



Armenian Cultural Conservancy NEWSLETTER

Editor's Reflections

by Mary Mirigian Ekmalian

Did you know that there is a library on the third floor of The Vineyards? The Armenian Cultural Conservancy has started an Armenian section by donating books on Armenian topics or by Armenian authors that are in English. Residents may check them out. The duplicates are being donated to the library in the Residential Building. The following were recently donated: FROM GRAVAL TO GAVAL by Hon. Armand Arabian; AS LOVE IS MY WITNESS by Ralph L. Baker; NEVER SAY GOOD-BYE by Eden West (aka Lillian Buchaklian); GAMBLER by William C. Rempel (biography of Kirk Kerkorian); A HEARTBEAT AWAY: ARE YOU READY? by Arsen S. Marsoobian.

On Friday evening, June 21 in the AACL Hall the ACC hosted the film "The Last Word" starring Shirley McLaine." Approximately 50 residents and community members attended and enjoyed the popcorn, snacks and drinks provided by Conservancy supporters. It was a thought-provoking, entertaining movie on the topic of one's legacy after passing.

On Tuesday evening, July 30, we had our second Family History Night at the Woodward Park library. Alain Ekmalian presented an oral history of the Terzian journey from Adiyaman to Aleppo, Syria, then to Marseilles, France and finally to Troy, New York and the Ekmalian journey from Kheghi (near Erzeroum) to Aleppo and then to Marseilles and finally to Troy, New York. Michelle Paloutzian Maggi spoke about the Paloutzian family from the village of Parchanj near Harput (Kharpert). She displayed family albums and a rare book on Parchanj and explained her process of identifying all the unidentified photos in their family albums (see photo).

Our next event at the Woodward Library will be in February – the exact date cannot be set until January – and we would like to

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Sunset Soirée Highlights Prospect of a Permanent Home for the Armenian Cultural Conservancy

by Rosemary Jendian and
photos by Sean Minier

With eyes set toward the future, community members gathered for an autumn soirée on Saturday, September 28 in the East Courtyard at The Vineyards. The Armenian Cultural Conservancy (ACC) hosted their annual benefit on the newly expanded grounds of the California Armenian Home (CAH).

This charitable giving event demonstrated the valued partnership between ACC and CAH, and provided supporters of both institutions the opportunity to learn about enriching the future while celebrating a shared past and present. CAH generously partnered with ACC in Spring 2019. Board President Lucy

Kazanjian Grayson offered an office space on the grounds allowing for display cabinets of collectibles (donated or on loan) to share with residents and visitors to The Vineyards.

Local artist Pat Hunter was commissioned by ACC Co-Chair Midge Barrett to bring to life a painting of the 1894 Henry Vartanian House. Through her signature watercolor, she depicted the house as envisioned in Fresno's historic district of Armenian Town. Especially for the event, Mary Ekmalian, Van Der Mugerdechian, and Megan Jendian displayed heirlooms and prepared photographic displays of historical and informational materials. Some artifacts that were on loan just for this evening included an-

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Editor's Reflections

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have another 5-10 minute family history presentation. Please consider being part of this popular program.

Thanks to Randy Baloian, we had a special visitor to our office in mid-September. Art history scholar Marianna Hovhannisyan from UC, San Diego was visiting Fresno and doing research on the history of the grape industry in the San Joaquin Valley. She was especially interested in our archives regarding family histories, so our archive historian Van Der Mugrdechian shared what we are doing regarding family histories.

The third session in the popular ACC cooking series is planned for Saturday, January 25. We look forward to working with the kufta masters in the Home Guild in this joint effort to keep this fading art alive. A formal flyer will be sent out in January.

We are grateful to Attorney Phil Setrakian for donating all his beautiful office furniture (bookcases, desks, chairs, side tables, et cetera) to ACC, in addition to paying half of the moving costs. It will be in storage until we have a larger space.

In January we will be changing and expanding our executive committee and we encourage our supporters to consider being part of this committee. The more individuals we have participate, the more ideas we have and the lighter the workload is on each of us. Being inclusive and transparent on everything we do is our goal. Our monthly business meetings beginning in January will be on the second Friday at 9:30 a.m. at our office and all members are welcome to attend.

ACC wishes everyone a blessed Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year. **All I/we want for Christmas is a location to move the Vartanian House!**



During Family History Night Michelle Paloutzian Maggi her Paloutzian family history from the village of Parchanj near Harput (Kharput).



