

# WEST WEEKLY

AUGUST 5, 1990

## Armenian library, museum celebrates culture and people

By Carrie Izard Richardson  
SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE

**W**ATERTOWN - Behind the tinted windows of the former Coolidge Bank and Trust Co. building in Watertown Square, a museum is taking shape from the basement up as Gary Lind-Sinianian races against the clock to complete the conversion of a former bank into the permanent site of the Armenian Library and Museum of America in time for its scheduled grand opening in October.

But suggest to the museum's curator and only full-time staff member that the task seems Herculean in the face of what remains to be done, and Lind-Sinianian just smiles and says, "We'll be ready."

It is an ambitious statement. Although the \$2.3 million building was acquired in September 1988, the 3,000 artifacts and 10,000 books were not moved from the museum's temporary site at the First Armenian Church in Belmont until last April. And until the museum was granted an occupancy permit by the town in mid-July, the collection remained stored in the basement.

But Lind-Sinianian and his wife, Susan, the museum's textile curator, conservator and only part-time staff member, are working steadfastly with seven part-time volunteers to give life to the museum in time for the opening, which will mark the culmination of a 19-year-old project by a dedicated museum board of trustees. Since 1971, the board has sought to preserve Armenian heritage by collecting and exhibiting artifacts and written

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GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / DAVID L. RYAN

Susan Lind-Sinianian, textile curator at the Armenian Library and Museum of America in Watertown Square, reads an exhibit for the planned opening in October.

# Armenian library, museum celebrates culture and people

## ■ MUSEUM

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works that illuminate the rich history and colorful culture of Armenian people.

"When this library opens, not only our people but the community will witness the symbolic resurrection of the Armenian people and the preservation of our culture," said Vartan Hartunian, a museum founder and pastor of the First Armenian Church in Belmont.

Persecution and displacement of Armenians in the 19th and early 20th centuries nearly wiped out evidence of Armenian contributions to civilization, said Hartunian in a recent telephone interview. But "the scattered [Armenian] people, who are the diaspora, tried to keep and preserve as much of the Armenian culture as possible. . . the opening of the museum will show our contribution in Oriental rugs, Bible translation, printing, metal work and, perhaps most important, in the realm of survival under the most stringent and horrible conditions," Hartunian said.

The museum is located in the heart of this west suburban community that includes one of the oldest, largest and most active Armenian communities in the nation, according to Lind-Sinianian. He said the museum will be one of the largest ethnic museums in the US and one of the largest, independent Armenian museums outside Armenia.

Indeed, visitors who expect to find a few dusty books and relics in a local museum are in for a big sur-



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / DAVID L. RYAN

Susan and Gary Lind-Sinianian prepare a handcrafted rug for viewing at the Armenian Library and Museum of America.

prise when the doors officially open. First- and second-floor exhibits will feature highlights of the permanent collection, an extensive range of Armenian artifacts from textiles to Armenian artwork.

The third floor had been desig-

nated as an art gallery and living art center in which Armenian and non-Armenian artists will be invited to display their work. A children's center also has been slated for the third floor, along with tentative plans for an artist in residence studio and a

small theater for showing films by independent filmmakers. Several other ideas aimed at keeping the museum a "living museum" are under consideration, according to Susan Lind-Sinianian.

"We want to reach the widest possible audience," said Gary Lind-Sinianian during a recent interview. "Armenians don't live in a vacuum. They're part of the larger world."

Samples of the museum's permanent collection will be featured in the opening exhibit. In the first-floor Bedoukian Hall - named for Paul Z. Bedoukian, who donated his large, private collection of Armenian antiquities including a rare Armenian coin collection - Armenian rugs, coins, metal work, jewelry, pottery and Urartian (Armenian ancestors) artifacts dating back to 1300 BC will be on display. A side gallery in the Bedoukian Hall will feature examples of eastern and western Armenian architecture, costumes and accessories.

In addition to the Mesrob Boyagian Library, second-floor opening exhibits will feature the work of Minas Avedissian, a contemporary, Soviet Armenian painter, and the work of Zaven Najarian, a fifth generation woodworker and cabinet-maker whose family made President John F. Kennedy's personal desk, according to Lind-Sinianian. The second floor also will include an exhibit on the Armenian genocide, which Lind-Sinianian said has had a "profound impact on 20th century Armenians, just as the Holocaust has had

on the Jews."

Lind-Sinianian said the genocide is considered to have taken place between 1915 and 1918 when the Turks drove Armenians into the Syrian desert where it is estimated that more than a million Armenians perished. Hartunian's father, Abraham, a genocide survivor, immigrated to America and penned his autobiography, "Neither to Laugh Nor to Weep," a memoir of the Armenian genocide. The original manuscript and the original English translation by Vartan Hartunian will be featured in the second-floor Hartunian reading room.

In addition to the books, the open access library and the library annex will include newspapers, sheet music, maps and oral history tapes of Armenian genocide survivors.

The task of converting this former bank into a museum has fallen on many shoulders - carpenters, plumbers, electricians, professional exhibit designers, interior designers, the board of trustees and the Lind-Sinianians, who have been overseeing the transformation since last fall.

