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ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION  AUG. 2016

A NEW OPENING?

Restarting the peace process as Nagorno-Karabakh rebuilds

THE PROMISE

YOUR EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK AT SURVIVAL PICTURES' UPCOMING FILM 'THE PROMISE' P.18





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Editorial

Four months after the worst outbreak of fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh in more than two decades, the fragile cease-fire is being observed again, the majority of the displaced families in the villages near the border have returned to their homes and the international headlines have all but disappeared. The aftermath, however, will not be so easily forgotten, as once again this historic piece of the Armenian homeland is tasked with rebuilding a more secure and peaceful future.

More than one hundred Armenians were killed in four days of fighting that began after Azeri battle tanks, military helicopters, and heavy artillery bombarded the borders of the Armenian-populated territory. Were it not for the outstanding bravery of both conscripted and volunteer soldiers who valiantly defended the borders, the outcome would have certainly been far worse. We salute their extraordinary courage and heroism and offer our heartfelt gratitude. We also join the growing calls to put an end to the immoral sale to Azerbaijan of advanced rocket systems, drones and heavy artillery from Russia, Israel and Turkey that have fueled militarization of the conflict and casualties.

In this issue of the *AGBU News Magazine*, we return to the villages directly affected by the conflict with first hand accounts from the families who barely managed to escape alive. We examine the failings of the current mediation process in an exclusive interview with NKR Prime Minister Arayik Harutyunyan, and we bring you the moving images of life in a war-zone from award-winning photojournalist Nazik Armenakyan.

In the months that followed April's clashes, the Armenian capital once again generated international headlines after a

group of 30 armed men stormed a police station in July, holding officers and ambulance medics hostage to demand the release of their jailed leader. The tense two-week standoff was marred by further violence as several thousand protesters rallied in support of the militants to voice an underlying current of discontent with the government over a perceived lack of political, economic and judicial reform, clashing with police amidst a heavy-handed crackdown in which not only protesters,

but dozens of journalists were beaten and arrested. Armenia's problems will not be solved by violence. We deplore the death of two policemen and the injuries of others. However, we join the voices of those who expect governmental reform to secure opportunities for a fair socio-economic life for all citizens, the establishment of law and order applicable equally to all, and the fight against corruption and monopolies.

During the summer Armenia also hosted the historic and inspirational visit by Pope Francis, featured in this edition along with an exclusive AGBU look at the upcoming film *The Promise*. A production of Survival Pictures, founded by the late billionaire Kirk Kerkorian, the film depicts the story of a love triangle set against the Armenian

Genocide in the last days of the Ottoman Empire.

Our focus, however, continues to be the provision of aid and humanitarian assistance to our brothers and sisters in Nagorno-Karabakh, many of whom are struggling to rebuild their lives after suffering the consequences of war for a second time. The Armenian diaspora has a responsibility to help alleviate their burden, and I encourage our global AGBU membership to continue to give generously to our aid campaign for Nagorno-Karabakh. ❏



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Setrakian', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Berge Setrakian
President



03 Editorial

06 Features

06 Facing an Uncertain Future

Climate of fear remains as Nagorno-Karabakh grapples with fallout of war *By Gayane Mkrtchyan*

10 Interview Newsmaker: Arayik Harutyunyan

AGBU's exclusive interview with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh

13 Declaration of Dissent

Armenians demonstrate against the government in another summer of protest *By Daniel Halton*

14 In Pictures: Coping with Conflict

Carrying on in the aftermath of April's four-day war
Photographs by Nazik Armenakyan

18 The Promise

AGBU's exclusive first look at one of the year's most anticipated films conceived and funded by the late Kirk Kerkorian
By Daniel Halton

22 Spiritual Alliance

His Holiness Pope Francis visits Armenia *By Daniel Halton*

26 Education

26 Education in the Midst of War

Students continue their studies in the face of hostilities
By Jennifer Manoukian

30 Beyond the Classroom

AGBU Children's Centers students shine brightly
By Armen Terjimanian

34 Classrooms, Computers, and Now TV

AVC tunes in to the needs of the tech-savvy

37 Redefining the Armenian Experience

Over 18,000 readers turn a new page with e-books

40 AGBU Donors

41 Rose Tashjian: *Legacy of Kindness and Compassion*

42 Moses and Meada Ouzounian: *Oriental Rugs of Hope*

43 Flora Mirzaian: *Toasting to Health, Success and Happiness*

44 Barbara Apisson: *Learning and Laughing at Camp Nubar*

48 AGBU News

48 Highlights

58 Young Professionals

63 Chapters

72 Bookstore





Update

Following publication of the Winter issue of the *AGBU News Magazine*, we received several letters from concerned readers inquiring about the young man who lost his leg featured in our cover story on the Armenian community in Aleppo, Syria. AGBU Aleppo is helping fit Manuel Tanigian with a prosthetic leg and reports that he is doing well. The Armenian community of Aleppo continues to grapple with the lasting impact of the war, including the recent shelling of an Armenian Hospital in late May and missile attacks in early June that resulted in several casualties.

AGBU News Magazine

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Facing an Uncertain Future

Climate of fear remains as Nagorno-Karabakh grapples with fallout of war

By **GAYANE MKRTCHYAN**

A precarious calm has settled over Nagorno-Karabakh, many of its war-weary citizens once again rebuilding their homes and picking up the pieces of their shattered lives after the deadliest fighting in decades erupted in early April. The short-lived media attention on this remote land in the South Caucasus has long since moved on, but the tragedy is far from over. In the once thriving and bucolic village of Talish, where more than 500 farmers, laborers, and young families worked the land and tended to their livestock, a desolate ghost town now stands in its place. Its exposed and partially destroyed buildings are populated only by Armenian soldiers and volunteer fighters guarding against further incursions from the Azeri military, now positioned just half a mile away, making it still too dangerous for the village's displaced residents to return.

And so it is every day, 59-year-old Angin Sargsyan boards a bus from the Hotel Yerevan in Stepanakert for the 18-mile trip to Talish to feed the surviving cattle and chicken in the remnants of the family farm. "I feel sadness in my heart when I look at my home," she says, "which now has been damaged more than during the previous war. We had just started to live a good life, and now we have to start everything all over again."

April's 'Four-Day War'—the largest mili-

tary offensive since the first war in the early 1990s—claimed the lives of more than 100 Armenian soldiers, including a handful of civilians, and resulted in the loss of some three square miles of land along the heavily militarized line of contact between the unrecognized Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan. It was a stark reminder to the rest of the world that the long-standing and largely forgotten conflict in the South Caucasus remains a volatile powder keg where, after nearly a quarter century, peace remains elusive.

For one of the world's most intractable conflicts, Nagorno-Karabakh has attracted remarkably little international attention. The territorial dispute is rooted in the former Soviet empire, when Stalin's arbitrarily redrawn borders left the historically Armenian land within neighboring Azerbaijan's territory. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the conflict exploded into a full-scale war that claimed the lives of 30,000 people and left Nagorno-Karabakh under Armenian control. In 1994, an international ceasefire brokered by Russia, the United States and France under the auspices of the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE), effectively froze the conflict for the following two decades. In the absence of any significant global pressure since, the

Saro Simonyan, a disabled veteran of the first Karabakh war, lost his son, Nver, in the April fighting.







international community has had little incentive to dedicate itself to resolving the feud between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Attacks by Azerbaijani snipers, however, have steadily been increasing over the past five years, as an emboldened, oil-rich Azerbaijan continues to spend billions of dollars on military expenditures that continue to fuel the conflict. The sniper fire has now been supplanted by sophisticated multiple-launch missile systems, tanks, heavy artillery and attack drones acquired from Russia, Israel and Turkey.

In light of the recent pattern of military escalation along the line of contact, indeed it should have come as no surprise when during the late night hours between the first and second of April, Azerbaijani troops launched coordinated attacks on the northern and southern fronts, targeting not only Armenian military positions but also civilian areas.

Déjà Vu

Over the course of the next four long days, Nagorno-Karabakh once again endured the run-for-your-life horror of war. As Armenian forces lost control of some high ground,

several villages and towns were left exposed to Azerbaijani fire. Not since the first war had the local population witnessed destruction on such a scale. Household utensils, toys and books were left scattered in the yards of bombed homes. Ceilings lay on kitchen tables, beds and floors, all of it covered in tiny shards of shattered glass windows. On the frontlines of the fierce fighting, more than one hundred Armenian soldiers lay dead.

Like a bad memory from the first war, residents of the village of Talish were forced to flee their homes. Safura Iskandaryan, a 52-year-old mother of four, remembers how the downpour of enemy shells and rockets lit up the April dawn. Seconds later, she says, the local houses were reduced to ruins.

“You cannot imagine how fast we got in our car, grabbing as many people as we could,” she recalls. “We already knew that the Azeris were in the village. It was like watching a movie. Children were crying and adults were screaming: ‘Edo jan, save us, drive forward, they are shooting. Cars were rushing out of the village. Everyone was trying to save their families.’”

The ten-member Sargsyan family was also lucky to escape alive. Among them, the eldest

is 104-year-old Hayk Sargsyan, the youngest six-month-old Hakob. The others are still haunted by flashbacks from April.

“We woke up at night from the sounds of explosions. At first, we thought it was an earthquake. After several shell explosions we called the head of the village, who urged us to hide in the basement. After several hours we came out of there,” says 27-year-old Hasmik Sargsyan. “My mother wanted us to get out together but I objected saying that it would be better to leave the basement one by one, as at least in that case some of us would survive if another shell hit us. The village was heavily bombed. It was like New Year’s fireworks, but with debris that could kill us at any time.”

Months later, a climate of fear and uncertainty still reigns. Despite the cease-fire, sniper fire continues sporadically. In July one serviceman from the Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army was killed and four others wounded in separate incidents throughout the month. Azerbaijani forces furthermore attempted to infiltrate Nagorno-Karabakh in the east on two occasions, but were spotted and repelled by the Defense Army. Sos Petrosyan, a 43-year-old Talish resident who took his sons and wife to his mother-in-law’s house



The ten-member Sargsyan family was among many who took refuge in Stepanakert hotels.

in Armenia, worries about the future of his home, which is now more exposed to enemy fire than before the April offensive. “The fate of the village is uncertain,” he says sadly. “It will be bad if it turns out that April 2 was the last day in the history of a centuries-old village.” Still he remains hopeful. Talish can be restored if security can be established at the border. “Money will come, and there will be people who will want to help rebuild,” he adds.

In the neighboring villages and towns of Martakert, Martuni and Mataghis near the line of contact, residents are rebuilding with a renewed focus on security. New roads with embankments are being constructed to protect against enemy fire. Families forced to abandon their homes during April have since returned to their daily routines cultivating gardens and tending to cattle. Despite the risk of renewed fighting, Martakert resident Yura Baghryan, his three children and six grandchildren are not willing to even consider moving to a safer region. “We were born here and raised here. Our life is here,” he says. “And we are standing on our land like an oak.”

Opening or Renewed Conflict?

Any resumption of hostilities would potentially be even more deadly. As a recent analysis by the International Crisis Group noted, “there is a serious risk that long-range ground-to-ground missiles would be used and casualties, particularly civilian, would be much higher in the effort to gain a decisive ground advantage. In the wake of the April fighting, the public in Armenia and Azerbaijan are more ready for military solutions than at any time in 25 years.”

ry and French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault resulted in an agreement to reduce cease-fire violations along the line of contact. In follow-up talks in St. Petersburg on June 20, the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders expressed a mutual desire to resolve the conflict and echoed calls for more international observers along the line of contact to monitor the existing cease-fire agreement.

Despite the tentative diplomatic steps to date, the fundamental issues underlying the conflict have yet to be addressed. And while

“Despite the tentative diplomatic steps to date, and the fact that cease-fire violations have declined, the fundamental issues underlying the conflict have yet to be addressed. The potential for another outbreak remains...”

Such a scenario would more than likely draw in Russia and Turkey—already at odds in Syria—in a wider conflict. Russia considers itself a key mediator and guarantor of security in the region, but despite being strategically aligned with Armenia, has sown division by continuing to sell arms and pursuing closer ties to Azerbaijan. For its part, Turkey has repeatedly proclaimed itself a staunch ally of Azerbaijan in pursuing closer military, political and economic cooperation.

Within that context of an increased military threat and the risk of a wider fallout if fighting resumes, observers expressed cautious optimism that the aftermath of April’s offensive might lead to an opportunity to pave the way for negotiations toward an eventual comprehensive settlement. A meeting between Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and his Azerbaijani counterpart, Ilham Aliyev in Vienna, Austria on May 16, mediated by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State John Ker-

cease-fire violations may have declined, they continue to take a deadly toll. Since April there have been several small-scale skirmishes, including most recently during the morning of July 23, when Armenian serviceman Arsen Arakelyan was killed by Azerbaijani fire along the line of contact. The potential for another outbreak remains, particularly if Azerbaijan grows impatient with the slow pace of discussions. Breaking the impasse will require a much stronger international effort to pressure both sides to accept confidence and security building measures (CBSMs), including the proposed OSCE mechanism to investigate and establish responsibility for cease-fire violations. Before both sides can entertain any discussion of concessions potentially involving territory or interim status recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh, the government and people of Nagorno-Karabakh must first be engaged as full partners in any negotiation process in order to move forward. Until the peace talks can succeed in bridging the strategic divide over disputed territory, peace in the region cannot be guaranteed to last. ■

Talish village head, Vilen Petroysan.







Arayik Harutyunyan

*AGBU's exclusive interview with
the Prime Minister of the
Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh*

Q How are the people of Nagorno-Karabakh coping with the aftermath of April's four-day war, and what has changed in their daily lives?

A People have largely re-established their daily routine, and with time it will be possible to repair the physical damage to their country and restore their economy. Tragically, however, the same cannot be said for the soldiers and civilians who were killed in the fighting.

Sadly, the reality of war is familiar to our people who have lived through the first war in the 1990s during which they survived with remarkable dignity. Today again we share the pain of our compatriots and will try to help them overcome what they endured in this latest military aggression. These difficult and challenging times have also motivated us to be more consistent in meeting those challenges and achieving our goals. With a stronger commitment, we are now making every effort to strengthen the country's defenses and to stimulate its economic development.

Q How many people have been displaced, and when might they return?

A During the fighting, the frontier settlements were evacuated and the majority of the people were displaced. Today I can report that with the exception of the village of Talish the inhabitants of all the other settlements have returned. As you know, Talish is quite near the border and the events of April demonstrated that it is too dangerous for its residents to return at this stage. For that reason, we took the decision to temporarily settle the resi-

dents of Talish in more secure areas of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Q In terms of the government's strategic priorities, what has changed?

A The principal objective of the government of Nagorno-Karabakh has always been to increase the quality of life of its citizens through economic development. We are continuously working toward developing the institutions necessary to ensure our state-building aims and security. Taking into consideration the new situation, we are focusing our attention on strengthening the security system to reduce the risks to our people as well as to promote sustainable development.

Q Do you believe it is possible to resolve this protracted conflict through negotiations and diplomacy?

A Historically almost every conflict between nations and peoples has been solved through diplomacy. The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh is no exception. However, the current format for negotiations unfortunately cannot lead to any serious progress. I cannot be optimistic as long as the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh is not a full partner in the negotiation process, and as long as the Azerbaijani authorities continue to engage in unprovoked acts of military aggression. We would only be deceiving ourselves to expect a diplomatic solution under these conditions.

Q If Azerbaijan agrees to negotiations and Nagorno-Karabakh is accorded equal status as a negotiating partner, what concessions are you willing to consider?

A As I have made clear in the past, we will only reveal our position and specific

*Prime Minister Arayik Harutyunyan in his office
in Stepanakert, Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh.*

options if the Azerbaijani authorities demonstrate a willingness to negotiate. Until then it is premature to discuss any hypothetical situations. I can only say that our homeland and the right to self-determination and security for its people are not negotiable. The government of Nagorno-Karabakh is always ready to discuss any reasonable offers and we have never avoided direct negotiations on the

community. Both the governments of Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, as well as various influential organizations within the diaspora, have made it clear on numerous occasions that the supply of arms to Azerbaijan should not be allowed under international law. Azerbaijan has never hidden its anti-Armenian behavior and its military ambitions against the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh.

