashen Armenian Youth Club (HAYC)* Xmas Party on 8 December 2017 at *Hayashen* by socialising and eating together. Guest speaker was 14- year old ice-skating champion Emily Lucine-Phillips who as accompanied by her father David and mother Lucine Chakmakjian who spoke about her eventful career so far. Emily has won a number of very prestigious national and international accolades, both in solo and doubles ice skating from an early age. The excited youth were inspired by her determination and achievements and asked lot of questions which Emily and her parents kindly replied. At the end of the evening Emily received the "*Jack Petchey Youth Achievement*" Award.



Congratulations to Inga Vardanyan who became the latest winner of the *Jack Petchey Foundation Award* nominated by (HAYC) on 9th February 2018. A popular, kind and academically gifted girl, Inga is particularly interested in history and journalism. During the week of *Holocaust Memorial Day*, she wrote an insightful and moving article about her family's story of surviving the Armenian Genocide in 1915 which was printed in her school magazine. When we heard about it, we invited Inga to talk at HAYC about researching and writing her article, editing and publishing it in her school newsletter. Inga spoke very well at HAYC and was very inspiring to other young people. (See photo of Inga holding her certificate at HAYC). At HAYC on 2 March 2018, there was a short talk and presentation about the *Pahapan Foundation's* work in *Tavvoosh* region of Armenia and about a fundraising puzzle game developed to secure the safety of school children on the borders with Azerbaijan.



'*Science is fun*' was the theme of HAYC session of 16 March 2018 as young people marked Science Week. The hour long inspirational and interactive workshop was delivered by a friendly and engaging presenter from *Science Rocks*. During the workshop the young people were engaged and involved throughout by learning together. At the end of the session, all those present enjoyed a pizza meal together and socialised.



Many thanks to the *British Science Association* for supporting this event.



On 7th March 2018, over 90 children accompanied by supervisors enjoyed the West End musical *ALADDIN* together. For many this was the first time they had experienced a West End show. (See photograph above and below) HAYC is planning a similar theatre trip during February 2019.



# ARMENIAN COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL GROUP



The Annual Christmas Party of the *Armenian Community Pre-School Group* took place on 14th December 2017 at *Hayashen*. (See group photographs above and below)  
 This was the 32nd consecutive year that such a Christmas party was organised with the first one in 1987.  
 The party was a great success thanks to the many parents who brought lots of food to share as well as the generosity of various volunteers who provided goody bags. Father Xmas visited the party as tradition dictates from the *North Pole* to distribute gifts to all the children present. Many thanks to playleader Armine Sargsyan for all her hard work throughout the year and the many dedicated parents who bring their young children to *Hayashen* come rain or shine.  
 The 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. ■

## YOUTH RESIDENTIAL



During the weekend of 16-18 February 2018, CAIA's *Hayashen Armenian Youth Club (HAYC)* organised a residential at *Woodrow High House, near Amersham*. 35 young people undertook various challenging activities, made and strengthened friendships, ate, learned and generally shared an unforgettable and enjoyable time together thanks to the support of the *BBC Children In Need*. ■



## COMMUNITY NEWS



A graduation ceremony was held at Kensington Town Hall of the University of London, Heythrop College on 12th December 2017, during which Revd. Dr. Nerses Nersessian archpriest of the Armenian Holy apostolic Church was awarded a degree of Doctor of Divinity, honoris Causa. See above photograph of Dr Nersessian listening to the citation given by Dr. Anthony O'Mahony from Heythrop College.



On 4th March 2018, Dr. Randall Rhodes, the PratoVost of the American University of Armenia (AUA) spoke at Hayashen. The AUA was co-founded by the University of California, Irvine AGBU, and the Government of Armenia and is affiliated with the University of California since its inception in September 1991. Dr. Rhodes displayed a PowerPoint presentation which included the academic programmes of the AUA, its education approach, profile of students and staff, funders, costs, achievements and plans going forward. Dr. Rhodes spoke three more times while in London. For more information about AUA, please subscribe to their e-newsletter via [communications@aua.am](mailto:communications@aua.am)



The Armenian Symposium was an all day conference held on 10th March 2018 organised by the Armenian Student Society of University College London and co-organised by RepatArmenia, supported by a host of local and international organisations including CALA, the Armenian Institute, One Armenia, AGBU and several others. Over 150 people attended and took part by listening to 10+ speakers and debate the presentations of people such as Rupen Vartanian, Nicholas Tavitian, Sevan Kabakian, Dr. Randall Rhodes and others.