### Vault to be used as chapel

Wood from the bank teller cages was recycled into a large reception desk at the entrance to the museum. A three-ton door of a first-floor bank vault was removed with a diamond-tipped rotary saw that was 5 feet in diameter. It took two weeks to remove the door, according to Lind-Sinianian, who said the vault will serve as a small chapel in which religious artifacts will be displayed.

In addition to structural and cos-

metic changes, a climate-controlled environment had to be created in four areas of the basement where the majority of the collection is stored. A bank vault that once held safe-deposit boxes, an artifact registration area outside the vault, a textile conservation room and a library annex now are maintained at between 68 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit and at 50 percent humidity, with an air filtration system working constantly. The climate-controlled environment is necessary to prevent the deterioration of artifacts, especially paper and textiles, which Susan Lind-Sinianian said are the most vulnerable.

The basement also includes a darkroom for photographing artifacts when they are catalogued, study vestibules, office and storage space, a graphics room, and a model-making room.

After a peek behind the scenes at the making of the Armenian Museum and Library of America, it is obvious that a museum is more than its exhibits. Indeed, exhibits "are only the tip of the iceberg," according to Lind-Sinianian. "A museum is all sorts of systems and paperwork - it's a process," said Lind-Sinianian, who estimated that some 500 hours of work remain before the museum is ready for the public.

"It's not just a local or sectarian or ethnic museum," Hartunian said. "... Human history has many hidden roots, and one of the hidden roots are the Armenian people. . . I think [the museum] will give even the non-Armenians a sense of their roots."

## ACYOA Central Council Meets With Primate, Reorganizes Regions

The ACYOA Central Council met with the new Primate, the Very Rev. Fr. Khajag Barsamian on Friday, August 31, following the General Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio.

The ACYOA Central Council has increased from five to seven members, due to a constitutional amendment enacted by the assembly last year. The Council has reorganized the geographic regions to promote greater involvement with local chapters. The new regions are: New England, Mid-Atlantic, North-West, South-East, South Central, Great Lakes, and the Capital. Central Council members will visit each chapter at least once during the

year.

In addition to striving for better chapter relations, Council members will be working on several national programs. A national anniversary ball will be held on January 26, 1991, in Boca Raton, Florida, to commemorate the organization's 45th anniversary. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mardigian, ACYOA benefactors, will be honored on this occasion.

Two national summer programs will be offered: The Archbishop Torkom Manoogian Armenian Studies Program, and a new work/study internship in Jerusalem. Other programs being planned include the annual cultural weekend, one-day cultural

and leadership seminars and Christian retreats. Each Central Council member is responsible for programs in addition to regular Council assignments. The Council is also working with Anthony Barsamian, the acting executive secretary, on several projects.

The 1990-1991 Central Council consists of: Lisa Manookian (chairman), Charles Shooshan (vice chairman), Sara Andonian (treasurer), Linda Chagachbanian (recording secretary), Steven Megridichian (corresponding secretary), Suzie Ashjian (advisor), and Laurie Onanian (advisor).

The Central Council will hold its next meeting with the Primate on November 9-11, at the Diocesan headquarters in New York City.



ACYOA Central Council members with the Primates of Eastern, Western and Canada Dioceses. Seated, from left: The Very Rev. Khajag Barsamian, (East-New York), Archbp. Vatche Hovsepian (West-Los Angeles), the Very Rev. Howan Derderian (Montreal, Canada). Second row, from left: Lisa Manookian, Charles Shooshan, Laurie Onanian, Steven Megridichian, Suzie Ashjian, Sara Andonian and Linda Chagachbanian.

## ACYOA Central Counselor Meets With New Primate Very Rev. Fr. Barsamian

NEW YORK, N.Y. - The Central Council met with the new Primate, the Very Rev. Fr. Khajag Barsamian on Friday, August 31, following the General Assembly. The ACYOA Central Council has increased from five to seven members, due to a constitutional amendment enacted at last year's assembly. With this expansion, the Council has reorganized the geographic regions to promote greater involvement with local chapters. The new regions are: New England, Mid-Atlantic, North-West, South-East, South-Central, Great Lakes, and the Capitol Area. Central Council members will visit each chapter at least once during the year.

In addition to striving for better chapter relations, Council members will be working on several national programs - including a couple of new ones. A National Anniversary Ball will be held on January 26, 1991, in Boca Raton, Florida, to commemorate the organization's 45th anniversary. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mardigian, the prominent

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**CENTRAL COUNCIL.** Members of Central Council of ACYOA with the Primate of Eastern, Western and Canadian Diocese at the recent Transitional Meeting. Standing L. to r.: Lis Manookian, Charles Shooshan, Laurie Onanian, Steven Megridichian, Suzie Ashjian, Sara Andonian and Linda Chagachbanian. Seated, l. to r.: Very Rev. Khajag Barsamian, Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian and Very Rev. Hovnan Derderian.

## **Helen & Edward Mardigian Pledge Additional \$50,000 To ACYOA**

NEW YORK, NY - Mr. and Mrs. Helen and Edward Mardigian recently contributed another \$50,000 to the ACYOA Endowment Fund to support the organization's youth programs. During the past four years, the Mardigians have donated a total of \$150,000 to the ACYOA.

The Primate, the Very Rev. Fr. Khajag Barsamian, announced the pledge at Sunday night's Awards Banquet during the National Sports Weekend, at which the Mardigians were honorary chairmen. Father Khajag presented the couple with a beautiful "Khatchcar" on behalf of the ACYOA, in appreciation of their outstanding support.