It is only thanks to the Defense Army of

nation of ceasefire violations. In addition, it should have established direct relations with the government of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Q The Armenian diaspora has pledged its support to the population of Nagorno Karabakh. What specifically can it do to help?

A First of all, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all our compatriots in the Armenian diaspora for supporting Artsakh both materially and morally since the April attacks. I can assure everyone that their support provided an additional source of strength for the civilians and soldiers defending the border. The diaspora's unanimous response helped deter the enemy.

Since the first war more than two decades ago, the role of the Armenian diaspora has been significant in restoring and developing our economy and infrastructure. In this sense, we hope the diaspora will increase its investment, charitable donations, and other projects

I would like to appeal to all your readers to visit as often as possible, and consider returning to their historic homeland. I am always so proud to see the organized activities undertaken by Armenian communities in the diaspora, particularly ensuring that their children speak Armenian. Our unity and strength is based on a close relationship with the homeland. The Armenian homeland is mighty and its sons and daughters are awaited in Nagorno-Karabakh. **A**

“I am always so proud to see the organized activities undertaken by Armenian communities in the diaspora, particularly ensuring that their children speak Armenian. Our unity and strength is based on a close relationship with the homeland.”

basis of equality. So far, however, no offer has been made.

Q To what extent do you feel the continued sales of advanced weaponry to Azerbaijan from Turkey, Russia and Israel have fueled the conflict?

A The unprecedented stockpiling of weapons by Azerbaijan has clearly escalated the conflict, and has been met with an attitude of apathy on the part of the international com-

Nagorno-Karabakh that relative peace has been maintained in the region and further aggressive actions by Azerbaijan have been prevented.

Q Over the past twenty years could the international community have done more to try to help resolve this conflict?

A I believe that there was much that could have been accomplished outside of the mediation process, which would have maintained the peace and helped lead to a resolution of the conflict. In particular, the international community could have been more consistent in addressing the issue of armaments and more forceful in its condem-

Across the lines of battle, care packages from Armenia reached Nagorno-Karabakh fighters, including sweets and letters from schoolchildren.





Declaration of Dissent

Armenians demonstrate against the government in another summer of protest

For the fourth consecutive summer, the streets of the Armenian capital swelled with social unrest as thousands of Yerevan residents voiced their discontent over the country's political leadership. Unlike the public outcry in previous years over the increased cost of public transportation, pension reform and electricity rate hikes, the nature of this summer's protest was dramatically different. The stakes were higher, the demands more desperate and the response more heavy-handed. When it was all over, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan conceded that mistakes had been made and acknowledged the need to expedite democratic reforms. He emphasized that Armenia's problems "will not be solved through violence or arms."

The catalyst for the July demonstrations was the deadly storming of a police station in the Erebuni district of Yerevan by an armed militant group calling for the overthrow of the government. One police officer was killed and several others wounded in the initial assault, sparking a tense stand-off as the gunmen demanded the release of their jailed leader in exchange for the police officers and ambulance medics they were holding hostage inside the police compound.

Calling themselves the Daredevils of Sas-

soun, the militants included a number of veterans of the 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabakh war. They are viewed as national heroes by their supporters who want the government to take a harder line in the protracted conflict with Azerbaijan. The group is also linked to the radical opposition movement Founding Parliament whose leader, Zhirayr Sefilian, was arrested in June on weapons charges and suspicion of plotting a coup.

On July 23 the gunmen released the last of the hostages but remained barricaded inside the police compound. Within days, they had become a rallying point for wider public dissatisfaction with the government as several thousand people joined nightly protests to support the militant group. Underlying the public sense of frustration with the government was speculation that Russia is pressuring Yerevan to trade land for peace in Nagorno-Karabakh.

On July 29, as the nightly protests expanded, riot police strung large coils of barbed wire across Baghramyan Avenue, blocking people from approaching the main government building and the presidential residence. With increasingly excessive force, police clashed with protesters as they dispersed the crowds. Dozens of peaceful protesters and journalists covering the

On the 14th day of the occupation of Patrol-Guard Service Regiment of Erebuni district by 'Sasna Tsrer' group, protesting people marched to Baghramyan Avenue in Yerevan, Armenia, but the police prevented them.

demonstrations were wounded including some who were left with severe injuries. Lragir.am news cameraman Marut Vanyan told *Human Rights Watch* that despite showing police his press badge, a group of unidentified men dragged him behind the police line and beat him with wooden clubs in the arms, back and legs. "That night felt like a deliberate attack on journalists," he recounted.

Facing increasing pressure from tactical police units, the gunmen laid down their weapons the next day and surrendered to law enforcement authorities, vowing to continue their struggle as political prisoners. Armenia's Special Investigative Service launched an inquiry into police actions on the night of July 29. During a meeting on August 1 to address the situation, President Sargsyan apologized to the journalists and pledged "the disastrous tendency to solve problems through violence must be eradicated."

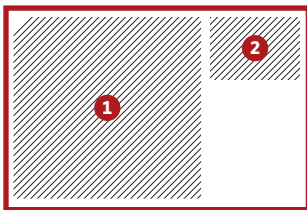
The groundswell of support for the radical opposition movement revealed the extent of distrust, disenfranchisement and dissatisfaction by many Armenians who perceive that despite progress the country's wealth and political power are still concentrated in the hands of a few. As Armenia continues to strengthen the pillars of its democracy, this summer's protests are a stark reminder of the long and challenging road that lies ahead. **A**

Coping with Conflict

*Carrying on in the aftermath
of April's four-day war*

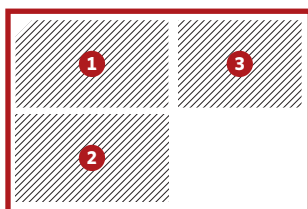
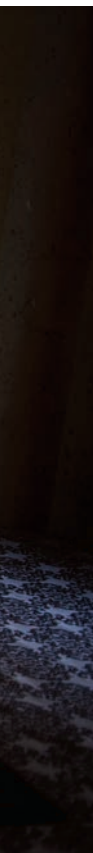
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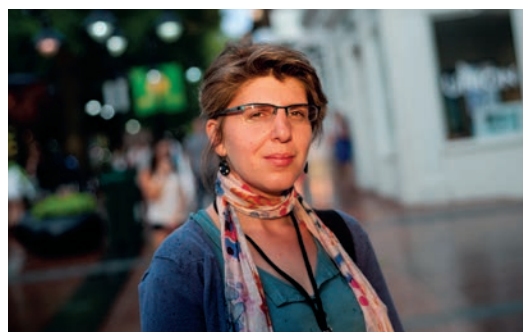


1. A soldier watches from a vantage point in the village of Taghaser in the Hadrut province of Karabakh. **2.** Remnants of village life have been replaced with the tools of war in villages such as Talish in Karabakh.





1. In Taghaser, Alina Simonyan mourns the loss of her brother Nver, a casualty of the April 2-5 fighting. **2.** The Sahakyan family in Talish, like many, fled their home before it was heavily damaged by shelling. **3.** Gharib Marutyan, a 65-year-old historian and 1992-1994 Karabakh war veteran, has brought his accordion—which survived the previous war—to entertain sons of his former comrades.



Nazik Armenakyan began her career as a photojournalist in 2002, working for the Armenpress News Agency, Yerevan magazine, Forum magazine, Reuters and ArmeniaNow.com. In 2009 she won the Grand Prix award and first place in the “People and Faces” category at the Karl Bulla International Photo Contest in Russia for ‘Survivors’—a series of portraits of survivors of the 1915 Armenian Genocide.

In 2011 Armenakyan was awarded a Magnum Foundation Human Rights & Photography Fellowship to study at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, and received a Documentary Photography Production grant from the Open Society Foundations for her second ongoing project documenting the LGBT community in Armenia.

Armenakyan is one of the founders of the 4 Plus Documentary Photography Center, which aims to empower Armenian women through documentary photography.

The Promise

AGBU's exclusive first look at one of the year's most anticipated films conceived and funded by the late Kirk Kerkorian

The process of filmmaking is inherently challenging, but the pressure to produce a great movie can be even higher when that film is funded by a passionate individual rather than a major studio. In the case of Survival Pictures' forthcoming film *The Promise*, it appears the producers have already met those high expectations, with some entertainment blogs predicting the movie will be among those on next year's Oscar shortlist.

Scheduled for initial release in theaters in December 2016, *The Promise* is the story of a love triangle between a brilliant male student, a beautiful young woman and a renowned American journalist, set against the backdrop of the Armenian Genocide in the last days of the Ottoman Empire—a subject rarely depicted in a major motion picture. Directed by Academy Award Winner Terry George (*Hotel Rwanda*), the film's stellar international cast includes Academy Award Winner Christian Bale (*The Fighter*), Golden Globe Nominee Oscar Isaac (*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*), Charlotte Le Bon, Angela Sarafyan, Shohreh Aghdashloo, Jean Reno and Marwan Kenzari.

The Genocide-themed film is the culmination of a decades-long dream of late philanthropist Kirk Kerkorian, who founded Survival Pictures to produce the film. The independent production company's co-manager Eric Esrailian produced the film with Mike Medavoy, Ralph Winter and William Horberg. “We really aspired to a return of the great cinematic films of the past, and wanted to do justice to that vision,” says Esrailian.

In an exclusive interview with AGBU, Esrailian adds that “it has been an honor and a privilege, working on behalf of Mr. Kerkorian, who championed this project

Behind-the-scenes with producer Eric Esrailian with director Terry George.







and first allowed us to make a major film with the Genocide as the backdrop. The film also acts as a conduit for key components of the Armenian culture to be transmitted to the world through this artistic medium.”

He admits trying to maintain the high caliber of Kerkorian’s vision while adhering to a strict production schedule was challenging, but he is sure his late friend and mentor would be thrilled with the result. “Kirk would feel a tremendous sense of pride. He knew the film was coming together with such a talented cast and a wonderful script and that brought joy to him. He truly wanted something to be done at the highest level.”

The strength of that commitment helped convince renowned Hollywood producer

Mike Medavoy to sign on to co-producing the film. “It was obvious to me that the subject had been waiting to be made for a long time. I’ve known the story about the Armenian Genocide, and its deniers, and knew it would make a great movie. The passion and determination that both Kirk and Eric had to make sure that it got told was certainly one of the main reasons for my involvement, and can you have a more dramatic true story?”

For Esrailian, interacting with the creative minds and heavyweight talents both in front of the camera and behind it, and with so many people within the Armenian community has been “incredibly rewarding.” He points out, though, that as much as Kerkorian strived to push forward with

a positive story the entire Armenian diaspora could be proud of, he also insisted on making a film that would entertain and move the broader world community. “The same historical patterns of displacement and deportation that defined the Armenian experience in the early 20th century are repeating themselves today throughout various cultures. And *The Promise* explores those universal themes of peace, love and perseverance that appeal to everyone.”

You can follow news about the forthcoming film on Survival Pictures’ Facebook page and on Twitter @esrailian and @survivalpics. **A**

Scenes from The Promise, starring Oscar Isaac, Christian Bale and Charlotte Le Bon.





Spiritual Alliance

His Holiness Pope Francis visits Armenia

By **DANIEL HALTON**

In a closely watched and symbolic visit to Armenia, Pope Francis has once again affirmed his vocal support for the Armenian cause. At each stop, the Holy Father inspired crowds of people, poignantly addressing the theme of memory; that it should never be a source of shame, but a

powerful motivation and vehicle for transformation toward a brighter and more peaceful future.

The three-day visit in late June was the result of a personal invitation from His Holiness Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church and Catholicos of All Armenians, and

President Serzh Sargsyan. The papal visit garnered widespread international media coverage that focused on the Pope's political message delivered within hours of his arrival on Armenian soil. From the Presidential Palace in Yerevan, Pope Francis urged the world to never forget or minimize the Armenian Genocide, ad-libbing



the word “genocide” that was conspicuously absent from his prepared text. “Sadly that tragedy, that genocide, was the first of the deplorable series of catastrophes of the past century,” he declared, “made possible by the twisted racial, ideological, or religious aims that darken the minds of the tormentors, even to the point of planning the annihilation of entire peoples.”

The words were met with a standing ovation from the audience of Armenian political and religious leaders, as well as members of the diplomatic corps. “One cannot but believe in the triumph of justice when in 100 years...the message of justice is being conveyed to mankind from the heart of the Catholic world,” President Serzh Sargsyan remarked afterwards.

The Pope’s symbolic visit, one year and a month after his historic Centenary commemoration address in St. Peter’s Basilica in

which he first publicly referred to the slaughter of more than 1.5 million Armenians as a genocide, is a testament to the Vatican’s close ties to the Armenian Apostolic Church and cemented the Pope’s alliance with the Armenian people, dating back to the bond he developed with the diaspora community in his native Argentina.

During the tour Pope Francis paid his respects at Armenia’s Tzitzernakaberd Genocide Memorial Complex where he greeted descendants of Genocide survivors including descendants of the 400 Armenian orphans taken in by Popes Benedict XV and Pius XI at the papal summer residence south of Rome in the 1920s.

“Here I pray with sorrow in my heart, so that a tragedy like this never again occurs, so that humanity will never forget and will know how to defeat evil with good,” Pope Francis wrote in the memorial’s guest book.

Pope Francis and Catholics of All Armenians Karekin II leave at the end of a mass at Vardants Square in Gyumri.

“May God protect the memory of the Armenian people. Memory should never be watered-down or forgotten. Memory is the source of peace and the future.”

The Pope then boarded a plane to Gyumri where in front of several thousand people in Vartanants Square, he celebrated his only public Catholic Mass of the visit. “Peoples, like individuals, have a memory,” he told the crowd from the altar. “Your own people’s memory is ancient and precious.”

In the evening Pope Francis delivered a Prayer for Peace in Yerevan’s Republic Square in front of a huge crowd of 50,000, according to estimates from the Vatican. With His Holiness Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church, at his side, Pope

Francis once again returned to the theme of memory. “Memory, infused with love, becomes capable of setting out on new and unexpected paths, where designs of hatred become projects of reconciliation, where hope arises for a better future for everyone,” he said.

Wrapping up the visit by traveling to the ancient Khor Virap monastery near the country’s closed border with Turkey, Pope Francis released white doves in the air as a symbolic gesture of peace between the two countries. He renewed his call for both countries to embark on a path of reconciliation, and also urged a peaceful resolution to the conflict with neighboring Azerbaijan. “May peace also spring forth in Nagorno-Karabakh.”

Below is the complete text of Pope Francis’s speech delivered on Friday, June 24 in Yerevan.

Pope Francis’s Speech

Mr. President, Honorable Authorities, Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Dear Brothers and Sisters

It gives me great joy to be here, to set foot on the soil of this beloved land of Armenia, to visit a people of ancient and rich

traditions, a people that has given courageous testimony to its faith and suffered greatly, yet has shown itself capable of constantly being reborn.

“Our turquoise sky, our clear waters, the flood of light, the summer sun and the proud winter borealis...our age-old stones...our ancient etched books which have become a prayer” (Elise Ciarenz, *Ode to Armenia*). These are among the powerful images that one of your illustrious poets offers us to illustrate the rich history and natural beauty of Armenia. They sum up the rich legacy and the glorious yet dramatic experience of a people and their deep-seated love of their country.

I am most grateful to you, Mr. President, for your kind words of welcome in the name of the government and people of Armenia, and for your gracious invitation that has made it possible to reciprocate the visit you made to the Vatican last year. There you attended the solemn celebration in Saint Peter’s Basilica, together with Their Holinesses Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch-Catholicos of All Armenians, and Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, and His Beatitude Nerses Bedros XIX, Patriarch of Cilicia

of the Armenians, recently deceased. The occasion was the commemoration of the centenary of the Metz Yeghern, the “Great Evil” that struck your people and caused the death of a vast multitude of persons. Sadly, that tragedy, that genocide, was the first of the deplorable series of catastrophes of the past century, made possible by twisted racial, ideological or religious aims that darkened the minds of the tormentors even to the point of planning the annihilation of entire peoples.

