

ARMENIAN VOICE



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CENTRE FOR
ARMENIAN INFORMATION
AND ADVICE

NEWSLETTER FOR THE LONDON - ARMENIAN COMMUNITY. AUTUMN 2019 No.72

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INVESTING IN THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY

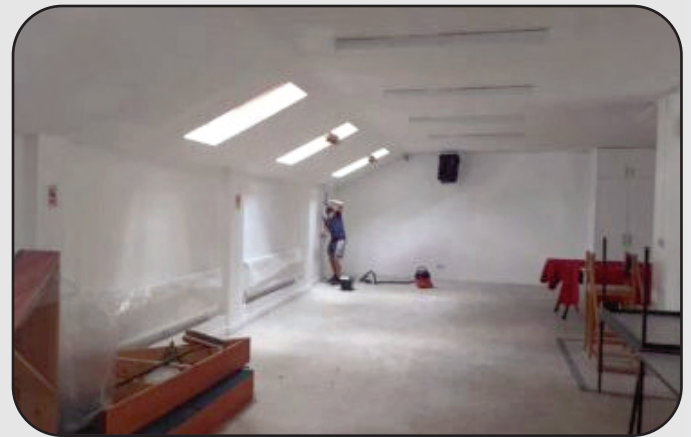


The CAIA is determined to ensure that as an organisation and community that we become more sustainable. With this in mind, every year, or whenever we can afford to we make improvements to the fabric of the *Hayashen* Centre to ensure that we safeguard this major asset for the Armenian community and for those who rely on our services.

We are therefore delighted to announce a series of improvements that have taken place in recent times. Firstly, thanks to the support of the *St.Sarkis Charity Trust* and *Smart Business Grant Scheme* administered by *Ealing Council*, we have installed LED lights throughout *Hayashen*. The difference and transformation is amazing and visitors can now witness this for themselves, and by replacing the old lights, as well as improving the experience of our visitors, staff and volunteers, we have also taken a major step to reduce our carbon footprint and electricity costs.

Secondly, we commissioned the replacement of the deteriorated flat roof of *Hayashen* which has now been covered end-to-end by a special waterproof felt (*before and after photos below*). Thirdly, we repainted the external walls of the building, decorated the interior walls and ceiling of the *Monte Melkonian Hall* in *Hayashen* so the building looks clean and fresh. Finally, we replaced the old vinyl flooring to ensure the highest safety and hygiene standards.

These last three improvements were by and large implemented thanks to the generosity of our members, community and in particular to the late Mrs Lala Colton. We are grateful to you all and are looking forward to the time when you can come and see these improvements for yourselves. ■





EU CITIZENS' RIGHTS & BREXIT EVENT



On 29 October 2018, an informative event was organised in Hayashen by Ealing Advice Forum (chaired and administered by the CAIA), the Law Centres Network, the European Commission and the EU Citizens' Rights Information Service to raise awareness about the rights of European Citizens to continue to live and work in the UK after Brexit.

Over 25 people were present to listen and engage with Mr Hilton von Herbert, (below) an experienced and award-winning immigration lawyer with over twenty years' experience in immigration, asylum and nationality law. Hilton currently works as the Immigration Supervisor in Ealing Law Centre. He was followed by Mrs Rina Lynam from the European Parliament Public Affairs Office in London.



CAIA CEO MISAK OHANIAN AT HEAR PAN-EQUALITY NETWORK

HEAR is a pan-equality network of London Equality and Human Rights voluntary and community sector organisations of which CAIA is a member. On 7th September 2018, HEAR organised a conference entitled "Working for Equality with the GLA and Statutory Sector colleagues: Achievements and the Way Ahead for Influence in Decisions and Policy" at City Hall where HEAR members expressed their views about the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy publication and discussed how equalities groups can more effectively influence decisions and policy. Misak Ohanian, was one of several speakers who talked about how working together can improve access to mental health support for BME Londoners. His speech can be read online via following link: <https://caia.org.uk/caia-ceo-misak-ohanian-at-hear-pan-equality-network>

NRCSE QUALITY AWARD



CAIA is pleased to announce that in May 2019 it successfully gained the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRCSE) Quality Mark award for the high level of its pre- and after school children's services: This quality award included:

- review of its governance and children related policies and procedures to ensure that provision is both safe and effective;
- observational visits of sessions in action by a professional supplementary schools' mentor and a witness report detailing the learning environment, teaching taking place, assessment of the school's planning, including evaluation and community engagement;
- preparation of a portfolio of evidence which was scrutinised by experts in the fields of education and community sector management.

Congratulations to Ms Venetia Abrahamian and Mrs Armine Sargsyan for successfully running CAIA's youth and childrens services and congratulations to everyone who attends and supports our children's services.

LONDON LEGAL WALK 2019



On 17 June 2019, Team CAIA took part in the 10 km London Legal Walk fundraising with hundreds of other lawyers, barristers, charities which culminated in an amazing and enjoyable street party at the end.

Many thanks to all those who walked and sponsored helping raise £1000+ for CAIA's advisory services.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES FOR BEGINNERS AT HAYASHEN



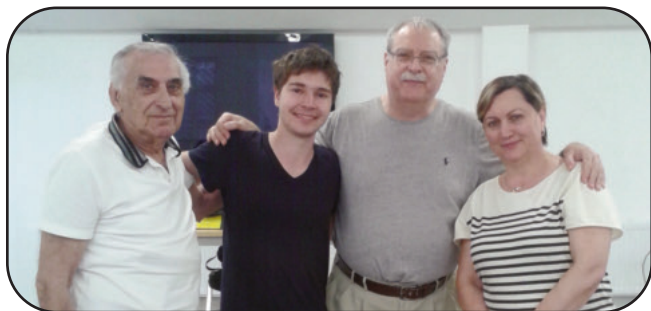
CAIA in partnership with *Global Skills* started to deliver English language classes twice weekly in 2019 at *Hayashen*, thanks to the initiative of CAIA's Advice Worker Arthur Manouk Cahill. Congratulations to the first ten students who gained a *City & Guilds* Functional Skills qualification in English at Entry 1. Ten adult students received their certificate in November 2019. Thanks also to teachers Marina Yesayan and Christina Tragni (right) from *Global Skills*.