Fr. Khajag said, "Mr. and Mrs. Mardigian, devoutly religious and very proud of their Armenian heritage, have generously supported religious and cultural programs to perpetuate the Armenian Christian tradition in this country."

Central Council Chairman, Lisa Manookian, stated, "Mr. and Mrs. Mardigian are pillars of strength for Armenians throughout the world. Their unwavering support, dedication and generosity have been experienced by many. Their love for educating and assisting Armenian youth in their service to the Armenian Church knows no bounds. They are truly remarkable people."

The Mardigians have demonstrated great interest and commitment to the Armenian youth through contributions to the ACYOA and other youth organizations. Through their generosity, the ACYOA can expand and enhance its programs to further educate and nurture our youth.

Mr. and Mrs. Mardigian will be honored by the ACYOA during the organization's National Anniversary Ball celebration on January 26, 1990 in Boca Raton, Florida. This occasion will mark the 45th anniversary of the ACYOA.

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NEW YORK - Helen and Edward Mardigian of Detroit, Mich. recently contributed another \$50,000 to the Armenian Church Youth Organization (ACYO) Endowment Fund to support the organization's programs. During the past four years, the Mardigians have donated a total of \$150,000 to the ACYO.

The Primate of the Eastern Diocese, Rev. Fr. Khajag Barsamian, announced the pledge at the recently concluded National Sports

Weekend's Awards Banquet. The Mardigians were honorary chairmen.

The Primate presented the couple with a *khatchkar* on behalf of the ACYO, in appreciation of their continuing support.

The Mardigians will be honored by the ACYO during the organization's National Anniversary Ball Celebration on January, 1991 in Boca Raton, Florida, which will mark the ACYO's 45th anniversary.

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August 22, 1990 The Armenian Observer

## LA wins AGBU Olympian Title

Francisco, Orange County, Pasadena, Philadelphia, San Fernando Valley and Washington. From Canada: Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.

More than 600 persons participated in the games in nine events such as track and field, basketball, volleyball, tennis, pingpong, swimming, badminton, racquetball and soccer, in two categories — seniors and juniors, men and women.

The Honorary Presidents of the 9th Olympian Games were prominent philanthropists Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mardigian of Detroit, who, very much impressed and excited, made a \$100,000 donation to the AGBU Youth Activities Committee as the spectators gave them a thunderous ovation on Sunday, during the closing ceremonies. (Originally they had made a \$25,000 contribution, but added \$75,000 more).

# LA Wins AGBU Olympian Title

## Edward Mardigians Donate \$100,000

LOS ANGELES — Out of the 18 AGBU chapters participating in the four-day 9th Olympian Games, the Los Angeles chapter came out with flying colors by becoming the overall winner and received the Alex and Marie Manoogian Cup last weekend in Los Angeles.

Los Angeles won seven first places in team competitions and 18 individual first place winners in the 9th Olympian Games of the AGBU, held at Occidental College.

The basketball team won the title and received the cup from Mr. Nazareth Kalaydjian, who had donated the cup. The LA team has won the basketball cup for the past five years in a row. Similarly, in volleyball, the LA team won the 6th time in a row and received the cup from Mr. John Boyajian.

Ed Atamian of LA won the tennis first place for the 6th year in a row.

The Glendale chapter took the soccer cup from Mrs. Theresa Deukmedjian, defeating the Pasadena chapter 7-2.

The Glendale chapter won six individual first places.

The AGBU Olympian Games Sportsmanship Trophy donated by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mardigian, was awarded to the Vancouver, British Columbia team.

The 17 chapters participating



Benefactors Mr. and Mrs. Edward and Helen Mardigian

in this year's game were: Bingdale Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Boston, New York/New Jersey, Oakland/San Chicago, Detroit, Fresno, Glen-

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Cont...

# Library & Museum has grand opening

Some 100 persons shared in the festivities as the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) held its formal grand opening last Saturday, Oct. 20.

"It was very successful. People were very impressed," said Susan Lind-Sinianian, the museum's textile curator and conservator.

The museum will now be open Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 1-5 p.m., and Tuesday evenings, 7-9 p.m.

Admission is free.

Upcoming plans include a series of workshops designed to preserve aspects of Armenian culture that may be in danger of dying out.

Museum staff will also work with the staff of the Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, to make sure the museum is accessible to visually-handicapped people.

ALMA is at Main and Church Streets. Watertown Square.



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**ORIENTAL RUG EXPERT** Arthur Gregorian, left, listens to explanations on Armenian coinage from Dr. Paul Badoukian, during grand opening ceremonies at the Armenian Library and Museum of America in Watertown Square. (Staff photo by Cheryl A. Miller)



**HANDSOME ARMENIAN RUGS** are a feature of Coolidge Bank & Trust Building has been remodeled the interior of the Armenian Library and Museum to provide extensive space for the library of America, 65 Main St., Watertown. The former museum. (Staff photo by Cheryl A. Miller)

## Artist Minas Avetisian Is Focus Of ALMA Exhibit & Lecture

WATERTOWN MASS. - A collection of paintings and drawings by the late contemporary Armenian artist Minas Garabed Avetisian (1928-1975) will be shown at the Armenian Library and Museum of America beginning October 20.