I pay homage to the Armenian people who, illuminated by the light of the Gospel, even at the most tragic moments of their history, have always found in the cross and resurrection of Christ the strength to rise again and take up their journey anew with dignity. This shows the depth of their Christian faith and its boundless treasures of consolation and hope. Having seen the pernicious effects to which hatred, prejudice and the untrammelled desire for dominion led in the last century, I express my lively hope that humanity will learn from those tragic experiences the need to act with responsibility and wisdom to avoid the danger of a return to such horrors. May all join in striving to ensure that whenever

Pope Francis, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and President Serzh Sargsyan arrive for a ceremony at the Tzitzernakaberd Genocide Memorial.



conflicts emerge between nations, dialogue, the enduring and authentic quest for peace, cooperation between states and the constant commitment of international organizations will always prevail, with the aim of creating a climate of trust favorable for the achievement of lasting agreements.

The Catholic Church wishes to cooperate actively with all those who have at heart the future of civilization and respect for the rights of the human person, so that spiritual values will prevail in our world and those who defile their meaning and beauty will be exposed as such. In this regard, it is vitally important that all those who declare their faith in God join forces to isolate those who use religion to promote war, oppression and violent persecution, exploiting and manipulating the holy name of God.

Today Christians in particular, perhaps even more than at the time of the first martyrs, in some places experience discrimination and persecution for the mere fact of professing their faith. At the same time, all too many conflicts in various parts of the world remain unresolved, causing grief, destruction and forced migrations of entire peoples. It is essential that those responsible for the future of the nations undertake courageously and without delay initiatives aimed at ending these sufferings, making their primary goal the quest for peace, the defense and acceptance of victims of aggression and persecution, the promotion of justice and sustainable development. The Armenian people have experienced these situations firsthand; they have known suffering and pain; they have known persecution; they preserved not only the memory of past hurts, but also the spirit that has enabled them always to start over again. I encourage you not to fail to make your own precious contribution to the international community.

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Armenia's independence. It is a joyful occasion, but also an opportunity, in cherishing the goals already achieved, to propose new ones for the future. The celebration of this happy anniversary will be all the more significant if it becomes for all Armenians, both at home and in the diaspora, a special moment for gathering and coordinating energies for the sake of promoting the country's civil and social development of the country, one that is equitable and inclusive. This will involve constant concern for ensuring respect for the moral imperatives of equal justice for all and solidarity with the less fortunate (cf. John Paul II, Farewell Address from Armenia, 27 September 2001: *Insegnamenti* XXIX/2 [2001], 489). The



Above: Pope Francis and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II water a tree planted in a model of Noah's Ark during an ecumenical service at the Republic Square. **Below:** Pope Francis and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II leave at the end of the Divine Liturgy at the Armenian Cathedral in Etchmiadzin.



history of your country runs parallel to its Christian identity preserved over the centuries. That identity, far from impeding a healthy secularity of the state, instead requires and nourishes it, favoring the full participation of all in the life of society, freedom of religion and respect for minorities. A spirit of unity between all Armenians and a growing commitment to find helpful means of overcoming tension with neighboring countries, will facilitate the realization of these important goals, and inaugurate for Armenia an age of true rebirth.

The Catholic Church is present in this country with limited human resources, yet

readily offers her contribution to the development of society, particularly through her work with the poor and vulnerable in the areas of healthcare and education, but also in the specific area of charitable assistance. This is seen in the work carried out in the past twenty-five years by the Redemptoris Mater Hospital in Ashotzk, the educational institute in Yerevan, the initiatives of Caritas Armenia and the works managed by the various religious congregations.

May God bless and protect Armenia, a land illumined by the faith, the courage of the martyrs and that hope which proves stronger than any suffering. ❏



Education in the Midst of War

Students continue their studies in the face of hostilities

By **JENNIFER MANOUKIAN**

When news of the clashes on the border of Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan in April reached Stepanakert, the entire city tensed. The minds of those who lived through the Nagorno-Karabakh War in the 1990s could not help but fear a return of darker times. Once the hostilities abated four days later, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh could let out a collective sigh of relief, but not without a certain degree of apprehension. The antidote to this apprehension for many of the residents of Nagorno-Karabakh was to return to the rhythms of their everyday lives, including, for students, to nurturing hope for educational achievement—with the help of AGBU.

In Stepanakert, AGBU sponsors two educational programs that have only flourished since the attacks in April: the TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert Center and the American University of Armenia (AUA) Extension Program. A testament to the resilience and commitment to learning in the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, the programs have not only remained intact, but have continued to grow, develop and expand to meet the needs of curious students striving for success in their careers—whether these are careers about to begin or those well underway.

TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert has always been a haven for the youth of Nagorno-Karabakh and, in the aftermath of the clashes, it continued to serve its function with renewed determination: “During the attacks, it was very tense at home, especially because my dad works in the army,” said 14-year-old Samvel Sargsyan. “But at TUMO, everything was different. I went to the center because I felt safe and secure there. It has a very special atmosphere.”

Officially inaugurated in September 2015 as a new hub for learning, creativity and technology in the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, the center marked the beginning of a partnership between AGBU and the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies, which also collaborated to establish TUMOxAGBU Gyumri in the same year.

The city of Stepanakert and its neighboring regions were abuzz with excitement when the center opened for classes in October 2015 and interest in its animation, filmmaking, computer programming, music, photography and graphic design classes has only grown, fostering a contagious spirit of excitement and optimism. The teenage students—ages twelve to eighteen—who attend the TUMOxAGBU afterschool classes have their sights set on greatness in the world of technology—and nothing, not even political unrest, will stand in their way.

Since April, the TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert Center, which only closed its doors for one day at the height of the attacks, continued to hold its workshops in writing, graphic design, programming and

Left: Sedrak Mkrtchyan's learning lab on the world of infographics at TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert. **Right:** Students at TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert during Scout Tufankjian's learning lab in May.

web development as well as introduce special learning labs. “Both before and after April, the mission of TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert has been to give students everything they need to succeed in the future along with maintaining a feeling of stability,” said Korioun Khatchadourian, head of TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert. “The learning labs helped show the students that life has returned to normal and that the path toward the future is clear.”

In May and June, TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert welcomed four accomplished professionals to impart their wisdom to enthusiastic young students.

In May, world-renowned photojournalist Scout Tufankjian made her first visit to the center in Stepanakert to teach a group of sixteen students about the fundamentals of documentary photography and help them develop their skills. For this learning lab, TUMO partnered with the HALO Trust to raise awareness about the organization's humanitarian work in clearing landmines and explosives from Nagorno-Karabakh. During the lab, the young photographers created photo-stories that featured the landscapes, everyday life and people of their city, focusing on the areas cleared by HALO and allowing the students to see their region through the lens of peace and normalcy. “I want to be a professional photographer and TUMO has made it possible for me to stay in Stepanakert to pursue a career in the field. I discovered photography at TUMO—a place filled with joy and hope and oriented toward the future—and Scout's course helped me learn even more,” said 16-year-old Nina Shahverdyan.

Later in the month, the students were visited by Sevana Tchakerian, lead musician in the French Armenian band Medz Bazar and founder of the music education organization Tsap-Tsapik. Tchakerian spent two weeks at TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert, teaching a learning lab on singing, rhythm and vocal harmonization. She also devoted time to making her students comfortable with the digital audio soft-



ware Logic Pro X, enabling them to create compositions on the computer and arrange new renditions of Armenian folk songs. “It’s important for Armenian musicians to own their culture and have a link with their past, but also not feel confined by it and break boundaries to create something new. I want the students to use their history to create something beautiful together,” said Tchakerian.

In June, Sedrak Mkrtchyan, a graphic designer and head of design at the PanArmenian media group, introduced students to the world of infographics along with typefaces, fonts and grids. Over the course of a month, students learned about the foundations and history of infographics along with different methods of expression for composition, color, typography and data. In the same month, Grigor Atanesian, editor at Russian *Esquire*, also gave a learning lab on digital storytelling for the students at TUMOxAGBU Stepanakert.

During a time of great uncertainty, TUMO inspired hope in the young students, offering them a sense of excitement about the future of Nagorno-Karabakh: “TUMO has made it possible for me to learn the basics of computer programming. I would like to be-

come a programmer—staying local, but reaching the global market,” said 14-year-old Armine Hakopyan.

At the AGBU-sponsored American University of Armenia (AUA) Extension Program in Nagorno-Karabakh, students also persevered in the face of April’s hostilities. The AUA Extension Program—with other branches in Gyumri, Dilijan, Yeghegnadzor and Yerevan—plans, designs and develops courses to meet the needs of public and private sector organizations to help students fulfill their professional goals through continuing education programs for adults, including trainings, workshops and seminars.

“The AUA courses that I had the privilege to attend have given me the determination to succeed and allowed me to diversify in my role. Although, I cannot say that I was able to use all that I learned, however, the skills and knowledge obtained from the course have allowed me to review my approach to certain issues and tailor the knowledge I’ve gained to the needs of my position and workplace. Hence, it has paved the way to new ways of observing and dealing with issues that have proved to be useful in life and at work,” said Armine Aleksanyan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The AUA Extension Program dates to 2013 when the collaboration between AGBU and AUA began with the goal of reigniting the workforce in Nagorno-Karabakh. Since then, the program has of-

Arpie Balian, Director of the AUA Extension Program (right), with a student in Stepanakert.



ferred more than 130 courses and trained more than 2,100 students. It has also given special attention to equipping future civil servants of Nagorno-Karabakh with the skills needed to achieve excellence in their careers. In particular, the program offers six levels of English language instruction, computer literacy and information technology training as well as leadership, business management and entrepreneurship courses to foster individual, organizational and community growth and transformation.

Since the April attacks, many classes were suspended as students—many of whom are military servicemen—rushed to the frontlines, but AUA’s commitment to the program remains unwavering. “The AGBU-supported AUA Extension Program in Stepanakert is aimed at preparing future leaders in the public sector. The fact that the AUA Extension program in Stepanakert caters to current and aspiring functionaries means that our classes have the potential to mold a cadre of public leaders who are better prepared to face challenges. Our courses in public management are tailored to meet the specific needs of the civil servants in various departments of Nagorno-Karabakh and the National Assembly,” said Arpie Balian, director of the AUA Extension Program.

AUA is a private, independent university in Yerevan, Armenia established through a partnership with the government of Armenia, AGBU and the University of California. As one of the founding

organizations of AUA, AGBU has been involved in the university since its establishment in 1991. AGBU has proven to be a champion for AUA through financial assistance in the launch of academic programs and scholarships as well as the establishment of the AGBU Papazian Library. AUA provides a global education in Armenia, offering high-quality, graduate and undergraduate studies, encouraging civic engagement and promoting public service and democratic values.

“The courses organized in Nagorno-Karabakh within the framework of the AUA Extension Program offered a great opportunity for me to learn about the American educational approach. My participation in the program was a unique opportunity to enhance my professional skills in different areas, especially in terms of improving my business communication skills. It is thanks to these AGBU-sponsored courses that now I can communicate with many international organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations by generally accepted communication standards,” said Artak Grigoryan, project manager at the Tourism Department of the Ministry of Economy.

With the conflict behind them, the students at TUMOXAGBU Stepanakert and the AUA Extension Program feel even stronger in their devotion to education and even more confident in their futures in Nagorno-Karabakh. ■





Beyond the Classroom

AGBU Children's Centers students shine brightly

By **ARMEN TERJIMANIAN**

When AGBU Marseille chair and film director Patrick Malakian visited Armenia at the end of 2014 searching for young performance artists for a program dedicated to the centenary of the Armenian Genocide, he had no idea what kind of talented youngsters he would find in the rehearsal classrooms at one of the AGBU Children's Centers.

Arriving at the Children's Center in the Nork neighborhood of Yerevan, Malakian sat as the lone audience member in a 400-seat theater. The choreographed performance of singing, acting, dancing and circus acts left him stunned.

"I can't say I cried all the way through, but they made me cry many times," Malakian recounted. "And at the end of the show, there were something like 98 children on stage. I went: 'That's it, this is it! I want to take you all to Marseille!'"

Although Malakian was aware that the Children's Centers were one of AGBU's many projects in Armenia, what he—and perhaps others in the diaspora—did not realize was the positive impact that the facilities have had on children in the post-Soviet era.

The AGBU Children's Centers began in February 1993 when the organization, in partnership with the Mother See of Holy Etchmi-



The AGBU Children's Centers, located in the Nork, Arapkir and Malatya suburbs of Yerevan, provide a range of afterschool instruction and summer programs for children and young adults.

adzin, acquired and transformed Yerevan's former Soviet youth palaces into three updated facilities.

Those centers, located in the Nork, Arapkir and Malatya suburbs of Yerevan, provide a range of after school instruction and summer programs for children and young adults.

Over the years, two more Children's Centers opened in the city of Vanadzor and at Holy Etchmiadzin. After 23 years, the centers act as a second home for nearly 2,000 children and young adults, ages four to 25.

Students gather in classrooms every day afterschool to take advantage of a wide spectrum of enriching programs, including arts and crafts, computers, dance, circus arts, history, sports, music, religious studies and the performing arts. The Nork facility also teaches classes during the summer.

"The important thing is that it needs to be a continual process because young children are very receptive at those ages," said Artur

Gevorgyan, a teacher at the Nork Children's Center. "The students are present in a supportive atmosphere where they interact with their peers."

Overseen by an administrative staff of over 175 and administered by the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the AGBU Children's Centers aim to nurture every student who walks through the facilities' doors creatively, physically and spiritually.

Gevorgyan's teaching expertise focuses on the sports side: judo. He instructs 50 boys ranging in age from seven to 18, divided into three groups based on age. He says his students benefit from the physical activity, especially those who must join the army for compulsory service.

But not only is his students' physical fitness advanced by attending classes, the youngsters' skilled training allows them to be competitive in tournaments.

According to Gevorgyan, the Nork Children's Center competitors won four gold medals last year at Armenia's National Judo Championship.

But the endgame is not about how many medals Gevorgyan's students win at a competition. It is about the positive recognition the students can bring to all involved at the Children's Centers as well as about building self-esteem and encouraging discipline that will serve them well outside the centers, too.

"This year, we had a judo student who became the Armenian champion and we are hopeful that next year he can win a European championship and perhaps even a world championship," said a humble Gevorgyan. "This is important because we train our students to become ready to represent all the Children's Centers."

The Children's Center staff's work has not gone unnoticed. In 2014, Yerevan Mayor Taron Margaryan recognized the Nork Children's Center staff, awarding them with the Yerevan Gold Medal for their tireless contribution to the children in the Armenian capital.

National and international recognition is not just limited to sports students, as the Children's Centers performing and visual arts students have also earned their fair share of recognition.

Many students in performing arts, circus acts and visual arts have gone on to win various competitions around the world.

In 2007, a Nork Children's Center student won the top prize in the International Children's Art Competition, organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Department of Public Information (DPI) and United Nations Postal Administration.

In 2012 and 2013, performing arts students participated in the Junior Eurovision Contest, the Pomegranate Seed Republican Theatrical Festival, the Delphi International Games and the International Children's Games. In November 2014, three circus act students were featured during the Junior Eurovision Song Contest in Malta.

The Centers' performance troupes have traveled extensively around the world, including to Brazil, Canada, Georgia, Poland, Russia, Uruguay and the United States, where they have drawn standing ovations from tens of thousands of admiring spectators.

One of the more recent thunderous receptions came from the south of France.

When Malakian brought over 50 Children's Centers performers to Marseille in November 2015, he knew he would be shocking an audience that was probably expecting the usual display of classical Armenian stage performance numbers performed by school-age children.

"There is one thing you have to understand: Everybody that

came to our show...thought they were going to see a kind of end-of-the-year school show," he explained. Instead the troupe's show titled "Éternels" dazzled the 1,200-seat Palais des Congrès theater with a performance of dancing, singing, acting, acrobatics and circus work, telling the story of Armenian history from Noah's Ark to the 21st century.