Dear Members and Friends,

As we look back on 2019, we remember fondly what fun we had at our programs at the Woodward Park Regional Library and at the California Armenian Home. We are pleased to have our office up and running at The Vineyards. We are also blessed to have dedicated executives in Mary Ekmalian, Dn. Allan Jendian, and Dn. Van Der Mugrdechian to keep our office open on a part-time basis. At the Woodward Library we enjoyed bringing you information and discussion on our heritage. This also gave us an opportunity to meet all of you and we are the richer for it.

In 2020 we look forward to more such exploration of heritage as we keep building on our budding relationships with other agencies in the field. Additionally, the time is at hand to take affirmative steps toward creating a heritage center, preferably in that part of Fresno of greatest significance to our people – the so-called “Old Armenian Town.”

The “OAT” district is where the five cottages sit on M Street near Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. It is our hope to augment these historic assets with the addition of the historic Vartanian house and outbuildings to one of the vacant parcels nearby. The resulting cluster would have great social and historic significance and serve as our first cultural conservancy center.

This, then, is our goal. Ambitious as it may be, we are a people that can get it done! Our curator and chief historian Van Der Mugrdechian is currently meeting with the Historical Commission and the developers of the empty lots around the proposed Old Armenian Town. We are also researching other possible opportunities of acquiring suitable land upon which to move the Vartanian house. We all have friends and family we can call on to assist to make this a community undertaking for all. We cannot fail.

Let us now turn our face to the sun and create an enduring institution that will enrich the future by preserving the past experience of a remarkable people.

Please consider a year-end donation to the ACC for this project.

On behalf of the ACC Executive Committee,
Midge & Charles Barrett

Thank You to Our Recent Donors

(June through November)

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Robert & Joyce Kierejczyk
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Alain & Mary Ekmalian

In Memory of Penny Mirigian
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Mary Ekmalian

Building Fund

Armenian Relief Society,
Fresno Mayr Chapter
George & Shenora Adishian
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Patty Torosian
Kathy Zakaryan

Other Donations

Kathleen Elia

**A volunteer is needed to send out timely acknowledgements for donations. Please contact Mary (559-261-1026) if you are willing to donate a couple hours a month.*

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Yes! I want to become a member of the Armenian Cultural Conservancy

- | | | | | | |
|--|------|--|-------|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student membership | \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership | \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor membership | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership | \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Founding membership | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservator membership | \$500+ |
| | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Fund | \$ _____ |

All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Please, make checks payable to Armenian Cultural Conservancy
mail to: 2037 West Bullard Avenue, PMB 106, Fresno, CA 93711-1200

You can help. Become a member. Spread the word. Host or assist with an event.

*"For when two of them meet anywhere in the world,
see if they will not create a New Armenia." – William Saroyan, 1936*

To collect, preserve and interpret the evidence of the Armenian experience in Central California in an enduring institution of learning.



Armenian Cultural Conservancy Logo

The six- and eight-pointed stars have a long history in pre-Christian Armenia and have been adopted in Church architecture and decorative arts. They are thought to have magical powers and are used extensively in astronomy and sacred art. The logo's wheel of eternity signifies life; the eight-pointed star represents the eight architectural pillars of the Armenian Church; the color purple represents the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Genocide; the gold color is the richness of the Armenian culture.

This logo was created by Alain Ekmalian.

Armenian Cultural Conservancy

Mailing Address:
2037 West Bullard Ave.
PMB 106
Fresno, CA 93711-1200

Office:
The Vineyards
6694 East Kings
Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93727
Phone: 559-835-0837

Office Hours: MWF
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Community Calendar

Christmas Decorating Help by St. Mary Yettem Church ACYO, call Dustin Vartanian at 559-623-3520, donations appreciated.

Friday, December 6, 8:00 p.m., Tata Simonyan, King of Pop, Live in Concert, Tower Theatre, 809 E. Olive Avenue, Fresno, 559-681-0212.

Saturday, December 7, 10:30 a.m. Country Store, 12:00 noon Lunch by Classic Catering, St. Paul Ladies Society Annual Christmas Luncheon, \$35 per person, Haig Berberian Hall, RSVP deadline November 24, call 559-226-6343.

Sunday, December 8, 12:30 p.m., Fowler St. Gregory Ladies Society Christmas Installation Luncheon, Cattlemens Steakhouse, Selma, \$20 per person, four menu choices, RSVP deadline November 29, call 559-834-2919.