The exhibit will be on display when ALMA opens to the public in its new building at 65 Main Street, in the heart of the historic Armenian community here.

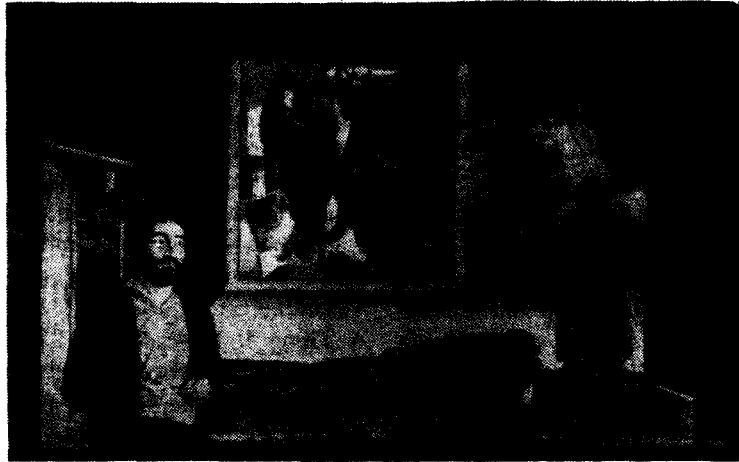
Designed as a showcase for Armenian history and culture, the new ALMA facility opening on October 20 represents the culmination of months of activity during which the former Coolidge Bank building has been transformed into a modern, first-class library and museum.

The unique collection of Avetisian works is on loan to ALMA from Watertown artist Richard Herach Tashjian, who was a friend of Avetisian's.

In conjunction with the exhibit, a documentary color slide show of Avetisian and his work will be presented by Tashjian at a special presentation on Tuesday evening, October 23, at 8 p.m. on ALMA's Third Floor Gallery.

The presentation, which is open to the public free of charge, will include slides of some of the 125 works by Avetisian that were lost in the artist's studio during a New Year's eve fire in 1972.

The life of Avetisian was marked by tragedy. He died in 1975 at the age of 47 of injuries sustained when he was struck by an automobile while walking to his studio.



*Painting of the artist Minas Avetisian created by Richard Tashjian.*

Beginning on October 20, ALMA will be open to the public on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday afternoons, from 2 to 5 p.m., and on Tuesday evenings, from 7 to 9 p.m.

The opening exhibit, "Curator's Choice, Selections from the Permanent Collection," consists of a representative sample of ALMA's textiles, rugs, ceramics,

needlework, metalwork, books, maps, photographs, costumes, and other items elucidating Armenian history and culture.

ALMA is open to the public free of charge. Further information is available by contacting acting director Gary Lind-Sinianian at ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown, Mass., 02172; Telephone (617)926-2562.

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## ALMA's Armenian Heritage Collection Opens To The Public

WATERTOWN, Mass. - The Armenian Library and Museum of America's unique collection of treasures from the Armenian heritage will open to the public in its new Watertown Square facility next Saturday afternoon, Oct. 20 from 2 to 5 p.m.

The public is cordially invited to join the ALMA trustees and staff in celebrating the opening of this new museum and library, which has been designed as a showcase for Armenian history and culture.

The opening marks the culmination of several months of intense activity during which the ALMA trustees and staff have concentrated their attention on renovating the newly purchased four-story landmark building, the former Coolidge Bank, into a first-class facility.

Located at 65 Main Street in Watertown, Mass., the building is appropriately centered in the heart of one of the oldest, largest, and most active Armenian communities in America.

### COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS

The opening exhibit, "Curators' Choice: Highlights of the Collections," will feature representative items from ALMA's extensive permanent holding of Armenian needlework, rugs, textiles, manuscripts, coins, books, maps, metalwork, and historic objects.

The exhibit is a collaborative effort of architect John Hampshire, museum designers Addis Osbourne and Marlene Grey, and ALMA staff members Gary and Susan Lind-Sinianian.

Paul Z. Bedoukian of Wilton, Conn., a leading collector and scholar of Armenian coins, will be present to describe items from his extensive collection of Armenian antiquities which have been donated to ALMA. These include metalwork, ceramics, woven art, early Armenian printed books, and coins.

Also present will be Arthur



PHOTO: DAVID L. RYAN, BOSTON GLOBE

*Susan Lind-Sinianian, textile curator at the Armenian Library and Museum of America in Watertown Square, readies an exhibit for the opening on Sat., October 20.*

T. Gregorian, a pioneer in the identification of Armenian rugs as a distinct type of Oriental, who has amassed the largest collection in the world of these rare works of art. The Gregorian collection of Armenian inscribed rugs is an important component of the ALMA collections.

ALMA textile conservator Susan Lind-Sinianian will describe the extensive ground floor facilities in the renovated building, which have been designed to photograph, record, study, repair, and conserve rare textiles.

An exhibit of works by the late Minas Avetisian (1928-1975), Armenian artist of Yerevan, will be on display at the opening. Artist Richard Tashjian, who prepared the exhibit, will be present.

Following the opening on October 20, the hours of the Armenian Library and Museum of America will be Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays, from 2 to 5 p.m., and Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. There is no admission charge.