"The level of those kids is professional," Malakian added. "That is something that when everybody came out they reacted, 'Oh my God, we did not expect that.'"

The show's timing also had an emotional impact on the audience and the Children's Center performers. Just days after arriving, the terrorist attacks that rocked Paris—including the tragedy at the Bataclan theatre—could have cast a damper on the show. But Malakian said the children's parents in Yerevan supported letting their kids perform in Marseille, providing not only an escape for the community, but a memorable show not soon to be forgotten. "[The children] all came here for one week and we had an incredible week together," said Malakian, trying to capture the right words to justify the emotion felt at the performance. "At the end of the show, everybody—and when I say everybody, I'm not talking about the artists, I'm talking about the audience—was in tears. This was one of the most incredible, human emotions I've witnessed in my career as a director."

Malakian is working with the Children's Centers performing arts students once again, serving as the artistic director of "Hokis," which will debut during the AGBU 89th General Assembly Weekend in New York in October. The performance will be a collaborative effort with students from the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies, AGBU global alumni and AGBU Performing Arts Scholarship recipients.

As for the Children's Centers, Malakian dreams of them becoming a well-known "symbol of excellence" for the teaching of performing arts and athletics, similar to how TUMO is now a symbol of excellence for youth and technology.

He is working with the centers to help them evolve to a place where they can offer more specialized classes in performance arts and offer opportunities for students to perform and work in world-class troupes and institutions around the world.

With proper time, effort and care, Malakian truly believes the Children's Centers can become a point of pride and international centers of renown.

"I love the Children's Centers. I think it is a very good program and it is gold. But it is rough gold that now needs to be taken care of in order to really do [the children] justice...Now it is time to show it to everybody. And when I say everybody, I mean not just Armenians around the world but beyond Armenians, because there is talent everywhere." ■

Since 1993, the AGBU Children's Centers have acted as a second home for nearly 2,000 children and young adults, ages four to 25.



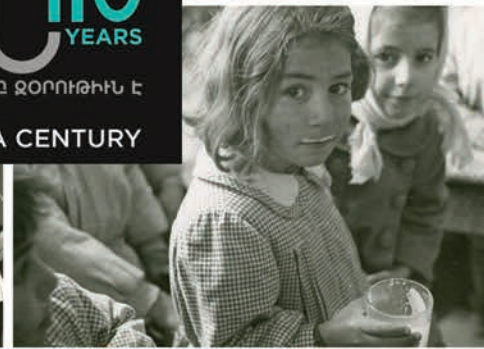


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Classrooms, Computers, and Now TV

AVC tunes in to the needs of the tech-savvy

Integration of technology has become crucial in the daily learning process of students all around the world, offering convenient access to content, while enhancing traditional learning methods. Since 2009, the AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) has been delivering a groundbreaking online course of study.

Tuning into the needs of the more tech-savvy learners, AVC's TV School and Hybrid Education Program provide timely solutions to the needs of these new types of learners who increasingly prefer technology as a source of information acquisition and education over printed textbooks and conventional curricula.



Prepared in collaboration with the Armenian Ministry of Diaspora, the AVC TV School airs on Armenian Public Satellite TV Channel H1, and was originally developed to provide a wider opportunity for children and adults to learn the Armenian language, starting from alphabet basics to an upper-intermediate level of the spoken and written language. Having premiered in 2014 with instructional programming targeted to English viewers, a new set of TV School programs were back in 2015—now with Russian-language instruction—with the English-language episodes continuing as reruns throughout the year.

Transcending geography, this path-breaking Armenian lan-

AGBUYSIP participants take part in the Summer Language School during their time in Yerevan.

guage learning TV program is based on the AVC online language lessons, which have been adjusted to a special TV format. Broadcasted in conjunction with the online courses, the program gives the viewers the opportunity to get in touch with AVC's live online teachers to continue the learning online right after each transmission. They can also interact with peers around the world, by enrolling in AVC online courses.

Administered in a more traditional group setting, the Hybrid Education Program blends the conventional methods of educa-



In Canoga Park, CA, AGBU Manoogian Demirdjian High Schoolers build up their knowledge of Armenian architecture with AVC.

tion with e-learning to offer the best these two forms of instruction have to offer to those who attend Armenian schools or have Armenian educational courses organized in their local community. The program targets schools and community centers and organizations that wish to introduce innovative and attractive learning methods into their curricula, as well as supplement their programs with additional resources. An entire classroom can sign up for any of the courses offered by AVC, whereby the local teacher and AVC online instructor collaborate throughout the course to help students achieve maximum results through this attractive method of learning.

This method was first introduced at the Ohannesian Armenian School in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates in 2009. Since then, the method has been successfully used in both AGBU and non-AGBU schools and Armenian communities stretching from Latin America to Georgia and from Canada to Russia, reaching an impressive number of 20 participant schools and communities across the globe. Supplemented with virtual tours and social events, and e-meetings and events among the schools and communities, the Hybrid Education Program is becoming a popular resource for Armenian education and networking.

According to Hosesep Torossian, Principal of the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School in Southfield, Michigan, “Adding the AVC curriculum to our Armenian language program at the Manoogian High School was an outstanding success. This hybrid approach of combining online and face-to-face instruction improved student engagement and learning, as they ben-

efited from the best practices of these two methods.” For some Armenian schools, AVC has been the expedient means of introducing technology into Armenian classrooms which were otherwise deprived of courses built through innovative learning technologies. In the words of Sevag Koulian, a teacher at St. Sarkis Sunday School in Dallas, Texas, which recently joined the growing list of AVC Hybrid participants, “The AVC project is a very rewarding experience. The opportunity to teach the Armenian language, history, and culture in an organized fashion will do wonders for both the kids and the teachers. In the weeks that we’ve used the program, everyone in the room has learned something new.”

For three successive years, AVC has been offering a version of the Hybrid Education Program through the Summer Language School for participants in AGBU’s Yerevan Summer Internship Program (YSIP), helping these young college students acquire or further develop their Armenian language skills during their eight-week professional stay in Armenia.

AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) is an accredited online learning program that aims to facilitate Armenian studies through new technologies. Launched in 2009, AVC classes are open to anyone who is interested in Armenian studies, delivering a virtual classroom to students and learners of all ages who do not have access to traditional, face-to-face Armenian educational programs, while supplementing the curriculum of those who do. The launch of the e-Book series and TV School mark AVC’s expansion in new and exciting directions. **A**

Redefining the Armenian Experience

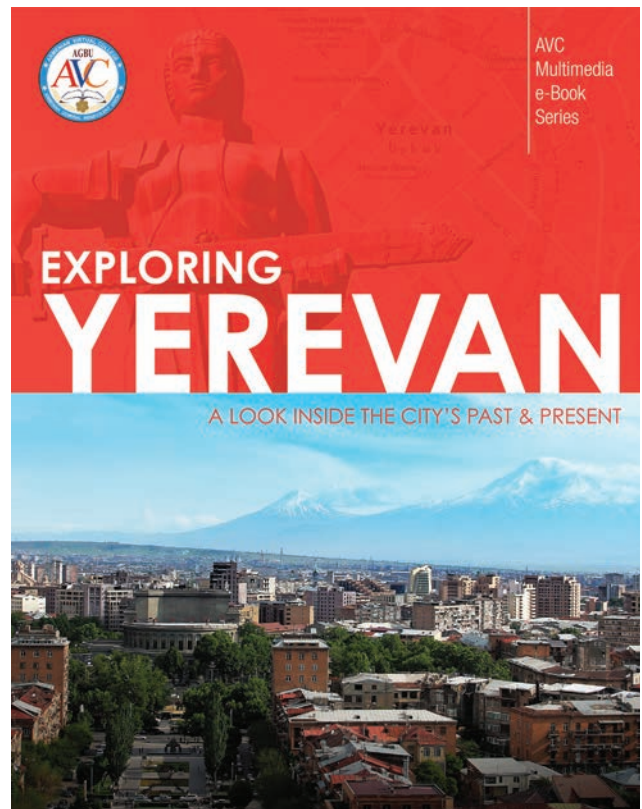
Over 18,000 readers turn a new page with e-books

Since 2014, the AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) has been redefining the Armenian experience with the release of interactive e-books, bringing Armenian history, culture and contemporary affairs into the digital age. Designed with the intent to expand AVC's learning community from virtual students to the public at large, the multimedia e-Book Series has become stupendously popular since the launch of the first volume in 2014, attracting over 18,000 readers to date. With a growing number of downloads each day, the series is a pioneer of periodical e-publications, turning a new page in the field of Armenian Studies.

The first e-book entitled *The Armenian Highland* (2014) provides an overview of Armenia's history and geography from ancient to modern times. It details the physical characteristics, natural life, environment, flora and fauna, climate and natural resources of the Armenian highland. It also discusses the administrative divisions of the region and puts them in historical perspective. This interactive e-book concludes with a brief introduction to the significance of the highland to the Republic of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The text is accompanied by vivid color images and optional audio narration and is interspersed with video clips, 3D panoramas, quizzes and interactive maps that all serve to enhance the reader's experience. Alongside the core text are sidebars with legends, facts and stories that make the e-book an essential reference for academics and non-academics alike.

Exploring Yerevan: A Look Inside the City's Past & Present (2015), the second e-book of the series, is an interactive guide designed to offer historical, social and demographic information to readers interested in visiting Yerevan or learning about the city. The perfect travel companion, *Exploring Yerevan* offers a variety of information, ranging from city tours and hikes to festive cultural and social events. Videos, interactive maps, virtual visits, picture galleries, 3D and panoramic images and puzzles are used to introduce readers to the city and its surrounding areas. Mayor of Yerevan Taron Margaryan stresses the importance of the collaboration between the Municipality of Yerevan and AVC in encouraging the success of similar initiatives: "Thanks to the incorporation of modern technologies, our 2796-year-old capital can now be presented to the world as an attractive touristic destination." AGBU Central Board member Dr. Yervant Zorian, AVC founder and president, echoes the mayor's sentiments: "With a groundbreaking presentation and a fresh wave of information, the *Exploring Yerevan* e-book is a perfect resource for anyone who wants to make the most out of their visit to Yerevan and learn about one of the oldest cities in the world. I am sure this book will acquire a broad readership and will

Above: *Exploring Yerevan* (2015) offers a look inside the city's past and present for readers interested in visiting Yerevan or learning about the city. **Below:** *The Armenian Highland* (2014) provides an overview of Armenia's history and geography from ancient to modern times.



contribute to making Yerevan one of the best touristic destinations in the world."

A full multimedia experience available in your choice of seven languages: English, Western Armenian, Eastern Armenian, Russian, French, Spanish and Turkish, the media-rich and superbly attractive interface, the interactivity and ease of use, the enchanting stories one does not come across in textbooks and every-day reads, all make the e-book series a highly pleasurable read for a variety of audiences. Both e-books are available for free download and online browsing just a few clicks away on computers and mobile devices. The iBook version is designed for iPads and iMac computers, while the Joomag web browser and app versions are designed for PCs, Android tablets and all smartphones. For more information or to download



your free copy, please visit the AVC website (www.avc-agbu.org), AGBU online bookstore (www.agbubookstore.org), or search "AVC" in the Apple iBooks Store or Joomag app. **A**

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Central Board of Directors of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (the "Union") hereby gives notice to all the members of the Union qualified to attend, that the 89th General Assembly will be held on Saturday, October 29, 2016 at 10 A.M. at the Harvard Club of New York City.

This is the only notice which will be given for the meeting of the 89th General Assembly. We therefore request the qualified members of the Union to attend the Assembly in person at the address and on the date given above, or, deliver or submit, on or before September 16, 2016 their respective proxies duly executed and certified according to the provisions of the Bylaws, to the Secretary of the Central Board at the following address:

Armenian General Benevolent Union
Central Board of Directors
55 East 59th Street
New York, NY 10022-1112, U.S.A.

AGENDA OF THE MEETING

1. Consideration and approval of the Report on the Activities of the Union for the years 2014 and 2015.
2. Consideration and approval of the Union's Financial Reports for the years 2014 and 2015.
3. Election of Directors.
4. Election of a member of the Auditing Committee.
5. Consideration and action upon any matters incidental to the foregoing and any matters which may properly come before the meeting or any adjournments thereof, including amendments to the Bylaws.
6. Consideration of any recommendation and resolution of the General Assembly.

ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION
CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sarkis Jebejian
Secretary

Berge Setrakian
President

ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION

ԾԱՆՈՒՑԱԳԻՐ ԸՆԴՀԱՆՈՒՐ ԺՈՂՈՎԻ ԳՈՒՄԱՐՄԱՆ

Հայկական Բարեգործական Ընդհանուր Միության («Միութիւն») Կեդրոնական Վարչական Ժողովը այսու կը ծանուցանէ Միութեան բոլոր իրաւասու անդամներուն թէ Միութեան 89-րդ Ընդհանուր Ժողովը պիտի գումարուի Շաբաթ 29 Հոկտեմբեր 2016-ի առաւօտեան ժամը 10-ին, Միացեալ Նահանգներու Նիւ Եորք Քաղաքի «Հարվըրտ Գլապ»ին մէջ: The Harvard Club 35 W 44th Street, New York.

89-րդ Ընդհանուր Ժողովի գումարման վերաբերեալ միակ ծանուցագիրն է այս: Հետեւաբար, Միութեան իրաւասու անդամներէն կը խնդրենք որ վերոյիշեալ թուականին անձնապէս ներկայ գտնուին ժողովին համար նշուած վայրը, կամ իրենց փոխանորդագրերը՝ գործադրուած եւ վաւերացուած ըստ կանոնագրի տրամադրութեան, ուղարկեն կամ յանձնեն Կեդրոնական Վարչական Ժողովի ատենադպրին, ամենաուշ մինչեւ 16 Սեպտեմբեր 2016, կեդրոնական գրասենեակի հետեւեալ Հասցեով.

Armenian General Benevolent Union
Central Board of Directors
55 East 59th Street
New York, NY 10022-1112, U.S.A.

ԺՈՂՈՎԻ ՕՐԱԿԱՐԳ

1. Նկատառում եւ վաւերացում Միութեան 2014 եւ 2015 տարեշրջաններու ընդհանուր գործունէութեան տեղեկագրերուն:
2. Նկատառում եւ վաւերացում Միութեան 2014 եւ 2015 տարեշրջաններու հաշուական տեղեկագրերուն:
3. Ընտրութիւն Կեդրոնական Վարչական Ժողովի անդամներու:
4. Ընտրութիւն Հաշուեքննիչ Յանձնախումբի անդամի մը:
5. Քննարկում վերոնշեալ օրակարգերուն առնչուող որեւէ հարցի, ինչպէս նաեւ ժողովի աշխատանքներուն ընթացքին արծարծուած կամ ըստ կանոնի ժողովին ներկայացուած հարցերու, ներառեալ կանոնագրի բարեփոխութեան:
6. Քննարկում Ընդհանուր Ժողովի յանձնարարութիւններու եւ բանաձեւերու:

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Սարգիս Ճէյէճեան
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Նախագահ

12 Յուլիս 2016

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Donors Show Outstanding Support by Contributing **\$10,256,820** to the AGBU Central Board Programs in 2015

We are grateful for the continued generosity of those who believe in our mission. The collaborative efforts of our communities around the globe, the commitment of our donors and the dedication of hundreds of volunteers and staff enable AGBU to enrich the lives of Armenians.

The below contributions were made to the AGBU Central Office in New York in support of our various worldwide cultural, educational, humanitarian, religious and youth initiatives.

This report does not include contributions made directly to various local chapters around the world.

We thank the many individuals and families for their generosity and thoughtfulness in designating memorial gifts or special occasion contributions for the programs of the AGBU.

Due to limited space, only individual gifts of \$1,000, or those of at least two donors have been included. To see a full list of donors, please visit agbu.org.