HOUNSLOW BEFRIENDING PROJECT



CAIA welcomed Dr Seda Boghossian-Tighe on 19th November 2019, the chairperson of the *British Armenian Health Association (BAHA)* which she helped established 35 years ago. Seda has extensive experience as a GP at *North West Surrey CCG* and has also enabled the *BAHA* to be active in Armenia where they have shared their experience and knowledge with the local health and care system. Seda spoke for an hour about dementia as part of CAIA's Befriending project supported by *Hounslow Council 2018/19*. She said that far too often loneliness leads to depression which in turns impacts mental well-being, including potentially to dementia at some point. She praised CAIA and its activities which bring the community together which helps address loneliness and isolation, specially the older people and their Carers.

THANK YOU TO OUR YOUNG VOLUNTEER



Fond farewell to young Swiss-Armenian Jivan Cheterian during May 2019 (2nd from left) following a month of volunteering at *Hayashen*. Jivan was kind enough to assist CAIA in the *Hayashen* library and with various other administrative tasks for which we are grateful. CAIA welcome volunteers (interns) throughout the year.

QUIZ NIGHT: YEREVAN IS THE GAME



On 24 November 2018, CAIA and the *Armenian Society of King's College London* organised a fun Quiz Night entitled "Yerevan is in the game"!



The evening was organised to mark *Yerevan's* 2800 anniversary which tested the knowledge of the participants who learned quite a deal about the capital city of Armenia. They also enjoyed the food and party at the end. Well done to all the young people who came up with the idea, devised the questions and managed the event. ■

Your Support Matters!

Thanks to your donations, we can provide a range of crucial services

CENTRE FOR ARMENIAN INFORMATION AND ADVICE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BY SUPPORT NETWORK

ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Over the last year we made a difference to people's lives by:

- Providing over 1344 hours of Advice
- Providing over 1000 hours of Health & Care programmes
- Providing transport and activities at our Lunch Club for Elders
- Run 24 sessions of Youth Club and 85 sessions of Playgroup
- Deliver the UK Armenians & WW1 Project and enabling volunteers to acquire new skills
- Organised and hosted over 40 events
- Organised outings for our Elders, Youth & Playgroup and more

ARMENIAN SENIOR CITIZENS

SENIORS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY



CAIA organised a special lunch for Armenian seniors and their Carers on 14th December 2018. This was the 32nd consecutive year that CAIA had organised such an event in respect and appreciation for their dedicated in supporting their families.



100 people were present to enjoy the kebab meal, desserts and gifts. Several also contributed to the entertainment through song, poetry, jokes and storytelling, not least of all, Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Primate of the Armenian Church in UK and Ireland (Photo above).

Many thanks to all our volunteers/staff who helped out with the service, providing lifts, setting and clearing up the premises and the kind donations received from *Katsouris Brothers* for their excellent *Cypressa Products* and catering from *JAKOBS* restaurant.



LEARNING ABOUT FIRE SAFETY



On 30th November 2018, Community Safety Advisers for the *London Fire Brigade* Angelique Rukuba-Raine and Asma Mahmood visited *Hayashen Elders Club*. They gave a fire safety presentation targeted specifically for those aged over 60 living alone and those with limited mobility.

The *Community Safety Advisers* offered to undertake home visits to those targeted to provide bespoke fire safety advice and installation of smoke alarms, where need be. The smoke alarms they provide for free also include models for those with hearing impairment.

As seen in the above photograph everyone in attendance appreciated the presentation very much.

For more information about the scheme please contact: Angelique at - angelique.rukubaraine@london-fire.gov.uk ■

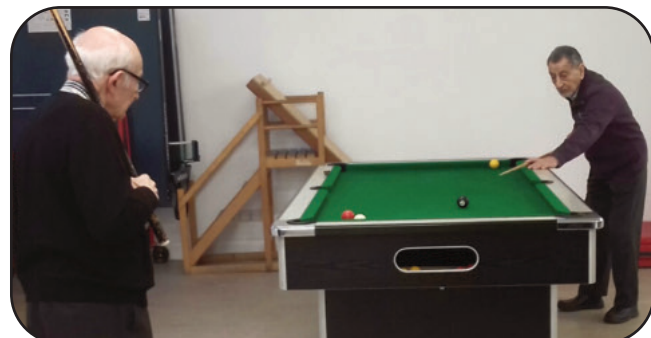
FAMILY OUTING TO BRIGHTON



An enjoyable day long outing took place on 31st July 2019 to Brighton benefiting over 50 young and older adults and Carers



The Armenian seniors club meets on Fridays 12.00-4.00pm at *Hayashen* where in addition to a hot meal those present enjoy various social activities and mild forms of exercise.



NEW EMOTIONAL WELL BEING GROUP & 1-2-1 SUPPORT SESSIONS



In October 2018, thanks to funding from the *People's Health Trust* using money raised through *The Health Lottery London West*, CAIA launched a new two-year Emotional Well-being project.

The aim of the project was to provide a safe, secure and culturally familiar environment for adult Armenians to share their personal experiences and examine the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviour patterns. During weekly group meetings at *Hayashen*, participants gained from the mutual-support of their peers under the supervision of the group facilitator and qualified counselor *Scarlet Sarksan* who promoted healing from emotional pain. Participants also developed their self-awareness and consequently were able to stimulate their own growth in order to promote positive change.

Subjects the groups discussed included learning about *Obsessive Compulsive Behaviour*, the impact on self and people around us, including treatment options, phobias such as *Claustrophobia* and *Agoraphobia*.