The aim of the Symposium was to increase Armenia's presence in the London, one of the world's financial and cultural capitals, through the creation of a platform that facilitates the exchange of ideas and the promotion of dialogue and collaboration for the development of Armenia.

For more information visit: [www.facebook.com/uclarmenia](http://www.facebook.com/uclarmenia)



VAN 1915 was the title of a lecture by Ara Sarafian, Director of the Gomidias Institute (photo above) held at Hayashen on 15th April 2018 to commemorate the Armenian Genocide. The focus of the talk was about the heroic resistance of the people of Van based on a book written by a witness. For more information contact: [gomidasinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:gomidiasinstitute@gmail.com)



An Ecumenical Service was held at St Mary's Church, Acton, on 23rd April 2018 to commemorate the victims of the Armenian Genocide and Christians being persecuted in the Middle East. The service ended with a traditional Armenian circle dance of life, solidarity and unity outside the church. ■

### ARMENIA'S VERY FIRST ART FAIR



Lizzy Vartanian Collier, a writer and curator from London exhibited an exhibition of photography and video works entitled *Perpetual Movement* during Armenia's very first art fair during 11-14 May 2018. In addition to her exhibition, Lizzy also helped run the Armenia Art Fair blog ([blog.armenia-artfair.com](http://blog.armenia-artfair.com)) and its PR effort, securing pieces in *The Art Newspaper* and *Harper's Bazaar Arabia*.

The Art Fair was a great success, with many visitors both from Armenia as well as from abroad. President Armen Sarkissian was also a visitor photographed alongside Lizzy. (Above) ■

**CHISWICK AUDIOLOGIST TO RETURN TO ARMENIA TO GIVE THE GIFT OF HEARING**



An audiologist from *Hearing Well*, in Chiswick, West London returned to Armenia on his second hearing mission with *Starkey Hearing Technologies*.

Deepak Jagota joined 14 other hearing audiologists from across the UK and Ireland and a six-strong team from the hearing device manufacturer's European headquarters. They travelled 2,400 miles to *Yerevan*, the capital of Armenia, on Friday 25th May 2018.

Deepak's visit was part of the worldwide *Starkey Hearing Foundation* initiative, which has provided over 1.9 million hearing devices in more than 100 countries. Its mission is to give the gift of hearing to those in need, helping them to achieve their potential. High-profile supporters include Richard Branson, Bill Clinton and Elton John.

During Deepak's previous visit in 2017, the mission worked closely with local teams to help improve the hearing health of more than 1,700 Armenians. It followed on from an earlier visit by *Starkey*, when hearing screening tests were carried out and ear impressions taken to identify candidates. In October 2017, Deepak and the hearing mission fitted the hearing instruments, counselled patients and supported them with what is all-important aftercare. Last month's visit will further build upon the work already undertaken.

Deepak (*below*) said: "It was a privilege to go to Armenia for the very first *Starkey* UK mission last year. I will never forget the happy faces, hugs and blessings I received.

"This was my second visit, but there is still so much work to be done. It goes without saying that I was delighted to be able to return to Armenia. I feel so blessed to give what is without a doubt the gift of better hearing to more people who really need it.

"Providing access to hearing care opens up a whole new world of opportunity. It connects individuals to life and helps them accomplish more than they ever thought possible – bridging gaps at school, work and in life for both children and adults with hearing loss. Our aim is to establish an ongoing community-based hearing service in Yerevan."



According the *World Health Organisation*, more than 360 million people have disabling hearing loss, with the greatest number living in developing countries. Unfortunately, less than 3% can afford hearing aids or access to care. ■

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You can also follow our latest activities on *facebook* via <https://www.facebook.com/Hayashen>

*Views expressed in articles and other announcements appearing in "Armenian Voice" are not necessarily that of the CAIA.*

## IN MEMORIAM



Ohannes (also Hovannes, Hovan, John or Onik) Vartan Koundourjian was born in Beirut the first child of Vartan and Araxi, and a younger half-brother to Haroution whom Araxi had from her previous marriage (she was a widow from the Armenian genocide). Vartan and Araxi had met in *Adana* (in modern Turkey), where Vartan had moved his family from Talas, near the town of *Kayseri* in Central Anatolia to flee from the worst excesses of the genocide, before eventually finding safety and settling in Beirut.