Works by artist Varteni Mosdichyan continue on exhibit on ALMA's Third Floor Gallery through the end of October. Lectures, open to the public free of charge, are held on the Third Floor on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month.

ALMA was founded in 1971 by a group of professionals, businessmen, scholars, and clergy who were dedicated to the collection, preservation, study, and display of artifacts which derive from and illustrate the history and culture of the Armenian people.

Today it houses one of the largest and most diverse collection in the Armenian diaspora. After renting for many years the ground floor space in the First Armenia Church in Belmont, Mass., ALMA now occupies permanent headquarters which will facilitate community outreach programs and will provide enhanced exhibition space, a more generally accessible library, and modern conservation and storage facilities.

# A Talk with Patriarch Torkom Manoogian

**NOTE:** Last weekend, Oct. 26 to 28, 1990, Patriarch Torkom Manoogian was officially installed and consecrated Patriarch of Jerusalem.

In late August, Armen Aroyan spent seven days in Jerusalem and had the pleasure to conduct the following interview with Patriarch Manoogian on Aug. 24, 1990.

**ARMEN AROYAN** — Your Eminence, may I congratulate you upon your recent election to the position of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem. Armenians all over the world and especially in the United States are keenly interested in the conditions at the Saint James Monastery. Would you be kind enough to greet them and give an overview of the history of the Armenians in the Holy City.

**PATRIARCH TORKOM MANOOGIAN** — I am glad to have this opportunity from Jerusalem to talk with my people in the United States who are so close to my heart. I know that Armenians living all over the world have a special interest in Jerusalem.

After Echmiadzin Jerusalem is the spiritual center which gives special pride to every Armenian, because Armenians have taken interest in the Holy places since the first centuries.

Organized life is recorded in books starting from the fifth century; monks from different national entities used to live in groups in various parts of the Holy Land. Armenian monks also, by the hundreds, have lived together in the Holy Land and through the centuries the Armenian community has been established and grown in number and in stature.

The Armenian convent is an area which covers one-sixth of the old city of Jerusalem and we know that at the present time the map of old Jerusalem indicates that there is a Christian quarter, there is a Moslem quarter, there is a Jewish quarter and there is an Armenian quarter.

**A.A.** — Would you briefly describe the extent of religious and cultural wealth the Armenians possess in the Holy Land.

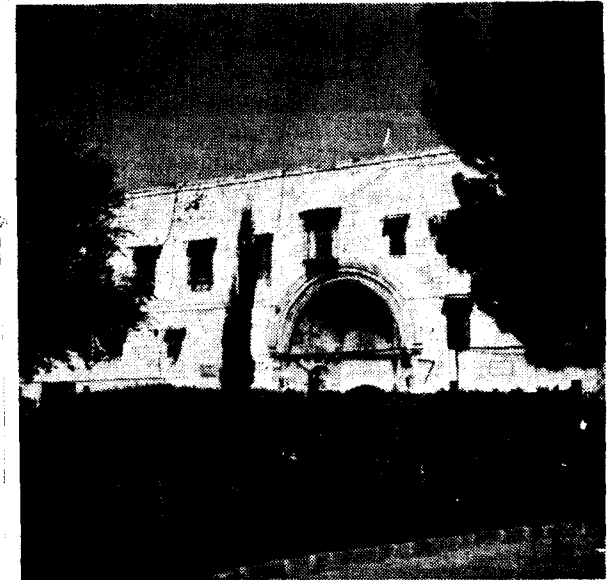
**T.M.** We have treasures in Jerusalem. The most valuable treasures are the Holy places in which we worship. The Armenian church together with the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches is the guardian of these Holy places, and therefore Armenian church services are performed every day in these locations.

In Bethlehem we have the Holy Nativity church where every morning the Holy Badarak is celebrated. We also have property around the church of Nativity and in the city of Bethlehem. We have devoted members of the Brotherhood serving there.

In Jerusalem the attention of the whole Christian world is centered around the church of the Holy Sepulcher. The history of this church is a long one. In the 1800s the church was burned and for many years it was in a state of disrepair and then it was repaired. However, in the 1930s there was a big issue because it posed a danger for multitudes to gather and to worship in. Eventually we know that in the 1960s with the agreement of the three patriarchates, the Holy



The Entrance of St. James Monastery.



In the Reception Hall of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem; Patriarch Manoogian and Armen Aroyan of Monrovia, California, the writer.

Sepulcher church was renovated. Today it is a beautiful church where every day hundreds of pilgrims, christians and even non-christians do visit because of interest or with the christian feeling of worship. In the Holy Sepulcher the Armenian church has its own wholly owned areas such as the second floor chapel where we have our own Badaraks but also there are other parts where we share the Holy places such as the Mount of Golgotha, the tomb of Christ and the place where the cross of Christ was found. Every evening the doors of the Holy Sepulcher church are closed from outside by a Muslim family who keep the key. They lock the doors from outside and at 4 a.m. they come back and open the doors; which means that those who serve in the Holy Sepulcher stay in. The Armenians at 11 p.m. start the midnight service for an hour or so and then the Armenian clergy take a nap for an hour or two and they get up again to celebrate the Badarak on the tomb of our Lord Jesus

Oct 31, 1990

Christ at 3 a.m. and then at 4 to 4:30 a.m. upon the conclusion of their services those who stay in the building go back for their naps and the one who comes from the Saint James Monastery goes back to his room and then to get up again at 1 p.m. to perform the afternoon service; and this goes on and on every day.