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ROSE TASHJIAN

Legacy of Kindness and Compassion

Rose Tashjian was a true native New Jerseyan. The Tashjian family—Joseph, Esther and their young son, Richard—moved to Paterson in 1911 to escape persecution in the Ottoman Empire. Before 1915, Paterson, Camden and West Hoboken, New Jersey drew Armenian immigrants who found work in the factories of the cities. Joseph managed to escape this fate. By the time Rose was born in 1913, her father—a tailor by trade—had already established his dry cleaning business in Paterson, which provided a comfortable living for his wife and children.

The Tashjian family attached as much importance to their American identity as they did to their Armenian identity. Richard served three and a half years in the United States Navy before starting a thrilling career as a photographer for *The Star-Ledger*, the most widely read local newspaper in New Jersey. Over the course of his career, he was sent on assignment as a photographer to follow New Jersey politicians, photographing their meetings with major political figures, such as John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

Rose had an equally illustrious career as a librarian. A lover of reading and fine arts, Rose worked as a librarian at the Paterson Public Library and Montclair State College and spent her weekends visiting antique shows, galleries and art exhibitions. She was also devoted to her family, sharing her mother's passion for celebrating holidays with tables filled with her favorite Armenian dishes and tending to the family's garden and dog, Sandy.



When Rose passed away in 2013, after having lived independently until she was 97, she was seven months from turning 100 years old. In her near century of life, she earned the respect of her friends and family for her kindness and compassion for humanity. It comes as no surprise that she is continuing her legacy of kindness and compassion with a donation to AGBU in her memory and in the memory of the family she treasured that will stretch far beyond her New Jersey roots. ❧

AGBU Donors

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MOSES AND MEADA OUZOUNIAN

Oriental Rugs of Hope

Moses Ouzounian spent his childhood dyeing wool and supervising the weavers in his father's rug workshop in Aleppo, learning the tricks of the trade that would serve him well in the business he would eventually establish a world away in California. Moses came from a long line of leaders in the rug business, which began as a result of the family's conversion to Mormonism two generations before his birth. In the 1890s, Moses's grandfather Artine was an art teacher at an Armenian school in Aintab when missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) arrived in the city. Agreeing with the teachings of the LDS Church, Artine converted to Mormonism and was immediately dismissed from his teaching position because of his faith. In search of a new way to make a living, he entered the rug business and found success, eventually expanding from Aintab to Marash where he put his son, Khoren, in charge.

It was thanks to the Ouzounian family's talent for their craft that Ottoman officials allowed the family to stay in Aintab in 1915—in exchange for a few of their best rugs. Although they were spared the deportations of the genocide, by 1921, the Ouzounians and the rest of the Armenian population in Cilicia feared new attacks by the Turkish nationalists struggling to conquer territory for the nascent Turkish Republic. This time, it was the family's affiliation with the LDS Church that would save them. After an appeal to Mormon leadership in Utah on behalf of the 53 Armenian Mormons still in Aintab, Joseph Booth—the former president of the LDS mission in Turkey—returned to the city to take the Arme-

nians to safety in Aleppo, negotiating expedited passports from the French authorities in power and organizing special caravans in December 1921. Moses's father was among these new arrivals in Aleppo, where he settled and restarted his family's business.

Moses was born into this business in 1935 and helped his mother run it after his father's death ten years later. But once he arrived in the United States in 1956, it was French and comparative literature that appealed to him most as a student at the University of Utah. After graduation, he envisioned a career in teaching and worked as a high school French teacher for ten years. Toward the end of his teaching career, he made the decision to return to the family business, opening Shah N' Shah Oriental Rugs in Santa Ana, California in 1971. In its first two years, Moses, still teaching, could only run the business part time. His wife Meada left her nursing position and, in addition to raising the couple's ten children, took charge until Moses arrived after school.

In his more than thirty-year career in the rug business, Moses took pride in acquiring an impressive collection of antique Oriental rugs that he would sell to dealers across the United States and Europe. In 1975, he was robbed at gunpoint for his collection and worked with the FBI to recover 146 of his rugs, appraised at \$500,000, that had been scattered from Denver to Germany.

After retiring in 2010, Moses and Meada auctioned off much of their personal collection of rugs acquired over a successful career, donating all the proceeds to the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians. With a special place in his heart for the plight of widows and orphans, Moses hopes to play a part in alleviating suffering in the country where his story began. **■**



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FLORA MIRZAIAN

Toasting to Health, Success and Happiness

Flora Mirzaian always appreciated the little things in life. From the beauty of the hymns at her church, to the laughter of her grandchildren, to the sequins on her old ballet costumes, she lived a life full of love for her family and the arts as well as for AGBU and the Armenian community. Born in Krasnodar in southern Russia in 1931, Flora and her family soon fled communism for Tehran where she settled into an idyllic childhood. As a young girl, she took ballet and piano lessons, performed in dance recitals and studied French and English with private tutors. In 1946, Flora, her parents and brother left Iran for more religious freedom and educational opportunities in the United States, settling in Oakland, California and bringing with her the dedication and grace she learned as a performer.

This new phase was defined by school, family, and community. Known throughout her life for her generosity of spirit and excellence in all she did, Flora—widowed by the age of twenty-three—devoted herself to her two sons, Ronald and Robert, as well as to the AGBU Oakland chapter. Serving as chairperson of the chapter in its early years and later taking pride in organizing events for the young Armenian professionals of the region, Flora was also a loyal supporter of AGBU projects in Armenia after the country's independence. She is remembered in particular for her great contribution to AGBU Oakland fundraising efforts for the American University of Armenia and the AGBU Soup Kitchens on the outskirts of

Yerevan. Flora also traveled to Cairo to celebrate the 75th anniversary of AGBU in 1981. On that trip, she shared a cab and a long conversation with AGBU President Alex Manoo-gian, a memory she held dear for the rest of her life. “She was good at explaining people’s hardships and helping to find solutions to their problems. Her insight and forward-thinking helped in the realization of a person’s true objectives and in finding a more productive path,” said her son Ronald.

Flora also instilled a special appreciation for AGBU in her grandchildren. Following in the footsteps of his grandmother, David Ojakian is a leader in the AGBU community as the chairman of the AGBU Young Professionals of Northern California: “I have always admired my grandmother for her passion for AGBU and its mission as well as for her interest in the arts. At a young age, she exposed my sister Lorena and me to theater and performing arts, taking us backstage at many shows to meet the actors. This exposure to performing arts so early definitely played a part in my pursuit of acting.”

When Flora passed away in April 2016, her family was very pleased that she donated \$100,000 to her beloved AGBU to be used to develop programs on behalf of the community she adored. Առողջութիւն, յաջողութիւն, ուրախութիւն (health, success and happiness) is how Flora would make a toast at the beginning of every meal. Thanks to her devotion and love for AGBU, she will be spreading her well wishes to Armenians far and wide. **■**



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BARBARA APISSON

Learning and Laughing at Camp Nubar

Alumni of Camp Nubar have a pride like no other. Their fun-filled summers as campers and counselors make an enduring impression on their lives, filling them with lasting memories, friends and an affinity for the camp. Thanks to the Barbara Apisson Trust, children from families without the means to send them to Camp Nubar have been given the same opportunity to have a life-changing experience.

From the 1940s to the 1970s, Barbara Apisson (née Serabian)—a survivor of the Armenian Genocide—and her husband Henri ran an inn and restaurant called West Point Farms on a two-hundred-acre property north of New York City. When Barbara passed away in 1996, she left all of her land in a trust to be turned into a camp for Armenian children. Studies, however, found that converting West Point Farms into a camp would not be financially feasible and her trustees were granted the latitude to sell the property and use the funds to make scholarship endowments to camps.

Camp Nubar was one of the grateful recipients of Barbara's kindness and love for the outdoors. The Barbara Apisson Scholarship Fund for Camp Nubar is the largest endowment for the camp to date and has made several significant contributions since the fund was founded in 2014. Since then, 23 campers have had the chance to learn and laugh at Camp Nubar and they are just the start. "The scholarship fund will help many children experience the natural beauty of our camp and make lifelong friendships. We are so fortunate to be the beneficiaries of Mrs. Apisson's generosity. Her spirit will live on at Camp Nubar each summer," said Sarah Partin, chair of the Camp Nubar Committee.



Founded in 1963, the camp—located in the Catskill Mountains of Upstate New York—attracts hundreds of children ages eight to fifteen each year. The camp's programs are specially designed to build self-esteem and encourage socialization while instilling a sense of pride in the shared love for the Armenian heritage. Traditional camp activities, such as ceramics, horseback riding and volleyball, are accompanied by Armenian dance, language and history for a truly unique summer. From the waterfront to the dining hall, from the tennis courts to the photography lab, Barbara's memory, along with her appreciation for nature and Armenian identity, will continue to resonate in the laughter of campers for many years to come. **■**

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We thank the many individuals and families for their generosity and thoughtfulness in designating memorial gifts or special occasion contributions for the programs of the AGBU.

In Memory of...

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American University of Armenia

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Camp Nubar; Humanitarian Emergency Relief

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Total to Date \$2,280



BE
PART OF
HISTORY

In 1906, Boghos Nubar Pasha and Yervant Aghaton joined forces to form the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU). With the inaugural meeting held on April 15, AGBU began its longstanding mission of service to the Armenian community.

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Above: AGBU President Berge Setrakian with Joseph and Jenny Oughourlian. **Below:** César Alierta, chairman on Telefónica.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

AGBU Gala in London Rouses Tremendous Support for Syrian Relief

On May 21, AGBU brought together hundreds of supporters and friends for a Gala Benefit Dinner at the Landmark Hotel in London. The evening was devoted to celebrating the achievements of the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians and inspiring continued support for helping to alleviate the dire conditions that continue to persist in the region.

Thanks to the generosity of AGBU Central Board member and CEO of Amber

Capital Joseph Oughourlian and his wife Jenny, who underwrote the entire gala, all the proceeds from the fundraising dinner were directed to the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians.

The highlight of the gala was the keynote speech by the Right Honourable Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham. Lord Darzi—the embodiment of success—captivated the audience with his wit and charm. Born in Baghdad to Armenian parents, Lord Darzi is known as one of the



world's leading surgeons, pioneering the keyhole surgery that has saved the lives of countless patients around the world. He has also served as a government health minister and became the first person of Armenian origin to become a member of the House of Lords.

Speeches were also given by the evening's master of ceremonies Camilio Azzouz of the AGBU London Trust and AGBU Europe Board; Mr. Oughourlian; César Alierta, the chairman of the Spanish telecommunications provider Telefónica; and AGBU President Berge Setrakian. All the speakers emphasized the importance of responding to global crises swiftly and instilled in the audience the great significance of their contribution to Syrian relief. In particular, Alierta—a friend and supporter of the Armenian community—encouraged AGBU members to raise awareness about the crisis in Syria and outlined the way Armenians are exemplary in the world: “I’ve seen how resilient and strong the Armenian community is. It is part of your DNA. It is the most important community in the world because the Armenian community is the only one that can know how life is in the Middle East, Europe, Canada, the United States and Latin America and also serve Christian values.”

Among the prominent guests were members of AGBU London, the AGBU London Trust, AGBU Europe, the AGBU Central Board and the clergy of the Armenian Apostolic Church along with members of the AGBU Young Professionals (YP) network. Special acknowledgment was given to AGBU Central Board member Vasken Yacoubian, who has been in-

strumental in organizing relief efforts in Syria and for Syrian Armenians living in Armenia. “From the bottom of our hearts, you are truly a hero to us and a big source of inspiration. If my generation puts so many hours of work into what we do, it’s because of people like you who have put everything they have into our community. We want to deeply thank you for that,” Azzouz said in recognition of Yacoubian.

The gala closed with remarks by Mr. Setrakian, who sketched the formidable history of the Armenians of the Middle East over the past century and emphasized the perseverance of the Armenian people: “These are difficult times, but we will prevail. I remain optimistic. This vision of ours, created in 1906, has gone through many challenges, but we thank Armenians worldwide who have trusted this organization and we will continue the heritage of our founders and continue to reach out to every Armenian in need.”



Lord Ara Darzi with his wife Lady Wendy Darzi.

**THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF OUR DONORS IN LONDON,
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LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

AGBU Europe International Strategy Meeting Held in London

On May 21, AGBU Europe held an international meeting in London that brought together the AGBU Central Board, the AGBU Europe Board and members of AGBU chapters and partnerships in Europe. The purpose of the day-long meeting was to assess AGBU Europe, set new goals, provide strategic direction and mobilize its leadership and members.

The meeting was the occasion for AGBU Europe's new president Nadia Gortzounian to devise a plan that will guide the organization until 2020. The strategy outlines that Armenian identity gives access to enriching intellectual and cultural capital as well as to social and professional networks that create opportunities.

Gortzounian's remarks were echoed in the numerous presentations throughout the day, which emphasized the leveraging of relationships in the diaspora to better serve Armenia; the need for Armenian leadership in Armenia and in the diaspora; and the importance of partnerships—both with Armenian and with non-Armenian organizations—to help ideas circulate and better mobilize for change.

AGBU Europe outlined four objectives around which its plans will revolve: to reinforce networks of cooperation within the Armenian world; to promote involvement in public policy among Armenians; to contribute to the promotion of and access to Armenian cultural heritage; and to provide humanitarian aid to Armenians in regions of conflict.

The day-long meeting featured experts discussing pressing topics, such as the growing young communities in Europe; the risks and returns of Armenian lobbying in a European framework; the benefits of building a pan-European leadership network; AGBU's track record in Armenia and its long-term vision; the importance of technology in Armenia and the diaspora; and the outlook for Armenians and AGBU in Europe.

"We are an interconnected nation in which Armenian identity creates opportunities to learn and succeed and in which Armenian leaders inspire younger generations. Networks will help exchange good techniques and innovation as well as coordinate activities and exercise influence. Creating ties between Armenians creates unique opportunities and reinforces the desirability of Armenian identity," said Gortzounian.

The meeting concluded with renewed ambition to develop the capacities of the organization and the larger Armenian world and to better anticipate and confront crises, including through the mobilization of skills and through closer partnerships with public institutions in Europe. AGBU President Berge Setrakian ended the meeting with a call for Armenians to take their future into their own hands and confront the double challenge to Armenians in Europe and throughout the world: in the diaspora, conditions must be created not so much to preserve Armenian identity, but to attract Armenians who are not involved. In Armenia, conditions must continue to be created for success.

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AGBU Highlights

PLOVDIV, BULGARIA

AGBU Plovdiv Chairman Roupen Chavoushian Awarded the Saint Nerses Shnorhali Medal

On March 26, His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, awarded AGBU Plovdiv chairman Roupen Chavoushian with the Saint Nerses Shnorhali Medal for his contribution to the Armenian Apostolic Church and to the Armenian people. For nearly twenty years, Chavoushian has been a member of the Sourp Kevork Church in Plovdiv and has devoted his time and effort to the prosperity of the church. Since 2014, he has served as the deputy chairman of the Diocesan Council and continues to assist and donate to Armenian churches across Bulgaria.



LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

AGBU London Honors Former Chairman and Trust Member Assadour Guzelian

On March 20, AGBU London organized a literary event and reception in honor of former AGBU London chairman and current AGBU London Trust member Assadour Guzelian. Guzelian—a writer, poet, editor and celebrated leader in the Armenian diaspora—was the chapter chairman from 1990 to 1992 and is currently serving the London Trust as an advisor. In attendance were representatives of the Armenian Church and the Armenian embassy as well as members of the Armenian community of London. Guzelian's literary achievements were emphasized during the event, including his first book, an epic poem entitled *Hamo and Fadileh* (1960); *Everlasting Friendship* (2009); *Turning the Press Pages* (2011), a collection of Guzelian's articles from his fifty-year career; and *The Letters Talk* (2014), a collection of letters between Guzelian and distinguished personalities.



BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

The AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Celebrates its 40th Anniversary

On February 26, the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School celebrated its 40th anniversary at a gala held under the patronage of the AGBU Board of Directors at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The gala was attended by AGBU President Berge Setrakian and Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church Hovnan Derderian as well as school alumni and members of the wider AGBU community. The honoree of the evening was AGBU Vice President Sinan Sinanian, who was honored with the Saint Gregory the Illuminator Medal, the highest honor bestowed by His Holiness Karekin II, the Catholicos of All Armenians. Established in 1976 in the heart of the San Fernando Valley, the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School offers classes from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. Over the years, the school has accommodated the educational needs of the growing Armenian community and has prided itself on its academic excellence.