One of the most notable events was on 5 February 2019 when the group (above) used the creative technique of drawing to help group members express themselves artistically and examine the psychological and emotional undertones in their art. With the guidance and interpretation of *Dr Shahan Tamrazian*, participants were able to "decode" the nonverbal messages, symbols, and metaphors in their artwork. The activity helped some to gain a better understanding of their feelings and behaviour to enable them to resolve deeper issues.

Another very interesting session led by *Dr Tamrazian* was about *Faith & Self Belief*. (Photo below)



There was also the opportunity to benefit from 1:1 private sessions with *Scarlet*, to learn about various aspects of health such as physical, mental, social and spiritual and practice mindfulness. The project also organised further visits from external professionals to support the program as well as social events in the form of celebrating birthdays (above) and outings such as visiting *Gunnorsbury Park* which included a guided tour of the museum (below).



During the summer, several sessions were also held outdoors in the *Hayashen* courtyard which was wonderful to see with participants making friends, chatting and sharing refreshments and a meal at each session. (Below)



During the October-November 2019 sessions the Group tackled "difficult" subjects such as *Personality Disorder*, *Controlling Parenting* and others. Over 30 people have benefited from the project during the first year. ■

INTRODUCTION TO ARMENIAN HISTORY, CULTURE & HERITAGE 2019

For six Sundays between 17 Feb- 24 March 2019, thanks the support of Ealing Council Adult Education Department, CAIA delivered seven fascinating lectures and presentations about a wide range of topics, from *Shakespeare to Hamshen Armenians*, and a special Armenian dolls exhibition.

100+ people from diverse backgrounds, ages and ethnicities attended the sessions to learn more about Armenian History, Culture and Heritage and to view the Dolls exhibition.



The first session on 17th February 2019 was delivered by Dr Susan Pattie (above) who spoke about the remarkable story of the Armenian volunteers (*gamavors*) in the *French Foreign Legion*. These were men who had escaped the Armenian Genocide themselves, through the good fortune of earlier migration, returned to the battlefield to fight with the Allies, hoping to save their families, fellow Armenians and homelands.

This little-known aspect of WW1 by Susan Pattie has been published as a book entitled, *The Armenian Legionnaires: Sacrifice and Betrayal in World War I*.

More information about the book in this newsletter on p13.



The Armenian diaspora and its relationship with the homeland (20th & 21st centuries) was the title of a talk on 24th February by Dr Razmik Panossian, (above) the Director of the Armenian Communities Department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

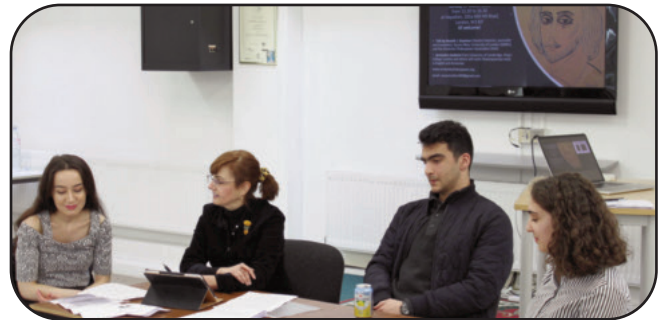


On 3rd March 2019, an illustrated talk took place about medieval Armenian History by Toby Bromige, (above) who



is completing his PhD, entitled, '*Stranger's in a Foreign Land: Armenians assimilation and alienation in the Byzantine Empire, c.867-1100*', at Royal Holloway, University of London.

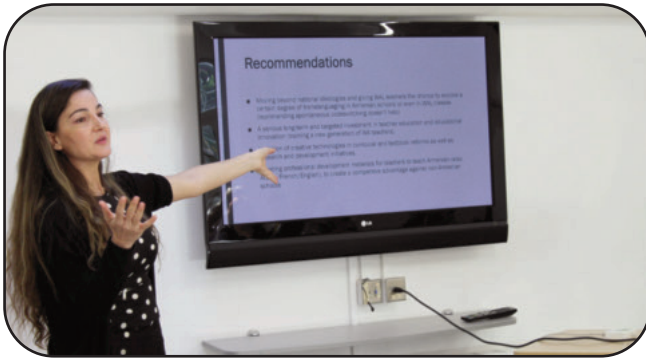
On 10th March 2019, Dr. Maria Koinova (above) reader in International Relations at the University of Warwick spoke about her work on the Armenian diaspora, discussing specifically patterns of Armenian diaspora mobilizations to recognize the Armenian genocide and regarding the evolution of political and social processes associated with Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The session drew on extensive original research conducted among the Armenian diaspora in Europe, part of a large-scale migration project of the European Research Council "*Diasporas and Contested Sovereignty*," conducted at Warwick Uni. (2012-2017).



Hasmik J. Seymour made a presentation '*The Entry of Shakespeare on Armenian Stage and Page*' on 17 March.

Hasmik is a theatre historian, translator, journalist and founder of the Armenian Shakespeare Association (ASA), which originated in 2016 - the year of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 1616. The speaker specified that Armenians started translating Shakespeare almost two centuries ago, however, little is known about Shakespeare's early translations into Armenian. Her talk was accompanied by archival images of Shakespearean texts in Grapar, Western and Eastern Armenian. Quotations from Shakespeare were recited by three university students in English and Armenian, thus engaging the new generation in Armenian cultural studies. Hasmik examined the first professional stage adaptations in Armenian since the 1860s. Two celebrated soliloquies from *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello* - the first Shakespearean plays introduced by the Armenian Theatre Troupe was also read. Further on, the speaker examined the impact of the first stage adaptation of *Hamlet* with its unprecedented critical reception by foreign specialists and eyewitness testimonies. Concluding her years-long investigation results, the speaker noted that Armenians were the originators of theatrical activities in the 19th century under harsh censorship and personal sacrifices across the Ottoman Empire, Persia, Caucasus; furthermore, they were the first to introduce Shakespeare among the nations of the Near East and Caucasus on stage and in print. Hasmik stressed that more needs to be done to raise the awareness amongst international academia about the contributions of Armenian translators and theatre practitioners to the global Shakespeare studies. Hasmik's enlightening presentation was accompanied by some rare archival photographs from the 19th century. (www.armenianshakespeare.org)

On 24th March 2019, Dr Chaghig Filian (*below*) spoke about her research into *Language practices among Lebanese Armenian adolescents*. The session explored how residential location can shape the identification and self-perceptions of Lebanese Armenians and the use of Western Armenian language.