The glorious celebrations of our feast days in the Holy Sepulcher are well known. The Patriarch has his own days to head the brotherhood, to enter in a procession the Holy Sepulcher, to celebrate Badarak and to have processions around the tomb of our Lord where we have the Saint Gregory chapel which was lately excavated and remnants were found from the first century: walls of the city of Jerusalem.

Then we have the famous church of Saint Mary in the valley of Gethsemane. There also every morning Badarak is celebrated. First the Greeks at early morning and then the Armenians from 7-8 a.m. on. This week is the Assumption week of Saint Mary and for two weeks the Seminary boys every morning go down to the church to celebrate the Badarak. The grapes having been blessed two weeks before the feast day, the principal of that particular church hosts the seminarians and offers them grapes every day after the Badarak. To enter the church one goes down forty steps almost like walking down a cave. Then one's eyes get used to the darkness and one feels the mystery of the church and the dampness also.

In the Saint James Monastery itself we have our own so called principality. The monastery has its own walls within which we have the cathedral of Saint James which comes from the seventh century; a beautiful cathedral with beautiful Armenian architecture. We have the printing press; the old one was established in 1833 by Yessayi Patriarch who had studied photography and who introduced it in Jerusalem; and we take special pride in this fact. The magazine of Seeyon started in 1866 and until today it has been printed monthly. We have hundreds of books published some going back to the 1830s and 1840s. We have the Gulbenkian library which was built in 1929 by

the Gulbenkian Foundation. It is one of the best libraries in this area with 60,000 books catalogued. Then we have the Helen and Edward Mardigian museum which is open to the public and where many pilgrims visit and see the ancient artifacts, pictures, maps and objects pertaining to Armenian heritage.

We have the Church of the Archangels within the boundaries of the Monastery and this is the spot where the house of the chief priest was during the trial of our Lord Jesus Christ and there one finds also the olive tree to which our Lord was tied. This church is currently being renovated.

We have the Library of the Manuscripts where close to 4000 manuscripts are preserved. The library is actually the Chapel of Saint Toros where my class was ordained to the priesthood and where we lived for forty days preparing ourselves for the service of the Lord.

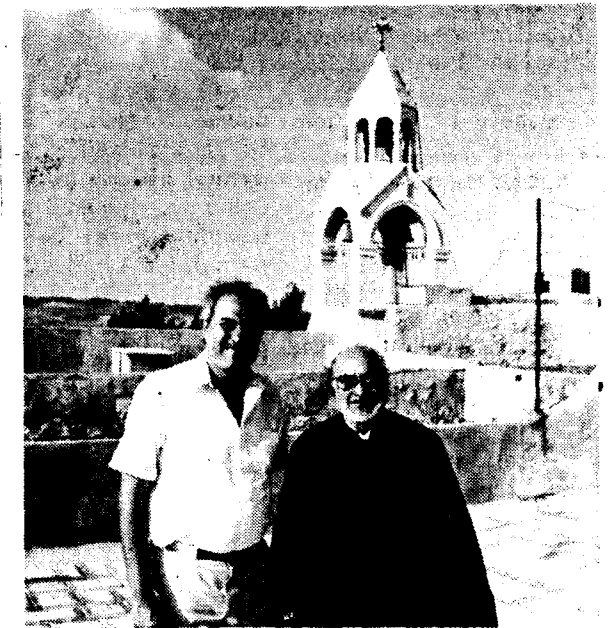
We have the Theological Seminary. The new building is known as the Alex and Marie Manoogian Seminary. At the present time we have 20 to 24 students but in a week or two twelve will be coming from Syria and Lebanon and one will be coming from Egypt. There are two or three candidates from Rumania and Bulgaria and I am told that these young men probably do not even speak Armenian, but we have accepted them hoping that they will be able to learn properly. We also have two students coming from the Boston area and two from the Los Angeles area. So we are trying to reorganize ourselves and hopefully the monastery will again be functioning as we had seen it functioning in our young days.

**A.A. — How is the political climate surrounding the Patriarchate in these turbulent days in all of the Middle East.**

**T.M. —** The situation of course in Jerusalem is different from what it was during my days in the 1930s. However the Christian presence is here and all Christian communities are worshipping. The political situation is tense but that should not be any reason for all Christians not to come on pilgrimage. That is very important not only for the pilgrim who comes for worship but also for us who live in this city because the unity of the spirit should flourish and be evident these days. That is a major concern of church leaders in this city. It is also the wish of the government authorities that Christians feel free to come and to join their own communities in worship.

**A.A. — What is the present condition of the Armenian community under the Jurisdiction of the Patriarchate? How many do they number?**

**T.M. —** We have communities in Jordan which is under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate. We have communities in Haifa with a chapel and in Jaffa with a school and a chapel. In Bethlehem there is a large Armenian community and strangely enough most of them are Arabic speaking. My intention is to start an Armenian school in Bethlehem for the two to three hundred Armenian families that we have there.



Aroyan with Father Voski on the roof of the Armenian Monastery in Bethlehem. The Armenian bellfry of the Church of Nativity.