Ohannes was soon joined by two younger brothers, Hratch and Hamayag, and attended school in Beirut where he learned English, French and Arabic, along with the Armenian he spoke at home. He also started to develop his lifelong passion for music, singing in the Armenian Church choir. After the end of the Second World War, with little hope of returning to home to Kayseri, and given the potential uncertainty in Lebanon, his family considered emigrating to the United States. As a precursor to this he was sent as a teenager to live with his aunt and uncle in Detroit.

He attended *University in Detroit* studying Engineering, singing in the Armenian church choir, involving himself in the Arabic society, and soon found himself working as a draughtsman at a sheet metal pressing works, designing and drawing the blueprints for the various moulds. Living in Detroit he attended both the many classical concerts the city had to offer but also the jazz bars. Here he started having first-hand experiences of racism, often being stopped by police "for his own safety" and witnessing the persecution of African Americans.

Having decided Detroit and life in the US was not right for him and the rest of the Koundourjian family, he returned to Beirut, attending the American University there. Soon after the Armenian Bishop in Detroit took up a new post in Jerusalem, and knowing of Ohannes's talent, invited him to become a researcher at the seminary. He did this for several years, studying and teaching Armenian Church history, comparative religion and the medieval *Khaz* Armenian musical notation dating from the 8th century, where he translated many works into modern notation for the first time, before deciding to return to Lebanon.

In Beirut he quickly picked up his musical life forming a small roaming choir with his friends that would sing Armenian and other songs in the bars and clubs of Beirut. Finding themselves in great demand they were able to access to some of the best clubs and sound systems, and as a result spent many hours listening to and discuss records together before the clubs would open for the evening.

Ohannes was caught up in the Lebanese crisis of 1958 where Armenians found themselves on various sides of the political and factional lines. In one incident he narrowly escaped with his life thanks to the efforts of his older half-brother; others were less fortunate. This formed

somewhat of a turning point in his life and he became involved in the formation of the Armenian journal *Spurk* in Beirut that aimed to cross Armenian political divides and prevent the type of infighting which had occurred previously. Initially he helped in the production of the journal and later wrote pieces of art and cultural commentary and appreciation. This formed the start of what would later become his career in journalism and publishing, and his involvement - often in the background - in Armenian politics and the recognition of the Armenian genocide by parliaments and states around the world.

Having found Ohannes perhaps not making the most (financially) productive use of his time, a senior figure in the Lebanese Ministry of Public Works, discovering that he had previously trained as an engineer, quickly found Ohannes an unofficial position in the Department. Here he studied the topography of the landscape and designed various trunk roads around Lebanon. Eventually Ohannes left the ministry and started working for the English language Beirut magazine *The Daily Star* where his abilities in English and Arabic proved especially useful.

With the onset of the civil war in 1975 things in Beirut became increasingly difficult, especially for those involved in the press. A chance meeting with Caroline (Rita) Kassardjian after a long friendship led to them discussing marriage. She agreed, and with the Arabic language magazine *Al Hawadess* set to start-up an English language version Event based in London, they were soon married and moved to the city in early 1976. Leaving behind their families and his beloved *Austin Healey Sprite* on the streets of Beirut, they arrived with nothing to their name, and were overwhelmed by the generosity and support of other Armenian emigres. It's not clear at what point of translation his surname became Koundarjian but it may have been here, and for reasons only known to Ohannes he never sought to correct this mistake.

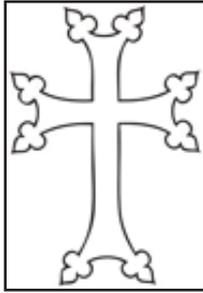
In December of 1976 their first child Arec was born, followed by a second a year later, Hratche. As the troubles in Lebanon escalated the production of *Al Hawadess* fully moved to London, where Ohannes became Production Manager for the magazine. He was involved in everything from proof reading, deciding which adverts could appear with which articles, and checking the prints as they rolled off the press. Here he had his first experience of computers which lead to the purchase of an early version of the *Amstrad PC* in the mid 1980's at which point he ditched his trustee typewriter and never looked back. In his later years he became an avid fan of the internet and *YouTube*, often finding recordings of performances he had attended or seen in the 50's and 60's.