On the same day, Avedis Hadjian, (*below*) a journalist whose writings have appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Bloomberg News*, and many others gave an illustrative talk about his experience of writing his book *Secret Nation: The Hidden Armenians of Turkey*.



To write the book, Avedis 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. Avedis spoke about how he unearthed the unique heritage and identity of those Armenians who survived the genocide in Anatolia either by concealing their true origin or by assimilating as Muslims, losing all traces of their Christian identity. Many of these survivors were orphans, adopted by Turks, only discovering their 'true' identity late into their adulthood. Outwardly, they are Turks or Kurds and while some are practicing Muslims, others continue to uphold Christian/Armenian traditions behind closed doors. ■



Dolls wearing various Armenian national costumes of the 19th-20th centuries were on display at *Hayashen* during two sessions of the Sunday lectures series. The dolls exhibition was the work of Alice Martirosian, who was born in Iran and has been living in London since 1971. Alice believes that in this way, she introduces the young Armenian generation to a variety of Armenian folk art and craft. These traditional costumes were made for the purpose of protecting from everyday activities and weather, and at the same time to show the appreciation of beauty and the skill, for example of working with raw materials, such as silk, wool and cotton. As a result of knit



ting yarn and knitting fabrics, daily clothes were made, while not forgetting dressing women's long hair. Sources for making the doll costumes came from lots of handmade books, periodicals and personal research. ■

The Simra II Project



The *Simra II Project* (funded by the European Commission and in collaboration with Acton-based *Double Helix Resource* organisation) took place over June and July 2019 with three of the key groups who use *Hayashen*, the mother and toddlers, the youth group and the Well-being group. Aimed at women and girls who statistically do not have the same economic and developmental opportunities as men and boys, each group participated in four sessions that particularly explored identity and integration through discussion, art projects, and practical support. Mothers and their children made hand prints side-by-side to present themselves in a way that our ancestors did in caves. Mothers and daughters from the youth group made clay representations of themselves using material that literally came from the earth. The wellbeing group drew pictures which were free expressions of themselves, some dream-like, some sad and evidently linked to genocide. Using much more modern technology identity was explored through taking passport sized photographs and showing the same person but with different expressions and looks to demonstrate how we are not just 'one' presentation of ourselves as a passport photo tells us. With all of the participants having lives that bridge being in more than one country, or rather, living in the UK but regularly returning to Armenia, it became clear to see how there are tensions between economic opportunities that are offered in the UK verses the longing of hearts for Armenia. All indicated that their children were happier and freer during the summer holidays in Armenia; all longed to be with 'those warm-hearted Armenians', and the newer arrivals with very young children missed having support from their extended families who were back home. Using psychologist 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs' it was clear to see how different aspects of life were fulfilled but by different countries and the opportunities they offer. We held a ceremony to women and girls with two of the groups and interestingly on the whole they elected to include the males of their families in some way. This was just the start of a journey of exploration and to the facilitator who has been on her own journey to understand and integrate her Armenian roots, it was very apparent that these women and girls may have their own issues day-to-day, but their kindness, generosity and welcoming natures cannot help but be present in the world. This was a project that included women and girls, but found humanity living and breathing for all humankind.

Written by Vanita Nicolls (*above*) Facilitator & CAIA member) ■

HAYASHEN YOUTH CLUB



On Friday 21st September 2018, HAYC celebrated Armenia's Independence Day and to reflect how it all happened 27 years ago! A try at traditional Armenian *Kochari* dance, music and a birthday cake for the Republic of Armenia highlighted the evening. In addition, the young people thoroughly enjoyed a creative workshop on ornamental Armenian letters, where they chose their initial and decorated it with a mix of watercolours, acrylic paint and felted pens. The group displayed a variety of artistic styles in their creative productions! The workshop proved very popular and will be back with more Armenian ornamental letters, floral patterns and symbols (*Photos above*). On 5th October 2018, HAYC held a fun quiz competition with prizes where youth answered riddles and solved an Armenian word search. While others continued with the creative workshop on ornamental Armenian letters, and floral patterns.



On 9th November 2018, HAYC welcomed Dr Sevag Ouzounian and Events organiser Tamar Kalendarian. (*above*). The young people enjoyed their presentation about the various geographical landmarks, where they had visited. Sevag, who used to attend HAYC regularly when he was a teenager, shared his personal journey in working today as a Psychiatrist.

Tamar also spoke about her background, education and current position as an Events Organiser for a large British private finance company. After Q & A and pizzas supper together all enjoyed another birthday cake. The evening continued with 11-year-old Luke Avakian being awarded the *Jack Petchy Young Achievers* Certificate for his outstanding sporting accomplishments. (*Photos above*)

HAYC organised an interactive sports activity led by Annie Kasparian and Simon from the *Ealing Croquet Club* on 26th November 2018. Young people learnt the correct way to play, as well as enjoyed a competitive game between the *Girls vs Boys*, with the girls winning.



On Friday 7th December HAYC celebrate Christmas with a Christmas disco. The evening began with the usual activities followed by carol singing, dancing, decorating gingerbread figures, with everyone receiving gifts.

On 11th January 2019, HAYC welcomed Sam Sawhney (*below*) from *Sporting Equals* to talk about his Footballing career, as well as starting a Tennis workshop. We continued with the usual activities of pool, Foosball, Table tennis and the creative workshop, finishing off celebrating the 10th birthday of Lourdess Avakian, who brought a delicious cake for everyone to enjoy.



On 25th January 2019, HAYC organised several fun activities focusing on teamwork and communication led by youth worker Venetia Abrahamian. Both teams started off shaky in the beginning when it came to working together, but shortly after had realised the importance of communication in particular circumstances and started to work more as a team rather than individually. for youth.