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## Patriarch Torkom

Continued from Page 8

The number of Armenians in the Holy land of course has dwindled. At one time there were 15 to 20 thousand Armenians but since the 1940s and 1950s many have left the country. At the present time in Israel we count between two and three thousand Armenians (not having a definite census) and in Jordan between six and seven thousand.

We have the Tarkmanchats school for our children and it is one of the best schools in Jerusalem. It is an Armenian school for Armenian children but we have non-Armenian children attending also who come here especially for their secondary school education and in the process they also learn Armenian. The number of our students has also decreased unfortunately. So we are inviting Armenians to come and live here to recreate our real Armenian spirit, culture and heritage. We believe that, knowing the perseverance of the Armenian spirit, we shall be able to organize ourselves as a community as well.

**A.A. — What is the size of the Saint James Brotherhood?**

**T.M. —** At the present time in the monastery and in the Jerusalem area we have twenty ordained priests and bishops. About twenty of our Brotherhood members are serving the diaspora in various dioceses throughout Australia, South America, Eastern and Western United States, England, France, Germany, etc. and we are hoping that by organizing our education in the seminary we will be able to prepare and train qualified candidates for the priesthood.

**A.A. — Would you encourage for more Armenians to visit Jerusalem and partake of its rich spiritual and cultural heritage?**

**T.M. —** The invitation is open. Armenians should not need an invitation. This is their spiritual home, this is their heritage and these are their treasures. I am not referring to the artistic treasures only which are



The offices of St. James Monastery

very valuable but also to the spiritual treasures all associated with the land where Jesus was born, was raised, worked, preached, died for the salvation of man, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. One can follow our Lord step by step and remember His teachings so that one might be strengthened in faith. This is the same spirit as the one we feel when we vis-

it our Fatherland in Armenia, when we visit Echmiadzin, when we visit the beautiful churches (though some of them in ruins) scattered in the mountains and the valleys of Armenia. There is no doubt that thousands of churches in ruins are also scattered in Western Armenia which shall remain always the Fatherland of Armenian generations to come.

FEBRUARY 28, 1991

## Primate Barsamian Pays First Trip To Florida Church

BOCA RATON, FL. - Bishop Khajag Barsamian paid his first official visit to Florida in his capacity as Primate of Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church on January 27, 1991.

The Primate celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St. David Armenian Church here, and ordained three sub-deacons from among the St. Nersess seminarians.

The day before, His Grace was welcomed by Hrashapar and Sunday Eve services, as he entered St. David Church, led by Pastor Rev. Dr. Zaven Arzoumanian, the Very Rev. Fr. Vasken Tatoyan, Father Mardiros Chevia, deacons and seminarians, choir members and some 100 faithful.

Bishop Barsamian was also welcomed by Archbishop Sion Manoogian, former Primate of the Diocese, who accompanied the procession as the senior among the archbishops and as the representative of the Mother See Holy Etchmiadzin.

Following the Sunday Eve service, our pastor addressed his welcoming words to both the Archbishop and the Primate, to which Bishop Barsamian responded, expressing his joy and deep satisfaction for the accomplishment made by the new parish in Florida.

The same evening, in the church's Mardigian Hall, ample preparation was made for the celebration of the 45th anniversary of the ACYOA, by the Central



**FLORIDA VISIT.** Bishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church enters St. David Armenian Church in Boca Raton in solemn procession with St. Nersess Seminarians acting as deacons. The visit was the Primate's first official visitation to Florida, where there is a growing Armenian community. (Photo by B. Der Bedrossian).

Council and by the local St. David chapter. Three hundred guests attended the banquet to honor the Primate, and particularly the benefactors of the Youth Organization and the parish, Mr. and Mrs. Edward and Helen Mardigian.

A special program booklet was printed to mark the occasion by the Central Council of the ACYOA.

During the program, with Kachadoor Kazarian acting as Master of Ceremonies, addresses were offered by the ACYOA officers, and choral selections were presented by the Karatsayn Singers.

Special tributes were presented by Lisa Manookian on behalf of the ACYOA to the benefactors, Edward and Helen Mardigian.

On Sunday, the Primate celebrated the Liturgy. In attendance

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## Primate Visits Florida Church - Continued from page 10

were close to 400 people. Present were Archbishop Sion, Fr. Zaven, Fr. Chevian, a group of St. Nersess deacons and seminarians. Three of the Seminarians, namely Greg Doudoukjian, Richard Bohajian, and Robert Boyajian, were later ordained sub-deacons by the Primate.

Soon after their ordination, all three deacons served on the altar as "pourvaragirs" and reader of the Epistle.

During the sermon, the Pri-

mate read an encyclical from His Holiness Catholicos Vazken I elevating the pastor, Dr. Zaven Arzoumanian to the degree of Archpriest. The Gontag praised Father Arzoumanian for his many years of service to the church.

The Primate also made his good remarks for Father Zaven's academic achievement and dedicated service to the Armenian Church, before inviting him to the Altar and presenting him with the encyclical.

In the afternoon, the Mardigian Hall was again filled to capacity for a farewell brunch to all out-of-town guests and the Primate. There was a display of artistic paintings by Krikor Dermeyan of Spitak, Armenia, whose works were brought to St. David through the efforts of Mr. Zaven Dadekian of the AGBU.