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MOUNT EVEREST, NEPAL

Climber Ara Khatchadourian Waves AGBU Flag Atop Mount Everest

On May 22, Ara Khatchadourian waved the AGBU flag for the first time atop Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world. Khatchadourian, an AGBU Yervant Demirjian Elementary School alumnus and participant in the AGBU Scouts and Sports programs in Beirut, dedicated his climb to the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. Upon his return to Marseille, he was met with a hero's welcome and received a Gold Medal from the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia.



NEW YORK, NEW YORK

AGBU Expands Education Innovation Platform to Improve English Proficiency in Armenia

In May, AGBU announced the addition of ANI to its growing AGBU Education Innovation platform. The program—founded in September 2015 by Australian Armenian siblings Ray and Meline Nazloomian—joins English-speakers in the diaspora with English-learners in Armenia to help improve English proficiency in the country. Seeing their program grow exponentially in its first year, the Nazloomians chose to partner with AGBU to help further grow and develop ANI.

This partnership is the latest initiative to reach the program's goal of connecting students in Armenia with native English-speakers across the globe. ANI connects coaches and students for a free, once-a-week, 30-minute to 45-minute, one-on-one Skype session, during which students have the opportunity to practice and improve their English outside the classroom. The curriculum is broken into 12-week blocks and students and coaches can continue their work together for as many blocks as they choose. By April 2016, the program included 60 students from across Armenia and 60 coaches from Australia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and the United States. Now with the support of AGBU, the program is in the process of increasing its number of coaches and students. AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) has already begun work in Armenia to encourage more students to participate in the program. To register as a coach or a student, please visit www.myani.org.

BUENOS AIRES AND CÓRDOBA, ARGENTINA; MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY; AND SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

AGBU Central Board Members Tour Chapters in South America

In April, AGBU Buenos Aires, AGBU Córdoba, AGBU Montevideo and AGBU São Paulo welcomed AGBU President Berge Setrakian and AGBU Central Board members Sam Simonian and Ruben Vardanyan for visits of their chapters and programs. Their speeches centered largely around the transformation of AGBU goals and the new direction the organization has been taking in the past two years, reformulating its programs to confront the challenges of the Armenian population worldwide. Setrakian emphasized the importance of seeing the Armenian nation as global, rather than local; Simonian described the process of creating the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh; and Vardanyan explained the various projects being implemented in Armenia and explained the potential for the development of the tourist industry in Armenia. On all four stops, the board members met with AGBU leaders and members, along with AGBU students, scouts and members of YP Buenos Aires and YP São Paulo.



BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

AGBU Asbeds's 15th Anniversary Celebration Honors Former Chairmen

On May 7, the AGBU Asbeds of Los Angeles celebrated their 15th anniversary at the Montage Hotel in Beverly Hills with nearly one hundred members and guests, including former chairmen who were honored for their dedicated service. The Asbeds are comprised of individuals who were active members in various aspects of AGBU in their youth, including youth groups, athletics and scouting union, and continue to serve the organization in various capacities as adults. During the event, former chairmen—Jack Abajian, Krikor Patatian, Kurken Berksanlar, Diran Jerejian, and Harout Yaghsejian—were honored for their contributions to advancing the AGBU mission. This year, long-time board member Aram Aginian was appointed chairman.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

AGBU Distributes Nearly \$1 Million in Scholarships to Students Worldwide

In the 2015-2016 academic year, AGBU awarded nearly \$1 million in scholarships to 435 students in nearly 30 countries. For almost a century, the AGBU Scholarship Program has helped further the educational pursuits of tens of thousands of promising young Armenian university students enrolled at some of the world's top-ranked universities.

Each year, AGBU accepts applications for five categories of scholarships: Heritage Scholar Grants for high-achieving high school seniors at the three AGBU high schools in the United States; US Graduate Fellowships for students in professional, master's and doctoral programs in the United States; International Scholarships for students studying outside the United States with special funds for the United Kingdom, France and Syria; Performing Arts Fellowships for undergraduate and graduate students in music, drama and film; and Religious Studies Fellowships for graduate students pursuing theology and youth ministry.

This year, the AGBU Scholarship Committee was particularly proud to support young women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM fields are one of the fastest growing employment sectors and considering its historically large gender imbalance, the committee was honored to help prepare Armenian women for successful careers in these areas.

Susie Sargsyan, a doctoral candidate in applied mathematics at the University of Washington, began her academic interest in math at Yerevan State University: "Education in Armenia still carries the remnants of the Soviet Union methodology and pays too much attention to theory and less to practice. This fact made me want to continue my studies abroad." But Susie is not planning on staying in the United States after she graduates. She intends to return to Armenia and develop the field of applied mathematics in her native country with a focus on real world application. "It was great to finally see how mathematics can be applied for modeling and better understanding diseases, the behavior of neu-

rons, predicting weather, analyzing data and more. All these facets keep me amazed and excited about the future and what I can do using mathematics." During the school year, Susie works as a research and teaching assistant, but during the summers her budget is tight: "It's very stressful to think about saving money when I'm not working. The AGBU scholarship helped me feel less pressure, so that I could concentrate on my research and for that I am grateful!"

The AGBU Fellowship has also helped medical students like Claire Alexanian, a first-year student at the Georgetown University School of Medicine in Washington D.C. For Claire, medicine runs in her family: "My mother, a practicing pediatrician, was a tremendous influence on me growing up. From a young age, she would teach me about science and medicine, which really piqued my interest in the field. My love of science and inclination to help others made medicine a natural fit for me." At Georgetown, Claire has encountered a supportive learning environment with

stellar classmates and patients who often share their personal stories with her. But she is not just acquainted with patients in the American healthcare system. Claire spent July 2015 in Armenia with the Armenian American Health Professional Organization (AAHPO) to provide medical treatment for villages, where there is a lack of access and affordability. "As my first exposure to healthcare in Armenia, I became better acquainted with their healthcare system and have a clear understanding of their medical needs." She hopes to come back in the future and continue to improve the health in the villages of

Armenia, but in the meantime, she will continue to study on an AGBU scholarship, which has helped her with her medical school essentials: books, tuition and her very first stethoscope.

Outside the United States, the AGBU Scholarship Program has also helped young women to excel in the STEM fields. In Istanbul, Turkey, Şıla Temizel is not only a master's student in environmental engineering at Boğaziçi University, but also a researcher at the Boğaziçi University Sustainable Development and Cleaner Production Center, which focuses on eco-efficiency, sustainable consumption and green entrepreneurship in Turkey.

"Environmental issues together with chemistry captured my interest as an undergraduate. I felt I should gain some practical experience working in a research environment to gain first-hand knowledge of what the life of a research scientist entails. I have enjoyed every moment of my work: especially the opportunity to participate in important projects and discuss ideas with senior engineers and chemists."

After Şıla graduates, she hopes to pursue engineering as a doctoral student in the United States. "The AGBU scholarship has enabled me to buy important books related to engineering and even the laptop I needed to present at conferences in Italy and Spain as well as prepare my PhD applications."

In Linz, Austria, Armig Kabrelian is pursuing her bachelor's degree in biological chemistry at Johannes Kepler University. Armig, born and raised in Aleppo, fled to Austria with her family when the conflict began in Syria. "As a non-European Union student, tuition fees are very expensive at



Şıla Temizel



my university. I want to thank AGBU for awarding me this scholarship and easing the financial burden on me and my family.” As a child, Armig was raised on stories of Armenians with great talents, including scientists, and she was determined to become one of these great talents herself. “My motivation to continue my education in the sciences was to strengthen Armenian society and keep the Armenian voice strong in this challenging world. Every time I hear about achievements of fellow Armenians, I feel a great sense of pride.”

Also in Europe, Arpine Martirosyan studies civil engineering at the Dresden University of Technology in Germany. Arpine grew up in the up-and-coming Armenian town of Dilijan, home to the prestigious United World College Dilijan. “During my childhood, I saw many important schools and factories in my hometown built by my grandparents and parents. It is an indescribable filling when one can see that the results of his work help people over so many years.” This feeling led Arpine to study bridge and tunnel design to help her country develop with modern technologies and creative designs. In Germany, she has seen herself grow as a professional and gain international experience, including language skills which Arpine has used her AGBU scholarship to improve: “Thanks to my scholarship, I could afford German language courses, which will be a great help for increasing my career opportunities in Germany.”



YEREVAN, ARMENIA

The AGBU #Help Artsakh Campaign Raises \$325,000 and Counting

Since the four-day war in Nagorno-Karabakh in April, AGBU worldwide fundraising efforts, individual donors and a special allocation by the AGBU Central Board of Directors have raised more than \$325,000 for the people of Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and their armed forces. After large scale military attacks by Azerbaijan and the continuing security threats it poses to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, there is a dire need for a unified and reinforced commitment by Armenians worldwide. AGBU has reaffirmed its unwavering support to the people and armed forces of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh and brought urgent support to the families of fallen soldiers, injured soldiers and innocent civilians.

On May 13, the AGBU Armenia team visited severely injured soldiers and volunteer fighters at the Central Clinical Military Hospital and the Rehabilitation Center of the Armenian Red Cross Society in Yerevan. The team also visited the homes of discharged soldiers and families of fallen soldiers in the regions of Shirak and Ararat to deliver \$1,000 to each family.

On May 21 and 22, AGBU Armenia visited Nagorno-Karabakh, including the Military Hospital in Stepanakert and the homes of fallen soldiers in the regions of Martakert, Martuni and Hadrout, providing families in need each with \$1,000 of financial assistance. AGBU Armenia Deputy Director Hovig Eordekian met with Arayik Harutyunyan, Prime Minister of Nagorno-Karabakh, and introduced AGBU’s campaign directions, which include the purchase of medical equipment and supplies, financial assistance to the families of fallen and injured soldiers and support to displaced families.

“After returning to Yerevan, we will immediately start a very important phase of our campaign, which entails purchasing medical equipment and assisting our military. The list of equipment was identified by the Defense Ministries and prioritized by the medical divisions of the military. It will include emergency and intensive care equipment as well as hemostatic agents and portable x-rays. We believe that this equipment will help save the lives of soldiers on the frontline,” said Eordekian.

Since the beginning of April, AGBU Armenia has provided support to more than 70 displaced Armenians, including 30 children, by hosting them at the Nairi Hotel in Stepanakert, where AGBU Nagorno-Karabakh program coordinator Sassoun Baghdasaryan has been overseeing this project and delivering financial assistance to 21 families of injured and fallen soldiers.

To ensure its resources are correctly allocated, AGBU began coordinating its programs with Armenian governmental agencies as well as other organizations that have initiated fundraising campaigns. As a result of these efforts, AGBU Yerevan, Repat Armenia, Sahman and the Arar Foundation created a Coordination Group, a growing network that meets regularly to share experiences and recommendations.

AGBU Young Professionals

The **AGBU Young Professionals (YP)** is a growing network of YP groups and supporters around the world who preserve and promote the Armenian identity and heritage for Armenians between the ages of 22 and 40. The YP movement began in 1995 with the first group in Los Angeles. Since then, the network has expanded to include chapters and partnerships in North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East.



YP Groups Worldwide Fundraise for the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians

The AGBU Young Professionals (YP) network has been instrumental in fundraising for the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians. Harnessing their enthusiasm, professional networks and creativity, YPs around the world have made a special effort to raise awareness and funds for Armenians in need. At the center of their efforts

stands the AGBU #ICareICan campaign, driven by social media and fueled by the idea that even the smallest initiative can make a big difference:

YP Austria led the YPs of Europe with its October benefit concert with Kariné Poghosyan. The New York-based pianist donated all the proceeds from her concert in Vienna to Syrian relief.

YP London continued the European YPs commitment by hosting three events that raised both awareness and much-needed funds: an Armenian Christmas brunch and two spin-a-thon fundraisers in the winter that brought the community together in solidarity.

YP Beirut followed in the footsteps of its sister group with a spin-a-thon in April and devised its own inventive Manti Night

the following month where a local bakery donated \$1 for each piece sold.

YP Toronto and **YP Montreal** recognized the need for employment among the Syrian refugees in their communities and came together to hold job fairs this winter, helping to improve job prospects with resume-building and cultural acclimation classes.

YP Greater New York organized its annual Thanksgiving Eve Dance in November and Silent Auction and Cocktail Party in January to make a significant contribution to the relief fund.

YP Los Angeles and **YP Buenos Aires** put together creative fundraisers with YP Los Angeles's Casino Night and YP Buenos

Aires's social media campaign that both contributed to the fund.

YP Northern California spearheaded a flurry of fundraising events this year, including a comedy night in November, its Winter Gala Weekend in February and a tragicomic performance by Lousine Shama-mian in May.



YP Beirut



YP Greater New York



NEW YORK, NEW YORK

YP Greater New York Welcomes Expert on Women's Leadership

On March 11, YP Greater New York welcomed women's leadership expert Monique Svazlian Tallon to the AGBU Central Office in New York for a presentation on her book, *Leading Gracefully: A Woman's Guide to Confident, Authentic and Effective Leadership*. During her lecture, Tallon led audience members in exercises to develop the skillset to become an inclusive and effective leader and discussed seven feminine strengths, including vision, vulnerability, care, intuition, empathy, collaboration and humility. Tallon, a NYSIP alumna, is the CEO of Highest Path Consulting, which specializes in executive coaching and training to empower next-generation women leaders. In 2013, she founded the Women and Power Leadership Forum and is a writer for the Huffington Post on topics related to women's leadership. Her business background includes working at several large corporations in Silicon Valley. In the coming months, Tallon will bring her expertise to YP groups in California and Massachusetts.



BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

YP Northern California Hosts Comedy Show for Humanitarian Relief

On May 8, YP Northern California (YPNC) hosted the Bay Area premiere of Lousine Shamamian's comedy show "Shake The Earth." Produced by YPNC Vice-Chair Rose Nemet, the groundbreaking show debuted in the San Francisco Bay Area to a packed house of over one hundred young professionals, family, and friends at the La Peña Cultural Center in Berkeley. The evening brought together a community in support of Syrian and Nagorno-Karabakh Armenian relief and featured a live production unlike the community had ever seen. "Shake The Earth" follows Lousine's journey growing up gay in the Armenian community of New York City. The show is an explosive tale of survival, resilience and freedom. Lousine brings the injustice inflicted on her ancestors to light while standing up for herself and recounting her great-grandfather Georgi's remarkable story of survival during the Armenian Genocide.



NEW YORK, NEW YORK

YP Greater New York (YPGNY) Raises \$35,000 for AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund

The AGBU Young Professionals of Greater New York (YPGNY) kicked off 2016 with its 15th annual Silent Auction & Cocktail Party at The Martha Washington Hotel in New York. The event raised \$35,000 for the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund and drew 250 young professionals from throughout the northeast. It also attracted event sponsors, including Tito's Handmade Vodka, 90+ Cellars and Manhattan Beer Distributors. Throughout the evening, guests enjoyed music by Greg "DJ GLO" Stepanian and bid on a wide array of gifts, luxury items and services donated by leading businesses and generous individuals in the fields of fashion, sports, dining and entertainment. These included items from Almayass, Michael Aram, The St. Regis, Soul Cycle, Gregg Emery and Louis Vuitton, among many others. 2016 was the third year the YPGNY committee chose to hold the annual Silent Auction & Cocktail Party in support of the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund.



BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

YP Belgium Brings Young Professionals Together for an Evening of Networking

On February 19, YP Belgium brought together dozens of young professionals in Brussels for an evening of networking. Joining established members and new participants, the event attracted young Armenians interested in receiving career advice and expanding their networks, while also providing the opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new people. Since its inception in 2014, YP Belgium has been hosting networking events regularly in an effort to keep connections between young Armenians alive.



AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

YP Amsterdam Brainstorms about Future Challenges Facing Armenians

On April 29, YP Amsterdam organized a brainstorming session around the theme of "Joining Forces" to assess how the Armenian young professionals of the Netherlands can activate their personal networks to help alleviate future challenges facing Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and the diaspora. The impetus of the event was the conflict with Azerbaijan at the beginning of April. The session was built around two questions: what are possible challenges that the region might face in the future? Who are the people in our own combined networks who we can approach to help? YP quickly mobilized its community to help start a conversation that is essential to bringing a peaceful end to the enduring tension between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

AGBU Chapters



NEW YORK, NEW YORK

AGBU Performing Arts Department Welcomes Tigran Hamasyan and His *Luyis i Luso* Project

On May 4, the AGBU Performing Arts Department welcomed jazz prodigy Tigran Hamasyan and his *Luyis i Luso* project at the Bric House Ballroom in Brooklyn. The project, Hamasyan's re-arrangement of 5th to 20th-century sacred Armenian music for piano and voices—in collaboration with the Yerevan State Choir—is a multimedia installation and concert that uses life-sized screens to project his 2,000-mile pilgrimage through historical Armenia, documented by filmmakers Alex Igidbashian and Emily Mkrtychian. The audio-visual installation uses Berlin's Studio Ondè's projection technologies, sound design, and animations that transform historic spaces around the world into living, breathing digital recreations. During the performance, Hamasyan improvised a live soundtrack to the installation and then invited his award-winning *Mockroot* trio—Sam Minaie on bass and Nate Wood on drums—to join the concert.



LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

AGBU Western District Celebrates the 110th Anniversary of the Organization

On May 1, AGBU Western District celebrated the 110th anniversary of the organization with over 900 guests at The Reef in downtown Los Angeles. The evening opened with *The History of Humanitarianism*, a timeline highlighting AGBU's accomplishments, through numerous displays of artifacts and photographs dating back to 1906 until the present. The event also showcased the art and talents of both students and professional artists and was highlighted by the evening's marquee speaker, entrepreneur, philanthropist and member of the AGBU Central Board of Directors, Ruben Vardanyan. AGBU Western District Chair Talin V. Yacoubian, Esq., gave opening remarks that emphasized the AGBU Western District's focus on taking strategic risks in order to move forward with increased ferocity and strength. Mr. Vardanyan's message, delivered during a conversation with Ms. Yacoubian, strongly resonated with the audience. Broadcasted live on YouTube, the event reached thousands across the globe.

AGBU Chapters

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

AGBU Fresno Welcomes Dr. George Bournoutian for Lecture on Russia and Iran

On January 28, AGBU Fresno, along with the Leon S. Peters Foundation and the Armenian studies program at the California State University—Fresno, sponsored a lecture with Dr. George Bournoutian on the topic of Iran's mission of apology to Russia. Bournoutian, a professor at Iona College, explained the inner workings of the Iranian mission in the murder of Alexander Griboyedov, the envoy and minister plenipotentiary of Russia in the early eighteenth century. Bournoutian skillfully informed those present of the dealings and the travels of the members of the mission.



WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

AGBU New England District Raised over \$13,000 for the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian and Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians

On May 7, AGBU New England District hosted a night of jazz at its newly renovated Center in Watertown, Massachusetts. The event raised over \$13,000 for the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian and Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians. Thanks to the generosity of several underwriters, 100% of all the ticket donations have been sent to the relief fund. "It was a unique and incredibly successful event all in the name of humanitarian assistance," said Ara J. Balikian, chair of the New England District. "We transformed our Center into an intimate lounge, and everyone had a great time." During the performance, the audience enjoyed homemade desserts, premium cocktails, and listened to a performance by outstanding musicians Vartan Ovsepyan (piano), John Lockwood (bass), Karen Kocharyan (drums) and Samvel Galstian (vocals). The event was supported by the Tekeyan Cultural Association.



SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN

The AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School Becomes Leader in STEM Education

In the 2015–2016 academic year, the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School in Southfield, Michigan—under the guidance of high school principal Dr. Hosep Torossian—became a pioneer in its initiation of the first Project Lead The Way (PLTW) course offered at any Central Michigan University-authorized charter school. PLTW is the nation's leading provider of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs. The first course at the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School—titled Project Lead The Way-Human Body Systems (PLTW-HBS) and instructed by teacher Mae Gosaynie—exemplifies student engagement and motivation at its finest.

This course is designed around a MANIKEN® on which each body system is created out of clay. The systems and their respective organs are labelled with tape flags. Concept maps of the mechanisms utilized in the systems are then created using Inspiration software on classroom notebooks. Scenarios of patients with symptoms are provided to the students, so that they can analyze the symptoms and diagnose the fictitious patients. Students take on the role of forensic anthropologists, neurologists, ophthalmologists, biometric engineers—for a total of eleven careers. All projects are real-world authentic assessments as they provide students with the opportunity to experience firsthand the challenges faced by these professionals each day in their communities. At the end of the year students have the option to take an online assessment administered by pltw.org that may offer them college/university equivalency credit if they score a six or above on a scale of 1–10.



TORONTO, CANADA

AGBU Toronto Hosts Book Reading With Author of *As the Poppies Bloomed*

On April 14, AGBU Toronto—with the participation of the Armenian Association of Toronto and the Bolsahay Cultural Association—hosted a conversation between Salpi Ghazarian, the director of the Institute of Armenian Studies at the University of Southern California, and Maral Boyadjian, the author of the award-winning novel *As the Poppies Bloomed*. The conversation between the two sisters touched on family history with vivid recollections of growing up with their maternal grandmother, a genocide survivor. During the event, the audience learned about the mythical village of Salor, as Boyadjian summarized the first chapter of her novel. She also described her five years of research, writing, publishing and distribution, with a goal of completing *As the Poppies Bloomed* in time for the 2015 centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

TORONTO, CANADA

AGBU Toronto Organizes Benefit Concert for Syrian Armenian Relief

On May 6, AGBU Toronto organized a Benefit Concert in support of the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians. Drawing nearly four hundred people, the concert was held under the auspices of His Excellency Armen Yeghanyan, Ambassador and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to Canada. The evening featured Sona Barseghyan, a recipient of an AGBU Performing Arts Fellowship, as well as talented local artists: Narine Mardoyan (piano), Krikor Jangeozian (baritone), Lilit Zakaryan (violin) and Ara Arakelyan (saxophone). Alongside more well-known pieces, such as music by Khachaturian, Babadjanyan, Baghdasaryan and Mirzoyan, newer arrangements of Komitas and Sayat Nova songs composed by Giorgy Saradjian were also performed. The concert was designed to take the audience on a musical journey throughout the regions of Historic Armenia to sample various genres and eras. While preserving the authenticity of the original musical creations, the audience was also presented with unique contemporary interpretations.



MONTREAL, CANADA

AGBU Montreal Welcomes Canadian Foreign Minister at its Armenian Genocide Commemoration

On April 22, AGBU Montreal welcomed the Honorable Stéphane Dion, the foreign minister of Canada, to its Armenian Genocide Commemoration Ceremony at the AGBU Center. The event, which drew over 500 people, marked the first time a Canadian foreign minister attended the commemoration ceremony. The event began with a cultural program—including performances by the Alex Manoogian School Choir, the AGBU Marching Band, the Scouts and the Mashtots Choir—and was followed by the keynote speaker, Representative of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic to the United States and Canada Robert Avetisyan, who spoke about the interrelation of the Armenian Genocide and Nagorno-Karabakh, the impossibility of Azeri rule and the hope for independence.



Buenos Aires, Argentina

AGBU Buenos Aires Welcomes Celebrated Photographer Norair Chahinian

On May 3, AGBU Buenos Aires welcomed the celebrated Brazilian Armenian photographer Norair Chahinian for a presentation about his book and exhibition *The Power of Emptiness*. The event was a special sneak-peek of the exhibition—co-sponsored by the Armenia Fund of Argentina and la Feria Internacional del Libro de Buenos Aires—for the youth of AGBU Buenos Aires and included stories of Chahinian's four years living in Turkey, including a trip to his ancestral town of Urfa. Chahinian was born in 1979, in São Paulo, Brazil. For various photography projects he has traveled to South America, Europe, the Caucasus and the Middle East. His photographs have been published in daily newspapers and periodicals and were featured in various exhibitions. In 2008, in Buenos Aires, he published a photography album titled "Armenia."

Montevideo, Uruguay

AGBU Montevideo Lays Groundwork for Expanded Youth Programs

In March and April, AGBU Montevideo laid the groundwork for expanded youth programs, including the Liga de Jóvenes (AYA) and the Ereván 50 scouting movement. On March 16, 17 and 18, the chapter held a course for scout leaders to train them to welcome new scouts, be more effective leaders and be more knowledgeable about Armenian history and AGBU projects in Armenia and the diaspora. In April, the scouting activities officially began with their annual camping trip. Their major activity was a historic visit through Montevideo that replicated the experiences of the scouts' ancestors who arrived in the country between 1918 and 1925.





BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

AGBU Europe Calls for the Rediscovery and Valorization of Diasporas in Europe

On May 2, AGBU Europe co-organized a conference at the European Parliament in Brussels that called for the rediscovery and valorization of Europe's diasporas through its A Europe of Diasporas network. The conference panels discussed two areas of concerns: education and the need for inclusive narratives. The panel on inclusive narratives addressed the effects of the near absence of diasporas in the narratives that shape people's understanding in the media, education, entertainment and public discourse. A Europe of Diasporas is a network of diasporas in Europe. It was established by AGBU Europe, Phiren Amenca and the European Union of Jewish Students and aims to help affirm the notion that diasporas have been part of the European story for many centuries and that they are an asset for Europe.



BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

A Europe of Diasporas Network Launches a Mobile App for Armenian Cultural Heritage

In March, A Europe of Diasporas—of which AGBU Europe is a founding member and which is co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union—launched a mobile app that gives access to a unique map of European diasporas with landmarks, monuments and community centers of the Armenian, Jewish, Roma and Assyrian diasporas in Europe. It also allows users to take pictures of historic landmarks and add them to the map. The app is available both on Google Play and on the App Store. The A Europe of Diasporas network was established by AGBU Europe, Phiren Amenca and the European Union of Jewish Students and aims to help affirm the notion that diasporas have been part of the European story for many centuries and that they are an asset for Europe.



ALMELO, THE NETHERLANDS

AGBU Holland Hosts Presentation with AGBU Europe Youth Representative

On May 15, AGBU Holland hosted a presentation with Herminé Duzian, the AGBU Europe youth representative, at the AGBU Center in Almelo. The event, co-organized with YP Amsterdam, gave an overview of the various AGBU programs designed for children and young adults both in Europe and in Armenia. Duzian highlighted the Colonie de Vacances Summer Camp in Haute-Savoie, France for children; the Discover Armenia program in Armenia for teenagers; and the Musical Armenia Program and Yerevan Summer Internship Program for college students.

PARIS, FRANCE

The AGBU France Performing Arts Department Organizes Sonata Concert

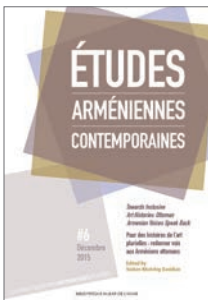
On April 21, the AGBU France Performing Arts Department organized a piano and violin sonata concert at the Alex Manoogian Cultural Center in Paris in honor of the 101st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The event—held under the auspices of the Coordination Council of Armenian French Organizations (CCAF)—featured a musical program that included Brahms, Debussy and Khachaturian performed by renowned violinist Jean-Marc Phillips-Varjabédian and pianist Varduhi Yeritsyan. Among the guests were the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to France, His Excellence Viguen Tchitetchian and the Representative of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh in France, Mr. Hovhannes Gevorkian. At the end of the evening, Yeritsyan donated all the proceeds from the evening's CD sales to the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians.



PARIS, FRANCE

The AGBU Nubarian Library Publishes New Issue of *Études arméniennes contemporaines*

In 2016, the AGBU Nubarian Library released the sixth issue of its *Études arméniennes contemporaines*, a bilingual, biannual and multidisciplinary journal published in Paris. The articles in the latest issue—subtitled “Towards Inclusive Art Histories: Ottoman Armenian Voices Speak Back”—focus on Armenian arts in the Ottoman Empire. The latest issue goes beyond art history to reflect on the way Ottoman history has been treated by historians. The articles advocate challenging conventional understandings of history and critique dominant nationalist discourses. They also introduce into the historical debate silenced voices that have been deliberately excluded from history. In so doing, this volume aims to contribute to the discussion on creating inclusive, nuanced and just representations of complex pasts. All articles are available for free on the journal's website: eac.revues.org.



SOFIA, BULGARIA

AGBU Sofia Holds Dance and Traditional Armenian Costume Fashion Show

On May 29, AGBU Sofia hosted a dance and traditional costume fashion show entitled Reflecting on the Armenian Spirit and Soul at the Bulgarian National Musical Theater with a dance group visiting from Istanbul. Under the auspices of the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia in Bulgaria, the event showcased the preservation of Armenian identity and paid tribute to the talent, artistry and skills of Armenian artists and artisans. For the event, Julie Mutlu, the director of the group, made the collection of 100 costumes by hand and sought to leave a legacy for future generations about the heritage and traditions of their ancestors.



PLOVDIV, BULGARIA

The AGBU Plovdiv Erebuni Band Performed for the Armenian Community in Greece

On February 13, the AGBU Plovdiv Erebuni Band traveled to Greece to perform for the Armenian community of Komotini, Greece. The 16-person vocal and instrumental group was invited to Komotini by the Krikor Lusavorich Armenian Church Board and the city's Armenian Cultural Organization. During the concert, the young soloists Marina Spasova and Ovanes Karahlyan sang traditional Armenian songs, including "Ha-vadum em," "Chi gareli," "Djeyrani bes," among many others, under the musical direction of Ardash Erniasyan. Among the guests was the Deputy Mayor for Cultural Affairs for the City of Komotini.



DAMASCUS, SYRIA

The AGBU Gullabi Gulbenkian School Celebrates the 110th Anniversary of the Founding of AGBU

On April 15, the AGBU Gullabi Gulbenkian School celebrated the 110th anniversary of the founding of AGBU in the presence of AGBU Damascus members and friends. During the event, the sixth grade students presented a short history of the organization, focusing on its numerous activities and campaigns. AGBU Damascus recognized the generosity of the AGBU community worldwide during challenging times in the history of their county and vowed to continue upholding their Armenian identity.



PLOVDIV, BULGARIA

The AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra Holds a Charity Concert in Plovdiv

On February 23, the AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra held a charity concert in Plovdiv, Bulgaria in support of Zlatka Alexandrova, the longtime make-up artist of the Plovdiv Opera. The concert, which drew more than 400 guests, was organized by the Mayor of Plovdiv, Zdravko Dimitrov; the chairman of YP Plovdiv and board member of AGBU Europe, Haik Garabedian; and the chairwoman of AGBU Sofia, Sonia Avakian-Bedrossian. The musicians of the AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra performed with conductor Maestro Bedros Papazian; Haigashod Agasyan, a noted singer and composer; Ivaylo Mihaylov, a well-known tenor from the Plovdiv Opera; and mezzo-soprano Varta Sargsyan. The concert included several masterpieces by Mozart, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, Aram Khachaturian, Gomis, Marin Goleminov, Vladimir Djambazov and Vasil Spasov.

AGBU Chapters



LATAKIA, SYRIA

The AGBU Latakia Karoun Children's Choir Performs Christmas Eve Show

On January 5, the AGBU Latakia Karoun Children's Choir performed a Christmas Eve show for the Armenian community. The choir was founded in 2012 under the direction of conductor Berge Yeretsian and has since had eight performances, including one in honor of the centenary of the Armenian Genocide last year. The program of their Christmas Eve show included songs and carols in Armenian, Arabic and English. At the end of the performance, AGBU Latakia expressed its gratitude to Yeretsian for sowing the seeds of love and importance for Armenian music in the young choir members.