On 1st March 2019, a fun and interactive learning workshop took place called '*Young Armenian Apprentice*'. Young people were tasked to create delicious personalised smoothies and to market this. Natural fruit ingredients were provided and the excited youth made a wide variety of smoothies with various taste, textures and flavours, all healthy and delicious in their own way. They also designed creative posters which including the brand name, price and ingredients of the smoothies.

The highlight of HAYC on 11 February was talented 13-year old David Alexanian being awarded the *Jack Petchy Young Achievers* certificate for his footballing skills.

National Science Week 2019 was marked on 15th March at HAYC thanks to the support of the "*British Science Association*". Professor Lizzy was hired for an evening of various interactive, learning and fun experiments. The youth made slime, sherbet, and other experiments before finishing with a *Coke Fountain* and *OJ Rockets* as a finale held in the '*Hayashen courtyard for health and safety*'. ■



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR JACK PETCHEY YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS



James Marlow with his certificate at HAYC on 5th July 2019.



David Alexanian with his certificate on 11 February 2019.

YOUNG PEOPLE ENJOY THE LION KING



On 7th March 2019, 50 young people accompanied by 20 parents/volunteers enjoyed "The Lion King", a musical based on the 1994 Walt Disney Animation Studios' animated feature film of the same name with music by Elton John, lyrics by Tim Rice.

The visit was organised by CAIA's Hayashen Armenian after school Youth Club. See photograph of excited youth photographed outside the famous Lyceum Theatre just before seeing the show.

Special thanks to the BBC Children in Need for enabling many of the youth to visit a London Theatre for the first time and enjoy a wonderful evening.

HAYC GO KARTING FUN DAY



On 23 October 2018, 35 young people enjoyed a great day out of Go-Karting at Brentwood Leisure Centre. The day started outside Hayashen 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 drove and competed against each other several times safely and securely over the next five hours stopping time enough to eat through 16 large pizzas, By the end of the afternoon at 4pm, the fastest (and safest) young drivers raced against each other which resulted in Chris Sargsyan (with the cup in above photo) to emerge as winner this year. All the young drivers received certificate souvenirs for their driving skills.

By 6pm all the young people and several volunteer arrived back to Hayashen tired but 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.



ARMENIAN COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL GROUP



CAIA's Armenian Community Pre School operates every Monday and Thursday 10am-12.30pm at *Hayashen* as a Parents & Toddlers Group. The sessions provide opportunities not only for under 5's to learn and play together but also for parents to socialise, celebrate the birthdays of their children together and other joyful milestones like *Atam hatik*. According to Armenian tradition when an infant's first tooth arrives, a celebration takes place known as *Atam hatik*. As part of the ritual, the names of various professions and items symbolizing these are placed in front of a child: a microphone for an entertainer, a stethoscope for a doctor, scissors for a tailor or money for a banker. Whichever object the baby chooses first is thought to be a sign of where the child's professional aptitude lies.

2019 SUMMER PROJECT



In August 2019 a successful summer holidays programme took place with parents and children enjoying several lovely days out which included trips to Acton Fire Station (photos above & below) and to *Gunnersbury Park* which included a guided tour of the museum and picnic at the playground. ■



The Parents & Toddlers Group enjoyed a great Christmas party at *Hayashen* on 10th December 2018. Parents/grandparents baked and enjoyed lovely food to share with each other for several hours. There was also much dancing, singing, happy playing by the children as they ran around. Ft. Christmas visited the proceedings and distributed presents to all the well-behaved children.

NEW BOOK LAUNCH



Ara Sarafian of Gomidas Institute presented a new book, *"Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914"* by Dr. Karayan in Hayashen on 17th October 2018. The book is the most important English-language publication on the demographic profile of Armenians in the late Ottoman Empire, listing lists over 4,000 Armenian inhabited towns and villages, their old and new names, geographical coordinates, and Armenian population. There was huge interest in the event and the hall filled in very quickly. It was really nice to welcome not only the regulars and the Armenian community members, but also Turkish, Kurdish and Syrian visitors who had an interest in this fascinating talk. We also had some distinguished guests from Birmingham – Claire Short (Former Secretary of State for International Development in the Cabinet of then-Prime Minister Tony Blair until her resignation in 2003) and psychologist Dr Alan Kessedjian.

As it is always the case with Ara Sarafian's thought-provoking talks, the Q&A session was longer than the actual lecture, and there are already plans for the next talks, which will concentrate on each region of the Ottoman Empire separately.

From Gomidas Institute Executive Director Ara Sarafian: *"Last night we had our first launch of Dr. Karayan's 'Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914' and it went well. I introduced the book in his own terms. I stressed that he was a pathbreaker and his volume is now an important milepost in Ottoman historiography. I also added that he based his work on a massive range of published sources and went on to comment on his findings with reference to archival materials that he could not consult. This independent assessment was a crucial factor in validating his work. The audience was mixed in its social, academic and ethnic makeup. It was good to see many Turks and Kurds there – because Ottoman Armenian history is part of our broader, common history. I think we should reflect on such gatherings as part of the ongoing reconciliation process that took off 10-15 years ago at a societal level. The Armenian Genocide and its legacy have not been resolved, and there can still be a dignified resolution to it"*.



During November 2018 the London Armenian community welcomed Mr Ara Kocunyan, the editor-in-chief of *"Jamanak"*, which has been published uninterruptedly in Istanbul, Turkey since 1908.

On 2nd November 2018, Mr Kocunyan visited the Bishop's House in Ealing, London, where a reception was held in his honour organised by the Primate of the

Diocese of The Armenian Church of the United Kingdom & Ireland, Bishop Hovakim.

The Bishop greeted the various guests with a brief introductory speech, followed by a talk from Mr Kocunyan, which reflected the history of the *Jamanak* newspaper, the achievements and challenges they have faced all through its publication. Following Q & A, a short documentary was screened prepared by the BBC aired 3 years ago on BBC World News.