Ohannes continued his involvement with the Armenian community in London in various roles including Choirmaster at *St Sarkis Armenian Church* in Kensington, and later as a trustee and then Chairman of the *Centre for Armenian Information and Advice (CAIA)*. Even into his later years he continued to act as a proof reader and translator between Armenian and English and did his best to serve the community when required. He was also fortunate to find and connect with members of his family in London from more distant branches that were thought lost, including the US and New Zealand. Bringing people back together, undoing the separation caused by the genocide, is something he cared deeply about.

Diagnosed with his illness in September 2017 he took it like most things in his stride accepting it as unfortunate but unavoidable, proving a tower of strength to his family and friends and introducing his family and guests to Epicurean philosophy along the way. His wish was to remain at home surrounded by his family, books and his music, and we are happy that he was able to do so. ■

*Instead of flowers the family asked donations to be made to CAIA, a charity where Ovannes was a trustee, serving as a treasurer and chairman for several years.*

## CONDOLENCES



John der Parthog was a much loved and respected man who made friends with everyone who crossed his path. He was born in Ethiopia in 1927 from a refugee family fleeing Ottoman persecution, and they subsequently moved to Cyprus when John was a boy. After marrying Gwyneth in 1956 he spent the majority of his life in the UK.



John and Gwyneth went on to have a son, Dudley, a daughter, Judith and later a granddaughter, Suzanne. John achieved much in his rich and varied life but he was proudest of co-founding *Sunvil Travel* with his business partner Noel Josephides in 1970.

The company supported several Armenian causes in the UK by donating travel tickets for charity raffle draws, advertising in newsletters, etc.

*Sunvil Travel* were also the first travel agency in the UK which promoted tourism to Armenia, including the fledgling *Armenian Airlines* following Armenia's independence in the early 1990's.

John continued to be involved with *Sunvil* until shortly before his passing on the 19th May 2018, ten days before his 91st Birthday, following a short battle with *Lymphoma*. A special Memorial Service took place at the *St Sarkis Armenian Church*, on the 6th June where John's interesting and inspirational life celebrated. This was followed by refreshments at the *Centre for Armenian Information and Advice (CAIA)*, *Hayashen*.

John was laid to rest the following week in Cyprus alongside his parents and brother.

Instead of flowers the family asked donations to be made to CAIA, a charity very close to John's heart where he was a trustee for five years. For details visit:

<http://caia.org.uk/> <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/johnderparthog>

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS

The CAIA is grateful to everyone for the kind donations of financial support as well as in kind such as books, CD's, DVD's, photographs since the last issue of *Armenian Voice*. Their generosity is highly appreciated and most welcome.

The CAIA is particularly grateful to the families of Ovannes Koundarjian and John der Parthog as well as all those who knew them for their kind donations in lieu of flowers.

The CAIA is also grateful to Mr Sos Grigorian who on the occasion of his birthday asked for donations from friends and relatives instead of gifts to raise £200 for CAIA.

## CONDOLENCES

*Diran Chakelian, 1954 - 2018*



Diran, born in Lebanon, was a much respected human being and active member of London Armenian community for many years. He served as a teacher at *Kevoork Tahtayan Armenian Community Sunday School*, the CAIA as an active member and Trustee and most recently as a trustee of the *Barkev Kassardjian Sis Trust* (a charity that helps Armenians in the UK). The funeral service was held at *St. Sarkis Church* on 18th July, followed by burial at *South Ealing Cemetery* and wake at *Hayashen, CAIA*.

Our heartfelt condolences to his wife Sue, his daughters Anoush and Lorig and to all Diran's family and loved ones on his unexpected passing away.

Instead of flowers the family asked donations to be made to three charities via link below.

<https://diran-chakelian.muchloved.com>

*Azadouhi Ohanian, 1932 - 2018*



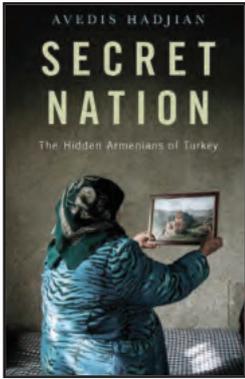
It is with deep sorrow that Mrs Azadouhi Ohanian (Mama) passed away on 24th July 2018 after a long illness. Born in *Nicosia, Cyprus* on 28th May from a refugee family fleeing the Armenian genocide. She was one of four children of the late Apisoghom and Varteni Anmahouni.