Closing words were offered by Archbishop Sion Manoogian, and the gathering came to an end with benediction by the Primate.

Armenian  
Reporter  
Jan. 17, 1991

## **ACYOA To Honor Mardigians At 45th Anniversary Ball**

BOCA RATON, FL. - Helen and Edward Mardigian, generous benefactors of the ACYOA, are to be honored by the organization at the 45th Anniversary Ball here on January 26, 1991. The banquet and ball will be held in Mardigian Hall, St. David's Armenian Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Mardigian have dedicated great efforts to programs for the Armenian youth. They feel quite strongly that our future depends on the youth. Since the mid-1980's the Mardigians have contributed more than \$150,000 to the national ACYOA to help implement new programs such as Cultural Week-ends and Christian Leadership Seminars. While serving as honorary chairs for the 1990 ACYOA Sports Weekend, they pledged \$50,000 per year to the ACYOA/ACEF fund.

Mr. Mardigian has held numerous prominent positions in Armenian organizations and holds honorary membership in several. He has been awarded the St. Gregory Medal by His Holiness Vazken I, and was honored as Man of the Year by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. He presently serves as Chairman of the Hercules Machine Tool and Die Company and President of the Mardigian Foundation.

The ACYOA is proud to honor the Mardigians on such an auspicious occasion. Anyone interested in attending should contact Melanie Mikaelian in care of St. David's Armenian Church.



**SPECIAL GUESTS.** Mr. & Mrs. Edward Mardigian, noted philanthropists, will be honored by ACYOA at the forthcoming 45th Anniversary Ball slated for January 26 in Boca Raton, FL.

## ACYOA Central Council Sponsors Annual Christian Leadership Seminar

By Lisa Manookian

PHILADELPHIA, PA. - The 1991 ACYOA Christian Leadership Seminar will be hosted by the Wynnewood ACYOA on Saturday, March 9, 1991 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Church in Wynnewood, Pa.

The seminar will focus on the leadership role of Armenian youth during the 1990's and will be led by the Rev. Fr. Arshen

Aivazian, pastor of St. Leon Armenian Church in Fair Lawn, NJ. The seminar is open to everyone and admission is free. A light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The seminar is sponsored annually by the ACYOA Central Council in an effort to educate Armenian youth about Christian leadership in the Armenian Church and to promote it. This year's focus is very significant

and timely in that there has been a steady decline of youth participation in the churches at-large. It behooves each of us to spend some time evaluating and addressing this issue so that we can, through our collective efforts, reverse this trend during this decade.

For further information, interested individuals may contact Shake' Ajamian at (215) 642-3174.



## *Annual Invitational Tournament*

The 1991 Archbishop's Tournament, sponsored by the ACYOA Central Council, will be hosted by the ACYOA Seniors of St. Thomas Armenian Church, Tenafly, NJ, in conjunction with the 89th Annual Diocesan Assembly. The Tournament will take place Friday, May 10 to Sunday May 12.

In 1971, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, then Primate of the Diocese, initiated for the youth of the Diocese the "Archbishop Torkom Manoogian Basketball Award."

This annual tournament is a weekend affair of sports events

and social activities, open to the ACYOA Seniors of all parishes.

The hotel accommodations for the weekend will be at the Loews Glenpointe Hotel in Teaneck, NJ. Details will be forthcoming.

The ACYOA Seniors of St. Thomas, under the guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Avakian Stoneson, chairpersons of the 1991 Diocesan Assembly Committee, have been hard at work planning for this special event and are looking forward to welcoming all attendees for this fun-filled and exciting weekend.

**Karen Saraydarian**

## ACYOA cultural weekend to take place in Worcester

NEW YORK—The Diocese of the Armenian Church announced that the fourth annual ACYOA Cultural Weekend will be held in Worcester, MA, on Presidents' Day Weekend, February 15-18. This year's Cultural Weekend will explore "100 Years of Armenian Church and Community Life in America."

Forty participants will join together in Worcester, MA—the site of the first Armenian Church in America—the Armenian Church of Our Saviour to discuss the evolution of the Armenian Church and community in the United States. The weekend has special significance to Worcester, as the Armenian Church of Our Saviour

is this year celebrating the centennial of its consecration.

The 1991 Cultural Weekend will include classroom seminars, as well as a "hands on" approach to Armenian culture. Excursions have been planned throughout New England to examine the oldest Armenian communities in America. Other activities include a tour of the new Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) in Watertown, and visits to the Armenian Churches and community centers of Greater Boston.

This year's lecturers will include Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Professor of Near Eastern Studies at the

University of California, Los Angeles; and The Very Rev. Dr. Krikor Maksoudian, Director of the Diocese's Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center.

The cost of the entire weekend package—including meals, hotel accommodations and tuition—is \$90 for ACYOA members, and \$100 for non-members.

For more information on the ACYOA weekend contact Laurie Onanian, Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, Central Council, 650 Huntington Avenue, Apt. 24J, Boston, MA 02115, (617) 734-6140, or the ACYOA Office, 630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016-4885, (212) 686-0710.

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Applications for this year's ACYOA Cultural Weekend can be obtained through:

Laurie Onanian  
ACYOA Central Council  
650 Huntington Ave, Apt 21J  
Boston, MA 02115  
(617) 734-6140