To further mark the 110th anniversary of *"Jamanak"* Ara Kocunyan spoke also at Hayashen on 4th November, 2018 attended by over 25 people who asked questions and listened attentively to the explanations he gave about Turkey's Armenian community.



Beast on The Moon is a play by Richard Kalinoski, and its first London production in 20 years was performed during 29 January-23 February 2019, directed by Jelena Budimir at the *Finborough Theatre*. Several post show discussions took place after some of the evening performances including one on Saturday, 2 February about *The Armenian Genocide and Refugees* hosted by Ara Sarafian (Gomidas Institute) and Misak Ohanian (CAIA) ■



The Armenian community of Great Britain participated in the unveiling of a khachkar at *Canterbury Cathedral* on 2 March 2019. The two metre khachkar was crafted in Canterbury from tufa stone especially imported from Armenia and was initiated by master craftsmen Brigadier John Meardon and Vartan Moskofian.

The khachkar was placed in the cathedral's memorial Garden to mark the end of WWI, remember the Armenian Genocide of 1915, and recall the memory of Randall Davidson (Archbishop of Canterbury 1903-1928), who worked tirelessly to save Armenians at that time.

On the day of dedication, a beautiful vespers service was held in the main cathedral, presided by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, with the participation of Bishop Hovakim Manukyan. The ceremony was attended by dignitaries, as well as several hundred Armenians and their friends from across the United Kingdom. The presence of so many people added more colour and dignity to the event. ■



The many people who attended the Armenian Summer Festival with good food, music and dance had a great time. The festival on 19 July 2019 enabled various Armenian organisations and business to express and promote their causes (CAIA stall photo below).

Great to have also both the Akhtamar Dance Group (above) and Vanoush Khanamiryan Dance School from Los Angeles to dance at the festival.

Local politicians and dignities such as Rupa Huq MP and Stephen Pound MP, councillors' Julian Bell and Bassam Mahfouz, as well as Mayor of Ealing, Dr Abdullah Gulaid attended the festival to express their solidarity.



ON 21 NOVEMBER 2018 DERBY CITY COUNCIL RECOGNISE THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

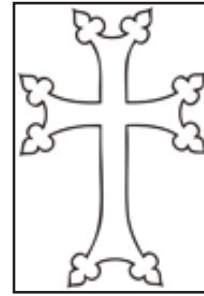
Derby City Council became the first city council in England to recognise the Armenian Genocide thanks largely to the efforts of Mr Russell Pollard who has campaigned for this for years especially during the annual Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) commemoration events.

Mr Pollard, a photographer by trade has visited Armenia and Artsakh 16 times and also runs a website www.Artsakh.org.uk

Following the resolution, Mr Pollard said "Hopefully, in the future, the Armenian world will recognize Derby as a place that did the right thing; a City that held out a hand across the oceans to those people in Armenia, in Artsakh, and throughout the Diaspora...to say, we hear your pain, we see it, we feel it...and we are with you, and stand by you".

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

CONDOLENCES



The CAIA extends its deepest condolences to the families and friends of following CAIA members and community activists who sadly passed away since the last issue of this newsletter. Everyone who knew and loved them will sorely miss them. If we have omitted anyone from the list below please forgive us.

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of the two Pilikian brothers, Hovhannes & Khatchatur within months of each other. Both were extraordinary talented and creative individuals as well as passionate activists in various spheres for decades. Please view the online links below dedicated to their memories and achievements.

+ Hovhanness I. Pilikian 1942-2018

https://keghart.org/a-human-dynamo-passes-away/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-human-dynamo-passes-away

+ Khatchatur I. Pilikian 1939- 2019

<https://khatchik-pilikian.muchloved.com/>

+ Berjouhi Costanian 1920-2019

Until recently Berjouhi was a regular visitor to CAIA's weekly Seniors Club. CAIA is grateful to the family of Berjouhi Costanian who kindly decided that donations be made in lieu of flowers in her memory.

+ Arek Barseghian 1945-2019

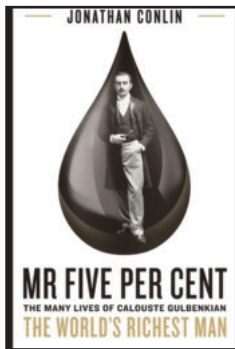
All who knew Arek were shocked to hear about her sudden death. She was a regular visitor to CAIA's weekly Seniors Club and many other functions. Arek will be fondly remembered for her smile and friendly personality by all those who knew her.

EDWARD GABRIEL GEORGE KURKDJIAN 11 JUNE 1936 – 19 MAY 2019

Edward was born in London to Armenian parents (his father was studying at the LSE at the time of the genocide and having no living relations was allowed to remain in the UK, his mother born in Istanbul spent her childhood in Manchester, France and then London). During the Second World War they were bombed out of their home in Acton round the corner from Hayashen. The family subsequently moved to Ealing where he grew up as part of a very small Armenian community with its base being St Sarkis Church and Hay Doon. Edward adopted the English way of life, developing a passion for sport along with a great sense of humour and fun which he kept through the course of his life, despite the many challenges that lay ahead. On completion of his National Service he started a career in accounting but left very soon to join his father in the oriental carpet trade and remained in this business all his life. Being highly regarded by his peers he became a Trustee for many years of two Charities (The Benlian Trust and The Essefian Trust) for the benefit of Armenian students and organisations in the UK and overseas. He married in 1964 and despite working extremely hard all his life always had time for his family. He leaves his wife, children, grandchildren, extended family, friends and work colleagues with nothing but special memories. RIP to a true Armenian English gentleman. (Written by a friend)

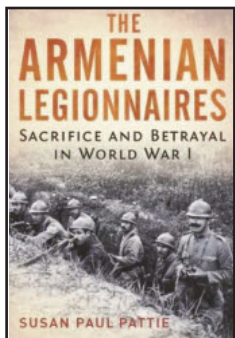
BOOK REVIEWS

Mr Five Per Cent: The many lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the world's richest man by Dr Jonathan Conlin; 416 pp. Hardback, ISBN 1788160428, Published by Profile Books