Azadouhi was an affectioned, supportive, selfless and hard working person all her life. Be it for her late husband Andranik, her children/grandchildren, extended family dispersed across the world or her community in UK.

She was utterly devoted to CAIA as a member and volunteer from its inception by visiting isolated older Armenians to offer comfort, cooking at the *Hayashen* elders club, at fundraising/cultural events and delivering cooking workshops to share her culinary skills/knowledge to younger people of all background. She was laid to rest at Chiswick new Cemetery on 4th August and will be sorely missed. Instead of flowers the family asked donations to be made to CAIA via <https://azadouhi-ohanian.muchloved.com>

## BOOK REVIEWS

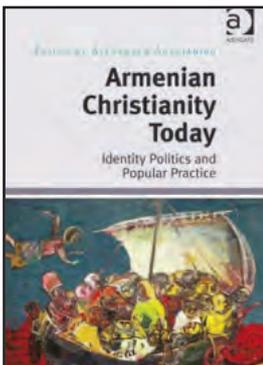
***The Secret Nation: The Hidden Armenians of Turkey*** by Avedis Hadjian; Hardback,  
Published by I.B.Tauris - ISBN 978-1-78831-199-1



It has long been assumed that no Armenian presence remained in eastern Turkey after the 1915 massacres. As a result of what has come to be called the Armenian Genocide, those who survived in Anatolia were assimilated as Muslims, with most losing all traces of their Christian identity. In fact, some did survive and together with their children managed during the last century to conceal their origins. Many of these survivors were orphans, adopted by Turks, only discovering their 'true' identity late into their adult lives.

Outwardly, they are Turks or Kurds and while some are practising Muslims, others continue to uphold Christian and Armenian traditions behind closed doors. In recent years, a growing number of 'secret Armenians' have begun to emerge from the shadows. Spurred by the bold voices of journalists like Hrant Dink, the Armenian newspaper editor murdered in Istanbul in 2007, the pull towards freedom of speech and soul-searching are taking hold across the region. Avedis Hadjian has travelled to the towns and villages once densely populated by Armenians, recording stories of survival and discovery from those who remain in a region that is deemed unsafe for the people who once lived there. This book takes the reader to the heart of these hidden communities for the first time, unearthing their unique heritage and identity. Revealing the lives of a people that have been trapped in a history of denial for more than a century, *Secret Nation* is essential reading for anyone with an interest in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide in the very places where the events occurred.

***Armenian Christianity Today - Identity Politics and Popular Practice*** By Alexander Agadjanian - Ashgate Publishing House - Paperback: 9781138548879 - 286 pages



*Armenian Christianity Today* examines contemporary religious life and the social, political, and cultural functions of religion in the post-Soviet Republic of Armenia and in the Armenian Diaspora worldwide. Scholars from a range of countries and disciplines explore current trends and everyday religiosity, particularly within the *Armenian Apostolic Church (AAC)*, and amongst Armenian Catholics, Protestants and vernacular religions. Themes examined include:

Armenian grass-roots religiosity; the changing forms of regular worship and devotion; various types of congregational life; and the dynamics of social composition of both the clergy and lay believers. Exploring through the lens of Armenia, this book considers wider implications of 'post-secular' trends in the role of global religion.

***Ethnic Armenian Civil Servants in the Ottoman Empire in 1909*** by Hratch Kouyoumdjian - 2016 - 63 pages  
*Armenian Genocide Centenary Commemoration Committee, UK.* ISBN 978-9953-0-3224-5

This book seeks to honour the memory of the many Ethnic Armenian civil servants in the Ottoman Empire from the early part of the 20th century as a testimony that Armenian

were an integral part of Ottoman society and loyally served the government of the day and discharged their duties of public services until the brutal genocide of 1915.

***Nor Arax - Storia del villaggio armeno di Bari***  
by Emilia Ashken De Tommasi - ISBN 9788894831061

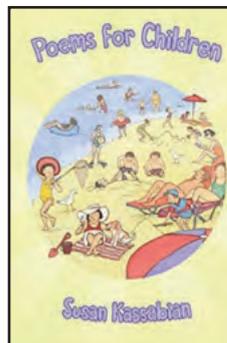


CAIA is very pleased to announce that one of its members and a contributor to our *UK Armenians & WW1* project, Emilia Ashkhen Wyszynski published a book on the fascinating story of the *Nor Arax Community* in the Italian town for *Bari*.