Sunday, December 8, 1:00 p.m., Holy Trinity Church Christian Education Committee presents "She Loves Me," Second Space Theatre, 928 E. Olive Avenue, Fresno, \$25 per person, silent auction, hors d'oeuvres, dessert, call Patty Torosian at 559-281-6863.

Sunday, December 8, 12:00 noon-11:30 p.m., Cambria Christmas Mart, Armenian Relief Society Bus Trip, \$45 includes bus, refreshments and \$15 entry fee to the Market, call Traisy Jebian, 559-284-9650.

Sunday, December 8, 12:30 p.m., St. Mary Yettem Church Ladies Society 5th Annual Holiday Christmas Bazaar, Majarian Hall, adults \$12, 10 and under \$8, country store, kofta & manti for sale, raffle, live auction.

Sunday, December 8, 4:00 p.m., Taline & Friends Christmas Concert, presented by Hamazkayin, Gureghian Armenian Cultural Center, 2348 Ventura Street, Fresno, \$25, call Nazik at 559-974-3089.

Saturday, December 14, 11:30 a.m., Holy Trinity Ladies' Guild Luncheon & Toys for Tots Drive, Fort Washington Country Club, 10272 N. Millbrook Avenue, \$35, guests welcome, menu choice chicken piccata or salmon, RSVP & pay by December 6, 559-486-1141.

Sunday, December 15, 12:30 p.m., Armenian Relief Society, Sophia Chapter, A Traditional Armenian Christmas Buffet, adults \$25, under 12 \$10, decorated Christmas tree competition, visit from Santa Clause, silent auction, raffle, call Asdghig at 559-473-5831.

Sunday, December 15, 12:30 p.m., Fowler St. Gregory Sunday School Christmas Extravaganza, Markarian Hall, shish/chicken kebab combo plate \$20, children 12 and under \$15, Sunday School Students Free, RSVP 559-834-2919.

Sunday, December 22, 1:00 p.m., Saturday School Annual Banquet, St. Paul Berberian Hall, Fresno, \$20 adults, \$5 children under 12, RSVP by December 29, 559-226-6343.

Tuesday, December 31, 7:00 p.m., New Year's Eve Dinner Dance, Gureghian Armenian Cultural Center, 2348 Ventura Street, Fresno, Adults \$60, Under 12 \$30, for tickets and info call 559-269-9754.

Sunday, January 5, After Church, Armenian Christmas Lunch, St. Mary, Yettem, \$15 adults, \$10 children 10 and under, RSVP Aza 818-442-3409 and Anoush 559-273-0113.

Sunday, January 5, 4:00 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 p.m. traditional dinner (Vartabed soup, salmon, bulgar pilaf, vegetable soufflé, \$20 adults, \$10 children 12 and under, RSVP by January 1, 559-486-1141.

Sunday, January 5, 2020, 4:30 p.m., St. Paul Armenian Church Jurakalouyts Badarak and Dinner, \$15 per person, \$5 children under 12, RSVP by December 29, 559-226-6343.

Friday, January 17, 11:45 a.m., California Armenian Home Guild Monthly Luncheon, \$10, Annual Membership \$25, contact Mary at 559-261-1026 for more information.

Sunday, January 19, 2:00 p.m., Holy Trinity Ministries Carnival to benefit Birds' Nest Orphanage in Lebanon, \$35 entry includes food and games, bake sale and raffle, for more info call 559-430-9884.

Saturday, January 25, 10:00 a.m., California Armenian Home AACL Hall, Armenian Cultural Conservancy Cooking Class III, "Karpertz Kofta," hands on instruction by experts, includes kofta lunch, \$35, contact Mary at 559-261-1026 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE – Saturday, February 1, Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School Annual Crab Feed, 559-323-1955.

Sunday, February 9, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Armenian Relief Society, Fresno Mayr Chapter Foul Breakfast, \$15, Armenian Community Center, 2348 Ventura Street, Fresno.

Friday, February 21, 11:45 a.m., California Armenian Home Guild Monthly Luncheon, \$10.

Saturday, February 29, St. Paul Armenian Church KEF Club presents Armenian Pop Star Joseph Krikorian, Haig Berberian Hall, 559-226-6343.

SAVE THE DATE – March 7, Armenian Relief Society, Fresno Mayr Chapter, International Women's Day Luncheon.