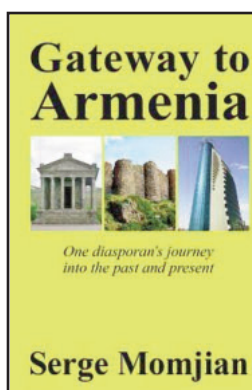
When Calouste Gulbenkian died in 1955 at the age of 86, he was the richest man in the world, known as 'Mr Five Per Cent' for his personal share of Middle East oil. The son of a wealthy Armenian merchant in Istanbul, for half a century he brokered top-level oil deals, concealing his mysterious web of business interests and contacts within a labyrinth of Asian and European cartels, and convincing governments and oil barons alike of his impartiality as an 'honest broker'. Today his name is known principally through the *Gulbenkian Foundation* in Lisbon, to which his spectacular art collection and most of his vast wealth were bequeathed. Gulbenkian's private life was as labyrinthine as his business dealings. He insisted on the highest 'moral values', yet ruthlessly used his wife's charm as a hostess to further his career, and demanded complete obedience from his family, whom he monitored obsessively. As a young man he lived a champagne lifestyle, escorting actresses and showgirls, and in later life - on doctor's orders - he slept with a succession of discreetly provided young women. Meanwhile he built up a superb art collection which included Rembrandts and other treasures sold to him by Stalin from the *Hermitage Museum*. Published to mark the 150th anniversary of his birth, *Mr Five Per Cent* reveals Gulbenkian's complex and many-sided existence. Written with full access to the *Gulbenkian Foundation's* archives, this is the fascinating story of the man who more than anyone else helped shape the modern oil industry.

The Armenian Legionnaires: Sacrifice and Betrayal in World War I by Dr Susan Pattie; 304 pp. Hardback, ISBN 13 9781788311250, Published by I.B. Tauris



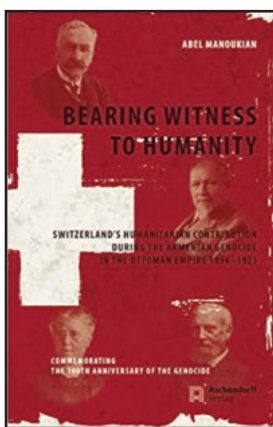
Following the devastation resulting from what has come to be known as the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey in 1915, the survivors of the massacres were dispersed across the Middle East, N. America and Western Europe. Not content with watching World War I silently from the sidelines, a large number of Armenian volunteers joined the French Foreign Legion. They were trained in Cyprus and fought extensively in Palestine and *Cilicia* alongside General Allenby, eventually playing a crucial role in defeating German and Ottoman forces in Palestine at the *Battle of Arara* in September 1918. The *Armenian Legionnaires* signed up on the understanding that they would be fighting in Syria and Turkey, and, should the Allies be successful, they would be part of an occupying army in their old homelands, laying the foundation for an independent Armenia. Susan Pattie describes the motivations and dreams of the *Armenian Legionnaires* and their ultimate betrayal as the French and the British shifted their priorities, leaving their ancestral homelands to the emerging Republic of Turkey. Complete with eyewitness accounts, letters and photographs, this book provides an insight into relations between the *Great Powers* through the lens of a small, powerless people caught in a war that was not their own, but which had already destroyed their known world.

Gateway to Armenia - One diasporan's journey into the past and present by Serge Momjian 168 pp. Paperback, ISBN 978-1-9995963-0-9, Published by Heddon Publishing.



Haig Bedrossian, an American-Armenian journalist, has lived outside his ethnic community virtually all his life. It is not until he is in his thirties that he realizes his true self lacks Armenian identity, for which he feels a sudden twinge of guilt. Shortly after a slow integration into his community and gaining a general understanding of Armenian history from the internet, he finds himself caught between two worlds, two different realities, and two conflicting sets of values: mainstream American and ethnic Armenian. His first assignment is to visit the independent Armenia, where the private guided tours of historic sites and the discovery of the country's art treasures significantly increase Haig's knowledge of its rich culture, and engage him in a riveting conversation with his local guide about Armenia's turbulent past, its challenging present and the evolving, complex relationship between homeland and diaspora.

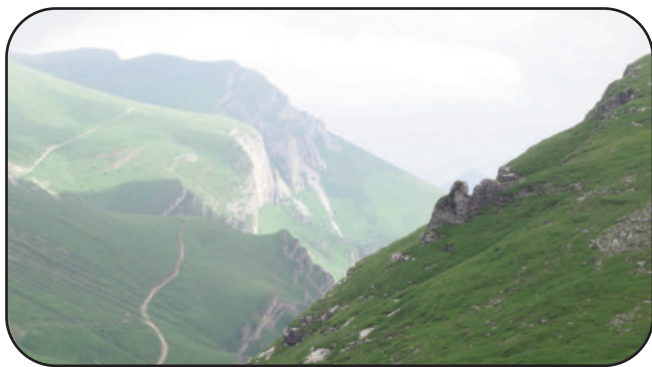
Bearing Witness to Humanity: Switzerland's Humanitarian Contribution During the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire 1894-1923 by Abel Manoukian, 605 pp., ISBN 3402133148, published by Aschendorff Verlag, 2018.



This book seeks to pay tribute to the Swiss people's unprecedented solidarity with the Armenians in their most trying times. After providing a comprehensive overview of Armenian history and the events leading to the massacres and genocide perpetrated against the Armenians, the author explains how it came to be that the Swiss people took a stand alongside their Armenian brothers and sisters in the Christian faith.