Emilia Ashkhen's book (*in Italian*) retraces the steps of this modern odyssey, and it does so on the basis of documents and archive sources that are published today for the first time. Piraeus, 1924. The sails of the shipping company "Puglia" fly majestically in the seas of the

Greek port. The Captain has a mission to accomplish: to rescue the Armenian refugees who have escaped the genocide of the Young Turks. The crossing is tiring, but everything takes place according to plan. When the profile of the port of Bari appears on the horizon, the nightmare is reality over. The poet *Nazariantz* greets his compatriots in tears and helps them settle down in a small village outside the city that is renamed "Nor Arax", "New Arasse".

***Poems for Children*** - by Susan Kassabian  
Paperback (ISBN: 9781973387107)



We are pleased to announce that CAIA member and a former Trustee of our charity, Susan Kassabian has published a new book of poems for children.

Susan was born in North West London and began writing while bringing up her two children. She has written short stories and a book of humorous poems for children and her first novel is called "*The Mummy of Mulberry Avenue*".

*Poems For Children* appeals to children because it handles a lot of first experiences, for example death of a much-loved pet. Yet it still manages to keep it lighthearted, like the innocence of a child which fitted perfectly. In *My Goldfish* she writes

*I hope she doesn't dig him up,  
I wouldn't like to feel  
I'd gone to all that trouble just  
To give a cat a meal!*

It's not only relatable to children but to adults as well because they have those memories too. They can share with own children as they read along. These poems are all about life as a child and readers can be instantly transported back to their childhood, the excitement of going to a theme park, the morning rush to school, being left out of a party, wanting the same bag as your friend, tasteless school dinners with hidden grey hairs etc.

For more information, follow link  
<https://goo.gl/zqNBY>

## NOTICE BOARD

**INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY:** The CAIA is looking for summer interns and volunteers for its rich reference library, containing a wide range of books, periodicals, maps, posters and diverse multimedia resources.

Roles include cataloguing in Armenian and/or English language, arranging books in shelves, sorting out archives, helping with the enquiries, scanning, etc.

Out of pocket expenses covered, training and references provided. For more details and information, contact: Tatevi 0208 992 4621 or [info@caia.org.uk](mailto:info@caia.org.uk)



### Sessional job opportunity

We are looking for an enthusiastic, organised person for general and kitchen help during the Elders Lunch Club on Fridays.

Contact us for more details about hours, tasks or remuneration.

tel. 0208 992 4621

email: [health@caia.org.uk](mailto:health@caia.org.uk) |

[info@caia.org.uk](mailto:info@caia.org.uk)



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## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL UK ARMENIAN CHARITY

**Membership of CAIA enables you to make a regular annual donation to support the work we do. It also enables you to be involved in the direction of the organisation and appointing our Trustees.**

### Annual Membership Cost

**Individual Membership – £15.00 per annum | Family Membership (couple) – £20:00 per annum**

#### Benefits

- Help fund our services which enable us to support those in need within the community
- Strengthen Armenian networking within the UK
- Ability to express your views and opinions and help shape the future of the organisation at our AGM
- Ability to nominate/vote for Trustees at our AGM
- Subsidised Outings / Theatre Trips/Events

**I wish to become a member of CAIA and enclose the relevant membership subscription for the year:**

<b>Individual Membership</b>	<b>£15</b>	
<b>Family (couple)</b>	<b>£20</b>	
<b>Donation (Specify Amount)</b>	<b>£</b>	

You can make your gift worth 25% more by making a Gift Aid declaration. Please tick the box below and sign if you are a UK Taxpayer.

*giftaid it*

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Address \_\_\_\_\_ Post code \_\_\_\_\_

#### Payment Methods

By Cheque	Payable to 'Centre of Armenian Information and Advice'
Online	Go to <a href="http://bit.do/CAIA">http://bit.do/CAIA</a> and follow the instructions
Bank Transfer	HSBC Bank, A/C No. 71116037, Sort code 40-02-13

Standing Order	To the Manager of _____ (Bank / Building society name) Bank Address	
Please pay the Centre for Armenian Information and Advice £ _____ annually and debit my account		
Account Holder Name/s	Account Number	Branch Sort Code
Home Address		
Date of First Payment	Member / Donor Full Name	Telephone Number/email