KAMISHLI, SYRIA

AGBU Kamishli Welcomes 90 Children to its Annual Summer School

On June 6, AGBU Kamishli welcomed 90 children to the start of its annual summer school at the AGBU Karnig Yacoubian Hall. The school was organized on the initiative of the chapter's Ladies' and Young Women's Committee with the purpose of gathering the Armenian children in the community and creating a pleasant environment for them despite political unrest. Ten teachers and supervisors are volunteering their time to look after students from kindergarten to seventh grade, teaching Armenian, Arabic and English along with Armenian history, religion, music, dance, drawing and crafts.



ALEPPO, SYRIA

The AGBU Lazar Najarian-Calouste Gulbenkian School Commemorates the 101st Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

On April 22, the AGBU Lazar Najarian-Calouste Gulbenkian fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes commemorated the 101st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The commemoration began with an artistic program that welcomed the AGBU Syria District chairman Nerses Nersoyan, vice chairman Henri Arslanian and members of the Education Committee. After a moment of silence for the victims of the genocide, students recited poetry by Vahan Tekeyan, Barouyr Sevag and Hovhannes Shiraz, performed music by Gomidas and pledged to stay faithful to the Armenian language and culture. Students also laid flowers and lit candles around the genocide memorial in the school's courtyard



BAGHDAD, IRAQ

AGBU Iraq Commemorates the Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide with a Literary and Artistic Evening

On April 21, AGBU Iraq organized a literary and artistic program in honor of the 101st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The program centered around the life of Gomidas Vartabed and was attended by more than 150 members of the Armenian community of Baghdad. Guests included Ambassador of Armenia to Iraq Karen Grigoryan and Primate of the Armenian Catholic Church of Iraq, Emmanuel Dabaghian. The evening's program was composed of Gomidas Vartabed's most famous songs and hymns as well as shadow theater performances of the poetry of Barouyr Sevag.



BEIRUT, LEBANON

AGBU Lebanon Hosts Welcome Reception for New Ambassador of Armenia to Lebanon

On April 19, the AGBU Lebanon District Committee hosted a welcome reception in honor of His Excellency Samvel Mkrtchyan, the newly appointed ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Lebanon, and his wife Isabella. The reception took place at the AGBU Demirdjian Center and was attended by Lebanese ministers and members of parliament, representatives of leading organizations and AGBU benefactors. Executive Director of AGBU Lebanon Anita Lebiar wished the new ambassador great success in his endeavors in Lebanon and gave an overview of the numerous AGBU programs and celebrations that will be organized to honor the organization's 110th anniversary. In turn, Ambassador Mkrtchyan expressed his gratitude to the AGBU leadership for the warm welcome and for the continued support that AGBU extends to Armenia.

CAIRO, EGYPT

AGBU Cairo Celebrates the Publication of Two Books in Arabic on Aspects of Armenian History

On May 7, AGBU Cairo celebrated the publication of two books in Arabic on aspects of Armenian history. The first book was a translation of Raymond Kévorkian's *The Armenian Genocide*. The book, translated by Sahar Tawfik, is considered the most detailed text on the Armenian Genocide and its translation was published by AGBU Cairo. At the event, Kévorkian—inited especially for the launch from Paris—explained the concept of the book and the phases of the genocide. The second book was the first volume of *Armenia and Armenians in the Arab Press, 1876-1923*, a project initiated in 2001 by AGBU Cairo and headed by Dr. Mohamed Refaat Al Imam, to locate, copy and classify all articles published in Arabic newspapers and periodicals during the period. A database of these articles—the result of an extensive search of 253 newspapers and periodicals at the Egyptian National Library—will gradually be accessible to all at www.arminmedia.com as the 36,000 documents are uploaded.

In attendance at the event were His Grace Bishop Ashod Mnatsagarian, the Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Egypt; His Grace Krikor Okostinos Coussa, the Primate of the Armenian Catholic Church in Egypt; His Excellency Armen Melkonian, Ambassador of Armenia in Egypt; along with Egyptian dignitaries, including well-known intellectual and guest of honor Mostafa El Fekky, Mohamed Sabry Arab, the former Minister of Culture as well as Egyptian journalists and the Dream TV channel.



YEREVAN, ARMENIA

AGBU Armenia Hosts Award-Winning National Geographic Photojournalist

On March 18, AGBU Armenia hosted a lecture entitled “Storytelling and Self-Publishing Today” by *National Geographic* photographer John Stanmeyer. During the event, Stanmeyer—winner of the World Press Photo 2013 Contest and the Robert Capa Golden Medal—presented his more than two-decade career. Stanmeyer has been to over one hundred countries, and his latest project has taken him to Armenia. During his presentation, Stanmeyer told the stories behind each of his photos, tackling topics such as disease, global warming and cultural traditions. On his trip to Western Armenia in 2015, Stanmeyer visited Sassoun, Ani, Van and other towns and villages, meeting and photographing survivors of the Armenian Genocide to present the plight of the Armenian people.

AGBU Chapters

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

AGBU Melbourne Commemorates Anzac Day Alongside the Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

On April 25, AGBU Melbourne commemorated Anzac Day alongside the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Every April 25, Australia commemorates the more than 20,000 Australians and New Zealanders who landed at Gallipoli during World War I with Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) Day. The night began with a traditional *hokejash* for over 100 members and friends and was followed by a premiere of the film *Armenia—My Love*, a story of an Armenian family's experiences during the genocide.



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

AGBU Sydney Alex Manoogian Saturday School Honors Armenian Mothers

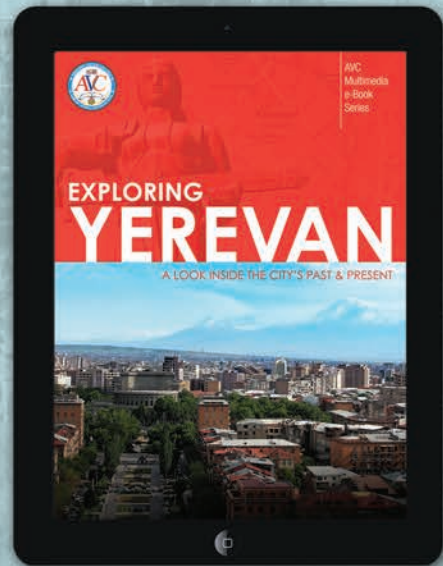
On May 14, the AGBU Sydney Alex Manoogian Saturday School held its annual Mother's Day concert and lunch prepared by the School Parents Committee. During the event, the students recited poetry, performed Armenian dances, and sang traditional Armenian songs, dedicating their final song "Pari Arakil" to their mothers and grandmothers, with a special dedication to mothers in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The word "arakil"—meaning stork—is considered a sacred bird in Armenian culture. The bond and relationship between mother and child is often likened to the strength of the stork as a bearer of good news, peace, harmony, love and good fortune. Detailed information about the cultural significance of the bird was presented to the audience in Armenian and English along with information about other birds, such as the crane and the sparrow.



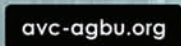
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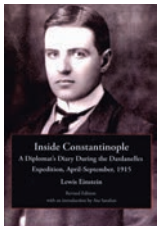


AGBU Bookstore

NEW

Inside Constantinople

Item Number: 027 \$25.00



Lewis Einstein was the first United States official to publicly speak against the genocide of Armenians and his diaries foreshadowed much of what Ambassador Morgenthau wrote in his memoirs a year later. Both works supported each other in giving us invaluable insights into how, and how well, American officials were informed of the Armenian Genocide in 1915.

Author: Lewis Einstein

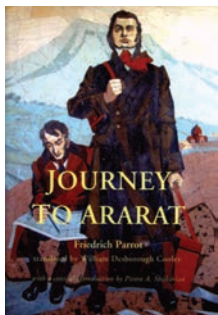
Publisher: Gomidas Institute

Format: Paperback

NEW

Journey to Ararat

Item Number: 029 \$30.00



In February 1828, the Russian Empire annexed the historical Armenian province of Erivan (Yerevan) from Persia. The province included Mount Ararat, a symbol of Armenian national and spiritual identity, considered to be the final resting place of Noah's Ark. The mountain had never before been scaled in recorded history. Explorer Friedrich Parrot of the University of Dorpat (now Tartu, Estonia) decided to take on the challenge of climbing Ararat. In 1829, he traveled to the Caucasus

with an expeditionary team. Accompanied by Armenian writer Khachatur Abovian, he eventually reached the summit of the mountain. His memoir of the expedition, *Journey to Ararat*, was later published in German in 1834 and translated into English by William Desborough Cooley and printed in the United States in 1846.

The content of Parrot's account is not just limited to Armenia and Mount Ararat. It also contains plenty of fascinating insights on the broader region in the late 1820s. These include impressions of Georgia, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Kalmykia, eastern Ukraine, central Russia, and the German colonies of Transcaucasia.

This new edition of the Cooley translation includes a critical introduction by Pietro A. Shakarian, new maps, and historical documents from Estonia and Armenia related to Parrot's expedition. It also includes illustrations from the original English translation of Parrot's book, reproduced with the assistance of the Cleveland Public Library's John G. White Special Collection of Folklore, Orientalia and Chess and Digital Public Library. All of these new and restored elements provide a fresh look and understanding of Parrot's 1829 expedition to the Holy Mountain. The text itself is an engaging and often informative travel memoir of 19th century Russian Armenia and Transcaucasia.

Author: Friedrich Parrot

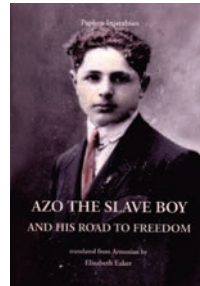
Publisher: Gomidas Institute

Format: Paperback

NEW

Azo The Slave Boy

Item Number: 026 \$20.00



Azo The Slave Boy recounts the painful and emotional journey of Papken Injarabian. The youngest of five children, he was born in 1906 in Amasia, Turkey. When Ottoman Turkey entered World War I, his older brothers were conscripted and the family never saw them again. The Turkish government then ordered the evacuation of Amasia and neighboring villages as part of the planned deportation and destruction of Ottoman Armenians. On June 21, 1915,

nine-year-old Papken, his parents and two sisters had to leave behind their beloved home. They were forced to march for hundreds of miles across the treacherous mountains. After losing his parents and sisters along the way, he was taken in by Kurds as a slave. In order to stay alive, he had no choice but to become a Muslim, and was renamed Azo. In vivid detail, Injarabian recounts his enslavement, which lasted more than four years, and multiple attempts to run away from the cruelty of nine masters and their families.

Author: Papken Injarabian

Publisher: Gomidas Institute

Format: Paperback

NEW

Komitas—The Artist and The Martyr

Item Number: 024 \$15.00



Komitas is the talented artist-priest who tours the remote villages of his homeland, collecting and transcribing folk songs. His long, scrupulous research work as an ethnomusicologist enables him to trace the pre-Christian roots of Armenian sacred music, and elevate its folk music to a high standard. He plays a crucial role in introducing the unique musical heritage of Eastern cultures to the West. Although

he becomes a celebrity musician and his lectures and songs are widely acclaimed, his secular performances of sacred music in his homeland and abroad put him on a collision course with the conservative clergy of his church. On the night of 24 April 1915—known as Red Sunday—Komitas is arrested along with 200 Armenian intellectuals and community leaders and deported far inland by the Ottoman government as a prelude to a premeditated plan to annihilate the Armenian population of Anatolia. Though he is among the few who are reprieved, the terrible nightmare he has experienced, from which he never mentally recovers, takes him into asylums, where he spends the last twenty years of his life in seclusion, his complex inner world governed by the ineradicable images of his past. This compelling book, based on factual events makes the past and people come alive in an entertaining dialogue.

Author: Serge Momjian

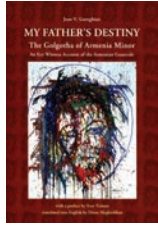
Publisher: Janus Publishing Company Ltd.

Format: Paperback

NEW

My Father's Destiny

Item Number: 030 \$24.00



My Father's Destiny is one of few English language accounts of the Armenian Genocide in Sivas, the province with the largest Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire. This work is composed of a translation of Aram Gureghian's memoirs written at the age of 16 following the Armenian Genocide; the Gureghian family's subsequent fate in exile in France and Soviet Armenia; and an account of the Armenian Genocide in Sivas the ancestral homeland of the Gureghian family. This highly readable work was originally published in French (1999), then in Turkish (2004) and is now available in English.

Author: **Jean V. Gureghian**
 Publisher: **Gomidas Institute**
 Format: **Paperback**

NEW

Ambassador Morgenthau's Story

Item Number: 028 \$28.00



These are the memoirs of the American ambassador to Constantinople between 1913 and 1916. Written in 1918, Morgenthau reveals himself as an astute observer who developed close contacts with the leaders of Ottoman Turkey, as well as their allies. His memoirs cover WWI in the Middle East, including the Turco-German alliance, the Allied Gallipoli campaign and the genocide of Armenians.

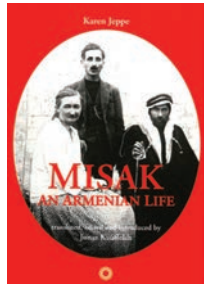
This new edition of Morgenthau's work includes a critical introduction by Ara Sarafian with reference to Morgenthau's private papers.

Author: **Henry Morgenthau**
 Publisher: **Gomidas Institute**
 Format: **Paperback**

NEW

MISAK—An Armenian Life

Item Number: 031 \$24.00



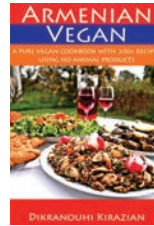
MISAK—An Armenian Life is a masterful translation of Karen Jeppe's biographical work on her adoptive son, Misak, and includes an 84 page introductory essay on Jeppe's legacy working with Armenians in the late Ottoman Empire and French-mandate Syria. The translation, introductory essay and annotations are the work of Jonas Kauffeldt, assistant professor of history at the University of North Georgia.

Author: **Karen Jeppe**
 Publisher: **Gomidas Institute**
 Format: **Paperback**

NEW

Armenian Vegan

Item Number: 025 \$30.00



Need a break from hamburgers? *Armenian Vegan* is your delicious solution. With more than 200 entirely vegan recipes including all your favorite Armenian meals such as stuffed grape leaves, rice and bulgur pilaf, vegetable medleys and hearty breads, *Armenian Vegan* is loaded with delicious recipes with easy-to-follow instructions. In addition to all the classic Armenian vegan dishes, author Dikranouhi Kirazian

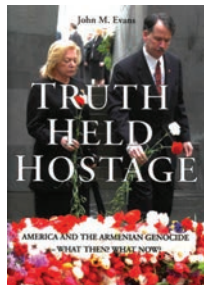
adds her own delightful touches to these favorites—and many of her own new creations in this must have cookbook for anyone looking to expand their vegan diet.

Author: **Dikranouhi Kirazian**
 Publisher: **CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform**
 Format: **Paperback**

NEW

Truth Held Hostage

Item Number: 032 \$32.00



Ambassador John Evans's *Truth Held Hostage* is the most important work about the Armenian Genocide by a US diplomat since Henry Morgenthau's groundbreaking *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* in 1918. Evans writes with elegant clarity that allows us to experience his journey into a major personal and political ethical dilemma concerning the truth of history and the untruth of US government protocol in the name of foreign policy politics.

Author: **John M. Evans**
 Publisher: **Gomidas Institute**
 Format: **Hardcover**

NEW

Come Into My Kitchen

Item Number: 033 \$32.00



In *Come Into My Kitchen*, first-time author Dorothy Ajdaharian-Arakelian includes her favorite Armenian and international recipes, inspired by her family's culinary traditions. From suggested guides for an elegant dinner party for four or forty, to simple short-cuts for the busy parent, Arakelian transforms a wealth of culinary expertise into easy-to-follow instructions for the novice cook or seasoned home-maker, while encouraging readers to experiment with seasonings and flavors to adapt the recipes in her book to one's personal preference.

Author: **Dorothy Arakelian**
 Publisher: **Xlibris**
 Format: **Hardcover**

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Apprentice shoemakers and seamstresses at the Giligian Orphanage and Vocational School in Aleppo (1923).
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