A stark contrast emerges between the merciless policy of annihilation implemented by the *Ottoman Empire* and the shining examples of selflessness provided by aid workers from Switzerland, who - as doctors, nurses and educators - gave the Armenian people formidable assistance in the most adverse of circumstances. Two examples, among many, should be mentioned - Sister Beatrice Rohner (1876-1947), from *Basel*, who suffered a mental breakdown following all the horror she experienced as a teacher and director of an orphanage, and Jakob Kunzler (1871-1949), from *Walzenhausen*. Having been acquainted with Kunzler, Carl Lutz found him to be a great inspiration for his own heroic efforts saving Jews in Budapest in 1944. The Author of this book endows his Swiss 'witnesses for humanity' with a lively voice, without any loss of scholarliness, as is demonstrated by copious footnotes and references. His extremely wide-ranging research integrates previously unseen material from Swiss archives for the first time and forms the basis of this comprehensive work, which constitutes a significant enrichment of the subject.

CONNECTING IN DILIJAN NATIONAL PARK



Having always lived in big cities, I make a point of spending my holidays walking in nature away from noise and air pollution as well as from crowded urban environments. This year, I chose the Armenian highlands in the South Caucasus as my multi day trekking destination. This wasn't entirely coincidental as I am a diaspora Armenian with ancestors who have lived in mountainous villages of Eastern Turkey. Therefore, mountains and their communities feel in many ways like home to me. In early June, my eldest son and I set off with a group of hikers for a guided fundraising 4-day trek in the *Dilijan National Park* of Armenia organised by the *Transcaucasian Trail* NGO.

Although I have previously been to Armenia, I never before explored it in such a rewarding way. As I began to discover the wonders of *Dilijan National Park's* ecosystem, I was breath taken by lush forested areas opening on carpets of meadow flowers inhabited by countless buzzing bees. Following the gentle mountain slopes, we made our way to soothing highland lakes and stared in awe at the proudly standing rock formations cut by magnificent waterfalls. Beyond the beautifully pristine environment, we met many welcoming farmers and villagers, eager to share a drink or a shelter or enjoy a chat about life, food and landscapes.



It was during one of these encounters, in the remote village of *Khachardzan*, surrounded by lush and forested highlands, that the mayor showed us the newly built school, educating about 60 children from 6 to 16 years old, entirely funded by an Argentinian Armenian. In a context where villagers live mostly on subsistence farming with little access to basic commodities, minimal governmental help and no job prospects, this school represents a step towards sustainable development, hope for a better future and a strong sense of community. However, this village is far from representing a common social model in Armenia. After 27 years of successive corrupted governments, a mass economic migration combined with an extremely low birth rate, the country is struggling to provide decent welfare to a population which values family religiously. *Khachardzan* was literally a breath of fresh air with their constructive use of private donations for the benefit of all their community. Over a delicious home-grown meal,

I find out that the village school had no library books! I came to realise that just as the wildflower meadows of the *Tavush* mountains provide food and shelter to large bee populations, story books could provide food for thought to the young minds of this village.

I returned home, my head full of mesmerising landscapes, wildlife experiences and a strong sense of harmony with nature transmitted through discussions with villagers of all ages. While local communities live through many hardships, they are eager to share their food and homes. Almost like a genetic attribute, Armenians consider guests like a gift of God and care for them to a great extent. Inspired by their lifestyle, I decided to fulfil the mayor's wish for books for his village school. With the invaluable help of my hiking guide, Ashot, I started planning the book donation as a tribute to these newly forged connections.

Back in *Yerevan* in September, I wandered around the busy and well-stocked bookshops of the capital on a mission to select Eastern Armenian extra-curricular books that would



fulfil an interest or simply tickle the imagination. Thanks to the bookshop assistants' careful help, I gathered about 60 books from translated modern novels to Armenian historical stories and from informative and illustrated books to classical tales. In addition, the amazing team at *Hike Armenia's* one-stop hiking information centre in *Yerevan*, introduced me to Laurie, an American-Armenian librarian specialist who has dedicated herself to implementing the *Little Free Library* concept of raising literacy levels by sharing books freely through wooden boxes dotted around cities and towns. With her inspiring experience, Laurie was extremely helpful in getting the details of the book donation right.

Finally, the day came to deliver the books to the village school of *Khachardzan*. In September, the forested area of *Tavush* enjoys the warm autumnal sun colouring the landscape in shades of yellow and orange. It's in this hospitable environment that I returned to the village, to be welcomed by the whole school including teachers, headmaster, mayor, parents and children. I felt very privileged to help this community because schools in remote villages don't have access to community libraries. And unfortunately, the Armenian internet hasn't yet developed children e-books in Eastern Armenian. I strongly believe that fulfilling the wish the mayor presented me with a few months before, was worth my time and efforts. And this was confirmed, when I saw the illuminated faces of the children when presented with the books. Only then, did I understand that reading would enable these children to discover the world, experience, understand and debate ideas as well as create imaginative worlds.

Just like I connected with these pristine highlands and its guardians, the children reading those school library books will make their own connections through their beautiful language. Finally, whether you are a hiker with a cause or one looking for an authentic experience, I can wholeheartedly recommend Armenia. Whatever your ability and whether you are a family, a group or a solo traveller, you are in for a treat in the welcoming nature of *Dilijan National Park* and beyond!

Taline Muriel Clark. - January 2019

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By becoming a member of the Centre for Armenian Information and Advice (CAIA) you help support Armenian's in the UK and make a real difference to the lives of many. The CAIA is a registered charity in the UK No. 1088534. We:

- Provide independent confidential Advisory services on a wide range of issues
- Provide transportation and luncheon clubs for our elders
- Run regular youth clubs
- Run playgroups for preschool children and their parents
- Promote Armenian History, Culture and Events
- Provide Health Advocacy and Outreach services
- Maintain a comprehensive community library.
- Provide Volunteering/work experience/work placement opportunities & training where required.

Benefits of joining include:

Regular **ebulletins** and information about events happening in our community.

- Armenian Voice Newsletter/E Bulletins
- An Invitation to our Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Reduced rates for CAIA activities/outings/workshops and priority booking.
- Along with your Family membership your children will have membership to our Youth Club.

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