SAVE THE DATE – March 20, "Armenia Uncovered," Kev Orkian's documentary of his journey to discover his roots in Armenia, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, hosted by Ladies' Guild.

SAVE THE DATE – March 21, Kev in Concert, California Armenian Home AACL Hall.

SAVE THE DATE – March 22, Fresno State Armenian Studies Program Scholarship Banquet.

SAVE THE DATE – May 30, California Armenian Home Ani Guild Patron Event.

SAVE THE DATE – June, St. Mary Yettem Church Pilgrimage to Armenia, for more information call 559-528-6892.

A request to all Armenian Community Organizations – Please e-mail community events to armenianconservancy@gmail.com as soon as they are set in order to include them in ACC's Newsletter Community Calendar and on our website.

Soirée

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tique books from Zaroohi Der Mugrdechian, wooden bath slippers from Nelsene Deranian, and a carpet from Frances Tusan (*see photo*).

During the wine reception surrounded by palm trees and a water fountain, guests enjoyed music provided by pianist David Aus. A delicious, bountiful mezze was prepared by the Holy Trinity Ladies' Guild Catering headed by Mary Ekmalian, Jane Knar Lanas, and Patty Torosian, and The Vineyards Executive Chef Brian Kesanen created many other tasty, attractive appetizers.

A welcoming address was delivered from the evening's organizing chair, Mary Ekmalian, who thanked all supporters of ACC's mission to "collect, preserve, and interpret the evidence of the Armenian experience in Central California in an enduring institution of learning." Members of Heritage Fresno were also recognized for giving impetus to the formation of ACC, including historian Mabelle Selland, Charles and Midge Barrett, Pat Hunter, Janice Stevens, Mr. and Mrs. Herb Arden, and Gary Becker.

ACC Co-Chair Charles Barrett mentioned the rationale of Pat Hunter's comment regarding the printed placemats, that "sometimes art can influence people" and stressed the urgency of moving forward as an action-committee to quickly relocate the Vartanian House. This historic house is likely the oldest remaining in Fresno and has already been saved once by the Caglia family and donated to the Fresno Rescue Mission. Although the buildings were restored, the property on which it sits is now needed for another purpose. Once again, the Vartanian House needs to be salvaged. Now is the time to move it – most appropriately to Armenian Town – and can be re-purposed as the Armenian Cultural Conservancy.

The evening's brief program featured an update from Residential Director George Juarez. With over four decades of experience and service at the Home, George relayed heart-warming and personal anecdotes representative of the residents' strength, loyalty, and dedication to history. "This Vartanian project will materialize. When Armenians believe in something, they make it happen."

Emcee Sarah Soghomonian, a producer with first-hand experience of local history documentaries, emphasized the relevance of being connected with our collective and cultural past. With an appreciation of rare architecture, she displayed enthusiasm for the prospect of the Vartanian House being relocated and re-purposed, and encouraged a philanthropic spirit among the attendees.

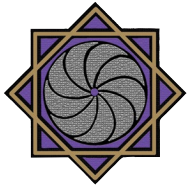
To contribute to ACC's primary project at this time, please note "Building Fund" with your gift.



*Photography by
Alain Ekmalian*



Fresno's Armenian Cultural Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) community benefit organization (CBO) welcomes your participation in on-going educational offerings and with loaned donations of Armenian artifacts and heirlooms. For further information call 559-835-0837 or e-mail armenianconservancy@gmail.com.



Armenian Cultural Conservancy

2037 W. Bullard Avenue, PMB 106
Fresno, CA 93711-1200

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Now on display at TheVineyards at the California Armenian Home

*The dedication on
November 13,
at 3:00 p.m., of the
"Eternal Flame,"
sculpture created by
Corky Normart, with
the funding from Joy
and Ed Arakelian*

*Photography by
Alain Ekmalian*



*Wooden bath slippers
loaned by Nelsene
Deranian, originally
belonging to her maternal
grandmother Khanum
(Ana) Amsalian of Bafra
(Samsun Province of
Turkey)*



*Here is Elizabeth Dashjian
with a metal mortar and
pestle from Erzurum, late
19th century. The name
David is inscribed in
Armenian on the pestle.
It belonged to Elizabeth's
late husband's grandfather
David Karahadian
(Dashjian). It was donated
to the ACC and is on
display in a glass cabinet
just outside the ACC office
at The Vineyards.*